



Snatching, Stumbling,  
and the Falling Away

reconciliation of Falling Away with the  
Security of the Believer

## SOME MORE SOUNDS...Snatching, Stumbling, and the Falling Away

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## PREFACE: "Snatching, Stumbling, and Falling Away"

Like many medical diagnosis, this perspective of churches and denominations today is not particularly pleasant to hear. However, the challenge of the Falling Away introduced in THE SOUND OF A SOUND FAITH demand an explanation of the seeming contradiction of "Once Saved Always Saved" and the perspective that most church members will be victims of the Falling Away. This book on SOME MORE SOUNDS is built on the basic Bible convictions of the first book, but tries to explain in a practical way based on the parable of the Seed and the Sower ,the actual process of church members falling away, not from the churches as church attendance may actually go up, but rather from Christ, God, and the Bible. The Falling Away and the process by which it happens as sin abounds and the love of many waxes cold is hard to explain. The Falling Away of the magnitude to call it THE Falling Away only happens twice in history, once to the children of Israel in the wilderness and once before the Second Coming of Christ. It is especially hard to explain simultaneously the sound doctrines of the Security of the Believer and the Falling Away, yet they are both true. The secret of success like in all Bible study is to find the Authorized Public Interpretation {API} from Jesus and the Apostles. By that I mean to look at real Bible on how much like the physical birth where 9 months is required to the spiritual new birth like Jesus said. This is so much unlike the instantaneous new birth of the fundamentalists and others, which is at the foundation of the only approximately 25% of the wheat in local churches and denominations as compared to the 75% of tares. {By the way, I apologize for not being able in this book to cover the subject thoroughly, and the reader is referred to the later book of TOLERATION OF THE TARES. This book tries to develop the proper "leave them alone" attitude of Jesus.} We also in the sequel to this book, TOLERATION OF THE TARES, need to utilize the outline of Mark which we diligently develop in this book.

Color, which you will not find in most Bible commentaries, is used to set apart the Bible quotes and immediate comments to the general flow in black letters. The Bible quotes are given in the pleasant color of green, and the immediate comments are given in the pleasant color of blue. I think this will help you in the reading of it along with the 12 point print and double spacing. The CD version of SOME MORE SOUNDS will have sound and animation.

## 1

**Things, Things, Things: God or Mammon**

"Things" is a difficult word. It can mean so many different things. It has 10 distinct meanings in the dictionary, each with multiple levels of meaning. It can mean "a matter of concern" as in the phrase "many things to do". It can mean a "deed, act, or accomplishment" as in the phrase "do great things". It can be used in the sense of "possessions, effects as in the usage of "pack your things". And on another level that is less tangible it is "whatever may be possessed or owned or be the object of a right, and on still another level it can be "an article of clothings" as in I don't have a thing to wear. With still another definition it can be "an object or entity not precisely designated or capable of being designated" as in the phrase "use this thing". Likewise depending on the usage of the word it can have the definition of "detail or point" as in the phrase "checks every little thing". Thing or things can be far more abstract as an "idea or notion" like in the sentence he says the first thing that comes into his mind; thing or things is also used in the sense of something individual like "not a living thing in sight". You have heard it used in the sense also of "the proper or fashionable way of behaving, talking, or dressing" as in this is the thing. And then the tenth definition is as "a mild obsession or phobia" as in he has a thing about driving.

The word "thing" in the Bible also has different meanings. Most are familiar with the quote of Romans that "all things work together for good to those who love the Lord and are the called according to His purpose." Things there refers back to the context of how God is working for the good of the called, the Holy Spirit and Christ are also working together for the good of the called. Here the things are good.

In another context, that of I John 2:15-17 "things" is bad. "Love not the world; neither the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. {God, the great originator and controller of the new birth will not allow it to happen. He will not allow His love to be in anyone who does not give Him "exclusive loyalty" to borrow a phrase from Thomas McComiskey in THE MINOR PROPHETS. I also remember so well from a Contemporary Philosophy of Living class the supreme attribute of character from Josiah Royce of "loyalty". I think loyalty in our contemporary jargon best describes the top love that King James struggles for in usage of the word "charity".} All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. The world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Another bad usage of "things" is found in the parable of the seed and the sower that was told by Jesus. Jesus first told of the seed of the Word that fell among thorns which immediately sprung up then the thorns choked it out. And then Jesus explained this as when an individual hears the Word of faith and of God, and explains the thorns that choke it out as "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things". You noticed that "other things" with cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches that choke out the word of faith.

I think you would agree that Jesus is primarily concerned about objects or possessions here, and this is the usage of the word things on which we try to concentrate as perhaps the number one diversion of people living by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Things as objects or possessions dominate lives. Recall it was the very good and moral rich young man that walked away from Jesus when Jesus told him to give all his possessions to the poor, then come follow Jesus. The young man walked away according to the Scripture "because he had great possessions."

At least this young man realized it. How many young men and women are walking away from Jesus who do not realize that they are so occupied with objects and possessions that Jesus has been ignored by default. The words of God has lost

much of their effective meaning in their lives simply because they are too occupied with possessions—"things" if you would—to even think about God and Jesus.

1. The word that Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount to describe "things" is the word "mammon". What you have in this Sermon is the contrast between the things of God and the things of mammon, things created by man and by the world.
2. There is nothing wrong with "bread" but if man lives by bread alone then he can not also live a balanced life of every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.
3. The temptations of Satan to stop the ministry of Jesus centered around the things of this world, and the sad fact is that Satan really has the ability to control these things of the world. If you allow these things to control your life it is sadly the equivalent of allowing Satan to control your life. While the things themselves, like money, are not evil, the things become the root of all evil. In fact money would fall into the category of mammon as "all things created by man"

"Mammon" is the word used by Jesus for things. Is it a surprise to you that while we hear so much about Jesus and the teachings of Jesus and about God, we do not hear the word "mammon" mentioned much. The answer is simple: businessmen do

not want any bad connotations attached to the buying of things. Mammon which literally means things of man's creation is not bad within itself. Mammon is much like money. In fact when the word mammon originated it applied most significantly to money. Well, mammon and money are not evil per se, money and mammon are the root of all evil. It is the root of all that diverts a man effectively from God; it is the root of all that causes man to live more by bread than by the words of God; it is the root of what chokes out conversion with the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things.

Jesus in His teachings of the Sermon on the Mount described it this way, and we have never been able to see the real meaning to the extent of a practical application in life.

**"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." (Matthew 6:24)**

We hear this and we go into self-denial: "No, that is an archaic teaching that came before this age of technological things and world-class education and the development of a social conscience. I can love my things without hating God; and I can love my God without hating things. I can be loyal to the accumulation of things without despising God, Jesus, and the Bible; and I can be loyal to God without the

despising of my education, status from men in business, my house, and my other things. Extremes are not necessary, we say to ourselves. I can be moderate in the things of God and I can be moderate in the things of men's creations.

Well, the words of Jesus stand firm; and they stand unchanged down through the centuries as recorded in the Bible. **“You can not have two masters”**. {You can not escape the conclusion that God demands and deserves, and it is for your own benefit, exclusive loyalty. If it were for eternal life alone it would be worth it, when you consider the length of eternity compared to the short boot camp here on earth; but it is also a life style here on earth which Jesus calls no less than the “abundant life”. This abundance is some times misunderstood, and privately interpreted as the prosperous life of the middle class; but one such abundance is the privilege each day of casting every care on God the Father. **“Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time, casting ALL YOUR CARE upon Him, for He cares for you”**. }

Well, the reply might come, we just do not understand what God meant when He gave Jesus those words to teach. Yes, we do! The meaning is right there on the surface. I recall from many of my good Bible teachers, one at Ouachita Baptist University who said, “just let the Bible say what it means...let the Bible say what it wants to say....” AND WHAT THE BIBLE IS TRYING TO SAY IS THAT EITHER

MAMMON OR GOD WILL DOMINATE YOUR LIFE, AND WHICH IS TO DOMINATE IN YOUR LIFE IS YOUR CHOICE.

Generally, you would have to agree with me, it is the case that those all wrapped up in things, also do not have the motivation of "service" for God in the first place. Where they have missed the boat, and it is an eternal miss, is the meaning of service for God and in the placing of service for God in first place. This is as basic as the first three of the Ten Commandments. It was summarized by Jesus as: **"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, mind and soul, and Him only shall you serve."** {Notice how the "Him only shall you serve" rings again of the exclusive loyalty; and how this summary from Jesus is as old as the Old Testament. In fact Jesus is quoting here from the Old Testament.}

One might respond, "This is simple and we know all these things, because we are church members."

No, you don't as indicated by the popularity among Bible believer's of the philosophy of Joel Olsten as given in his best selling book YOUR BEST LIFE NOW. In one chapter alone on the good life, Joel mentions "things" twenty-three times. Also the so-called "Women of Faith" with their popular challenge for women to live the extraordinary life now—supposedly a Bible and Christ ministry—offer you a catalog of things to buy which are called "women of faith resources". Now, what in the world does a ministry of Christ and the Bible have to do with the selling of

sweaters, and necklaces, and purses, and all sorts of things. In the case of Joel and the ladies of faith, they are promoting immediately the very mammon that diverts from the service of God.

## 2

### **"Cares of This World, Deceitfulness of Riches, and Other Things"**

These few words from Jesus, "cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and other things", where do you think they come from. Yes, they come from the parable of the seed and the sower that Jesus explained later to His disciples to illustrate how many church members and others miss out on a real conversion. The people of Jesus' day were very religious, like most people in the United States, they have heard the seed of the Word of Christ.

While we real southern baptists would like to blame the current Falling Away condition of the churches on the fundamentalists for their superficial and shallow practices on the new birth, human nature has dictated the four distinct responses to the Word of the Gospe. **{Like most of their other Bible it is based on a hunt and peck method of understanding, but they are not alone on instant new birth.}** We must admit from the parable of the seed and the sower that from the very beginning of the Gospel of the kingdom with Christ, 25% of the people who hear the Word of the Gospel have it immediately SNATCHED away by Satan. Since their will on the

matter and their human spirit is comparable to wayside soil, have the seed of faith instantly SNATCHED away by Satan. How does Satan do that? Well, unfortunately he has direct access to the human spirit if not countered by the work of the Holy Spirit here on earth. Although it is hard to say in this day of the type and measure of "tolerance" we have in this country from the American Democratic Faith, {like the religious leaders to whom Jesus spoke saying "you are of your Father the devil"}, you can easily make a case from the Bible that all of those who have not been given the love of God in their life, are controlled by Satan. And while they may think their influence toward the wayside soil is in the interest of God, just like the religious leaders of Jesus' day thought they were doing the work of God {remember how Paul thought before conversion that he was doing the work of God as he hauled Christians off to prison}, those religious leaders who sowed that seed, especially if they are liberals, can assist Satan in the immediate SNATCHING away of the seed sown by the wayside. You see, really, such liberals and fundamentalists, are the wayside, anyway.

You know if you were looking about you today for the most influential men in the world who lead {the man of sin of II Thessalonians} in the Falling Away, it would be a toss-up between a Muslim leader like Bin Laden and a fundamentalists leader like Bush, Falwell, Stanley, and LeHaye. While Bin Laden based on the Muslim

classic teaching of destroy the infidels like the potential for a world-wide rebellion that can easily led to the final great battle of Armagaddeon in the middle east, it is the fundamentalists leaders like Falwell and Stanley, as they took over control of the Southern Baptist Convention 20 years ago—by the way, the largest Protestant denomination in the world with influences all over the world—with their fighting spirit that have caused all the wars, contentions, and divisions among Southern Baptist in Texas, and no doubt in the whole world. This bad spirit of such fundamentalists was expressed by W.A. Criswell approximately 20 years ago as he told Bill Moyer in a TV interview that “We will keep on fighting until one side or the other wins.” Well, that is exactly what happened: the fundamentalists kept fighting with the moderates, electing such fundamentalists pastors as President like Adrian Rogers and Charles Stanley with the rejection of Texas’ Baptists number one conservation-on-the-Bible and on evangelism candidate, Winfred Moore of the First Baptist Church Amarillo, until they established control over the convention, destroyed the reputations of other conservatives with the label of moderates which in their mind and their listeners’ minds meant liberals, caused the SBC to split into three conventions, drove other conservatives out of Southwestern Seminary, caused warfare between Baylor Theological Seminary, Texas Baptists, and SBC leadership; and the worst thing of all caused a bad spirit of contention to

fall over the whole Southern Baptist Convention. {I must add now that the only hope for the SBC is if the real Southern Baptist rise up to re-take control of the SBC. The real Southern Baptist are those who were southern Baptist during all the time the fundamentalists with their Bible Baptist churches and little seminaries withdrew in approximately 1920 from the Convention, then when approximately 20 years ago decided to come back in force, taking control. Of course, some of the real Southern Baptists are also those influenced more by Texas Baptists and other conservatives who did not fall prey to the bad fighting spirit of the fundamentalists.

It is unpopular to say now; even dangerous, but when I was a youngster growing up in Southern Baptist work in Texas, we called such men "fundamentalists"; because they liked to fight and you knew what they were against more than what they were for. However I must add that the extent to which the world is falling away now, even in the United States where leadership has been for generations of the "Fulfillment of the Gentiles" and of the spreading of the Gospel, is going to work against the real Southern Baptists taking control, and it will work in favor of the contentious attitude of the fundamentalists. (It is like J. Vernon McGee {by the way who started out as one of them with his training at

Criswell's Dallas Baptist Theological Seminary} says, "I wish the fundamentalists could learn to contend for the faith without being contentious."

It is that contentious spirit which dominates their evangelism to the detriment of any real contending for the faith that they do, even as the attitude is more important than the deed to Jesus.

We must interrupt these tirades in order to look briefly at something really fundamental. That is the Scripture that is the most important for the gist of this whole book, SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND THE FALLING AWAY. We must have a basis for this gist in the Word of God, and it must be exegesis—reading out the meaning from the Bible, rather than the isogesis practiced by fundamentalists, the hunt and peck method of reading meaning into the Bible. Well, here it is from Jesus Himself. It is the explanation of the parable of the seed and the sower that Jesus gave specially to His own disciples after He had given the parable itself to the multitude. {It is part of what I like to call the API for the "Authorized Public Interpretation" of the Bible. It is the authorized interpretation that comes from Jesus and the Apostles, by way of God and the Spirit.}

**Mark 4:13-20**

"And He said to them, 'Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? {We will discuss it later, but it is the unique

privilege of the real disciples of Jesus to understand the spiritual matters given in parables.}

"The sower sows the word. {I think you understand word as word of God, or the word of the Gospel, or the word of faith.} And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately {immediately, see how quick Satan is: he is quicker than the fundamentalists}...and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. {You see how Satan SNATCHES the seed right out of their hearts, and this is the prime way He goes about seeking whom he may destroy.}

"These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness." {Did you get the full impact of these words, "they immediately receive it with gladness"? And there is hardly a church in the land or an evangelists, fundamentalist or otherwise, who would not conclude this is instantaneous salvation, that a soul has been born again. You have to admit that when someone immediately receives the word with gladness, they will show the symptoms of joy and salvation; but we are told the rest of the story, how they only endure for a while and how they stumble. Of course, they are still on the church

roll; and you while the pastors are counting their ten thousands, you do not hear the rest of this story.}

"...and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arise for the word's sake, immediately they stumble."

Just two short statements here that may interrupt the flow on the explanation of Jesus to continue with the last, two remaining kinds of human-response-soil: (1) "endure for a short time", perhaps for the approximately 40 years typical of the first Falling Away by the children of Israel in the wilderness; and (2) "Immediately they stumble" from persecution and lack of root; but even here you see some amount of time as the church member goes about their life, because it does take some amount of time for persecutions, tribulations, and a lack of growth for roots.

"Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

{I must add the comment here that it is the wrong done today by the heaped up Bible teachers with itching ears who parade the *Gospel of Prosperity*, formerly called the "*Gospel of Wealth and the corrolary of success*" in the history of American Thought, thus right there in the church worship creating the very thorns of cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things that choke out the very word of Jesus and the *Gospel*. And if you don't get it in the worship service, you can get it from their best-selling books or on television. Oh yes, these are dangerous times: it is called the time of the *Falling Away* as sin abounds and the love of many waxes cold; and the greatest danger of all is the silence of the pulpits on the *Falling Away*, the same silence that proves this is a time of intolerance toward sound doctrine.}

"But these are the ones sown on good ground,those who hear the word,accept it, and bear fruit some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

{I like the pattern here: hear the word and "accept it". This is what makes citizens of the kingdom of God and Christ; this is what causes men and women and young people to become members of the body of Christ, the church written in heaven called the Church of the Firstborn; this is when a person passes from tares to wheat and from an alien to a child of God; and this is the point at which the hearer

and acceptor can claim the words of Paul for themselves, "Nevertheless the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: the Lord knows his own, and let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." If they are so busy bringing forth the 30 times fruit, the 60 times, or the 100 times fruit they will not have time for the iniquity, nor the inclination of the Falling Away.}

### 3

## **JESUS OF NAZARETH AND SALVATION**

If you wish to do some exegesis from Scriptures on the subject of CHRIST, it is almost impossible to take any passage of Scripture and not also discuss SALVATION. If you wish to do some exegesis from Scriptures on the subject of SALVATION, it is almost impossible at the same time not to discuss CHRIST. It seems that God wanted it that way in the writing of His book the Bible. I think that what we are really looking at is that the life of Christ and God's provision of salvation for men is impossible. You know how often the Bible talks about man at Creation as being the "first Adam" and how likewise Christ is the Second Adam. The first Adam brought sin, death, alienations from God, and lack of salvation while

the Second Adam, Christ, brought righteousness, life, restored fellowship with God, and provided eternal life through faith.

The First Sermon by the Apostle Peter after the Ascension of Christ back to heaven is typical of this pleasant exegesis of Bible passages. With our simplistic minds, we would like to utilize it to discuss what Christ is all about, or we would like to utilized it to discussion what salvation is all about. Yet it seems that we can not have one without the other, and that is the way it should be. Truth is a circle which spirals about the mind and character of God. You can not have one truth without the other, and one truth leads to another. We comprehend something of this in the famous teaching of Jesus about Himself as "the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus said of Himself, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me." Jesus is the way to God the Father, to the Father's house of many mansions, to heaven and eternal life; Jesus is the very personification of truth—if you look at Jesus you look at salvation; and Jesus is the life—a more meaningful kingdom of Christ centered life now and an abundant eternal one for the future.

Peter starts this sermon with an explanation of the historical coming of the Holy Spirit in power on the earth by quoting these events of the First Day of Pentecost after the Ascension as the fulfillment of a prediction by the Prophet

Joel in Joel 2:28-32. Granted that we normally like to latch onto the “end time” events in Joel 2 and Acts 2, I would hope that we can more focus on the words of salvation. If you look at Acts 2:17-21 and Joel 2:28-32 as a survey of world history as God is making it—and indeed it is starting with the historical event of the Holy Spirit coming to take the place of Christ on earth and with great power all the way to the end of time with the “great and notable Day of the LORD”—then the longest period of time is the period referred to as “whosoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved”.

“And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

This is one verse of Acts 2:21 and of Joel 2:32. There is some additional information in Joel 2:32 that Acts 2 and the Apostle Peter do not quote. Joel 2:32 adds in that one verse that this salvation of God will come out of Jerusalem, and it adds that salvation will be for a remnant of Jews and Gentiles.

Now, at this point the Apostle Peter has the same pleasant dilemma that we have. Peter has explained what is happening on this first Day of Pentecost, but now he needs to explain specifically, as Joel does in 2:32, how salvation comes out of Jerusalem. How do you think Peter does that? Exactly Peter does it with an extensive discussion about who Jesus of Nazareth is. How quickly we pass from

salvation to Jesus of Nazareth! And yet you will find that Peter's subsequent 18 verse explanation of who Jesus of Nazareth is is also an explanation of salvation.

Let us look at those 18 verses as quickly as we can. First, a brief of what the 18 verse explanation of Jesus of Nazareth and the salvation of God contain: (1) First Peter sets forth his version of the Gospel of how Jesus of Nazareth was proven to them to be the Son of God by God the Father, how His purpose was to be delivered to death by crucifixion according to the plan of God, and how God raised Him from the dead; (2) Then Peter supports the fact of the resurrection with a quote from the Prophet David in Psalms 16:8-11; (3) Then there is an explanation by the Apostle Peter of what the Prophet David has written, by the way we should know that this is part of the Bible training and understanding that Jesus imparted to Peter; (4) Then Peter transitions back to how David foretold the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ; (5) Peter transitions from the Ascension to the events of that morning (6) And then there is another quote from the Prophet David as recorded in Psalm 110:1 to reinforce these teachings about the Resurrection, Ascension, and the sending of the Holy Spirit; and (7) Lastly the dynamic conclusion of Peter's message.

We will look at this six point message as quickly as we can. The Apostle Peter would never make it as a good preacher in this day and time. Everyone knows that you

should have either three points and a poem or you should have only a four point message.

1. How impressive is Peter's version of the Gospel of Jesus. It within itself is a short message.

a. God approved Jesus of Nazareth, His work and His teachings, by the "miracles, wonders, and signs" that God gave Him to do. [A clue for Mark.]

b. The Great Maker of History, God Himself, determined according to His foreknowledge and purpose, that Christ would be delivered to Crucifixion.

c. This predestination of God did not eliminate the personal responsibility of the Jewish nation of their false accusations and their handing over Jesus for crucifixion by the Roman government.

d. God raised Jesus up from the dead. It was, according to Peter, impossible for God to do otherwise for His own Son. It was not possible that the very Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth, should be held bondage by death itself.

2. The quote from the Prophet David of Psalms 16:8-11 proves that the Resurrection of Christ was part of the eternal plan of God. A person might casually read Psalms 16 thinking that David is only talking about himself and his own spiritual struggles and death; but it should become obvious to the reader when he comes to 16:10 that it is a discussion of the very Son of God.

What else could it be when you read in verse 10 about the "Holy One of Israel". Of Israel and of the world, there has always been only ONE Holy One, one without sin and that is Christ. Okay, here is the quote from Psalms.

**"I (recall that the I is really Jesus of Nazareth talking and thinking out loud)...I foresaw the LORD (LORD in capital letters like that is always God the Father)...I foresaw the LORD always before my face, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. (You see how this is faith in God on the part of Jesus....Therefore, Jesus continues, my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For you will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you allow YOUR HOLY ONE to see corruption. You have made known to me the way of life; You will make me full of joy in Your Presence." (Acts 2:25-28 and Psalms 16:8-11)**

3. Peter explains David. David is dead so that he could not be talking about himself, and further Peter says, his tomb is right here in Jerusalem with us. But you see that David was speaking as a Prophet, Peter and the Scripture call David a Prophet and that is how we know that He was. Prophets speak for God and foretell events. That is what the Prophet David did in Psalms 16:8-11 as he foretold the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Peter states in unmistakable terms that David wrote details of the resurrection of

- Jesus: (1) how God would not leave the soul of Jesus in Hades; and (2) how the body of Jesus after death would not see corruption. Then comes Peter's bottom line on the Resurrection: that God raised Him up from the dead, and how all the apostles and disciples saw exactly what happened. They saw Jesus of Nazareth dead and buried then on the third day they saw Jesus of Nazareth alive and well.
4. Truth gets in another circle here with the preaching of Peter as He explains how the Coming of the Holy Spirit relates to the Resurrected and Ascended Christ. It goes like this: (1) God had already promised the Holy Spirit to Jesus to take His place on earth, continue His work, and accomplish far more than Jesus alone could do—in fact you will recall that Jesus also passed this promise on to the disciples to encourage them as they all face the prospect of the cross together; (2) When Jesus Ascended back to the right hand of God the Father, He became the recipient of the promise; and (3) The Ascended Christ Himself sent the promise of God from heaven to earth, that event was being sent with signs and wonders on the first day of Pentecost after the Resurrection.
  5. Thus Peter has made a smooth transition from the Ascension of Christ to the very events of that morning. The tremendous sound from heaven like a

mighty, rushing wind; the tongues of fire sitting on top of each of the eleven disciples; and the speaking in other languages from the Holy Spirit. (By the way we might believe as real the present day attempt to imitate the speaking in real languages, if the same imitators could simulate the tremendous wind from heaven and the tongues on top of the speakers. They can not because those signs came from heaven, from God and Christ!)

6. The dynamic conclusion of Peter's Message.

- a. Israel, you crucified Jesus of Nazareth; but God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ. Christ was the understood Old Testament word for the Messiah, the provider of salvation; and Lord is the master.
- b. The convicting power of the Holy Spirit was at work. The listeners said, "What can we do about it?"
- c. Peter replied "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins; then you too will receive this gift of the Holy Spirit. You must separate the gift of the Holy Spirit from the events of the historical coming of the Spirit. The gift is exactly that which Jesus detailed in John 14-16 while the peculiar events of that day is the sound, the cloven tongues, and the speaking in other languages.

d. Furthermore the baptism is not a baptism of water. It is the equivalent of the new birth and beyond. Notice the word is "be baptized" as something that is being done to you by the Spirit of God, not something you can do.

e. Peter goes back to salvation. Back to that part of Joel 2:32 that he was attempting to explain when He got off on a necessary discussion of who Jesus of Nazareth is. He says that the promise of God as recorded in Joel 2:32, again in Acts 2:21, is a promise to three groups of people: (1) It is to the listeners on that day of Pentecost; (2) It is a promise to their children; (3) It is a promise to all subsequent history of peoples for as many as God Himself will call.

#### 4

### Traditionalism (FUNDAMENTALISTS) AND THE NEW BIRTH

The subject is simple and straightforward: HOW THE FUNDAMENTALISTS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE FALLING AWAY. Actually, there are many ways that the fundamentalists have contributed to the Falling Away; but this study from the Bible is on specifically HOW THE FUNDAMENTALIST'S CONCEPT OF THE INSTANTANEOUS NEW BIRTH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE FALLING AWAY. As a text we will look at one verse from Jesus' parable of the seed and the sower,

Mark 4:16. [correlation with Mark should be from Mark 4, details of parable of the sower and maybe more]

**"These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness." (Mark 4:16)**

Now, look at that "with gladness". Matthew says "receives it with joy". Now a fundamentalist with his "pick and chose" method of Bible study, if he noted the wording carefully at all, would say that this is instantaneous new birth. The hearer of the Word receives the seed of the word with gladness or joy. "That is salvation!" "That is instantaneous new birth." Well, we know better. We know from the explanation of Jesus that this is the Seed of the Word which falls on stony ground, but after a short period of time this so-called believer no longer endures. "After a while" are the words of Jesus to explain the short time this believer lasts after receiving the Word with great joy and exuberance, perhaps even shouting. Jesus further explains that when tribulation or persecution come on account of the Word, this person stumbles. Stumble is another word from the Falling Away. A lack of enduring is another word for the Falling Away. You can see that it takes time for this would-be believer to intercept persecution and tribulation. But all during this time of persecution at work and at play, at large from the church, the

fundamentalist churches are carrying him on the church roll as a born-again believer.

Let us briefly look at the facts of the New Birth as taught by Jesus and recorded in the third chapter of the Gospel of John. (1) There is a distinct difference between the physical birth and the new birth. Jesus said, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This immediately separates Bible faith from the American Democratic Faith where everyone born in the United States is automatically by birth or by environmental influence a Christian like Prime Minister Begin expressed when he said "we Israelis are born Jews like you Americans are born Christians." Not so to be born and raised in America is only to be born and raised under the American Democratic Faith. It is a marvelous set of values, freedoms, and traditions; but it is not salvation, nor is it the birth of the Holy Spirit. (2) By comparing the spiritual or new birth to the physical birth, Jesus teaches us that it takes time to be born again just as it takes nine months to be born physically after the seed is implanted in the womb. That is the problem with the fundamentalists who are in reality traditionalists who have made a religion out of the traditions of the Scofield Reference Bible. They try to appear literal by saying "you must be born again"; but then they distort the original meaning by their doctrines and practices of

instantaneous salvation or instantaneous new birth. They look at a person during a revival meeting or even in personal evangelism with their little equations for salvation; they see the seed fall among thorns or on stony ground; they see the immediate with joy springing up on the part of the hearer; and they say, "how marvelous is the work of God for a new soul has been born again." Not necessarily so; because the new birth just like the physical birth that Jesus compared it to takes time. Perhaps not nine months. Maybe longer or shorter; but there is some period of survival time from the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things that the planted seed of faith must survive before it is a real new birth.

## 6

### SOME MORE SOUNDS and Peacemaking

SOME MORE SOUNDS...is a continuation of SOME SOUNDS OF SOUND FAITH which tries to stop the trend, at least for a few people, of II Timothy 4:1-4, "The Time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but out of their own desires shall they heap up teachers having itching ears, turn away from the truth, and be turned into fables."

1. The goal of *SOME MORE SOUNDS* is to extend the influence of Christ and to prevent the *Falling Away*.

2. The second goal of *SOME MORE SOUNDS...FROM John Mark* is to promote the grand theme that "God is the great Maker of History", the title of volume 1a of the *LEARN CHRIST FROM THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS* commentaries.

(1). God makes history with the Bible. The Bible tells that God makes history. According to the Apostle James, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning {of time}...."

(2). God makes history with the Bible by making the history of the Bible. The approximately 40 Prophets and Apostles God chose to write books of the Bible over a period of approximately one thousand years were carefully chosen in their historical context, running from the Prophets Job and Moses in the writing of the Old Testament to the Apostles Paul and John in the writing of the New Testament. Old Testament quotes in the New Testament provide internal proof in the Bible itself of God's plan and control in the writing of the Bible. John Mark records 16 of those quotes, and *SOME MORE SOUNDS...is* organized around those 16 Old Testament quotes.

(3). God makes sure that you will get the proper interpretation of the Bible by providing in the Bible not only the quotes from the Old and New Testament, but also by providing in the Bible itself the proper interpretation of the quotes. We have only begun to appreciate what the Apostle Peter meant when he wrote, "no Scripture is of any private interpretation, but Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." God wrote it and God interpreted it properly, all in one book of two testaments.

a. These Holy men of God, prophets in the Old Testament and Apostles in the New Testament, were carefully chosen by God at specific intervals of history and moved by God the Holy Spirit to write consistently with the mind and heart of God.

b. God assured that what the Prophets wrote would be consistent with what the Apostles wrote, and both consistent with what Jesus brought to earth of the teachings of God. John Mark with his record of the teachings, character, and works of Jesus is a short 16 chapter example of that working of God in history. We might call this the "authorized interpretation", the opposite of "private interpretation" which is forbidden by the Bible.

In this day and time when the number one excuse for neglect of the Bible is "there are so many interpretations", it should be comforting to comprehend that

God not only gave the "Scripture" but also in the same Bible, the proper interpretation. This was more of God's planning as the *Great Maker of History* to counter what He knew would be the Satan-given-excuse to the world for not living by "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God", as Jesus said, as well as living by bread, at which we are far more adept.

### Peacemaking

In this age of the *Falling Away*, just before the *Second Coming of Christ* and as a precursor to the *Second Coming of Christ*, the meaning of "Blessed are the peacemakers..." has been stolen like the real meaning even of *Christian* and of so many other words in the Bible. The world, Satan, and teachers of "itching ears" {II Timothy 4:4}, with skillful exercise of the techniques of "isogesis" {the reading of meaning into the Bible as contrasted to "exegeis" which is the faithful reading out of the original meaning}, use the word in an "of this world" sense to apply to any politician who seeks to promote peace in the nations of the world, independent of any faith in Christ.

Peace and real peacemaking is only with Christ as the mediator according to the Word of God in Ephesians chapters 1 and 2. This applies to peace between man and man and to peace between God and men. Christ must be at the center of peacemaking efforts between man and man and between God and man.

"For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." (Ephesians 2:14-18)

If we are to truly extend the influence of Christ, the true Biblical employment of a peacemaker, then Christ must be personally involved, and the extensive "how" of this issue is the story of this book. John Mark, the author on the human side of the Gospel of Mark, extended the influence of Christ when under the inspiration of the Spirit of God when he wrote about the life and teachings of Christ. Of course, above all Mark extended the influence of Christ in faithful recordings about the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. It is the death of Christ, with faith in that death as a substitute atonement for our sins, that provides salvation for the world, and for us in particular; it is the resurrection of Christ which provides an example of life after death and provides the foundation for the hope {reasonable expectation} of eternal salvation; and it is the Ascension to the right hand of God the Father which provides both assurance of the forgiveness of sins {"He ever

lieves to make intercession for our sins"} and more assurance of eternal life as He promised that in the future we would be where He is.

"Young John Mark did all that!" one might say. Well, yes, and so did Matthew, and Dr. Luke, and the Apostle John. So also did the Apostle Paul in the book of Romans, sometimes called "The Gospel according to Paul". {I would remind you that "Gospel" always assumes the Gospel of Jesus Christ, although not always expressed in the Bible as such; and in such cases where the reference is to "the gospel of the kingdom", it is decidedly the Gospel of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. {Some things belong more to Jesus than to God like the kingdom, the only real Church, the Assembly of the Firstborn written in heaven, and the Judgeship to separate the living from the dead, and general Lordship; but they have been ordained to Jesus Christ by God, and will be turned over to God at the end. First, all things are placed at the feet of Jesus, subject to Him; and then all things will be delivered to God the Father, in order that all glory will belong to God.}}

However, there are in the nature of inspiration and the whole history of the writing of the 66 books of the Bible, unique characteristics of the personality of John Mark and in the research and development of the Gospel of Mark. {See F.F. Bruce on THE BOOKS AND THE PARCHMENTS.} For one thing John Mark, unlike most of the New Testament writers, was not an Apostle. He was an eyewitness of

much of the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. Most conservative Bible commentators agree that it was John Mark, with an unnamed reference to himself in the tradition of the Apostle John doing the same in the Gospel of John as the writer, who as a young man about twelve years of age fled naked from the Garden of Gethsemane when the arrestors of Jesus grabbed the scant clothing that he hastily threw on the way to following Jesus and the Apostles to the Garden.

It is very possible that the Last Supper just before the evening excursion in the Garden was held at the home of John Mark's mother.

John Mark's mother was the sister of Barnabas, the famous missionary with the Apostle Paul, and one sometimes called an apostle in the book of Acts; although not the twelfth apostle selected by the other Apostles after Judas fell by transgression. There is a lot of evidence of human personality in Acts: Barnabas had pre-eminence in the first church as he sought out and promoted the new convert Saul, then Barnabas and Saul brought John Mark back from Jerusalem to Antioch with them {Acts 12:25} and then took him on the first missionary journey, but Mark deserted the mission at Pamphylia, "not going to the work" as we read in Acts 15:28; and then on the second missionary journey when Paul objected to taking Mark, there is a personality conflict between Paul and Barnabas, Barnabas taking

John Mark with him, Paul taking Silas. The record does not tell us more than "the contention was sharp between Paul and Silas."

We can only speculate as to why John Mark turned back at Pamphylia. It was important to Paul, but Barnabas either wanted to give John Mark another chance or Barnabas consider insignificant the desertion at Pamphylia. Do you look for the problem at Perga in Pamphylia {Acts 13:13}? Did John Mark simply return to Jerusalem because he was homesick, or did he wish to confer with Simon Peter, who in his epistle calls him "my son"? Whatever, Paul took it seriously as an indication of John Mark's lack of dedication; but we also know that when later in prison in Rome, Paul asked for John Mark saying that he was "profitable to me for the ministry". Paul did give John Mark another chance; and I think, from speculations based on the internal evidence of various scriptures, that it was a chance equal to almost the one given by Paul to Dr. Luke. There is much evidence that Paul was chosen to be the Chief Editor of the New Testament--that was his prime ministry and the one he had in mind when he noted John Mark as profitable to that end--so when Paul requested Timothy to come before winter, bringing the books and parchments with him, two of those manuscripts were for Dr. Luke to write Luke and Acts, and one of the manuscripts was for John Mark to use in the writing of the *Gospel of Mark*.

You can tell that John Mark made a marvelous recovery in the eyes of the Apostle Paul, likewise in the esteem of the Church of First Century Christianity. Above all, and what is most important, John Mark proved a person interest in extending the influence of the life and teachings of Jesus; He showed extremely strong convictions on Jesus; He illustrated his willingness to be used by the Spirit of God in the writing of the shortest of the four Gospels. This personal recovery by John Mark, the opposite of the challenge of our generation of the Falling Away, is a co-emphasis with the influence of Christ in this presentation. Is it as dramatic as what happened in the life of Demas, personified when Paul wrote, "Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world? I don't know, but it seems very similar. We hope that Demas also had a marvelous recovery in being rescued from his love of this present world, no doubt a similar experience to what happened to John Mark; but even more importantly in all these cases and others in the Bible, we can see hope for rescue of victims of the Falling Away.

You know, loving "this present world" does not sound so serious, but it really is. Many might say, "well, they are young...wait until they grow up"; and indeed it no doubt worked in the case of John Mark, but perhaps not in the case of Demas, certainly not in the case of all of the children of Israel in the wilderness except for Caleb and Joshua. Love of this present world will not mix with the love of God.

Mammon is the things of this world which man himself has created, and the Bible represents the bread God has given man, every word of which proceeds out of the mouth of God. Christ is the teachings that He received from God and delivered in the Sermon on the Mount, by the way recorded in Mark as well as the other Gospels, in there Christ demands, and God demands, that a definite choice for priority be made for God and God's righteousness over the mammon of man.

It is not an either/or as to whether mammon and bread of life will both exist in human life: it is a matter of which will have the priority--mammon of God--to the extent of servitude. Christ is talking about motivation. What is your primary motivation? To seek the mammon of men like a house, and land, and degrees, and career, and position, and even wealth or pleasure? Or to diligently seek after the Bible and the words of the Bible as every word that proceeds out of mouth of God, and to seek first after the kingdom of God and after God's righteousness?

## 7

### Threads or Sounds of Doctrine and Authority in Mark

There are certain threads or sounds that repeat often in the Gospel of Mark. One such sound is that of DOCTRINE and AUTHORITY. {There are others that you will expect to see in a study of the 16 chapters of Mark: the teachings of Jesus on certain subject matters as the Falling Away, the teachings of Jesus on love of this

world versus love of mammon, the teaching and preaching of Jesus on the Gospel, the miracles of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus; and so on. It is hoped to limit to the study to eight of these and stay focused on them throughout Mark. This is not a attempted commentary on Mark. Many good commentaries on Mark already exist.} God plays with the wisdom of the world and of the university scholars as He chooses to save those through the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe (**"When in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe..."**); (4) The wisdom of this world of the universities and books (except a select few) are foolishness with God, and not many mighty or noble or wise are called to a proper spiritual understanding; and (5) It is necessary to face up to the fact that true Bible faith in Christ is a minority endeavor as **"many are called but few are chosen"**, and **"broad is the way that leads to destruction and many go that way"** while **"narrow is the way that leads to eternal life"** and few there are that take that way of life. It is the simple difference between the majority and the minority that we are talking about.

This applies to the United States also. You can hardly make a legitimate case that this majority and minority thing of the Bible applies to the whole world apart from the United States. Even as it applied also to Israel, the originally chosen

nation of God, in the days of Christ, it also applies to the currently chosen nation of God, the United States, during this age of the fullness of the Gentiles. What we have in the United States, to use the words of some of the American Studies scholars, is an AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC FAITH. It can be summarized as spoken by former Prime Minister of Israel Begin, "You Americans are born Christians just as Jews are born Jews." Neither is true, but it takes a close study of that part of the Word of God called the book of Romans, by the Apostle Paul and the Spirit of God, to understand it. That will be explained in the third chapter, "God's Watershed of History: Choice of a Beloved and Foolish Nation". Suffice it to say for now as Paul, "not every Jew is born of Israel", nor is every child of God born of Israel, and there is a spiritual Israel. In other words, until the fullness of the Gentiles age is complete, there will be more children of God from among the Gentiles, the United States leading the way, than from among the physical nation of Israel. **{Enjoy it while you can.}**

Second to the proper attitude, it is necessary to work hard to understand the Bible. Jesus uses the words "asking", "seeking", and "knocking". Another way to say it is that those who search after the truth from the Bible are the ones most likely to find the truth. One of the so-called "beatitudes" describes the way God will bless those who seek the truth of the Bible, **"Blessed are those who hunger**

**and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”** Many like to talk about this as happiness or the beatitudes. No, it is the blessings of God; and if God Himself blesses you beyond that of the sun and rain, beyond that of the majority on the earth, it is indeed a blessing. God can and will bless you by understanding of every word that proceeds out of His mouth if you will develop the right attitude and put out effort in knowing the truth. We live among many who desire the instant spiritual blessings of salvation and special insight; however there is never and has never been a quick and easy way. Many point to the salvation of Paul on the road to Damascus as an example of instantaneous salvation; but there would not have been a salvation experience of the road except for the extended time of that preceded it in which “he kicked against the pricks”. And still his salvation was not complete as indicated by the physical blindness **{a sign of incomplete spiritual insight}**, until Ananias assisted him with more truth from the Ascended Christ. Even so Paul was not yet ready to preach. He must spend time in the Arabian Desert with the Ascended Christ, and then go back to Tarsus to reread the Old Testament in the light of what Christ had taught him.

Paul teaches about the yearn in Hebrews for the sound doctrine of the Word of God as the equivalent motivation of a new born baby desiring to have milk. All know of that yelling and screaming and crying of the baby for milk, and the person

who yearns with that intensity after every word from the mouth of God as recorded in the Word of God will be rewarded in like manner as a mother cares for her child. Someone besides Jacob must wrestle with the angel for a spiritual blessing, and that someone is the person, having established a proper attitude, who seeks to know the truth of God and Christ, the truth of the Word of God which is divine in origin, absolute in authority, sufficient in message, and high fidelity in communication.

There is far more to the little book of Mark that we can reach in this series of messages; however since it is a pivotal book of the whole Bible which will be explained now, it is hoped that a life-time interest can be generated in the book of Mark that will be both an inspiration and a source of sustenance during a life that is lived more than by bread alone, a life that is lived by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. You can start your spiritual pilgrimage of life, or sustain it, no better place than with Mark and in particular with the teachings of Jesus in Mark.

Why do I call the Gospel of Mark pivotal in the Bible. For several reasons: (1) Even A. T. Robertson in his famous *HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS* using the Gospel of Mark to outline all of the other four of the Gospels; (2) If you have read any of the *LEARN CHRIST* commentaries, especially on the life and letters of Paul

or on the Old Testament according to the New Testament, you are familiar with how God selected Paul to be the Chief Editor of the New Testament; and further how Paul after his conversion and time with the Ascended Christ in Saudi Arabia, while in what is sometimes called the seven silent years at Tarsus, re-read all the Old Testament writing a parchment of all the Old Testament quotes to be included in the New Testament (Paul himself wrote 14 of the 27 New Testament books and sponsored 3 others through Dr. Luke and John Mark); (3) When Paul left with John Mark a manuscript of those carefully chosen quotes for an Old Testament life of Jesus, he also gave to John Mark the testimony of Simon Peter which he recorded on another parchment (Paul left a manuscript with Dr. Luke with the testimony of James); (4) A careful study of all these Old Testament quotes in the four gospels show the book of Mark with a careful choice of quotes to be a sort of Appendix to the Gospels. In short, in the Gospel of Mark you have a condensed summary of the four gospels, of the Gospel according to Peter and Paul, and a condensed summary of the Gospel of the ages according to the Old Testament. Yet it is simple, straightforward, and a story of action with terse teachings of Jesus! That is worth a life time of becoming acquainted with. (If you just happen to remember me and these words of encouragement, that will be another pleasant memory.) Furthermore I would suggest memorizing the model prayer from Jesus of Mark xx:xx as both an

example and a guideline for daily prayers. These daily prayers are a vital part of the living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

## 8

### WHAT IS SOUND DOCTRINE?

1. What is Sound Doctrine? Since doctrine is another word for teachings, and of course for Bible believers the teachings of Jesus and of God, which are the same, then sound doctrine is also sound teachings from God Himself and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus made it clear often during His three years ministry on earth that His teachings or doctrines were not His own but belonged to God His Father, and furthermore that whatever God taught Him to say is exactly what He taught on this earth. Parenthetically, it should be stated at this point that sound faith is a subset of sound doctrine. Even as sound doctrine includes all that comes from God and Jesus and all that can be known as truth about God and Jesus and their teachings, even so sound faith is a subset in that it is both beliefs and a process of confidence in that sound doctrine. **{This will be discussed more thoroughly from the Bible in the chapter on FAITH.}**

2. What is Sound Doctrine? Sound doctrine is synonymous with "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (verse 3) of the book of Jude. It was delivered once for all by Jesus and the Apostles who recorded what He said in Matthew,

Mark, Luke, and John; it was recorded once for all in the books written by the Apostles and Prophets; it has been sealed once for all in the history of the Christ faith in the book of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament, by the assembly of the Firstborn and their leaders as they have crystallized as the Holy Bible this book.

You see right here at this point at least half of the confusion is eliminated as on how to distinguish between sound doctrine and all the beliefs that clamor for recognition. At least half of all of the religions and denominations did not subscribe to the Bible as the Word of God, and therefore do not subscribe to this as the only sufficient source of sound doctrine. Then you can eliminate another one-fourth of so-called Christian denominations and religions who do not believe as stated in Jude 3, that the sound faith and doctrine was once for all delivered to the saints. They believe in the evolution of sound doctrine; they believe that they like the Prophets and Apostles of old are the recipients of special revelations from God. At the extreme of this spectrum are the Mormons who have replaced the single Bible of the faith once delivered with four Bibles, and also subscribe to constant new revelation from the Heads of the LDS churches. To express it in the words of the Doctrine and the Covenants any time the Head Prophet of the Mormon

church speaks, it is Word of God. **{Later, I will discuss how this places two curses from the Holy Bible itself on the head of the Latter Day Saints.}**

And at the other end of the spectrum of the group who do not see sound doctrine and sound faith as "once for all delivered" are those people and groups who see knowledge of truth from God as sort of an evolution that comes as we learn more and as we acquire more scientific knowledge. As an example, and this is very subtle, is the religious person who will take God's name in vain as excusable as if the words no longer apply, **"the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain"** as taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Or the person that somehow sees God and His Word as outdated because this new generation is so much smarter than the last generation that lived. J.B. Phillips expressed it years ago when he wrote the book, *YOUR GOD IS TOO SMALL*. People did not believe that God understood radar or the modified Bohr Theory of the atom. Today people do not believe that God understands computers and genetics and information technology. You see we confuse some older Christ believers and what they understand with the God of this universe who understands and knows all things; and further who created the minds who can probe and invent these things and the fundamentals laws of the universe that make the understanding of these technical matters possible.

3. What is Sound Doctrine? It is doctrine that comes from God through the work and will of the Holy Spirit of God. Here, I must quote from the Word of God itself as found in II Timothy 3:16,17:

**“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...”** You see it came from God is a gift from God for the profit of humanity in order that humanity may come to know the way that God wants us to live **{that is the instruction, another word for teachings, and “instruction in righteousness” another way to correct our behavior and beliefs.}** As far as Scripture coming more specifically from the work on earth of God the Holy Spirit, we turn to the teachings of Jesus as recorded in John 14-16 where Jesus taught saying, **“...when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”** (John 16:13)

4. What is Sound Doctrine? It also helps to sift out the wheat from the chaff of sound doctrine to know not only the origin of sound doctrine as from God through the Spirit but that it must have come through an approved apostle or prophet. How do we know who has been approved? Once again it is from the Bible itself which tells of how Jesus chose both apostles and prophets. If you believe

about the Apostle Peter, then you believe that the Apostle Paul wrote Scriptures as much the Word of God as those of the Old Testament Prophets because Peter states that in his books, and so on epistle after epistle in the Bible the approximately 20 writing prophets of the Old Testament are confirmed and the approximately 7 writing Apostles of the New Testament confirm each other.

5. What is Sound Doctrine? It is the doctrine or teachings or faith taught by the Holy Spirit of God Himself. Refer again to John 16:13 above, **"the Spirit of truth...will guide you into all truth."** Isn't just a little bit of conviction and certainty like this from the Bible, from the teachings of Jesus Himself, from the book written by the Apostle John, and that has come to be believed by the great cloud of witnesses of the Christ faith that have gone before **{Hebrews 11 and 12}** worth a lot more than the tendency to wallow in the mud puddle of uncertainty and doubt of looking at all the teachings and beliefs in the world. **(Underlying all sound doctrine and the efforts to know and do sound doctrine is the fundamental belief based on the teachings of Jesus that the majority are wrong and the minority is right, and this applies in the United States as in all countries of the world.)**

6. What is Sound Doctrine? It is life related-can not be learned apart from the way life is lived-in that it must proceed from a deep-seated yearning to know

the truth, with the confidence that the truth is more likely to be learned when it is passionately sought; can not be learned apart from a desire to know the will of God; and can not be learned unless equal life priority is given to "every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" to the life priority of making a living.

## 9

### Some Obstacles to Learning Sound Doctrine?

1. Pastor James, the pastor of the first church ever, in Jerusalem immediately after the life of Christ, and the half-brother of Jesus, had a lot to say in the little book of James about truth, doctrine, and what causes obstacles to sound doctrines in churches. It is very practical because Pastor James is dealing with the problems in a very real church, the First. First of all the Apostle James says that the wars and battles over sound doctrine in local churches (and denominations) come from individual desires for pleasure and status. Once again I must quote from the Word of God:

**"Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust (for control, for recognition, for power, etc) and do not have. You murder (that includes anger and fighting) and covet (desire to have and be what someone else in the church has and is) and cannot obtain. You fight (in your home church) and war (in the**

denomination). Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”

(James 4:1-3)

Wow! It never can be said any better than that and never will be said any better than that. Don't look for some deep meaning that causes the splits in churches and the warfare in the Southern Baptist Convention, it comes out of wars and battles for pleasure. Crude, but true!

2. Another obstacle to sound doctrine in individual lives, in beliefs, and in the practices of churches is the lack of wisdom. Contrary to the old wives tale “that if the majority of the church votes to do something, it is right” is the teaching of Pastor James in the Word of God that where there is no real prayer there is no real wisdom from God and from above, and further where in any church there is “self-seeking” and “confusion” that is the sure sign that the wisdom from above has never come.

3. Another obstacle to sound doctrine is the “doctrines of devils”. Do the devils, alias the fallen angels and Satan, really have doctrine? Oh yes, and that doctrine is subtle and often so close to the truth of Jesus that it is difficult to shift out from the truth. Recall the way Satan tempted Jesus Himself in order to divert Jesus from the real will of God. First of all, he quoted Scripture. Do not be

deceived, every quoter of Scripture is not on the side of Jesus. In fact, it is very possible that Satan-especially in this time of intolerance toward sound doctrine-has as many people who quote Scripture as Jesus: the big difference being in the way they implement and interpret and apply the Scripture. For example, Satan tempted Jesus (Luke 4:1-13) on three fronts with unsound doctrine from Scripture: first, the temptation or obstacle from Satan was to live by bread instead of by the will of God; second, the obstacle from Satan was to worship Satan and to get the whole world rather than worship God; and third, the obstacle was to tempt God by leading Himself into futile tests of God Himself, a very common practice today in very popular churches.

4. The obstacle of seducing spirits. Along with the warnings of the Bible about doctrines of devils is also the warning of seducing spirits. Once again to quote from the Bible, the Word of God: **"Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth."** (I Timothy 4:1-3)

This was expressly told to Paul by the Holy Spirit of God. It is an inevitable prediction, called a prophesy, of what will take place in history: in fact is a accepted burden of proof of this book on THE SOUND OF A SOUND FAITH that has already happened, the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine. It is generally referred to by Bible scholars as the *Great Apostasy*. The only reason I do not like that phrase as it seems like something to happen way out in the future instead of now!

The short and simple of the meaning is: that is the doctrines of devils that come to you, and which must inevitable come as long as there is a Satan and other devils, if those doctrines of devils do not present obstacles to your sound faith and sound doctrine, then the seducing or deceiving spirits can get you. The bad thing about a bad spirit is that it can be clothed in clothing that is very deceptive, say for example black clothing or sheep's clothing.

4. The last obstacle to be mentioned to sound doctrine is the most serious obstacle to most Protestant, non-Mormon believers: it is the wall of intolerant doctrine built up in churches and denominations by itching ears teachers, preachers, and people that protects them from the sound of sound doctrine. When the Bible says in II Timothy 4:3,4, about the time of intolerance toward sound doctrine and mentions how those of itching

ears will "HEAP" to themselves teachers of itching ears, the "heaping" has the implication of extensive effort to protect against sound doctrine. For example the effort that the divorced in churches go to, who have not confessed divorce as adultery when there is remarriage, the effort they go to protect themselves from hearing the true words of the Bible and the teachings of Jesus on the matter. The "heaping" is like building up a vast wall of protection against sound doctrine. It reminds of what some of the New Jersey ladies who lost husbands in 9/11 were quoted as saying about the Bush administration, "they have built up around the White House a wall of secrecy." Well, the wall of intolerance toward sound doctrine is a wall for comfort, a wall built by itching ears.

## 10

### *The Silence on the Falling Away is a Message*

I am amazed at the lack of Bible teaching and preaching of a doctrine as fundamental and as important as is THE FALLING AWAY. The Falling Away, bar none is the challenge of this generation. While I would not expect secular educators and the newsmen and newmakers of the world to mention the Falling

Away, I would expect churches, evangelists, Bible teachers, and preachers on television to be talking about it. It is an amazing phenomenon of our time that while bible teachers and preachers talk about the end time events, they are not talking about the Falling Away, which according to the Bible, must happen before the end times; and which according the Bible is a sign of the coming end time. You can not have any last time events without first the Falling Away.

Why Is your favorite Bible teacher or preacher not talking about the Falling Away? Following are some possible explanations as to why your favorite Bible teacher or preacher is not talking about the Falling Away.

It is not popular to talk about the Falling Away. It is short of like the subject of "death": it is not a very popular subject for discussion, or even thought. Churchmembers, Bible toters, and others think that if they don't talk about it, perhaps it will go away. Can you not see the incongruous stance of looking for the Second Coming of Christ by overlooking the precursors to the Second Coming of Christ which according to the Bible in II Thesslonians is four fold: (1) An inevitable increase in sin or lawlessness in the whole world; (2) The withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from the earth scene; (3) The appearance of the man of sin, the son of perdition, who is a very human incarnation of Satan; and (4) The Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible on the part of churchmembers. Now, although part

of the Bible; you can see that it is not popular. This is a place that the fundamentalists who are really traditionalists in that they preach the same sermon today as delivered by their grandfathers and great grandfathers who were not in the Falling Away. How can they remain traditionalists and popular and preach the inevitability of the Falling Away before the Second Coming?

Second, not talking about the Falling Away is itself a sign of the Falling Away. If during the Falling Away, the most outstanding characteristic of the Falling away is a lack of sound doctrine, then you would not expect from the popular Bible teachers and preachers, the preaching and teaching of the Falling Away. Thus, what we have is within itself a proof of the Falling Away. The sad fact of the "will not endure sound doctrine" of the Bible is more a matter of what is left out of the messages than what is included. What you do not hear from popular Bible teachers is what you do need to hear. What are you hearing? Look at two recent best sellers which are telling you that if you want to attract a large number of people into a large, attractive building and called it a "church", then you have to do one of three possible things: (1) Preach and teach a unity and peace, not from sound doctrine or from the inherent unity which the Holy Spirit provides, but rather do so by making churchmembers subscribe to a church covenant which prohibits any disagreements among members, doctrinal or otherwise, that would disturb the fellowship (yes, this

is where Saddleback Church and xxxx have made a significant contribution to the *Falling Away*); (2) Preach and teach along with a lot of pleasant stories and smiles of good public relations the living of a good life now by way of the *Gospel of Prosperity* and the corollary of success (yes, this is what Joel Olsteen is doing); or (3) Preach and teach the extra-ordinary life as a woman of faith where things are not things but are "resources" of the woman of faith (well, you know who these ladies are). You see you are already horrified because you recognize that to say these things in criticism of Joel Olsteen, xxxx xxxx, and the Women of Faith is unpopular; because those Bible teachers and preachers are very popular, even into the thousands and tens of thousands.

That brings us to the third point of why you do not hear preaching and teaching about the *Falling Away*: it would be self-defeating for any preacher and teacher of the *Falling Away*, who bottom line is really an advocate of the falling away, to preach against the very movement of which they are a part. You would not find tens of thousands in that vast congregation listening to Joel Olsteen encourage you in the *Gospel of Prosperity* if they preached about the *Falling Away*. You would not find thousands in Saddleback Church and tens of thousands wanting to duplicate their rapid church growth based on a false doctrine about peace and unity, if xxxx xxxx preached about the *Falling Away*. You would not see women by the thousands

flock to hear women of faith, if they recognized the promotion of cares of this world, the deceitfulness of things, and other things as part of the Falling Away.

Fourthly, the bottom line is this: these so-called Bible preachers and teachers—any you will notice that you hear far more other stories than stories of the Bible than you do Bible itself (it is called talking about the Bible rather than talking Bible)—are part of the “itching ears” heaping up of false Bible teachers and preachers that Jesus also predicted would be part of the Falling Away. I wish that we could separate the heaping up of teachers with itching ears from the false teachers and preachers; and perhaps, we can in that the itching ears teachers just want to give churchmembers and others what they want. The itching ears teachers are smart enough to recognize what people want to hear because of what people really believe down deep in thier lives, and that it what you are going to hear from them. During the Falling Away, that is what will increase the attendance from victims of the Falling Away; this is what will grow large mega-churches; and this is what will allow the sign of success as if it were really a work of God. Paul and Jesus explained to us the motivation of false Bible teachers and preachers: (1) They are in the ministry for money, greed, and self-profit; (2) Their goal is to make disciples after themselves thus promoting their own fame and effectively scattering away the flock from the influence of the local church; (3) The Gospel of Prosperity and

Success has some sincere believers who have come not to see the distinction between the faith of the Bible and the American Democratic Faith. Somewhere along the line in the name of success in church work, they depart from the sound faith of the Bible, themselves not realizing when and how it happened! You would have to put these in the category of those who have their conscience seared with a hot iron. They can fleece the flock, even overthrow the faith of some as Paul talks about in II Timothy, and never flinch an eyelid.

## 11

### The Bible and the Falling Away

How did we get into the Falling Away in this country with so many churches, Bibles, and preachers? Well, first of all that is what the Falling Away is. It is a falling away from God, Christ, and the Bible on the part of the very people who have seen the work of God and who at some point have been identified as the people of God. You can recognize it each Sunday. During this time of the Falling Away, the way most pastors and teachers are survivor as appointed leaders over congregations is by each Sunday in some subtle form or fashion, by convincing the people that they are the elect of God.

What we need here is a little firm foundation in Scripture as it comes from II Timothy in order to explain how the churches and other Bible totters got in this

mess of the Falling Away. You will see it as we look in detail at God's word as recorded in II Timothy. This short message has three points so that it will be easy to follow and to remember: (1) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for churchmembership under Christ and for sound doctrine (the first we have bought or we think like the fundamentalists that we have bought the proper attitude of inspiration, but we have not as seen by the gap between churchmembership and Christ laid out in the verses above and in the lack of endurance of sound doctrine below); (2) A Form of Godliness with the power of God—the gap between Christ and churchmembership; and (3) Our theory of inspiration has not lead to sound doctrine.

First, the Bible has been accepted in this country as more an academic book than a book for practical teachings and practices. II Timothy 3:16: this is the pivotal scripture of the whole book of II Timothy, and you probably like myself have it memorized. Unfortunately while memorized, it has not been understood to the extent of implementation. That is clear from the horrors we see above it, in the "perilous times" of II Timothy 3:1-9, and below it in the "itching ears" of II Timothy 4:3,4.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..." (II Timothy 3:16)

What do we do? We get off on the one word "inspiration", whether it is verbal and plenary, and then we decide how much better we are than others churches and denominations on inspiration, never for all practical purposes coming to the applications and implementations of (1) doctrine, (2) reproof, (3) correction, and (4) instruction in righteousness. Once again look at the pivotal nature of this verse after the disintegration of the churches above where reproof, correction, and righteousness is not a part of church life, where in the "form of godliness or religion and worship exists without any internal and real power of God", where the gap between Christ and churchmembership has become so large that now it is churchmembership without Christ, where church behavior has become intolerable being replaced by the self-expression and self-fulfillment of the ways of the world. And then below the pivotal verse of II Timothy 3:16 is the evidence that the real meaning of inspiration of Scripture as profitable for doctrine has not been heeded. In II Timothy 4:1-4 the itching ears teachers and preachers have taken over the world of Bible teaching and preached. They are literally "heaped up" as a major world movement in Christianity. You hear itching ears teachings in the pulpits, you hear itching ears teachings on television (boy, do you ever hear it on television), you hear itching ears teachings in vastly attended women's conferences.

For our second point on the Bible and the Falling Away, let us go back up above the pivotal verse of II Timothy 3:16. (Perhaps you wonder why so much emphasis on II Timothy 3:16. Well, because it is a very positive statement and hope in the midst of so many negative aspects in churches and Bible teachings of the Falling Away. The Falling Away is very negative. That is the nature of the Falling Away. It is bad. It is bad enough when it happens to the world at large, but it is worse when the churches become havens of bad behavior and a den of thieves; and it is extremely bad when Bible teaching and preaching become dominated by itching ears teachings and the heaping up of itching ears teachers. What is the second point of the Bible and the Falling Away: churches have disintegrated without the "reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness" of the Bible.

Listen to II Timothy 3:1-9. It is hard to believe that the Word of God is here talking about churches. It sounds more like the description of civilizations of Romans 1 who have rejected God as part of their lives.

"But know this..." This is a good beginning to get the churches to listen, know this—you should know about your church behavior as part of the Falling Away...church attendance may go up like at the Lakewood Church in Houston, but you will see a Falling Away from God, Christ, and the Bible.

"...That in the last days perilous time will come..." The last days started with the Coming of the Holy Spirit in great power on the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ, and it ends with the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit from earth just before the Second Coming of Christ. Now the good news here is that these perilous times come and go, sort of like revivals only the opposite in nature. That is they come and go until church behavior becomes synonymous with the wickedness of the world which happens during the Falling Away. You decide for yourself if we are in the Falling Away based on what you hear from Scripture, always remembering that you can not expect the Second Coming without passing through the Falling Away.

"For men will be lovers of themselves..." Don't you see that behavior in your church. Men are far more wrapped up in themselves than they are in Christ.

"...lovers of money" How many men responsible for the robbing of thousands of Americans in Houston and in other cities out of their 401K's and other life savings, do you think were members of churches. I am sure all of them. Either at the First Baptist Church, the Second Baptist church, a Presbyterian and /or a Methodist Church. Lovers of money tend to create despisers of humanity. You are kidding yourself if you have not seen that behavior in your church!

"boasters" What can you say, there are almost as many loud mouth windbag and boasters in our churches as in the rest of the world. In fact, one can hardly tell the difference between the two environments. Yes, we tend to call it self-expression and self-fulfillment. Ladies in this time of equality have become as bad or worse than men. I think they are encouraged with such boasting behavior by the "good life" from Joel Olsteen, "the everyday life" you know from who, and the "extraordinary life" for so-called women of faith. How in contrast is the Bible approved behavior of to "only brag or glory in Christ".

"proud" Practicing the Christ of "God forbid should that I should glory save in Christ and the cross of Christ" would eliminate both pride and boasting.

"blasphemers" Well, we have you here. We are confident that we have not blasphemers of God and Christ in our church. Wait a minute, you have never heard your church members at play or work when they take the name of the LORD God in vain. That is blasphemy; and the practice is now rampant among churchmembers. Respect for God is very fundamental. Where you have that lack of respect for God is the same place that you will have "the form of godliness (or religion) that denies the power thereof."

Well, I will not comment on the other traits of bad behavior in the churches. Use your imagination as I simply read them, or use your memories. "...disobedient to

parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanders, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headsrong, haughty, loves of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

Okay, we have some more trash to go through in looking at the itching ears behavior that is below the pivotal verse of II Timothy 3:16. We can almost feel like the Prophet Jeremiah, by the way not at all a popular Bible teacher during his days, who said the message given to him by God was both bitter and sweet.

Thirdly, the heaping up of teachers with itching ears has become both a source of entertainment, a mass movement, and a haven of security and comfort. Listen to these words from the Word of God. Each word and each phrase is so packed with meaning. See if you don't see a description of what is happening right now?

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine (a new intolerance in the Bible belt has developed over the last 20 years, an intolerance toward sound doctrine or sound Bible teachings—oh, there is plenty of Bible talk, Bible teachings and preachers, perhaps more than ever before, but it is out of joint with the Bible itself, with Christ, and with God)...but according to their own desires {but according to their own desires, here is the motivation for intolerance toward sound Bible

teachings, it is a matter of what Bible totters and Bible listeners and churchmembers want to hear—they want to hear about the good life of prosperity, they want to hear about the extraordinary life of pride of life and lust of the eyes}...because they have itching ears {first comes the itching ears churchmembers and then comes the itching ears Bible teachers, like the priest like the people}...they will heap up for themselves teachers {my how the heaping is a large nation wide movement that builds cathedrals, large mega-churches, grows seminaries, foster television and vastly attended meetings—heaping is a good word as you just do not see an end of the growth of itching ears teachings}...and they will turn their ears away from the truth..{here along with the next phrase is the bottom line of the end result, Bible totters and church members turn away from the truth)...“and be turned aside to fables” {this is not something they do, but rather something that happens to them, they are turned into or become the victims of fables.}

#### Paul's Ministry and John Mark

Paul left a manuscript for John Mark with 18 Old Testament quotes to use for an outline in writing the *Gospel of Mark*. It may come as a surprise to hear this, and to read from II Timothy 4:11 that John Mark should be brought by Timothy to Paul, imprisoned in Rome, because “he is useful to me for ministry”. I do not have time to

lay again that foundation now of how Paul's chief ministry was not the missionary journeys—goodness, Paul had decided after John Mark departed from them on the first missionary journey that Mark was not profitable there—but the prime ministry of the Apostle Paul was as chief editor of the New Testament. Paul personally wrote 14 of the New Testament books and sponsored through Dr. Luke and John Mark three other New Testament books. {You can read more about this in the LEARN CHRIST Commentaries, especially in volume 1, "The Old Testament according to the New Testament" with an extensive introduction to how Paul was chosen by the Ascended Christ and instructed in Saudi Arabia on how to be the chief editor of the New Testament. Also you can read it in the second volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries, "Remember My Bonds', the Life and 14 New Testament Letters of the Apostle Paul".

Now, we proceed to look at those 18 Old Testament quotes that Paul left to John Mark to complete Paul's ministry in that the time of his death was imminent and Paul Himself would not have the opportunity to take this outline from the Old Testament to write a life of Christ. Also Paul left for John Mark and Dr. Luke the recorded testimonies of the Apostles Peter and James, the only other two that Paul spoke with after his conversion besides the Ascended Christ.

The first quote is about John the Baptist as the voice crying in the wilderness that makes preparation of the beginning of the ministry of Christ. It is actually two quotes, one from Isaiah 40:3 and another from Malachi 3:1. We are dealing with a lot of ministries here: the ministry of Paul as the chief editor of the New Testament, the ministry of John Mark in using the Old Testament quotes outline to write a life of Christ along with the recorded testimonies of Peter and James, the ministry of Christ—and that is the primary ministry that we are interested in as it is the ministry that provides salvation—and the ministry of John the Baptist who had the awesome challenge of introducing the nation of Israel to their Promised Messiah, the Christ, and to their Saviour.

John the Baptist, the voice of the one crying in the wilderness, appropriately was much like the Old Testament Prophets with his coat of camel's hair, his baptism of the people of Israel in the Jordan River for repentance, his proclamation of One to come much greater than Himself, and then his introduction as to who that One was with His baptism in the river Jordan.

Especially this time of the year with the Christmas story we are so familiar with this first quote in Mark, actually two quotes which begin with "As it is written in the Prophets" (Mark 1:2), that we hardly distinguish between the parts from Isaiah and the parts from Malachi. Normally we do get the new interpretation that

Mark places on it with the conclusion of Mark 1:1: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." It might think it strange that the conclusion of the two quotes from Isaiah and Malachi are up front, but that is the nature of the terse, action filled statements of the *Gospel of Mark*. And you might as well have the challenge to faith placed right up front at the beginning. You hardly stop to think that not only does this identify the ministries of Christ and John the Baptist with the Old Testament Prophets of Isaiah and Malachi, but also with this Jesus of Nazareth that John baptized. And Mark makes the statement right up front that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of God.

Quickly, let us break down which parts of the quote in Mark 1:2,3 come from Isaiah and which from Malachi. First, the quote.

"Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the LORD, make his paths straight." (Mark 1:2,3)

The first part of this quote about the "messenger" and preparation of the way is from Malachi 3:1. Here is the way it reads in Malachi. You can see how it is a thorough description of the ministry of Christ Himself, and one with which the nation of Israel was very familiar. After all this was the last message from a

Prophet of God to be spoken before the dark ages of before the time of Christ had dawned into a new day of the Ministry of Christ.

"Behold, {the Prophet Malachi writes}, I send My messenger. And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,' says the LORD of hosts.'" (Malachi 3:1)

I will not try to fathom the depth of the Trinity here as we see both references to God the Father as the LORD of hosts, and references to the eternal Christ that was with God from before the beginning in the "Me" of Malachi and in the "Lord" of Malachi. Just let me say that both God and Christ are spoken of here, God as the LORD with capital letters and Christ as he Lord with little letters. Just allow it to suffice for the moment to say that in the life and ministry of Christ, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." {For more of the Trinity, which by the way even know-it-all Stanford PHD Gene Scott admitted last week on television that he like most does not understand the Trinity completely. But we can know more than is generally know and from the Bible, and for what is in the Bible please refer to the 1a volume of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries on "God the Father". And it would help for more understanding of the Trinity to read all three volumes—1a, 1b, and 1c of THE OLD TESTAMENT ACCORDING TO THE NEW

TESTAMENT, individually entitles respectively as "God the Father", "The Prophet Messiah", and as "The Great Maker of History"}

You might say that the first part of Mark 1:2,3 is more about the Message of the ME of Malachi 3:1, while the second part of the quotes from Isaiah 40:3 is more about the Preparatory Ministry of John the Baptist, almost like another Old Testament Prophet Himself. Here is Isaiah 40:3, directly from the Old Testament. "The voice (that voice is John the Baptist and the people of Israel recognized it as such) of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'" (Isaiah 40:3-5)

Let us quickly break down the historical facts of this Isaiah 40:3-5 passage as talks about the work of John the Baptist: (1) "the voice of one crying in the wilderness": all that we read in Mark and the other gospels tells us that John primarily kept his ministry isolated to the Jordan River and beyond in the wilderness; (2) John's preaching of "repentance for sins" and baptism for the repentance of sins along with his message of the shortly to come "Lamb of God" that would take away the sins of the world was preparatory for the public

appearance of Jesus Christ—it was much like an ad campaign run today for the public appearance of some idol or hero, and just like today it was known and heard by the whole nation; (3) John's work was sort of like that of a Civil Engineer {much better, I might add than that of the dam builders in New Orleans} as John had the ministry of constructing a highway in the desert for Jesus Christ {I think that was just the beginning of the highway since how often do you see both valleys and mountains in a desert}, but John's construction job for Jesus Christ included building up or raising the valleys and knocking down or lowering of the mountains); (4) furthermore the construction work had to include making the highway straight and smooth—the crooked places had to be straightened and the high and low places made smooth {which I would say was John's function as a continuation of the Old Testament Prophets to make clear and understand of the exact implications of the prophecies and the outstanding nature of what was about to happen in history}; (5) "the glory of the LORD shall be revealed", the word LORD is for God the Father since it is all capital letters; and we know from the rest of the Bible that Christ was the glory of God the Father, and that in the life and death of Jesus Christ the world saw exactly what God the Father is like in the Person of the Son; (6) "and all flesh shall see it together"—well, we could camp out here but suffice it now to say

that one way or another since the life and death of Christ on earth the whole world of flesh, the world over, has seen and heard about Christ.

Quickly we must in closing comment on what the Message and Ministry of the Christ was in the first part as quoted from Malachi 3. Listen to it again:

"Behold, {the Prophet Malachi writes}, I send My messenger. And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,' says the LORD of hosts.'" (Malachi 3:1)

Here is the message and ministry of the Promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God:

(1) The Lord, yes this same Jesus Christ is also Lord, and He is the Lord whom they seek. Once again we could camp here but you have heard it often of how all humanity longs to know and see God and His Son, and beyond that especially in the nation of Israel was built up the expectations of the Prophet Messiah like Moses and the Son of David who would establish a kingdom. {We will not talk now of how most Palestinians wanted a kingdom exactly like the united kingdom of David and Solomon that extended across the immediate world, but I would like to add since this is an introduction also to Mark and the ministry of Jesus, the words from Mark 1:14,15—

"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'"

- a. Jesus waited until the messenger was out of the way, John the Baptist, to deliver His message.
- b. Jesus came into Galilee.
- c. Here is the preaching of Jesus Christ Himself about the kingdom of God. In this day and time when churches of all denominations under the influence of the Falling Away are going to pieces, we should emphasize not only that the kingdom of God moves on but also that the church itself of which membership is most important is written in heaven and that only a few from each church or denomination are citizens of heaven.
- d. The message of Jesus Himself, like any good message, had four parts: (1) "the time is fulfilled"—this was the exact moment and time in history for which God had made so much preparation of the world, the nation of Israel, the revelations in the Old Testament prophets, and in the rescue and preservation of the seed of Abraham; (2) "the kingdom of God is at hand"—hey Israel, you are so close to the establishment of

the very kingdom of God, listen and watch; (3) repent, Jesus echoes the ministry of John the Baptist of repent and be baptized for the remission of sins; (4) but Jesus adds "and believe the gospel"; and that gospel is the subject of the book of Mark that we will continue for quite a few messages.

### *God the Father, the Great Maker of History*

Before we can proceed with the Old Testament quotes in Mark, the further development of the importance of Jesus coming to His temple as part of His ministry and further His preaching of how the kingdom of God is at hand, it would be helpful to first consider how God the Father is the Great Maker of History. I was surprised when after the writing of the first two sections of volume 1 on "God the Father" and on "The Prophet Messiah" as I saw that a third section would be required and that it should be based on the Apostle James quote from the Old Testament as recorded in Acts. During the writing of the first two sections I had become increasingly aware, especially from the Prophets, how many ways God the Father is the Great Maker of History. Of course in the volumes 1a and 1b, I had sought often to seek the full meaning of what James implied when he said, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning..." The implications of that

statement from Pastor James is that since God knows all His works from the beginning of time is that God also has planned all His works from the beginning of Time, and the implication is also that God has revealed much of His works beforehand of all of history. Thus the title, "God the Father, the Great Maker of History." In preparation for 1c on "The Great Maker of History", I tried to make a list of ways that God has and does influence the course of history as we know it now and as we will know it in the immediate future. I was amazed at the size of the list, and I will try to introduce those ways God influences the history of man and the universe.

First however, we should look at the quote in Acts from Pastor James, and look briefly at the context to see what James is talking about. As encouragement, let me tell you that what you will find in the message from Pastor James is words about the Temple of David and words about how in the kingdom of God, already established on earth, that God will save Gentiles as well as Jews. Here are the words of Pastor James and the quote of Amos 9:11,12 as found in Acts 15:14-18.

"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name." {by the way, that taking by God from among the Gentiles a people for His name is the ongoing work of the kingdom of Christ} "And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return and

will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD.... {Recall how that from Malachi the message and ministry of Christ would be that all flesh would see the LORD and find the LORD whom they seek, well here in the "rest of mankind may seek the LORD, the Gentiles, you see the beginning of that fulfillment which is completely fulfilled in the words of Paul in Romans during the Fulness of the Gentiles}. ...Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.' Known to God from eternity are all His works." (Acts 15:14-18 and Amos 9:11,12)

"Known unto God from eternity are all His works" is the conclusion of Pastor James about the quote from Amos 9:11,12. It is also the conclusion of Pastor James at the Great Jerusalem conference as Paul and Barnabas tell the results about the Gentiles of the first missionary journey. It is also a conclusion based on the experience of the Apostle Peter as the Holy Spirit directed him to deliver the gospel of Jesus to a Roman centurion, Cornelius, at Caesarea Philippi.

So on my list of the ways that God the Father makes history, I will start with the three ways given in this context that God makes history. Namely in (1) rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem as a sign of the establishment of the eternal temple of Jesus and God, not made with hands. (2) Establishment of the kingdom of

God as a growing and inevitably established forever kingdom of both Jews and Gentiles. And (3) God's plan from the very beginning was not only to chose Abraham as the progenitor of Christ and Israel but also was to bring in the Gentiles to find a peak at the Fullness of the Gentiles.

Sorry that I will not have time to elaborate on each way that God made and still makes history from the long list, but the list is too long. I would only hope that you can only get the full impact of James' conclusion that "known unto God are all His works from eternity." It is really from eternity to eternity that God has planned out and mapped out all of the significant events of history. {I would recommend that you read volume 1c of the LEARN CHRIST commentaries for an elaboration of this list of how God works in history.}

1. The Kingdom.
2. The tabernacle and temple.
3. Salvation of Jews and Gentiles.
4. Creation of the World.
5. First Commission to Man: Replinish and Control the Earth.
- 6.
7. Establishment of two camps: Seed of Christ and of Satan ("you shall bruise His heel and He will bruise your head.")
8. God's curse on man, women, and the universe.
9. Call and blessing on Abraham.
10. Choice of Abraham's Seed and Palestine as the place for the Lord Jesus Christ.
11. Showing the world in Christ what God is like.
12. The Salvation of God, and God revealed in Old Testament, and then most fully in the Lord Jesus Christ.
13. The Spirit of Christ at work in Old Testament making known the ways and plans of God.

14. The Destruction of Cities and the World.
15. The confounding of languages in order to force the replenishment of the earth.
16. Creation of the Bible, writing.
17. Creation of the Bible, collection. (the Canon)
18. Preservation of the Bible.
19. Evidences, Apologetics, and Philosophy of Religion.
20. Preservation of the World, Consist through Christ.
21. Sending of the Holy Spirit in Great Power and then the Withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, the Last Days beginning and end.
22. Training and Commissioning of Disciples to take Gospel to all the world, then will the end come.
23. The Watershed of World History, Fulness of the Gentiles.
24. Establishment on earth of Christ's kingdom.
25. Second Coming of Christ.
26. Old world passing away and the whole universe becoming new.
27. Establishment of the Assembly of Christ as above it all!
28. Continuation of the beginning of sorrows: signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath.
29. Day of the LORD and Lord.

#### "All Flesh Shall See Him" (First and Second Quotes in Mark)

Previously we established how Paul left one outline for Mark as a guide to write by on the 18 Old Testament quotes that we presently find in Mark, and how Paul also left for Mark to write by the testimonies of Peter and James to the life of Christ. Of course, John Mark as a young man of about 13 years of age had previous experince himself with the life of Christ since it was he who followed Jesus and the twelve out into the Garden of Genthese mane, who also in turn fled naked when grabbed by a gurad after the capture of Jesus.

Previously we also looked in detail at the first quote as found in Mark 1:2 and 3. We have not as yet looked at the second quote which is from Isaiah 6:9,10 and which is found in Mark 4:12. Also we did not look, which is what we will do in this

message is to summarize how the twin quotes from Mark 1:2 and 3 as taken from both Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 were used by John Mark along with the testimonies of Peter and James and personal experience to write the three intervening chapters between Mark 1 and Mark 4. The assumption is made, and hopefully will be supported in this message, that what we found in Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 will summarize much between Mark 1 and Mark 4. In order to do this it is necessary to summarize the salient points of both Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1, and to do so under the beginning conclusion of Mark 1:1. Recall that conclusion: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." And we will add to that in order to make our outline, "according to Isaiah 40:3-xx and Malachi 3:1-xx"

Thus THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD ACCORDING TO ISAIAH 40:3-5 AND MALACHI 3:1. Here is the way we previously developed the outline of both.

- (1) "the voice of one crying in the wilderness": all that we read in Mark and the other gospels tells us that John primarily kept his ministry isolated to the Jordan River and beyond in the wilderness.
- (2) John's preaching of "repentance for sins" and baptism for the repentance of sins along with his message of the shortly to come "Lamb of God" that would take away the sins of the world was preparatory for the public

appearance of Jesus Christ—it was much like an ad campaign run today for the public appearance of some idol or hero, and just like today it was know and heard by the whole nation.

(3) John's work was sort of like that of a Civil Engineer {much better, I might add than that of the dam builders in New Orleans) as John had the ministry of constructing a highway in the desert for Jesus Christ {I think that was just the beginning of the highway since how often do you see both valleys and mountains in a desert}, but John's construction job for Jesus Christ included building up or raising the valleys and knocking down or lowering of the mountains).

(4) furthermore the construction work had to include making the highway straight and smooth—the crooked places had to be straightened and the high and low places made smooth {which I would say was John's function as a continuation of the Old Testament Prophets to make clear an understand of the exact implications of the prophecies and the outstanding nature of what was about to happen in history}.

(5) "the glory of the LORD shall be revealed", the word LORD is for God the Father since it is all capital letters; and we know from the rest of the Bible that Christ was the glory of God the Father, and that in the life and

death of Jesus Christ the world saw exactly what God the Father is like in the Person of the Son.

(6) "and all flesh shall see it together"—well, we could camp out here but suffice it now to say that one way or another since the life and death of Christ on earth the whole world of flesh, the world over, has seen and heard about Christ.

(7) The Lord, yes this same Jesus Christ is also Lord, and He is the Lord whom they seek. Once again we could camp here but you have heard it often of how all humanity longs to know and see God and His Son, and beyond that especially in the nation of Israel was built up the expectations of the Prophet Messiah like Moses and the Son of David who would establish a kingdom. {We will not talk now of how most Palestinians wanted a kingdom exactly like the united kingdom of David and Solomon that extended across the immediate world, but I would like to add since this is an introduction also to Mark and the ministry of Jesus, the words from Mark 1:14,15—

"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'"

- a. Jesus waited until the messenger was out of the way, John the Baptist, to deliver His message.
- b. Jesus came into Galilee.
- c. Here is the preaching of Jesus Christ Himself about the kingdom of God. In this day and time when churches of all denominations under the influence of the Falling Away are going to pieces, we should emphasize not only that the kingdom of God moves on but also that the church itself of which membership is most important is written in heaven and that only a few from each church or denomination are citizens of heaven.
- d. The message of Jesus Himself, like any good message, had four parts:
  - (1) "the time is fulfilled"—this was the exact moment and time in history for which God had made so much preparation of the world, the nation of Israel, the revelations in the Old Testament prophets, and in the rescue and preservation of the seed of Abraham;
  - (2) "the kingdom of God is at hand"—hey Israel, you are so close to the establishment of the very kingdom of God, listen and watch;
  - (3) repent, Jesus echoes the ministry of John the Baptist of repent and be baptized for the remission of sins;
  - (4) but Jesus adds "and believe the gospel"; and that

gospel if the subject of the book of Mark that we will continue for quite a few messages.

Let us try to simply this outline from Isaiah 40:3-5 and Malachi 3:1 before we verify that it does outline the first few chapters of the Gospel of Mark: (1) John the Baptist, the voice crying in the wilderness; (2) the Message of the Voice; (3) The building up and knocking down of John's construction work like that of a Civil Engineer; (4) The making straight and smoothing Civil Engineer work of John the Baptist; (5) The glory of the LORD revealed in Jesus Christ; (6) All flesh will see God together; (7) It is the same God that has been sought by all humanity; (8) First part of the message of Jesus is that the time is fulfilled; (9) The second part of the message of Jesus, and we would expect to find this echoed often in Mark as well as in the first few chapters, is that the kingdom of God is right here; (10) The third part of the teachings of Jesus would have to do with repentance; and (11) the fourth part of the teachings or message of Jesus would have to do with faith in the Gospel.

(1). Well, indeed as we might expect we find in Mark 1:4-8 the voice and life style of John the Baptist as the voice crying in the wilderness. John baptized in the wilderness and John preached in the wilderness a baptism for the remission of sins. All of Judea, the province around Jerusalem went out into the wilderness to

hear John. {much like today we might travel some distance to hear an evangelist; or there was the time we did it for men like Lester Roloff and even John R. Rice and Hyman Appleman. Now indeed it is more like for women of faith with their faith resources to sell as they talk about everyday life, the extraordinary life, or even the good life now.} Also all of Jerusalem went out to hear the voice of John the Baptist in the wilderness.

(3). It was there in the wilderness at the Jordan River where these crowds of attendees were baptised, confessing their sins. You see, already the work of a Civil Engineer by John of building up and tearing down has started. Verse 6 describes John as much like an Old Testament Prophet: John was clothed with camel'' hair and a leather belt. The dress was simple, cheap, and so was his diet: He ate locusts and wild honey. John ate was available there in the wilderness. Contrast this evagelists of all evangelists with the rich life style of most evangelists today. While John dressed like an Old Testament prophet to be accepted, evangelists today dress like the best of the world; and would you not think that it is also to be accepted of the world?

(2). The message of the Voice. Okay verse seven gets us to the preaching of John the Baptist. He baptized for the remissions of sins, but what did John preach. "There comes One after me," John preached—there is me, John said, and

then oh there is one to follow much greater than me. Well, the people of Judea and Jerusalem were quite impressed with John the Baptist, and yet he foretold another One to come immediately that was much greater than him.

(4). We see in the baptism for repentance and in the faith of the great One to come, the Civil Engineer work of John, tearing down and building up, smoothing and making straight. How great was this Jesus to John? He was so great that John was not worthy to stoop down and loose the strap of His sandal. Then John gets back on the subject of his baptism, the subject of a previous verse, and this is where you begin to see some of the greatest of Jesus of Nazareth. "I baptize with water", John said, "but Jesus will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

So what do we expect next according to the outline of Isaiah and Malachi? Well we expect to see (5) the glory of the LORD revealed. Look at the context in Mark 1:9-10, that is exactly what we see.

"It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens paring and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, 'You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'

(Mark 1:9-11)

You see how that is a revelation of the glory of God the Father as shown in His Son, Jesus of Nazareth. As soon as Jesus was baptized the glory of God lit up the heavens, the clouds parted; and the power of God and from God like a dove fell upon Jesus. The glory of God for Jesus was further revealed as the voice of God said from heaven, "This is my beloved Son." God said, "I am well pleased with Him." Yet the glory of God through Jesus, that it also His sinlessness, has to be revealed in the bad times as well as the good; and therefore the record tells us in Mark 1:14-15 that the very Spirit which descended on Jesus in special power and glory also drove Jesus into the wilderness. It is ironical that the very place that John lived and came from is where Jesus went now, the wilderness. Jesus was there 40 days. It was a wilderness in the sense that the wild beasts were there where Jesus went; and the wildest beast of all, Satan, was there to tempt Jesus. However, the glory of God on earth had legions of angels to help Him, and the angels ministered to Jesus. It was quite a spiritual gathering: Jesus, angels, Satan, and the wild beasts. {The details of the temptation of Jesus by Satan are recorded in the other Gospels, which we will want to look at extensively, especially about the reply of Jesus to Satan when Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stones into bread, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."}

It was for Jesus a matter of timing just like for us today when tempted away from spiritual endeavors like prayer and Bible to become more enamored with the making of a living. Later, after the approved time of spiritual awakening of 40 days, the angels came to minister bread, and I'm sure something quite better, to Jesus.

What we have remaining of the outline from Isaiah and Malachi, the first part of the outline from the Apostle Paul if you would is: (6) All flesh will see God together; (7) It is the same God that has been sought by all humanity; (8) First part of the message of Jesus is that the time is fulfilled; (9) The second part of the message of Jesus, and we would expect to find this echoed often in Mark as well as in the first few chapters, is that the kingdom of God is right here; (10) The third part of the teachings of Jesus would have to do with repentance; and (11) the fourth part of the teachings or message of Jesus would have to do with faith in the Gospel.

What we have remaining in chapter one of Mark is the following events from the life of Jesus: (1) Jesus' preaches the gospel of the kingdom of God in Galilee, 1:14,15; (2) Jesus chooses four fishermen to be His apostles, 1:16-20; (3) Jesus by casting out an unclean spirit, the equivalent of demon possession or domination, proves that His doctrine or teachings have power as well as truth, 1:21-28; (4) Jesus heals the mother-in-law of the Apostle Peter {by the way at some point in

here, and I would think above in the finding of the fisherman in the boats, the part of the outline from the testimonies of Peter and James come into play since they were among the four apostles selected, and you know it was here in the healing of the mother of Peter's wife}, 1:29-32; (5) the healing of many sick as the whole city of Capernaum—by the way it was also where the demon spirit was cast out and Peter lived, and even close to the Sea of Galilee where Jesus called the fisherman, 1:32-34; (6) Jesus preaches throughout all Galilee after a early morning of prayer, 1:35-39; and (7) Jesus heals a leper, 1:40-45.

Mark 2 is somewhat easier: (1) Jesus forgives and heals a paralytic, 2:1-12; (2) the call of another apostle, the Apostle Matthew, a former tax collector, 2:13-17; (3) Jesus questioned about fasting with responses with short parables about the bridegroom and fasting, and also about new wine in old or new containers, 2:18-22 {and already we notice that the transition by Mark writing is beginning to be made toward the second quote which is about "parables" and from Isaiah 6:9,10}; and then (4) in the conclusion of Mark 2, in verses 23-28, there is the teaching of Jesus about the Sabbath Day, not in a parable, and vastly encompassing for religious life. Really a better division of Mark, and one perhaps more in keeping with the original intention of Mark as well as the outlines given him by the Apostle Paul, would be to include the events of that same sabbath Day as recorded in Mark

3:1-6 with the events in the corn field. In the first of Mark 3 is where Jesus healed the withered hand of a man. What a way for a man to go down in history, as the man with the withered hand that Jesus healed!

## **SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND FALLING AWAY (A Reconciliation of The Falling Away and the Security of the Believer)**

Introduction: Both are Sound, Undeniable Bible Doctrines.

1. The Bible teaches the Falling Away. It comes from the Apostle Paul in II Thessalonians. We get it from Jesus in the "because sin shall abound, the love of many will wax cold"; we read of it in II Timothy in "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine", and before that in the same book we get it in the improper church behavior of a "form of godliness that denies the power thereof", of I Timothy in the verse "that the Spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith".
2. The Bible teaches the security of the believer in many diverse places. In I John in the "and this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life"; in II Timothy as Paul talks about the overthrow of the faith of some then adds that the "foundation of God stands firm, having this seal, that God knows His own and let every body who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity; in the famous "I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day"; and on and on.

3. Let me say preliminarily and in a more positive fashion that the Falling Away is not to be confused with the Falling Down. Falling Down would be considered as falling from grace which can not happen, but Falling Away is a falling away, not from church, but from God, Christ, and the Bible. A whole church can, and many churches and denominations, do fall away from God, Christ, and the Bible. Then some churches never fall into God, Christ, and the Bible.
4. Preliminarily let me also state that this is not an attack on young people or the younger generation, since if the second falling away—the falling away which is the greatest challenge of our generation—if the second falling away is like the first falling away that is the primary subject of the book of Hebrews, then all young people below 21 years of age are safe.
5. Let me state up front, before Scriptural proof, that the reason we have trouble wrestling to our own destruction with security of the believer and the falling away is that we do not face up to this reality: many church members who claim to have experience salvation and the new birth have not experienced salvation and the new birth. That sounds simple to say but it is the real obstacle to understanding of the seeming dilemma. The dilemma is caused by a failure to face up to the reality.

6. I want you to look again at how realistic the Apostles and Jesus were on this matter; and the fact that you very seldom hear about these realities, although carefully recorded in the Bible, is within itself a sign of the Falling Away.

I. You have read and read Ephesians quite often, but have not noticed that Paul questions the salvation of the church members at Ephesus in the statement, "This is not the way you learned Christ; if indeed you heard Him and were taught by Him." You see Paul is also tell church members today, "This is not the way you learned Christ if there is no difference between you and the other *Gentile Americans* around whom you live. You may not have heard Christ for yourself, and you may not have been taught by Christ yourself."

1. The reason that Paul suspected the new birth and salvation of some—the living like other *Gentiles* around them.
2. Paul's big "if" about learning Christ. Everyone wants to claim to be a disciple of Christ, yet Paul questions if some church members have ever even started the learning process much less continued.

3. John 14 in three questions from the disciples and with three answers from Jesus explains what it is realistic to hear Jesus and to be taught by Jesus Himself.
- II. There is no such thing as falling from grace, and that is what Paul is dealing with in Romans 5 in the if you do fall from grace you are crucifying a second time Christ on the cross, and that is impossible. It is as much impossible to fall from grace or stated another way to fall from the new birth and salvation as it is to place Christ back on the cross.
- III. Although Christ clearly laid down the analogy in John 3 between the physical birth and the spiritual birth, we still look for instantaneous new birth knowing full well, the mothers better than anybody, that it takes at least 9 months for birth to happen. We want it instantaneously as the seed is first being planted, because it looks good for the evangelists and the pastors, and we are very, very conscious of numbers and show.
- IV. A careful look at Jesus' parable of the seed and the sower, opens up the Bible realities of new birth and the Falling Away. Especially when you look at the fact that one of the unfruitful seed deliveries, that on stony ground, states that "he immediately received it with joy". Now, you know if you were in a church service or anywhere that someone "immediately"

received the words of the Bible with joy, you would say, and everyone would say, and there would be common agreement, that this person was born again and saved. Well, the Bible says that after a period of time because that person had not root, it died; and the Bible says that when persecutions or tribulations, in other words hard times, when they came the person stumbled.

1. The seed of the Word of God sown by the wayside can be summarized as SNATCHING. This never goes anywhere, because Satan comes and snatches away the Word before it can develop into the new birth. This would describe the vast number of people that either never get interested in the Bible, Christ, or God, or who join the church then go no further.
2. The seed of the Word of God sown on stony ground can be characterized as STUMBLING. Here there are two problems given by Christ for this stumbling.
  - a. They have no root, which by the way is a matter of personal choice, and they start a dying away process of the little spirituality that was planted in their life by word or example.

- b. Or they after a period of time in response to hard times and persecutions for the sake of the Word of God start to stumble. It is hard to tell, but perhaps there is some hope for the stumblers.
3. The seed of the Word of God sown among thorns is perhaps the best description of what is happening in the Falling Away.
    - a. YOU PROBABLY NEVER THOUGHT OF "MAKING A LIVING" AS A THORN THAT CAN CHOKER OUT OF THE SEED OF THE NEW BIRTH. The cares of this world choke it out, according to Jesus.
    - b. YOU PROBABLY NEVER THOUGHT OF THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH AND THE CORROLARY OF SUCCESS AS A THORN THAT CAN CHOKER OUT THE SEED OF THE NEW BIRTH. It really, to be more specific, chokes out the initiation and completion of the nine month spiritual birth process. The deceitfulness of riches choke it out, according to Jesus.
    - c. YOU PROBABLY NEVER THOUGHT OF THE "LUST OF THE EYES, THE LUST OF THE FLESH, AND THE PRIDE OF LIFE—ESPECIALLY THE PRIDE OF LIFE—AS A THORN OR

THORNS THAT CAN CHOKE OUT THE SEED OF THE NEW  
BIRTH. "Other things" choke it out", according to Jesus.

- V. Christ told disciples to: "deny self, take up the cross daily, and follow Him."
1. Denial of self each day would certainly be the opposite of self-fulfillment and self-improvement so dominant in the books of current Bible teachers.
  2. Taking up the cross daily would be the opposite of comfort and security.

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"Righteousness by Faith" (Romans, Luther, and Gene Scott) Reconciled with Faith Without Works is Dead (James, Inspiration, and the Canon)

Even as both the "Security of the Believer" and "The Falling Away" are both sound Bible teachings taught over and over in the Bible, so also are the "righteousness of faith" of Romans and "faith without works" of James. In fact the "righteousness by faith" of Romans 4 is closely related to the "security of the believer", and the "Falling Away" is closely related to "faith without works". This will become clearer as we look at some selected passages from Romans and also from the book of James. You will recall the famous passage of Romans 1:17 that was the basis of the

Great Reformation under the leadership of Martin Luther away from the Roman Catholic churches' emphasis on works for salvation: "The just shall live by faith."

And perhaps you have heard recent messages on television on the same subject of righteousness by faith, apart from the deeds of the law from Dr. Gene Scott, the Stanford PhD and pastor of the University Cathedral in Los Angeles, California.

Then I think that most are familiar with the famous words of the Apostle James in the book of James when he wrote both "faith without works is dead" and "the devils believe in God and tremble." In this message, we will look at a few of these verses from Romans on righteousness by faith, and then look in the book of James at a few on "faith without works is dead"; however first we need to consider something very important about the nature of the Bible itself as a unique Book that requires special techniques for reading.

- I. Hermeneutics, the Science of Biblical Interpretation. Many conservative Bible scholars like Bernard Ramm have written good books on the "how" of Biblical interpretation, and most generally all Bible students have at least one course on Biblical interpretation. I apologize for the word "hermeneutics" which makes the understanding of the Bible seem more difficult than normal, and to put it simply this collection of techniques for the understanding of the Bible is nothing

less than the principles that the Bible itself lays down for understanding. I think you have noticed how in many school textbooks, there is an introduction on "how to read or study" that particular textbook. Well, the Bible is a very unique *God-given* textbook or guidebook for living, and consequently the *God-given* methods for understanding are given in the Book itself, not in the introduction, but rather in the books as an integral part of the books. Let us briefly look at some of those principles.

1. The Bible can not be understood apart from the Spirit of God, Jesus taught in parables during His life so that the insight of the spirit of God was required to understand them, and today you might think of the whole Bible as a gigantic parable in that the help of the Spirit of God is required to understand it.
2. The second principle is closely related to this: since the Bible was written by God through the Holy Spirit as the Spirit directed Holy Men of God to write, it can be only understood by the help of these co-authors. In other words you need the help of Paul in reading the 14 New

Testament books from Paul coupled with the help of the Holy Spirit. How do you get that, it brings up to another principle?

3. By comparing Scripture with Scripture. What God wrote in Romans through Paul and the Holy Spirit will not contradict what God wrote in James through the Apostle James and the Holy Spirit. And what James said in the book of Acts will help us understand what James wrote in the book of James; what Paul wrote in Romans is helped by what he wrote in the other 14 books; what Peter says about the Scriptures from the Old Testament and from the Apostle Paul helps us understand Paul and other New Testament books; and the hundreds of quotes from the Old Testament in the New Testament, not only establish the validity of the books, especially when quoted by Jesus, but also establish the meaning. That brings us likewise to the matter of how in James and Peter and Paul we can discern the teachings of Jesus that were taught to them directly. {Paul received his from the Ascended

Christ out in Saudi Arabia immediately after his conversion on the road to Damascus.}

4. Lastly, I will mention from the vast field of study about the Bible that when you look at a whole book of the Bible, like Romans or James, the sum of the whole is much greater than the sum of the individual parts. It has to be this way since any one book of the Bible was a act of God through the Spirit revealing truth to His own people through holy men of God. In other words the truth from God is not the same as the market place. Like Dr. Gene Scott does you can not take the languages of Greek and Aramaic as spoke in the market place and comprehend all that was intended by God in the revelations of a single book.

## II. Some select passages from the book of Romans.

1. As you look at the complete context of Romans 1:17 you can appreciate more what it is talking about.

"For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "the just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17)

By the way, "the just shall live by faith" is a quote from the Old Testament Prophet Habakuk, and it is another way of saying that "the justified shall live by faith". You might say it another way: as the manner in which salvation starts, by faith, is the manner in which salvation also continues, by faith. Always in the New Testament when the Old Testament is quoted, it is explained; and in this case the explanation is also at the beginning. {It really requires the whole book of Romans to completely explain what Paul understood Habakuk and God to mean as the Ascended Christ explained it to him.} The end goal of faith is the righteousness of God, declared righteousness and actual righteousness. It starts in initial faith as a seed of the righteousness of God is planted in the individual life, called the new birth; and then it continues daily like Paul writes in Galatians, "and the live which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God"; and finally it is is the completed righteousness of God through faith at the Second Coming of Christ when "we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is."

2. And I left out a principle of Biblical interpretation that I must include here. As the Apostle Peter wrote: "NO SCRIPTURE IS OF ANY PRIVATE INTERPRETATION, BUT HOLY MEN OF GOD WROTE {OR SPOKE} AS THEY WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT." Generally it is a habit to focus on the second part, "holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" and

neglect the first part which is a very fundamental principle of biblical interpretation, "no scripture is of any private interpretation". In the neglect of the bible today, the prime excuse is that there are many interpretations of the Bible so that surrounded by confusion many would-be searchers after truth give up.

Well, let me tell you something you can immediately through away well over half of that confusion with the principle of "the natural man receives not the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know they for they are spiritual discerned." A PHD or ThD or self-appointed scholar or Bible teacher does not automatically with a degree or self-appointment either receive the new birth or receive spiritual discernment from God. Establish that as a fundamental principle taught in the Bible itself and you will take care of a very large part of the confusions about interpretations.

Then go way beyond that; and let Paul and the Spirit through Paul interpret the Old Testament, and the Old Testament explain and set up and interpret Paul; and Peter interpret Paul; and Jesus and Peter and Paul interpret James; and on and on until you have Jesus, all the prophets and all the apostles established the proper interpretation of the Bible which is not private. Oh yes, there are many that would like to make private interpretations of the Bible in order to justify themselves or justify the way they act and believe. It is like one scholar said, "It is not what I

don't understand about the Bible that bothers me, it is what I understand and have difficulty doing."

3. Let us jump over to the righteousness of God by faith in Romans 3:21,22.

It is somewhere in here, either Romans 3 or Romans 4, or a combination of both where Dr. Gene Scott has preached approximately 257 sermons. Some of them are very good on faith: one of those if you heard it was on how Peter was the only person other than Jesus that ever walked on water. You can sense a tremendous faith from Scott; although it is hard to sympathize with his agreement with Martin Luther than the book of James is a book of straw, and it is hard to sympathize with Scott calling James a "jerk" because "faith without works" seems to contradict the righteousness by faith.

"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe." (Romans 3:21,22)

You see here how the single interpretation is being locked down. The righteousness apart from law, being the equivalent of the righteousness by faith" was witnessed and spoke of in the Law of Moses and in the Old Testament Prophets. Moses wrote about it in the first five books which Jesus often called the Law of Moses. Moses wrote of righteousness by faith in Genesis; Moses wrote of

righteousness by faith in Exodus, Moses wrote of righteousness by faith in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The four major Prophets of the Old Testament—Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah—wrote of the righteousness of God by faith; and the 12 minor prophets including Hezekiah with his “the just shall live by faith” wrote of the righteousness of God apart from works of the law or righteousness by faith.

a. It is a specified faith and that is extremely important. It is not possible to possess some vague faith as a general principle or like the devils in the book of James to have a mental belief in the existence, power, and judgment of God. Romans 3:22 states “even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ”. “Jesus” was His given name like ours is John, Mary, or Jerry. Of course even this came from God through an angel saying that “You shall call his name Jesus which means Jehovah God is salvation”. Jesus of Nazareth as we see in the book of Mark was designated by God Himself as the Son of God, by John the Baptist, by the miracles Jesus did and the words He taught, and primarily Jesus of Nazareth was testified to be the Son of God, the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament, by the Resurrection from the dead. Christ is another word for Messiah; and in all ways Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah of the Old Testament.

b. "To all and on all who believe". Here I really like some of the teachings of Gene Scott. Believe, especially in the original Greek, is not sufficient to convey the meaning of the "trust" required in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to receive the righteousness of God by faith. Dr. Scott has invented a word called "faithing" since the Greek language does not have a verb equivalent of the word "faith". All who keep on faithing have the righteousness of God. If you read the Wuest Expanded Translation which came out years ago, it had some of that same meaning. "Keeping on believng and kept on having faith". {We will not discuss right now how it is impossible not to keep on believing once you have really experienced the 9 month new birth, and how it is also impossible to ever start the righteousness by faith if you have not experienced the full 9 month new birth.}

c. Notice the subtlety of the words: it is "TO" all and "ON" all that believe. That is not incidental, but fundamental. The TO refers to the inward gift of the righteousness of God which correlates with a real new birth, while the ON refers to the legal declaration by God that we are righteous in His sight. In other words, God looks at us who truly trust and experience the new birth and says that person is as righteous as if I am looking at MY SON HIMSELF AND WHAT HE DID ON THE CROSS!

4. I must quickly look at one more passage from Romans before I pass on into James. In it Paul is not only talking about the ignorance and stubbornness of his own Hebrew brethren, today and during his time; but also you will find that the Holy Spirit applies it to people today, Gentile church members of all denominations, and some non-members and non-believers.

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God which is by faith."

a. This "ignorance" of God's righteousness is not a matter of a low IQ, or lack of academics, or even Bible. Most of the doctors of the law and the religious leaders of Jesus' day and Paul's were not ignorant of the Old Testament. They were like Paul, himself a lawyer, steeped in the Old Testament as the law of religion and the state. Yet like Paul before conversion, they had missed the TRUE INTERPRETATION of law, righteousness, faith, and the new spirit. Like many academics today like the so-called PhDs and Thds of the Jesus Seminar have caught the letter of the law and the Bible without the spirit. They are natural men, albeit very educated natural men and elite socially, who have not received discernment from the Spirit of God. Here we would apply the scriptures, "God has chosen the foolish things of the world in order to confound the wise." And the scripture "when

by wisdom the world knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those that believe."

- b. There is a certain inherent pride in man, egged on by sin and rebellion against God, which makes him want to be independent and self-made. A tendency, if you would, to establish his own righteousness and his own method and standards of righteousness. You hear it all the time. I believe in keeping the Ten Commands, or my religion is my conscience, or I just do the best I can.

### III. Some Select Passages in the book of James.

We can not dwell long here, but it should not take long with the background from Scriptures that has previously been provided.

#### 1. James 1:22-24.

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was."

#### 2. James 1:26,27.

"If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, his one's religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

3. James 2:1-10.

4. James 2:14 establishes the two kinds of faith demanded by the context, the kind of faith of Romans and the kind of faith demanded by the context here in James.

"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?"

17

### OLD TESTAMENT QUOTES IN MARK

It was previously mentioned that there are approximately 17 quotes in the Gospel of Mark, and we previously looked at a few of these in the first few chapters of Mark. Since Mark is a short action Gospel of Jesus of only 16 chapters, it is an average of one quote per chapter; although the quotes are not evenly divided in Mark. Yet as previously discussed the quotes and the New Testament applications and interpretations of the quotes do have the set the sequence of events from the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Recall how the Apostle Paul as chosen by

Christ to be the chief editor of the New Testament left outlines for John Mark to follow which included the testimonies of James and Peter and a list of Old Testament quotes centered around the life of Jesus that Paul had not already used in the 14 books which he wrote.

1a. Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 which told in Mark 1:2,3 of the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and of the kingdom. These two quotes, one from a major Prophet, Isaiah, and one from a minor Prophet, Malachi, established John the Baptist as the voice preparing the way of the Lord and then established Jesus as the One who would come with healing in His wings.

1b. The PROPER INTERPRETATION of Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1 in the statement of Mark through the Holy Spirit of "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

2a. Isaiah 6:9,10 in Mark 4:12 which states how the Bible itself is a book of parables in that many will hear and not understand, will see and not perceive, and will not turn from sins to forgiveness. This is another way of stating a fundamental difference between the American Democratic Faith and the Faith of Jesus. While the American Democratic Faith places the emphasis on the majority, Jesus stressed the minority in the teaching that many would go the way that leads to destruction while few would go the narrow way that leads to eternal life.

2b. Jesus gave the PROPER INTERPRETATION in an explanation to the apostles of the parable of the seed and he sower.

"...And He said to them, 'To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to those who are outside, all things come in parables...' (Mark 4:11)

I hope you got that (1) how parables are to those outside the kingdom of Christ in order to keep them in their confused state unless they will meet the proper conditions of God for understanding; and (2) "all things", all spiritual things, come in parables: the Bible itself is a parable.

3a. Isaiah 29:13 in Mark 7:6,7 establishes the teaching of how many so called people of God would worship, trying to honor God in worship with their lips and the word of their lips while their hearts are far from God; and how their worship would be vain worship in that the worship would be more from the commandments of men than from the doctrines of God. Have you been there in those worship services? I have; and it is far more common than any church member wants to admit.

3b. The PROPER INTERPRETATION of Isaiah 29:13 by Jesus Himself, in made in the short form when Mark introduces the quote with the words from Jesus of "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written..." Not only did

Mark have the outline of the quotes from Paul to remind him as he wrote, but also he as a young man had been there often with the apostles and Jesus, tagging along behind them and listening.

By the way, you that are sincere about all the interpretations of the Bible should start with the several hundred quotes in the New Testament from the Old Testament where Jesus or one of the Apostles give the only PROPER INTERPRETATION, and by the time you have completed that study you will be so deeply into the proper meaning of the Bible that it will be very difficult for you to go wrong. If you need a guide on this, I would advise the securing of volume 1 of the Old Testament According to the New Testament which lists many of these quotes.

4a. Here in Mark 7:10 there is a quote by Jesus that is found in three places in the Old Testament—Exodus 20:12, Exodus 21:17, and Deuteronomy 5:16. As you might expect Jesus is establishing the validity of the law books of Moses called Exodus and Deuteronomy as he quotes from the Ten Commandments to Honor father and mother.

4b. The PROPER INTERPRETATION in Mark 7:9 and the whole context of how by the traditions of their interpretations they had for all practical purposes rejected the commandments of God. That sounds like today. If you want to justify

yourself, simply find an interpretation, tradition, or teaching that will help you rationalize it.

5a. Isaiah 66:24 in Mark 9:44,46, and 48. You are beginning to see that a favorite of the Apostle Paul which he left for John Mark was from the Major Prophet Isaiah. Indeed, even in the Old Testament Isaiah has been and is considered as the Prophet of prophets. Mark 9:44, 46, and 48 is unique in that Jesus quotes the very same words from Isaiah 66:24 three times. Three times Jesus quotes "Their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."

5b. It is important that we know the proper interpretation of this; however we may never know exactly what the "worm" is unless it is the soul or the DNA, but evidently it has to be some fundamental entity of the inside and physical body that still has feelings like the feel of intense heat. Let us see how Jesus gives us the PROPER INTERPRETATION in Mark 9 where Jesus twice calls this "hell" and mentions how hell is a fire that will never be quenched. The other day I heard a learned and foolish preacher of a large church of deceived church members talking about how hell is not real. The torment, he said, is so great that the fire feels like real fire....well, if it feels like fire and hell, perhaps it should be considered as hell. And that is what the Prophet Isaiah and Jesus, the Prophet Messiah, taught!

6a. Genesis 1:27 and 2:24 in Mark 10:6-9 where Jesus re-establishes the God ordained pattern of marriage as God set it up at the beginning, that of one man and one woman with children for life.

6b. Listen lawyers and divorce courts, listen America where now over 50% of marriages end in divorce. Listen to the proper interpretation of marriage as given by Jesus Himself, in Mark 10:6-9.

"But from the beginning (the life time permanence of marriage is no after thought, but from the beginning it was the plan and command of God} of the creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh, Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."

Jesus is not condemning any divorced person or gay person here, but rather is laying down the plan and commandment of God. It is one thing to be divorced and/or to be gay, but to shake the fist in the face of God and His commandments is another matter by trying to deny the truth.

7a. Exodus 20:12-16 and Deuteronomy 5:16-20 in Mark 10:19. As you might expect here, again Jesus is dealing with law in the Ten Commandments and the ignorance of the doctors of the law. This time he summarizes all the

commandments, and even this summary involves an interpretation that we need: the first four commandments are summarized as "there is only one that is good and that is God"; then comes no adultery, no stealing, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, and honor father and mother.

7b. The proper interpretation in Mark 10:24 from Jesus is "how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God". After Jesus took the rich young ruler above beyond the quest for eternal life and beyond the commandments which he claimed to keep, and when Jesus recognized that his possessions were most important to him, and having told the young ruler to give what he had to the poor to eliminate the obstacle to salvation, the young man went away sorrowfully because the Bible says, "he had great possessions."

8a. You are probably relieved to come to the more devotional, less instructive book of Psalms in Psalms 118:26 as outlined by the Apostle Paul and recorded by John Mark in Mark 11:9.

"Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (Mark 11:9,10)

Each sentence or phrase is terminated with an exclamation mark. This is an emotional peak in Mark as it talks of the triumphal and popular entry of Jesus into Jerusalem as the end approached.

8b. The proper interpretation in Mark 11:9a is that the whole multitude were repeating the words of the Psalmist about the Prophet Messiah and the expected re-establishment of the kingdom. At least, for the while Jesus was popular, much of that popularity was based on false expectations of the kingdom of God and Jesus as a large materialistic kingdom of Israel like under David and Solomon.

9a. Back to Isaiah, Isaiah 56:7 in Mark 11:17, but it is another double quote from the Old Testament, also being found in another major prophet, that of Jeremiah, and in Jeremiah 7:1. This is the famous quote from Jeremiah's temple message that the lonely prophet preached every day for years as he made the trek from his Anathoth home over to the Temple in Jerusalem to preach a very unpopular message. The Prophet Jeremiah reluctantly taught the people that they were like a hideout for thieves in that they would live during the week in ignorance of the ways and commands of God, then come to the temple on the sabbath saying "we are safe" because we are in the temple of God and in the city of God.

9b. The proper interpretation, once again by Jesus Himself, is found in Mark 11:17 with the quote from Isaiah and Jeremiah.

"Then He taught {in the temple at Jerusalem after over turning the tables of the money changers}, saying to them, 'Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves."

18

### SOME MORE PROPER INTEPRETATIONS IN MARK

I hope you appreciate the way the messages have developed up to this point as we have discuss first how the Bible is "of no private interpretation", in other words thee is only one proper interpretation or understanding; how confidence was expressed even at he beginning in the messages of sound doctrine; and finally in the Old Testament quotes in Mark where Jesus Himself gives the proper application and interpretation of many Old Testament quotes. Once again, if you are sincere about the confusion of many interpretations, denominations, teachers, and churches, start with the PROPER INTERPRETATION of the 17 Old Testament quotes in the book of Mark. Previously we looked at nine of those seventeen, and now briefly we will look at the other eight.

Who is going to be the ultimate judge for you of the PROPER INTERPRETATION? You, yes you have the ultimate freedom of choice and responsibility, and no one else. You must read the quotes from the Old Testament for yourself; you must read the PROPER INTERPRETATION AND

UNDERSTANDING AS GIVEN BY THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, then you must decide for yourself if you believe it. Of course, the belief has to go beyond that to faith or trust in the Lord Jesus Christ!

10a. Psalm 118:22,23 in Mark 12:10

11a. Exodus 3:6,15 in Mark 12:26

12a. Deuteronomy 6:4,5 and Leviticus 19:18 in Mark 12:30,31, more about the law as you would suspect from the Law of Moses in the first five books. Perhaps you wonder why Jesus dealt with the law so often.

13a. Psalm 110:1 in Mark 12:36; and again you will notice that next to the Law and Isaiah, the Psalms from David are favorites of Paul and John Mark. Also they were somewhat restrained by what Jesus quoted when in his ministry as remembered by young John Mark and reminded by the recorded testimonies from James and Peter.

14a. Daniel 11:31 and 12:11 from Mark 13:14 and here we have a quote from another of the four major prophets. Already from Isaiah, also Jeremiah, and now Daniel. This is the famous "abomination of desolation" of Daniel, quoted by Jesus in His great discourse on eschatology or "end times" While eschatology is not a Bible word, rather a word developed by Bible scholars to describe all the end time events like the Second Coming of Christ, destruction of the old heaven and the old earth

by fire, creation of a new heaven and earth with the lowering of the New Jerusalem to earth, the final judgment with eternal heaven and an eternal hell. The study is large and much of it is in the book of Revelation, perhaps the most mis-understood and mis-interpreted book of the Bible. There are two main reasons for this: (1) Bible students take eschatology and the book of Revelation out of the total context of the Bible—you can tell when a Bible teacher or preacher is about to go wrong on the book of Revelation when it sounds so differently from the rest of the Bible {Jesus outline the book of Revelation in Matthew 24 and this shorter passage of Mark 13 so that if would-be interpreters would stay consistent with what Jesus taught, there would be much fewer tangents, and the Scofield Reference Bible notes as a short-cut to would-be Bible sermons and teaches, and the tendency to accept those notes as The Word has not helped}; and (2) Remember Jesus' interpretation of the parable of the seed and the sower, also where he quoted from Isaiah to explain parables as hearing without understanding—the famous teaching by Jesus that “all things” spiritual are spoken in parables. Well, the book of Revelation, also Matthew 24 and Mark 13, are gigantic parables in that the same biblical interpretations are required to understand them as with any other parable. It was that way in the time of Isaiah, it was that way in the time of Jesus, it was that way when the Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation, and it is still that

way today. If a Bible teachers heart is not in the right place or if they try to give the appearance of Bible knowledge that they have not secured in the correct manner, you will know it by the weirdness of the things they teach on Revelation.

{What you want to read is volume 3 of THE LEARN CHRIST commentaries which is a study guide to the five books of the Apostle John which, of course, includes the book of Revelation. All five books are presented to remain in the total context of the Bible, and to use the same principles of biblical interpretation, those laid down by Jesus and the rest of the Bible, to understand the Gospel of John, Revelation, and the three little epistles of John. The specific name of that volume 3 is "Christ for Individuals" because first Revelation in the messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor, which had already begin to experience their own Falling Away, and therefore certain individual church members who had remained faithful needed an individual message for encouragement as they saw fellow members falling by the wayside; "Christ for Individuals" because it is the Apostle John with the guidance of the Holy Spirit who points out, particularly in John 14-16, of how people individually hear Christ and are individually taught by Him; and "Christ for Individuals" in that the Apostle John gives his last practical advice on an individual separation from the world and the lusts of the world in the three little epistles,

and also provides the necessary teachings on the Security of the Individual Believer—eternal security is an individual matter not a group characteristic.

14b. The abomination of desolation of Mark 13 and Daniel 11 and 12 was fulfilled initially when in 58 A.D. the Roman General Titus with his huge army destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple so that as Jesus predicted not one stone would be left on another and that the temple activity of daily sacrifice would cease. Now, as far as the double fulfillment which some people like to call it: I chose to call it the full spectrum of fulfillment, in the next section we will look at that more carefully from Daniel 11 and 12 as centered around the meaning of "kingdom" in Daniel and the book of Mark. If you study the Old Testament Prophets at all you have realized that in many cases there is a prediction that is an immediate Day of the LORD on the people in that generation and then it fore-shadows an end time similar event of much greater magnitude.

15a. Zechariah 13:7 and Mark 14:27 and here we have another of the 12 minor prophets beyond Malachi. Zechariah 13 and 14 once again as centered about the DAY OF THE LORD has a whole spectrum of meaning. It was the Prophet Zechariah who encouraged the re-builders of the Temple as they came back from Captivity in Persia; but then tells of another scattering of the people after the

death of Jesus, the same scattering of the people in 58 A.D. by the Romans as in Daniel; and then larger than this is the end time DAY OF THE LORD.

15b. Jesus in Mark 14:27-28 quotes from Zechriaiah 13:7 and explains it. "Then Jesus said to them, All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." {Notice the usage of the word "STUMBLE" in reference to the apostles. We know what Peter did in his thrice denial of Christ, and we know from Acts and the epistles of Peter of his marvelous recovery. I hope you noted that STUMBLING as the characteristic word of the Seed of the Sower when it fell on stony ground. The stony ground did not have any root to it; and therefore when tribulation or persecutions came because of the word, much like the early disciples had with the capture of Jesus, then they stumble. But the STUMBLING unlike the SNATCHING of the word immediately away by Satan and unlike the seed sown among thorns which is completely choked out by the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of sins, and other things, the STUMBLING leaves like the good fruit some hope for the future. However, I would not recommend stumbling too long, even 40 years like the children of Israel in the wilderness, as their is according to the Word of God a point of no return and therefore the Spirit always says "Today".

16a. Isaiah 53:12 in Mark 15:28 and here we begin to wrap up on the quotes in Isaiah close to where we started with quotes in the Isaiah 40:3 of Mark 1. You have seen how many of those quotes, especially from Isaiah and the Psalms, are about the life of Jesus. This passage in Mark and Isaiah is a description of the crucifixion of Jesus, how He was crucified between two robbers. The very Lord of this universe, willingly of course and for the sins of the world, was killed by the mob and the religious leaders like a common criminal. He Who had done no wrong, only went about doing good, was killed on the cross like He was a nothing and a nobody. And this is more a commentary on the human race than it is a commentary on the crucified Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps the most religious generation of all time, a nation where religious law was the law of the land, crucified Jesus through the permission of the Roman government.

16b. "So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.'" (Mark 15:28 and Isaiah 53:12)

17a. Psalm 22:1 in Mark 15:34. Now, how do you suppose that David in the writing of the Psalms knew the very words that Jesus would speak as He died on the cross, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' Well, one reason is as Peter tells us that Jesus was active as the Word from the beginning in heaven inspiring the Prophet David and others

what to say. That "spirit which gave them utterance" that Peter speaks of is the Eternal Spirit of Christ, always at work in the Old Testament. And it reminds us that Jesus was not the victim of the mis-guided religious or Satan, but rather planned from the aeons of heaven and eternity what He would say on the cross.

## 19

### Kingdom and Kingdoms in Mark and Daniel

From the beginning of the messages, we have sought to do peacemaking by extending the influence of Christ between God and man and between man and man. Another Biblical way to say this is by extending the kingdom of God and Christ. Perhaps you have never thought about it, but every time you repeat the model prayer, often called the Lord's prayer, you are praying that the influence of Christ might be extended, in the words "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Believe me in heaven where Jesus the Risen and Ascended Christ sits at the right hand of God the Father the influence of Jesus is very large. It is as Paul wrote in Philippians that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

You noticed that the gospel of Jesus itself and the gospel of Mark is a gospel of the kingdom of Jesus. Recall how the first two usages of kingdom in Mark in the very first chapter, Mark 1:14,15, are:

"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'"

Although we want to look at the other places the "kingdom" is mentioned in Mark in order to determine which has priority the church, the churches, or the kingdom, we see in the very first verse that the gospel of Jesus is closely related to the kingdom, so closely that the gospel with faith and repentance is the God-ordained means whereby people become members of the kingdom. Well, you might say, "This is the same way that people become members of a local church"; and therefore you might be inclined to think that membership in the kingdom is quite the same as membership in a local church. Well, that is true; but the problem is that men have too much to do with local churches and denominations, and consequently many members can be on the church rolls without have become a member of the kingdom of God and Christ. In other words, kingdom membership is real: church membership can be pretence; and if you recall the *SNATCHING*, *STUMBLING*, and *FALLING AWAY* of the seed and the sower, you know that in many cases the new birth as required for real church membership never took place.

The word "kingdom" is found 19 times in the Gospel of Mark. We have already looked at the first two in Mark 1:14 and 15.

3. Mark 3:24 uses the word "kingdom" with the word "divided" which reminds us that while churches can and are often divided, the kingdom of God and Christ can not be divided. The only division of the kingdom of God and Christ is that part of it is presently in heaven where the will of God is done completely and part of it is still here on earth, the will of God is increasingly done less as the whole world progresses into the Falling Away. Yet as the world increasingly goes into the increase of lawlessness or sin which Jesus predicted, then the love of many in the churches will wax cold; simultaneously there is a heaping up of Bible teachers and preachers with itching ears who ignore sound doctrine; simultaneously church members heap up teachers and preachers who will tell them what they want to hear more than what they need to hear; and there increasingly becomes a rift between the churches and denominations and the kingdom of God and Christ.

I do not have time now to speak of the church, which is the body of Christ written in heaven, as to be distinguished between local churches. Suffice it to say that the word "church", "ecclesia" in Greek, is found approximately 128 times in the New Testament. Most of those refer to the local church like

the church at Ephesus or the church at Antioch or the church at Philippi. It is a local church intended by Christ to be a local assembly of believers which obviously will happen in reality less and less as we get deeper into the Falling Away. Approximately 20 of these refer to the church as the Assembly of Christ that is written in heaven, and this church as of all truly born again with the 9 month or so new birth is very similar to the kingdom of God and Christ.

#### 4. Mark 4:11.

"And He said to them, 'To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables"; and then Jesus, you remember explains the purpose of parables from Isaiah 6:9,10 as some, not kingdom members, may hear and not understand, may see and not perceive. Thus this passage gives us great insight into who are kingdom members and who are not kingdom members: those that are outsiders, outside the kingdom of God and Christ, do not understand parables of all the spiritual things given in the Bible. It is the privilege of kingdom members to understand parables and other Bible teachers, and it is the privilege of kingdom members to be called the real insiders although at their local church they may seem like outsiders. Ironical, huh!

5. In Mark 4:26 we have more explanations by Jesus of what the kingdom of God really is.

"And He said, 'The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground {we know from the parable of the seed and the sower what happens to the seed that is sown in SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND FALLING AWAY, but here Jesus is speaking primary of the seed that brings good fruit}...and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how. For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head. But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.'" And here Jesus is reminding us that the continued growth of the kingdom of God does not make history or the history books. Even as the corn continues to grow in some fields in Tennessee and the wheat in some fields in Kansas without our interest or personal knowledge or that of the daily television and news, even so does the kingdom of God continue to grow independent of your awareness. You may seek to make it the same as your local church or denomination, but the kingdom of God and Christ is far larger and far more consistent in growth. This is not to say that the kingdom of God can not be grown inside your local church of denomination, but it is to say that even as the Assembly of Christ is far larger than your own local church, so also is the kingdom. What you should be more

concerned about is whether there is evidence of kingdom growth in your own church, and if the characteristics of kingdom membership are similar to the the characteristics of church membership that you see in your local church. If not, you may have to do like the Apostle Paul advised in II Timothy, as you see in your local church a pre-dominance of "a form of godliness that denies the power thereof", you may have to disassociate yourself—"know not to keep company with them".

6. Kingdom in Mark 4:30 where Jesus is trying to find something that the kingdom of God and Christ is like in order to promote understanding among His disciples. Jesus is trying in this parable to engender in the mind a mental picture of what the kingdom is like.

"Then He said, 'To what shall we liken the kingdom of God? Or with what parable shall we picture it? It is like a mustard seed which, when it is sown on the ground, is smaller than all the seeds of the earth; but when it is sown, it grows up and becomes greater than all herbs, and shoots out large branches, so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade."

Right now as then, there are many kingdoms which look much larger than the kingdom of Christ. There is the kingdom of the United States, the kingdom of China, and so on, all loom large and more real in our mind; however the kingdom of Christ which has been going on and growing for over two thousands of years must

now be much larger than all these other more visible kingdoms. And there is much more to this parable. Even as the mustard seed is much smaller than other seeds, so the seed of the kingdom planted in hearts may appear small and insignificant at the time as compared to the seeds planted by large universities, by science and the intellectual achievements and philosophies of man, it, being eternal continues to grow beyond the size of the universities, and governments, and states, and the philosophies and movements of men.

7. Kingdom in Mark 6:23 is a secular use of the word kingdom as it refers to the kingdom of King Herod, the King of Judaea during the time of Christ. You recall the story, how the daughter of Herodias, Herodias being angered by John the Baptist as he denounced publicly the marriage between Herod and Herodias, led her daughter when promised up to half the kingdom of Herod, to request the head of John the Baptist who was already in Herod's prison for preaching against his marriage. This week I listened to the History channel on the life and contributions of Herod. The biographer lauded Herod's achievements in building like a Casarea in the large, sheltered harbor and other enterprises. He admitted during the end of his life how eaten with worms and dying a painful death they he became violent killing his brother to get his wife and killing many of his relatives, this same biographer announced how he doubted the killing of the innocents at the birth of

Christ and failed to mention John the Baptist. This is a good example of SNATCHING, and how Satan is at work through so many of his educated servants to remove the seed of faith immediately as it is sown.

There are two Bible facts about Satan that we fail to appreciate: (1) Satan dominance or demon possession as we often call it, is not only the kind where we see abnormal or violent behavior, say like in the movies where some try to cast out demons, but Jesus made it clear that many of the religious leaders of his time "were of their father the devil", so that there is a milder form of devil dominance, a form of all who do not commit to Christ and God as master, a form like that of the biographer of Herod to cast doubt on Scripture. Secondly (2) we fail to appreciate that "Satan like a lion goes about seeking whom he may devour" is more an inward and spiritual matter than a physical one. I know we have seen these movies where little demons come out to physically devour the bad people of the movies. But do not forget that Satan is really a lion who comes along SNATCHING away the seed of faith and of the Word of God before it can be even sown in the human heart!

### Physical Bread versus Spiritual Bread

When Jesus told Satan, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," the implications of truth from God and the implications for the way men and women are to live were vast. For one thing, in these simple words of "every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God", Jesus was establishing the place of pre-eminence in both our physical and spiritual life that Bible Scriptures are to have. We are to treat this Bible of 66 books with respect for every single word as if it comes directly over the radio from God to ourselves, because indeed every word of it has come from God Himself through "holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit". "All Scripture", Old and New Testament "are given by inspiration of God; and are profitable for doctrine {yes there is that dreaded word which loses some of the dread when you know that it really means the teachings of God and from God}..."it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfected..." In other words that the man or woman of God may learn to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God as effectively and efficiently as they have learned to live by physical bread.

Going to work every day is so engrained in us, partly because we like to eat and have a place to live, that men and women for the most part do not need to be

encouraged to live by bread. It comes far more natural than that of living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. We get up and go to work every day; we get up and go to school every day in order to have an education to work and to earn our daily bread. Bread, of course, is the symbol of food on the table: it is also a symbol of security and comfort. On the other hand to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God comes three ways: (1) It comes primarily from every word that holy men of God, Apostles and Prophets, recorded as God Himself so graciously revealed from heaven many of His ways and thoughts and demands; (2) It comes also by prayer as the humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, as we pay proper respect to God, and as we seek, knock, and listen for guidance from God that are based on, and consistent, with His every recorded word; and then lastly; (3) the least effective method in this time of the Falling Away is to listen or read to and from others as they talk about the Bible.

The baptism by Jesus at the hand of John the Baptist marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. He knew that before His crucifixion, He would have only 3 and one half years of teaching, preaching every word that proceeded from the mouth of God. His purpose of going directly into the wilderness was to have communion with God the Father and to develop the proper plan and mind-set to complete His ministry in such a short time. Along comes Satan to do battle with

Jesus. Satan knew much of the ministry of Jesus from Old Testament scriptures; and in fact, Satan himself quotes from Scripture to tempt Jesus away from His intended ministry. Indeed Satan was there in the Garden of Eden with Adam, Eve, God the Father, and Jesus the Word, as God announced that Jesus would someday bruise the head of Satan and Satan would bruise the heel of Jesus. Satan wished to stop this madness right then and there. What was required was a major diversion from the 40 days of fasting and prayer in which Jesus was engaged. Satan said during the 40 days of hunger, "Here are stones, turn these in bread that you may eat." It was pure and simple an effort by Satan to divert Jesus from what was best. There was nothing wrong with turning the stones into bread: Jesus had that power and more over all the physical elements as the One who in the first place with the mediator of Creation; and further Jesus could summon legions of angels to minister to Him as he did after sufficient priority was given to spiritual matters for 40 days.

Now, what is the message for us: It is not that we must fast and pray for 40 days; because for one thing, we do not have the same ministry as Jesus. But the message is that we must establish and maintain the priority in our life for some kind of contact the words from God in the Bible, and we must establish some kind of prayer life that acknowledges God and listens.

1. What are ways that we can live by bread alone? Let us spell it out so that it is obvious; and I use one of the teachings of Jesus to illustrate how that so many things like making a living, taking care of the family, providing adequate food, clothing, and shelter—all things good within themselves—become less than our best when not included with respect for every word of God. Recall how Jesus compared the end of time and His Second Coming with the Days of Noah when the whole earth was destroyed with a Flood. Jesus said, "Men will be eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage" right up to the end, completely indifferent as to the great truths of God. You see, there is nothing wrong with getting married and having a marriage feast—God and Jesus taught the importance of proper marriage and Jesus honored the institution of marriage with His presence and help at the marriage feast at Cana—there is nothing wrong with eating and drinking, they are essential for the sustenance of physical life; but the point Jesus is making in that all these routines of life—education, making a living, providing a home and transportation, and even many extra comforts—so occupy and dominate our lives that no time or effort is expended, or little, to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

Recall again what happens to the little bit of seed from the Word of God falls into our lives if we do not think and act upon it? It is given in the parable of

the Seed and the Sower which I have tried to summarize as "Snatching, Stumbling, and Falling Away". The Falling Away is the most serious, of course, and that is where the seed of the words from God are completely choked out. What had the capability then and now to choke out that spiritual seed in our lives? Three were numbered: (1) cares of this world—and I am sure you know what they are such as paying the bills, getting a better home and education and income and status and more comfort and security—all good things but which can choke out the world; (2) Secondly, the deceitfulness of riches and here we must keep this in perspective that Jesus is not teaching that all of us want to be rich—and recall that now in the United States the affluent middle class {which you would have to admit is often the primary goal of all} is much richer than the average of Jesus' day}; and (3) "other things", Jesus said, choke out the word.

Wow, other things, that is a broad category. What did Jesus mean? Well, we are not left in the dark on this matter as we consider also other words that proceeded out of the mouth of God and as recorded in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus dealt extensively with things like food, clothing, and the cares of security for tomorrow; and what we find is that Jesus includes all these under the title of "mammon". All that comes from man, all the creations of man which divert us from the dominance from God and Christ are called "mammon". And God does not

leave us in the dark on these "other things" in many of His words which were revealed throughout the Bible including in the little epistle of John where the Apostle John writes, "Love not the world (here is you another all inclusive word to define the other things, the word "world" with the word "mammon"), neither the things that are in the world {you see how the things that are in the world is the same as the "other things" that choke out the seed of the Word of God).

This we have from every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God through the Apostle John a more precise definition of "world" or "mammon". "For all that is in the world {here it comes}, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are not of the Father but of the world, the world passeth away and the lust thereof but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

1. The lust of the flesh is of the world, mammon, and other things. It is an overwhelming desire to take care of physical pleasures and comfort.
4. The lust of the eyes is of the world, mammon, and other things. It is seeing these creation of man, all that man makes and sells, and having a beyond want to lust and desire to have these things.
5. The pride of life, and here is where so many of us fall into the destructive nature of "other things". Pride of life is lauded by the world: pride in nation, pride in family, pride in work achievements and status, pride in sports, and we

could go on and on with the many facets of life and the pride of life that choke out of the Word of God, that prevent if you would or at least eliminate a priority for every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

### Things and the American Democratic Faith

At some point later we must again summarize the American Democratic Faith as contrasted to the Faith of the Bible as including "personal gain" over "Christ gain". Politicians and other leaders have through the ages of American history sought to define this materialism as an aspect of the American Democratic Faith. Even the framers of the Declaration of Independence implied in the "pursuit of happiness" as an inalienable right some materialistic concepts. Indeed in the first writings it was, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of property" as the inalienable rights of men. And throughout American history this fundamental right of the American Democratic Faith has been promoted in the "chicken in every pot", in the good life of LBJ, and so on.

### 21

### Some More Sounds on the "Kingdom" from Mark and Jesus

We have our local church and our own denomination {which would include a local assembly that is interdenominational or non-denomination like Community Churches which expand into a larger organization or affiliation which is nothing

less than a denomination}...with this local church, our own denomination, and the church of Christ written in heaven, why do we need to worry about the "kingdom of God and Christ"? Isn't the kingdom of God the same as our local church? Hardly! It is important to see that while God has chosen often in the past to work through local churches and even denominations, that the local church in this time of the Falling Away has become more "mammon" than of God since local churches and denominations have become more the creations of man than of God and Christ.

Part of our problem, I think, is that we are victims of history and culture. We begin to think of the local church as established by Christ and mantianed by Christ even though we know that the denominational administrators are running them for their own benefit as are the local leaders of pastors, elders. Deacons, and even self-appointed groups within the church. Look again at the approximately 128 times that the world church is used in the New Tetament, and in particular the approximately 100 times where it refers to the local church. The local church, like at Jerusalem, Antioch, and in particular in the seven churches of Asia Minor was more a temporal assembly of like-minded believers which did not last generally more than 50 years. The kingdom of

Christ, on the other hand, and yea the Assembly of Christ written in heaven have lasted since the time of Christ and will last forever.

Let us quickly summarize what we previously looked at on "kingdom" in Mark from the total 19 times that the kingdom is mentioned in the Gospel of Mark, most of those times by Jesus Himself. First of all, we established our goal of peacemaking by extending the influence of Christ between God and man and between man and man—of course also between men and women; and we further agreed that along with the teachings and miracles of Jesus, an understanding of the "kingdom" would help to extend the influence of Jesus. It can go into the churches where people are heaping up teachers out of their desires to extend the kingdom through the influence of Jesus; it can go into the pulpits of fundamentalists and liberals where itching ears Bible teachers are giving the people what they want more than what they need, are tickling their ears in order to draw a massive crowd in attendance to extend the real kingdom influence of Jesus; and it can go into the television where the itching ears teachings of something that sounds different and unique is often heard to extend the real influence of Jesus' kingdom; and it can go into the Bible conferences many miles away where women of faith attract many to personal profit from their women of faith resources of trinkets and things.

Okay, what have we looked at so far? (1) Mark 1:14 established the life of Jesus as primarily preaching "the gospel of the kingdom", and can we do any less than make that our primary goal in preaching and teaching? {It may not give us personal gain and a personal following with the status, convincing ourselves that we must be right and that we are doing something extraordinary, when in fact we are riding the waves of the Falling Away when church members will not longer endure sound doctrine, when they years to promote teachers with itching years, when they seek teachers to agree and promote their own desires, just before they turn away from the truth and turn into fables as the Mormons and Catholics did years ago {Yes, my tolerance of the American Democratic Faith, which I also love, goes beyond to the intolerance {to convictions based on the Bible} of the faith of the Bible and of Jesus; and yes, I do believe that Jesus is the only Son of God, that Jesus is the only way of salvation, and that the Bible of 66 books as we know it is the only Word from God!

(2). Notice in Mark 1:15 what Jesus came preaching and Jesus, which is also what we should be teaching and preacher as following the example of our Master and the Master Teacher. Contrast this, if you would, with the unique and weird teachings that you hear each Sunday from pulpits, what you hear over radio and television which most often is a promotion of the American Democratic Faith

more than the Faith of Jesus and the Bible; and what you read in those resource books of the extraordinary life. The Gospel of Mark records the extraordinary life of Jesus; Jesus preached an extraordinary Gospel of the kingdom of God; and we should do likewise. How long has it been since you heard a message on the kingdom of God as part of the Gospel. Perhaps sometimes you do hear the repent the repent and believe words which are part of the Gospel; but I am almost certain that you have not heard, and do not hear, that the kingdom of God is part of the Gospel. When we leave out the teachings of Jesus and the Bible on the kingdom, we are leaving out part of the Gospel, and we are in effect ignoring part of the every word which has proceeded out of the mouth of God.

It is not what we do hear from the Bible during this time of the Falling Away that is so dangerous, it is what we do not hear. Recently I heard the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas lamenting how much Bible there was at his church, yet how little significant had happened in that church for many years.

Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom. Jesus said, "the kingdom of God is at hand". If Jesus preached the kingdom of God is at hand two thousand years ago, what should be we preaching two thousand years later about the kingdom of God. "Oh, that is old stuff," one might say. "We have gone beyond that to "getting it" which is something much better; we have gone beyond that

to the local church that Jesus established more in the middle of His ministry at Caserae Philippi; we have even in some cases gone strickly to the Assembly of the Firstborn written in heaven.

Have you every noticed that when we get in trouble, it is with fundamentals. It is true in sports, it is true in our work life and education, and it is true in our spiritual and church life? And the fundamental here is that we should be preaching the gospel of the kingdom. It is the gospel of the kingdom that will spread the influence of Christ more than the influence of some faith-healer, TV evangelists, or even certain denominational leaders. One big reason is that the kingdom takes our eyes off what man can make and do here on earth, including the establishment and maintenance of large church buildings and attendance, and it puts our eyes and focus of how the will of God is done in heaven that can be extended to the doing of His will here on earth.

(3). From Mark 4:11 we need to know that the real outsiders are not those outside a local church with all the answers, but rather the real outsiders who those inside local churches, and leaders, who have not come to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. Being very religious they are, much like the Doctors of the law and the other religious leaders that oppossed Jesus; but having eyes they see not and ears they hear not. Their lips honor God but their hearts are

far away from Him. There are essentially three keys this day and time to attracting crowds where it is in a local church like at Saddleback or Lakewood. These three are nothing new as Satan has been using them for ages, it is only that we are hearing new ways of itching ears. For a pastor to be successful, a very worldly concept, in this time of the Falling Away, he must convince his people that (1) they are the elect of God, (2) he must have some unique message in the itching ear category; and (3) he must effectively convince the people that he has a solution. You see, these three current methods of pastors and other Bible teachers are the reason that you are not hearing about the Falling Away. How can a pastor that leads the elect of God face up to the fact that some, perhaps many, of his congregation are members of the Falling Away; how can a pastor admit that it is his unique itching ears teachings of the Falling Away that is attracting and keeping the crowds that come to hear him; and lastly how can the pastor face up to the fact that his unique solution is [1] not so unique if it really correlates with the Bible, and [2] is not really the solution if the majority of his hearers are also those of the Falling Away who listen to what they want and will not endure sound doctrine. Is the pastor and other Bible teacher really promoting from what people want and are really able to endure...promoting from this all the way to the turning away from the truth and turning into fables.

At this point, we should start a Table that list the "kingdom" teachings of Mark as ways to extend the influence of Jesus.

Location in Mark	Taught By	The Teaching
Mark 1:14	Paul, Mark, and the Holy Spirit	Jesus preached "the gospel of the kingdom of God"
Mark 1:15	Jesus Himself	Part of the Gospel is that the kingdom of God is here!
Mark 3:24	Jesus Himself	Divided kingdoms are worse than divided churches and denominations
Mark 4:11	Jesus Himself	(1) if you desire to define a real disciple of Jesus, it is one who understands the mysteries of the kingdom; and (2) the real outsiders not those in the church who do not understand the kingdom.
Mark 4:26	Jesus Himself in the parable of the growing seed	The kingdom of God grows unseen by history and by much religious activity.
Mark 4:30	Jesus Himself in the parable of the mustard seed	The kingdom of God and Christ will ultimately be larger than any other religious, political, social, or intellectual movement.
Mark 6:23	Herod the Great	Unfortunaely then and now, this is the kind of kingdom thinking—of a material kingdom—that dominantes our thoughts.
Mark 9:1	Jesus Himself	Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ.
Mark 9:47	Jesus Himself	Entrance into the kingdom of God is the only other alternative to hell, so horrible that the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched, and that there should be so much priority for every word from God as the loss of physical vision. {NOTE: this is not a recommendation for the loss of an eye, it is a sacrifice of pleasure, security, and comfort that lands a place in the eternal kingdom of Christ rather than in hell.}
Mark 10:14	Jesus Himself	The kingdom of God is a kingdom of little children under God the Father. "Our Father" is essential.
Mark 10:15	Herod the Great	The kingdom of God must be received in faith and sincerity like a little child receives truth in humility.
Mark 10:23	Jesus Himself	It is hard for a rich man, a wise man, or any man of status and achievement to enter the kingdom of God, a concept we still do not learn in our respect

		of persons concepts and ways, and even our world-like motivations.
Mark 10:24,25	Jesus Himself	It is so hard for a man of many possessions to enter the kingdom of God that Jesus compares it to a camel passing through the eye of the needle. You might ask why: because cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke out the Word of Faith. Rich men are not eliminated from Faith, the fact is that like camels passing through the eye of the needle, there will be very, very few.
Mark 11:10	The Crowd at the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem	Seeing Jesus coming humbly on a donkey, the people still sought in Him a kingdom like that of David where they prospered greatly and ruled the known world. Carroll sees this as the beginning of the 3 ½ years of Daniel where Jews no longer entered the kingdom, approximately 100,000 of them being saved in that period and then no more until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.
Mark 12:34	Jesus Himself	A person who hears and heeds religious teachings can be so close to the kingdom of God, yet miss it because of their cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and other things like the rich young ruler who sought to keep the commandments, but went away from Jesus sorrowful not willing to make the choice of God over mammon.
Mark 13:8	Jesus Himself in the great teachings on eschatology of Mark 13 and Matthew 24	Jesus, realistically, uses kingdom and nation in the manner we most often think as countries; but against each other as the signs that will continue to happen from the time of Jesus to the end. The beginning of the sorrows continues through all the phases of biblical history of eschatology and revelation right up to the end. Carroll teaches that each nation has an angel, some good and some bad but all under the power of God, who seek contrary gospels like Michael for Israel and the angels of the Persians another goal.
Mark 14:25	Jesus Himself	Here the kingdom of God is the completed kingdom of God, when the kingdoms of this world become synonymous with the kingdom of heaven, and Christ has the Lord's Supper with His original disciples again. Those who foolishly think of the Lord's Supper as a sacrament that saves and forgives sins, do not see the redeemed of heaven taking the Lord's Supper with Jesus.

Mark 15:43	Mark, the Apostle Paul, Peter and James, and the Holy Spirit	Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who entered through the eye of the needle into the kingdom of God, although a member of the most hypocritical Sanhedrin of Jesus time.
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I hope you read carefully the teachings in the right most column. Or you will go back to do them. And did they help to extend the influence of Jesus in your own life?

## 22

### . Understanding of the 35 Recorded Miracles of Jesus Extends His Influence

Here, since we are still interested in how to extend the influence of Christ, we will look at the 35 recorded miracles from Jesus the same way we previously looked at the teachings of Jesus on the kingdom which also intends the influence of Christ. And when we say there are only 35 recorded miracles in the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John we must recall what John wrote at the end of his gospel.

"There are many other signs which Jesus did which are not written in this book, which if they were all written not even the world could contain the books that should be written; but these are written in order that you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have everlasting life."

I would hope you would note the differences between these miracles from Jesus, and the so-called miracle performers today we see on television. No doubt, Jesus the Ascended Christ as part of His ministry does chose some to be healers as well as evangelists and preachers; however because of the outstanding differences between these performers and the miracle healings of Jesus, we would think that the ones done unseen are most likely those with the true calling from Christ. And we must see also that Jesus continued the healing ministry as He saw God the Father do it from the Creation of the world. God the Father works in the secret place, and God the Father answers the secret prayer of the closet for healing.

Of course we will not be looking at all 35 of the miracles, only those listed in the book of Mark; and before you bemoan the few number in Mark, recall that John in the Gospel of John built his whole biography of Jesus around only seven miracles. {By the way in the Table below we will insert the miracles of Jesus in the proper chapter sequence between the kingdom teachings, and they will be shown in the color read for additions.}

Mark	Miracles of Jesus in Mark	Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles
1:14		Jesus preached "the gospel of the kingdom of God"
1:15		Part of the Gospel is that the kingdom of God is here!
1:16-	Jesus out-fishes the fisherman-disciples	

20	who have been shunked all day in their fishing, and calls them to be fishers of men in His kingdom service.	
1:21-28	<u>Jesus Healing of the Demoniac in Capernaum:</u> This amazed the religious leaders because of Jesus authority in doctrine which was a doctrine with the power to heal. I think what we see today is a claim for the power to heal which does not include any authority of doctrine, or adequate doctrinal support. Definitely what you do not see is the casting out of devils and demons, because Satan can not cast out Satan, and it would be too dangerous for these impostors as the demons would disclose them or jump on them.	
1:29-34	<u>Jesus Heals the Mother-in-Law of Simon Peter.</u> It was so routine and without fanfare for the Son of God, the former co-creator of the universe. He comes into the house routinely heals the mother in law of Peter, and gets up to graciously serve them a meal. That was much better than the putting on an expected show of jumping and shouting like we see today, a jumping and shouting that is a matter of learning by the examples of others. Well, that is what you are suppose to do when you are slain in the spirit, by the way not at all a Bible phrase or a practice of Jesus during healing.	
1:40-45	Jesus heals the Leper.	This is a good place to note the approachability of Jesus, then and now as the leper came beseeching him, and yet Jesus showed compassion although the man was so irritating to publish abroad the healing which restricted the future activities of Jesus to the desert places.
2:1-12	Jesus heals the paralytic	"the power of the Lord was with him to heal" (Luke 5:17-26)
3:1-6	Jesus heals the man with the withered hand	The doctors of the law and other religious leaders were watching to see if He would heal on the sabbath. Jesus taught them and the others about doing good or harm on the sabbath day, and taking care of the sheep that is in the pit.

3:19-30	Jesus heals the blind and dumb man in order that he can see and speak, and the scribes from Jerusalem of doing these miracles by the power of Satan.	When they accused him of being in league with Satan, he said that all sins will be forgiven men except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: in other words it is not what is spoken in front of men, but it is the personal unbelief to the work of the Holy Spirit that condemns.
3:24		Divided kingdoms are worse than divided churches and denominations
4:11		(1) if you desire to define a real disciple of Jesus, it is one who understands the mysteries of the kingdom; and (2) the real outsiders not those in the church who do not understand the kingdom.
4:26		The kingdom of God grows unseen by history and by much religious activity.
4:30		The kingdom of God and Christ will ultimately be larger than any other religious, political, social, or intellectual movement.

4:35 -41	Jesus performs the miracle over nature of causes the wind and waves to become calm.	It caused faith, even fear, as the disciples pondered who is this that nature obeys. They had not as yet come to see Him as the Word active from the beginning in Creation, with the power to make the universe.
5:1- 20	Jesus heals the crazy man that is demon possessed and lived in the tombs. In the tombs all night the man was crying and cutting himself; and it was impossible to chain him as he was so strong as to break the chains.	His name was Legion since many devils were inside him; however the man ran to worship Jesus and the devils cried out how He was Jesus, the Son of God, asking if Jesus had come to torment them before the time—look at how much doctrine the devils know, and tremble. Jesus commanded the devils to come out of him, and per the devils request not to be sent out of the country, he sent them into a herd of swine. Now here, Jesus tells the man to publish what happened to him.
5:21- 43	Jesus while on the way to heal the daughter at the request of Jairus , the woman with the issue of blood is healed automatically as she touched with faith the helm of the garment of Christ.	The woman had this malady for 12 years which drained all her money while the physicians had done her no good, and she knew as she touched his garment she would be made whole. Jesus to her, "Your faith has made you whole." Can you imagine any of these current faith healers even allowing themselves to be touched by the crowd, and have you ever heard of one case where the touch of the person unknowingly of the healer, without the fanfare of the slaying of the spirit, has caused healing. Once again when Jesus healed the dead daughter, which He called sleeping, he charged the people there not to make it known; and charged them to give her something to eat. Did they do it? No!
6:23		Unfortunaely then and now, this is the kind of kingdom thinking—of a material kingdom—that dominantes our thoughts.
6:30 -44	Jesus performs a miracle of bread provision with fish. Jesus feeds the five thousand men with five loafes of bread and two fishes.	The disciples gathered up 12 baskets of barley loaves that were left over. When Jesus or God as far as that matter do a miracle they do it right, not one that is rescinded latter because of lack of faith.
6:47 -52	Jesus walks on the Sea that is so rough that the experienced disciple-fisherman have trouble rowing; and Peter also walks for a short time on the sea.	Jesus says it only takes faith. However in the boat they worshipped Jesus, and said that indeed He is the Son of God.

7:24-30	Jesus heals the daughter of a Greek Gentile. The unclean spirit in the daughter was called a devil.	Jesus challenged faith from the woman as He said bread must first be given to the Jews, and she replied in faith that even the dogs eat of the crumbs under the table.
7:31-8:9	Jesus heals the man deaf and with a speech impediment, and then feeds the four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes.	The more Jesus charged people to secrecy about the healing, the more they published it; but the people decided that "He has done all things well".
8:13-26	Jesus heals a blind man at the pool of Bethsaida. This time the man was brought to Jesus, and Jesus besought just to touch him, knowing that it would bring healing.	It took two touches, the first after a test when the man saw others as tree walking, and a second from Jesus when he saw all things clearly; and this time the charged was heeded not to publish the matter as the man went directly home.
9:1		Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ.
9:14-29	Jesus heals the demoniac boy which the disciples could not heal. Notice how many of the demon possessed were young.	Jesus criticizes the faithless generation for not being able to heal in such cases. All the observers were astonished at the majesty of God, for only that kind of power could come from God Himself.

#### NOTES ON THE TABLE INSERTIONS for the Miracles of Jesus:

1. Did you notice how many miracles Jesus performed in just the first chapter of Mark? That is a testimony of the extent to which Jesus went about with compassion and doing good; it is a testimony to how many more miracles Jesus did which were not recorded; and it is a testimony to how the Gospel of Mark is a book of Action. Even in the first chapter, Jesus was baptized; Jesus was 40 days

in the wilderness, tempted of Satan, with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered to him; Jesus call disciples and Jesus taught, Jesus preached and Jesus performed several miracles in the very first chapter of the 16 chapters of Mark.

2. A very notable characteristic of Jesus' healing, quite in contrast to the notiriety of those today, is that Jesus demanded secrecy from those He healed in order that He could do His real work of teaching and preaching, and self-sacrifice.

## 23

### Characteristics: Kingdom Citizens and Church Members

It is only legitimate since the kingdom is far more important and eternal than the local church to compare what church members are like with what they should be like as identified characteristics of kingdom citizens. Although we have focused on Mark, we must turn to Matthew 5-7 an the correlation in Luke 6 for the greatest teachings on the kingdom and of kingdom citizenship characteristics. You may recognize this as the famous teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

We will find it easier to establish the characteristics of citizens in the kingdom than we will of church members. Indeed we must separate between what Jesus and the Apostles expect of church members, and since today there is a large gap between Christ and church membership which is growing synonymously with the Falling Away, we must also look at characteristics of what church members today are really like. You may think that is also impossible since we would have to use the prejudiced opinions of contemporary observers. Not so, Paul tells in II Timothy of the characteristics of church members when they have fallen away from God, the Bible, and Christ; and tells us two things generally about such: (1) that they have a form of godliness that denies the power thereof, they are religious in other words without the power of God working internally in them; and (2) if you are a sincere and real believer in the gospel of the kingdom of God, you are to stay away from such church members, not having company with them. If you do not believe this, then look at the words of God and the Apostle Paul of II Timothy 3:1-9.

We will first briefly look at the characteristics of church behavior during the Falling Away from II Timothy 3:1-9.

<b>The church member characteristics during the Falling Away, II Timothy 3:1-9</b>	<b>Kingdom Characteristics from the Sermon on the Mount</b>	<b>What church members should be like as taught by Jesus and the Apostles from the New Testament</b>
1. lovers of themselves: this has taken the form of self-development, self-fulfillment,	"For I say unto you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes	"God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ by whom I am crucified

or personal gain as in the American Democratic Faith, and also of cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches along with other things.	and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20)	and the world is crucified unto me."
2. lovers of money: yes, this is the motivation of many in churches, for personal profit; and you know that many of the robbers of 401Ks of the last few years were church members.	Anxiety over the cares of this world is eliminated with the faith that God will provide food, shelter, and clothing.	"All that is gain for me, I count as loss for Christ."
3. boasters: the loud mouth is obvious in many churches where all spoken centers around himself	"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward." (Matthew 6:5)	"if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know" (I Corinthians 8:2)
4. proud: recall that pride of life is of the world and not of the father whether it is in a church or elsewhere.	"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)	"let each not think more highly of himself than he ought to"
5. blasphemers: in the church, yes, if they have the habit of taking the name of God in vain.	"But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No', 'No'. For whatever is more than this is from the evil one." (Matthew 5:37)	"Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Ephesians 4:29)
6. disobedient to parents: in the churches, yes, and it is shown most clearly in the lack of concern for the sound doctrine in which parents believed and which they taught.	"Honor your father and your mother's" traditions.	"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3)
7. unthankful	God will provide us with daily bread, once again the bread is symbolic for all our daily needs.	"Be careful for nothing, but by everything with prayer and supplication of thanksgiving make your requests be known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding will keep your hearts and mind through Jesus Christ the Lord."
8. unforgiving	"forgive us our debts as we	"Let all bitterness, wrath,

	forgive our debtors"	anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:31-32)
9. unholy	"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8) and I might add in His kingdom.	"My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality." (James 2:1)
10. unloving	"Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away." (Matthew 5:42)	"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself." (Galatians 6:2,3)
11. slanderers	"Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him...." (Matthew 5:25)	"Thou shalt not bear false witness."
12. without self-control	"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48) and thus Jesus for kingdom members requires a perfecting love on the way to perfect like God and Jesus themselves show.	"that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of the mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:18)
13. brutal	"But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." (Matthew 5:22)	"with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2)
14. despisers of good	"You are the salt of the earth...and you are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13,14) if you are a kingdom member, and practice kingdom characteristics.	"Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things." (Romans 2:1)
15. traitors	"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves...Therefore by their fruits you will know them."	"Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the earth."

	(Matthew 7:15-20)	
16. headstrong	"The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light." (Matthew 6:22)	"For they think that they will be heard for their many words." (Matthew 5:7)
17. haughty	"But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly." (Matthew 6:3,4)	"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (I Corinthians 10:12)
18. lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God	"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many words in Your name? And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Matthew 7:21-23)	"who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Ephesians 4:19)
19. having religion without real faith as real faith includes the inward power of God	"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matthew 4:6) This would fill the emptiness inside.	"But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus" (Ephesians 4:20,21)
20. Such people are the type to be turned away from turning away from type even they are the majority of a church as they were at 6 of 7 of the major churches in Asia Minor, and as they will be today in many churches of the Falling Away	"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." (Matthew 7:13,14)	"But adulterers and fornicators and in effeminate know not to keep company with such."
21. They come into home with their subversive teachings and take captive women that seek learning without the real learning of Christ.	"Therefore whoever hears these saying of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock..." (Matthew 7:24)	"that you put off, concerning your former conduct according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the

		new man, which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 22-24)
22. Like the outsiders not part of the kingdom and like those who can not understand the mysteries of the kingdom, these church members are always learning without coming to a knowledge of the truth.	"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)	"The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit because they are foolishness unto him."
23. These kinds of church members not only will not endure sound doctrine but they resist the truth like Jannes and Jambres.	"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake." (Matthew 5:11)	"Not only believe but oppose those who do believe."
24. Men of corrupt minds like Jannes and Jambres.	"But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:23)	"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made Himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto the cross, even death."
25. Men disapproved by God and Christ of the faith like Jannes and Jambres.	"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7)	"Nevertheless the foundation of God stands firm having this seal: the LORD knows His own, and let every one who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."
26. Their follies will be revealed during the times of revival up until the time of the Falling Away, and then they will be in the majority.	"Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces." (Matthew 7:6)	"Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will wax cold."

NOTES for this Table:

1. The challenge is now to find good characteristics from the Bible of Jesus and the Apostles that can counter and match these 26 bad characteristics of church members. One approach would be to use a Bible concordance to attempt to match the key words in the first column or to match a synonym of a word.

2. We should quickly summarize from Matthew 5-7, the appropriate characteristics of the kingdom of God and Christ members.

(1). The blessed members of the kingdom of God and of heaven are the "poor in spirit" which include the poor, the humble, and those absent of self-pride (Matthew 5:3).

## 24

### Lack of Sound Doctrine on the Teachings of Jesus and the Bible

There are two extreme sources (causes) of the lack of sound doctrine in any local church: (1) One is to be expected, and the one about which you hear most often, it is that church members are in growth transition to become more like Christ; and (2) then there is the second one generally covered up by the first one with excuses like "at least they are trying", etc, and that is when church members and churches as in II Timothy 4:1-1 have come to the point when "they will not longer endure sound doctrine." Between these two extremes are other causes for the lack of sound doctrine which correlate with the Snatching, Stumbling, and Falling Away of the parable of the seed and the sower. And one other should be mentioned, that is the case of the good soil where the Seed of the Word of God brings much fruit in varying degrees—some thirty-fold, sixty-fold, and one hundred fold. So what we will really discuss know is five causes of unsound doctrine, alias unsound teachings {and I hope you remember that unsound living like in the 26 previous bad behaviors of church members is as much unsound doctrine as other teachings of Christ}: (1) The seed sown by the wayside where the birds immediately snatch it away, and how this is a parable of Satan as he and his demon angels go about the world snatching and destroying; (2) The seed sown in the soil of the human heart where it is on stony ground {more about it later but the soil is the inward person of spirit, will, heart, and mind} and the

first thing that happens is that there is no depth or root; and (3) The second thing that happens when the seed is sown on a stony heart is that it causes Stumbling, like with no root, as persecutions and tribulations come because of the convictions of the Word; (4) We must discuss three causes for the Falling Away as seed is sown among the thorns, the first of which is the "cares of this world"; (5) The second cause of the Falling Away from the seed sown in the heart among thorns is the deceitfulness of riches, which by the way does not mean that you want to be rich, it simply means that the attractions of possessions like thorns choke the motivations for Faith to grow; (6) The third cause of the choking out of seed faith from the thorns is "other things", and I think by now we know that to be identified by the Apostle John in the little epistles of I John as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life {and by the way to lust is nothing more or less than to covet, forbidden by God years ago in the 10 commandments} What we are after here is not more description of the problem and problems, but solutions based on good sound Bible.

We should briefly, however, describe the environment in which we live, and the environment in which we must function with our faith. Many years ago, a professor at Southwestern Seminary that I did not like particularly made a wise statement that has stuck with me, "There is always a tension between making a living and making a life that lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. It is also a tension between what we are and what we want to be in Christ. The religious writer and psychologists Harry Fosdick referred to it years ago as "Being and Becoming"; and since then Wayne Oates, the former professor of religious psychology at Southern Seminary as also written extensively of the tension in the life of both being and becoming more Christ like. We have to admit that we are not nearly what we need to be in

growth toward the full stature of Christ, but that we keep progressing each day and year toward becoming more like Christ.

Another factor of the environment in which we live is that unless I am deceived by the signs, we are already deep into the Falling Away. And even if we were not in it, the Falling Away which according to the Word of God in II Thessalonians must precede the Second Coming, then the Falling Away for which much fewer believers look than the Second Coming...I say the Falling has to be closer than the Second Coming. How can you be planning and looking for the Second Coming without looking and planning for the Falling Away that precedes it? The very fact that preachers are not talking about the Falling Away is the best sign that we are in it. Why? Because a characteristic of the Falling Away is that church members "will not endure sound doctrine"; and since the Falling Away is very sound doctrine, taught over and over by Jesus and the Apostles in the Bible, and practiced for 40 years by the children of Israel in the wilderness, then this silence on the Falling Away is of itself evidence of the Falling Away.

Another aspect of the terminal phase of the last days is that many false teachers and Bible preachers will be heaped up. Have you ever seen a time when the heaping up of Bible teachers was so rapid and so big? Every where we see on TV, on radio, in the book stores and with advertisement of another man or women who is a teacher of the Bible with some unique message. If you collect what the Apostle Paul told the Ephesian elders with what Paul wrote to the young preachers in Titus, I and II Timothy, also with what Jesus taught and Jude wrote and the Apostle John, and yes the Apostle Peter, you will find several reasons that itching ears teachers and preacher arise, and in turn the itching ears quite often turns in false teachers and preachers.

First from Jesus. {I will look at the shorter form on eschatology in Mark 13 rather than Matthew 24 for the sake of brevity.} The first period about which Jesus teaches as signs of the times begins with a caution of "Take heed that no one deceives you." (Mark 13:6) Did you hear those words of Jesus? The fact that Jesus says "take heed" means that the possibility exist that there will be deceivers, and the possibility exist that temporal believers can be deceived. This would certain fall into the category of seed by the wayside where Satan immediately snatches it up; but being deceived would also have to apply to the Stumbling where deceivers in the pulpits steer you away from taking root in your faith, or at least do not promote such, and where you are not prepared to deal with the persecutions and tribulations that inevitable come from convictions on the Word. One obvious way is when preachers and teachers fail to tell you that "all that will godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persection," as Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and they fail to give you the Biblical approach of believers will be in the minority. Why? And while jumping ahead this is one way to tell when there is the possibility that while a Bible teacher may sound good, and they must sound good in order to be wolves in sheep's clothing {in other words what you must see from them is the clothing of the sheep, and the wolves' motivation are far more subtle than the appearance)..the way to tell is if they are overwhelmed by their popularity. It becomes obvious that they are giving people what they want to hear, rather than what they need, in order to attract and keep thousands as listeners. Remember the Old Testament saying "that Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." Well, this popular and false Bible teachers are slaying in some cases thousands and in other cases tens of thousands.

Paul wrote in II Timothy as preparation for what he would say later on bad church behavior and on the unsound doctrine of the Falling Away...that is, in preparation for those passages, he

wrote of how right there in his time, "those with unsound teachings on the Resurrection of Christ were overthrowing the faith of some."

We truly get inside into false teachers from the Apostle Paul as he called the elders of the church at Ephesus to come assembly with him. {Read it for yourself in Acts 20:17-38 if you wish.} By the way, if false teachers and preachers existed in New Testament times, and they had effect on deceiving others what do you think is going to be the environment in this time when we are much closer to the Second Coming. Paul warns the Ephesian elders of what is definitely going to happen shortly after the end of his life, using much the same words as did Jesus in His warning to take heed. Paul says, ""Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which he purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20:28) Then Paul gives two motivations of itching ears and false teachers: (1) Like wolves do to sheep, they scatter the flock which is nothing less than Bible teachers taking the loyalty of a church member away from the local church and putting it on some self-appointed, not called by the Holy Spirit, Bible teachers; and (2) Paul said the motivation of false and itching ears teachers, that came up from in a local church and you are seeing that story in this day and time as Bible teachers are coming out of Houston and elsewhere to attract crowds says two things about them (Acts 20:30). (a) They speak "perverse things" in other words it is unsound teachings and doctrine but which is wrapped in the clothing of sheep; and (b) Their goal is to feed their own ego and provide religious status for themselves by drawing disciples to follow them thereby taking away those disciples from loyalty to the local church, and I might add also loyalty to Christ, the Bible, and God. {Lack of loyalty to God, Christ, and the Bible is what the Falling Away is all about: it is not a Falling Away from church, as church attendance will actually go up as people are attracted to what they want to hear; and

it is away from the works of God that church members have seen up to 40 years; and I might mention that this is not a criticism of youth as the youth of less than 21 years of age are safe as in the wilderness. They have not had time to see the marvelous works of God and Christ, and then fall away from them.

We should go back again to Jesus in Mark 13 on false Bible teachers with itching ears. As the phases of the last days pass well beyond the beginning of sorrows, although the signs of the beginning of sorrows like wars and rumors of wars, etc continue into the other phases...as the last days progresses toward a termination, Jesus foretells that "false Christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect." The elect are safe from this deception, although Jesus and Paul warned the elect to take heed to themselves and the doctrine; for in doing so they would both save themselves and those that hear them."

Many at this time have not taken that heed to themselves and their hearers, and they are daily in vast meetings and on television performing "signs and wonders" to deceive the Stumblers, the Snatches, and the victims of the Falling Away. What do you think "signs and wonders" from Jesus means? Well, it means exactly what the Apostle John meant when he wrote of the signs and wonders that Jesus performed during His life in order to convince the world that He was and is the Son of God. Remember them from Mark: the teachings, the miracles, the character, the resurrection and the Ascension! Would it surprise you to hear the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles from false teachers? No, that is exactly what they must do in order to put a sheep-clothing cover on their teachings. However, by way of encouragement, there is always some weird, non-biblical twist to their teachings that can be detected if you are alert, if you take heed like Jesus and the Apostle Paul said. It is just that you must wade through a lot of smiles, stories, and meaningless chatter in order to get the point of departure from sound doctrine. An

example in point is the teachings of Joel Osteen and many others who continue the Old fashion "gospel of wealth and the corollary of success". In other words who like Norman Vincent Peale and Charles Schuler and Zig Zeigler, and too many other deceptive teachers too numerous to name, they preach and teach a gospel of prosperity. Once again I am getting ahead of the message, but you must read carefully Olsteen's popular, best-selling book about the "good life now" in order to come to the chapter where "things" is mentioned 23 times; and where scripture from the Old Testament is perverted to include physical prosperity in a passage that is talking about spiritual prosperity. You see what chance do the listeners to Olsteen and these others have if they are lead to choke out the little seed about Christ which these do plant, if the message of cares of this world, the deceitfulness or riches, and other things is allowed to choke out the Word.

Later we must develop the many ways that people respond to the Seed of the Word, for now we will close with a quick look at the book of Jude. Let me remind you that if false prophets and teachers existed in the time of Jude, and John, and Paul, and Jesus, what do you think is going to happen in this day and time of the Falling Away?

"For certain men (this does not exclude women as men in the Bible is very generic including both men and women)...for certain men have crept in unnoticed {you didn't notice did you, you have been gullible enough to think that anybody who had the courage to preach and teach had to be right}...for certain men have crept in unnoticed {you might ask, where did they crept in; well, they crept into the local churches and the television pulpits and into your living rooms and into your hearts and loyalties}...certain men and women have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation {it is all part of the works known of God and of the Falling Away, not that God planned it, but that he knew it and warned about it; and what is their condemnation, well we read about that

later in Jude}...ungodly men {does that not remind you of II Timothy, the form of godliness without inward power and the 26 bad characteristics of church behaviour—by the way this group is bound to have their leaders that are more aggressive, more brutal, that love money and self more, and love the pleasure of status and admiration more than the whole truth of God}...ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4)

These Bible teachers and leaders turn around what Paul condemned in Romans when he wrote, "Let us sin that grace may abound". Paul said don't do that; and if you do you are presuming on the grace of God. You are attempting to crucify again the Lord Jesus Christ which is impossible, but by doing show you are showing disrespect for Christ, His sacrifice, for God and for the Bible. These are those who read too much into their instantaneous new birth experience which does not last; and those who count on the Security of the Believer without allowing for the Falling Away. {If you don't remember the Security of the Believer versus Falling Away discussion earlier, please read it again.}

## 25

### Seven Responses to Every Word from the Mouth of God and Guidelines for Help

Remember the six responses to the seed of Faith and of the Word of God: (1) The seed sown by the wayside which immediately Satan snatches away {we have called it the SNATCHING which can also have help from false teachers and preachers, at the two extremes of fundamentalism, charismatic, and liberalism, the liberals being more dangerous in this category; (2) the Word from God that is sown on stony ground where the hearer develops no root in their life of faith; (3) the Word sown on stony ground where persecutions and tribulations cause stumbling {these later too we have referred to as STUMBLING}; (4) The Word sown in a heart where there are many thorns of diversions including the cares of this world; and (5) the deceitfulness of riches in

the gospel of prosperity and the American Democratic Faith; (6) The other things of covetousness of the flesh, eyes, and the pride of life; and then (7) the response of the hearer of the Word from Christ's ordained fruits of righteousness come either thirty times, sixty times, or one hundred times.

Now, you must realize that in this parable from Jesus Himself that the soil—either wayside soil, stony, among thorns, or good soil is the human heart which has the freedom of choice. Satan can not force a snatching away from the wayside soil unless that person from which the seed of faith is snatched allows it; and so on through the other kind of soils that that are the freedom of choice of different persons to the Gospel. Jesus is just telling all what can happen, and what in reality will happen when listeners here some of the Word of God and of faith.

1. **SNATCHING.** There is almost no cure for snatching. This seed sown by the wayside would correspond to the majority who go the broad way that leads to destruction: the gospel of the kingdom is preached to them as it goes into all the world before the end time, but it is only in order that they can refuse it, and God can after the end judge them properly based on what they did with His Son, Jesus Christ.

2. The **STUMBLING** caused by no root obvious has the cure of growing roots in the individual believer's life.

3. The **STUMBLING** cause by persecutions and tribulation because of Bible beliefs has several cures.

b. There must be an overwhelming conviction not to go with the crowd. That the majority go the way of destruction and few go the narrow way to life eternal.

- c. There must also be an overwhelming conviction that persecutions and tribulations come to believers for no wrong which they do, God does chastise His own children, and the difficulties are allowed by God to come in order that the believer may grow to be more like Christ.

5. The Falling away caused by the cares of this world likewise has several cures.

- a. Watch the examples that you chose in the local church and at large.
- b. Be careful for nothing, but put every care on God and Christ as instructed to do so, waiting for God to either change it or give you more wisdom to deal with it. {IT IS NOT TRUE THAT THE CLOSER YOU LIVE TO CHRIST, THE LESS CARES AND MORE RICHES THAT YOU WILL HAVE. THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS MORE THE OPPOSITE!

6. The Falling Away caused by the deceitfulness of riches is obvious: don't do that, in other words don't seek after things to the extent that they become more important than the Word of God and a spiritual emphasis; choose the Master carefully, God of Mammon; and Learn Christ properly by seeing Him with the spiritual eye and hearing Him likewise, the Christ who promises that He and the Father will come into the human heart to sup with you personally.

7. The Falling Away caused by the other things of covetousness of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life is once again cured by a definite choice of life style where Christ is made the Master over Mammon, where Christ is learned personally and unlike the rest of the Gentiles; and where the American Democratic Faith does not crowd out the faith of the Bible and Jesus.

8. Fruits of righteousness in our lives needs no cure: only encouragements to keep going; and these encouragements we will do with certain very helpful Scriptures.

Parenthetically, you should apply the characteristics of bad church behavior to the false and heaped up Bible teacher of today, to see if they really apply to their lives and messages: (1) men will be lovers of themselves—man, does that every apply have you ever seen some many teachers and preachers all wrapped up in themselves, and excusing that self-centeredness in terms of this is part of the call of God which it is not; (2) lovers of money, wow, what can I say they all ask for money as a way to receive the blessings of God—last week one of these false Bible teachers used an Old Testament verse to encourage people next January to receive the blessings of the first fruits by send those first fruits of the year to them—which is definitely a teacher of the exegesis of scriptures for the benefit of their personal gain; (3) boasters—wow, do you ever hear the boastings of the great works they do for God in the extraordinary life, in writings, and in the things they provide for you—all of these going back to getting money for you in order to promote their personal gain; (4) proud—yes, you can see the pride oozes out of the messages without apology as they are popular and suppose that they being well-to-do have been blessed by God rather than Satan who promises who give the whole world to those who will worship and serve him; and (5) Blasphemers—yes, I have personally heard these Bible teachers take the name of God in vain; however this is also done with false claims under the name of Christ are made which are not shown, the matter of "and let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity {Why indeed do they expect you to accept them in the name of Christ as you do not know that Christ chose them for that ministry, if they are liscensed and ordained or sponsored; but they expect you to accept them for their boldness and much speaking, for their attractiveness, and for they subltly to tell you what you want to hear}....

"These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." (Jude 12,13)

Now, be honest when you listen to some of these heaped up teachers of the time of the Falling Away, don't you hear the raging wind and see the foam?

You get the picture, and you can apply the Word of God on bad church behavior to many of these heaped up teachers so as not to have any thing to do with them: (6) disobedient to parents, don't you doubt that they really learned these teachings from their parents; (7) unthankful unless you send them money; (8) unholy—if you listen careful some of those things that they encourage you to do, noting the response of the audience, while bodacious are downright unholy, quite unlike Christ and God; (9) unloving---this is the main thing that you can not see in some body remotely teaching to you without seeing you and asking for your money in return: they really don't care about you; (10) unforgiving; (11) slanderers—like Jude said they speak evil of those things which they do not understand as often they are amateurs, albeit aggressive amateurs in the faith; (12) without self-control—you especially see that among the charismatic where they present the lack of self-control to simulate emotion, not taking heed to Paul's admonition to "let all things be done decently and in order" and the admonition to "speak in the church only for edification, exhortation, and comfort—while many times this false Bible teachers and only comforting themselves with a crowd response and much hand-waving {it is much like a young engineer at work telling of how Jakes was teaching somebody how to speak in tongues, giving them certain words to use not in a real language}; (13) brutal—oh yes, you will notice that in word and deed they can be brutal if anything seems to threaten them or their so-

called ministry; (14) despisers of good—what do you think that they think of the minister that labors quietly and tirelessly without popularity and prosperity; (14) traitors—yes, to Christ, the Bible, and the kingdom of God—respect for the authority of the Word of God is not one of their strong points, spiritualizing is but not exegesis {to make a list is not to do exegesis when it is spiritualizing}; (15) headstrong, uh, do you not see headstrong—I am going here right or wrong regardless of what anyone says, and you will like it; (16) haughty—yes, that comes with the headstrong behavior you see from them; (17) lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God—I would think that you might see in the good life, and the extraordinary life, and the resources for women of faith, and many other approaches, a love of pleasure more than a love of God; (18) a form of godliness—yes, that look and act religious especially with their tongues, but where are their hearts—that denies the power of God; (19) they are obviously the kind that should be turned away from, at least to the extent of no support and no loyalty which is taken away from your local church where the pastors labors without prosperity, fame, and status; (20) there is an age-long history of gullible women who with time and money on their hands seek learning, being taken captive by false teachers {one reason that you hear of so many women preachers and teachers now who have focused on the homes where women live and work}; (21) They promote a learning of the Bible which never gets to the real truth of God; (22) Like Jannes and Jambres they resist the God ordained leaders like Moses, and all the truth that comes from these God-ordained, Christ chosen, and Holy Spirit promoted leaders; (23) they are men and women of corrupt minds who conscience has long ago be killed as the word in their hearts was choked out; and (24) they are disapproved concerning the faith—well, just the lack of obvious approval tells you that perhaps they never had any approval from God in the first place even if they can boast and show pride in so many converts where the new birth was received with great joy, and looked

like salvation, but the STUMBLINGS and Falling Away of time chocked out any good seed, if the seed was good at all.

26

## NOTHING BUT THE CURES AND ENCOURAGEMENTS

Nothing But Encouragements and Cures for the Falling Away, the Snatching, and the Stumbling

If you made it this far, that is commendable; and I apologize that we had to go through so much slop in order to keep here. I promise you that this section will be NOTHING BUT ENCOURAGEMENTS AND CURES FOR THE FALLING AWAY, THE SNATCHING FROM SATAN, AND THE STUMBLING.

1. SNATCHING. There is almost no cure for snatching. This seed sown by the wayside would correspond to the majority who go the broad way that leads to destruction: the gospel of the kingdom is preached to them as it goes into all the world before the end time, but it is only in order that they can refuse it, and God can after the end judge them properly based on what they did with His Son, Jesus Christ.

However, one possible way to alleviate the snatching work of Satan, his angels, and servants (the world if you please) would be by more awareness of the authority of the Bible as the Word of God. There is among us far too little respect for every word that proceeds from the mouth of God; and without the prerequisite respect, there does not come the subsequent recognition of the practical authority of the Bible.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God", Old and New Testament books has not sunk into us. It just has not dawned on us that God is trying to talk to the whole world of His creation through the books of the Bible. The world of religions and denominations offer many substitutes for the process of sanctification. Sanctification is the process after the new birth

whereby the believer grows more into the stature of Christ. Doctrines of devils and seducing spirits like the "sacrament" of the Roman Catholic Churches, and other denominations who did not break with church history and tradition in favor of the Bible, advocate a substitute for the Bible doctrine of sanctification. This substitute offers the false teaching that in the sacrament the bread actually becomes the body of Christ and the wine the blood: and this is where forgiveness occurs, continue salvation, growth, and sanctification. NO, it is by prayer, Bible, and seeking to live out in life every word of the Bible. Yes, that is often a trial and error method which can be compared to stumbling, and we will look at that next. First some last words on the advice of the Scripture, "that the man or women of God may be matured, grown into the full stature of Christ"—what some would like to believe is an easy way, a way that can be administered by a select few that call themselves ministers of priests, really comes through Bible, Bible, and more Bible.

2. The STUMBLING caused by no root obvious has the cure of growing roots in the individual believer's life. I can think of no better way to get into the "cures" and "encouragements" for stumbling than by looking at where the word is mentioned in the New Testament, because often the cure is mentioned with the stumbling.

- (1). If you walk in the daylight, you will stumble less, Jesus taught; and yes, more in parables where it has additional spiritual meaning.

"If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." (John 11:9,10)

If you study carefully the context, you will see that the disciples try to keep Jesus from doing what He should do because of the expected opposition. Jesus is saying that in order to do the will of God—and certainly you do pray "thy kingdom come, thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven—in order to do the will of God you must keep your eyes on Jesus as the light of the world. The light of the world which is Jesus must be inside you first, before you can keep your eyes on it. Yes, we are back again to what it means to learn Christ in Ephesians: what it means when Paul says “if indeed Christ you have heard Him and been taught of Him.” And the how as I have said many times comes from the answers of Jesus to three significant questions from the Apostles as recorded in John 14. The first question and answer respectively are: (a) Where did Jesus go when He left this earth and what is the way to Him and the Father? And the answer is that Jesus Himself is “the way, the truth, and the life”; (b) Show us God the Father?

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father, so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves” (John 14:9-11)

(c) Lord, how will you manifest yourselves to us and not unto the world? (John 14:22)

Answer: “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.” (John 14:23)

Thus this is a lot better, and even more mysterious, than some magical that get be worked with the bread and wine actually turning into Christ's body and blood for salvation.

(2). And we should also always remember that salvation starts in the new birth and continues in sanctification and ends in the new body at the resurrection by FAITH. Like we are told in Galatians 2:20, “and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

(3). Hebrews 12:12-17 mentions the process of stumbling without using the words in some cases, and you know how this twelfth chapter starts with a looking toward Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith; yet considered that God like a Father who are his own children will chastise, does bring difficulties or challenges into our lives in order to promote holiness.

"Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for you feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright." (Hebrews 12:12-17)

(a). As difficulties come in life, even persecutions and tribulations for Bible beliefs and expressions, the comforting words of faith in the Bible can strengthen hands and arms, feeble knees.

(b). The advice of the Scripture—"the profit for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness" if you would—can show the way to the preventive measures of straight paths that will prevent stumbling.

(c). These same words of Scriptures can provide the healing of weaknesses.

(d). Without the peace of Christ as contrasted to the peace which the world provides, which is the peace that God makes between God and man and between man and man, there is no inward or later physical seeking of God—"Blessed are the pure in heart {made so by the righteousness of God through faith alone}, for they shall see God".

(e). "Fall short of the grace of God" by the substitution of another means of grace and salvation which is by works more than by continuing faith, and fall short in works of what is demanded when the real new birth is there with proper sanctification.

(f). Roots of bitterness spring up among believers as the great spiritual birthright of believers is profaned by the desires and temporal needs.

3. The Falling away caused by the cares of this world likewise has several cures.

(1). The number one cure for the cares of this world, a characteristic of kingdom members in the Sermon on the Mount, is given by Jesus as faith that God like He takes care of the birds and the lillies will provide your needs.

(2). The second cure for the cares of this world centered around the anxieties of the future is to concentrate on today, letting tomorrow take care of the things of itself.

(3). A third cure, also a characteristic of the in-group of the kingdom is to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness", and God Himself will take care of adding these other things to you.

a. Watch the examples that you chose in the local church and at large.

b. Be careful for nothing, but put every care on God and Christ as instructed to do so, waiting for God to either change it or give you more wisdom to deal with it. {IT IS NOT TRUE THAT THE CLOSER YOU LIVE TO CHRIST, THE LESS CARES AND MORE RICHES THAT YOU WILL HAVE.

THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE IS MORE THE OPPOSITE!

4. The Falling Away caused by the deceitfulness of riches is obvious: don't do that, in other words don't seek after things to the extent that they become more important than the Word of

God and a spiritual emphasis; chose the Master carefully, God of Mammon; and Learn Christ properly by seeing Him with the spiritual eye and hearing Him like wise, the Christ who promises that He and the Father will come into the human heart to sup with you personally.

(1). The cure for the deceitfulness of riches is to make God master instead of any of the mammon creations of man.

(2). Another cure for the deceitfulness of riches is also a kingdom member characteristic, lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven instead of here on earth. How you do that is part of the challenge of the Christian calling.

5. The Falling Away caused by the other things of covetousness of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life is once again cured by a definite choice of life style where Christ is made the Master over Mammon, where Christ is learned personally and unlike the rest of the Gentiles; and where the American Democratic Faith does not crowd out the faith of the Bible and Jesus.

Well, we are really at 8 because we added to the list of responses, the seed sown by the wayside and the seed that is fruitful.

Fruits of righteousness in our lives needs no cure: only encouragements to keep going; and these encouragements we will do with certain very helpful Scriptures.

## CHRIST'S KINGDOM

How much more do you hear about the local churches and denominations today, than you hear about the kingdom of Christ; yet it was the opposite in the teachings of Christ. Only once does He mention the church, and that is not about a local church but rather about the total body of Christ, the one written in heaven, the general assembly and church of Christ the Firstborn. Why do people talk

about and consider "church", "churches", and denominations more than Christ's kingdom? One thing Christ's kingdom has no church roll. You can not clearly identify the members of the kingdom of Christ as you can the members of the First Baptist or First Presbyterian Church, and consequently you can not number the contemporary members of the kingdom as you can gloat over the ten thousand or so members of Preston Road Baptist Church. You can not say of the kingdom members that they must be doing something right since there are so many members, like you can say of a 10 thousand member local church that they must have something. There is a very mercenary aspect in that the people of a local church, since they pay the pastor a salary, or in some cases the denomination pays the salary, they think that the pastor should be working for them and the local church or denomination more than he should be working for the kingdom of Christ. In other words souls saved and souls helped which does not service the ministry of the local church or promote the numbers of the local church or denomination is not the pastor doing the work of the ministry. How often have you been invited to a local church or to hear a local pastor, and compare that with how often you have been invited to be a kingdom citizen or to enhance your member characteristics in the kingdom of Christ. It is our propensity for numbers of the American Democratic Faith that leads us to think that large universities and large churches are more worthy than small churches, or more worthy of consideration than is the kingdom of Christ.

I. It was very important to Jesus of Nazareth that people hear that His teachings came from God the Father. Jesus said to the people listening, "These are not my teachings, but I am only repeating what I heard from God the Father." The Gospel of John presents this best, and in these words.

(1). The teachings of Jesus are bread of life which the Father has given to the Son to pass on to kingdom subjects (John 6:27).

"Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

(2). The teachings of Jesus are based on the will of God, made clear to Jesus before entrance on this planet, that He should collect around Himself those disciples of the kingdom that God has given to the Son, and that He should lose none of them; but for the first time collect all of them in a physical and complete organization as Christ raises them up "at the last day." Someone asked me, "does time cease at the Second Coming". Well, since it is the last day of 24 hours; thus when the days cease then the time of hours, minutes, and seconds has no meaning. Certainly time must lose meaning with the prospect of on-going eternity as promised by God and Jesus, eternal punishment for the wicked and unbelievers and eternal reward for the believers. {The kingdom members if you would!}

"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lost nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." (John 6:39)

Now be sensible, how would you identify the "all God has given to Jesus" except as the kingdom of Christ and of God. It certainly could not correlate with your church where some are the wheat and some of the chaff; nor your denomination where the same is true.

(3). Jesus referred to His teachings as doctrines from God with the authority of God, and further promised that any kingdom subject would be able to recognize the doctrines that came from Him and God as contrasted to the doctrines which have another source, that is from man and from Satan.

"Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own

authority. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him." (John 6:16-18)

A little exegesis, or reading out the meaning here, is in order: (a) The doctrines or teachings of Jesus did not exclusively belong to Jesus, but had their source in God the Father, and were teachings based on the mind and character of God which Jesus received from God the Father; (b) An established principle of how to understand the Bible (the parables of the Bible itself if you would) is A WILLINGNESS TO DO THE WILL OF GOD {you see nothing about education or degrees or status as a scholar; and here the Bible and Bible learning is unlike any other subject of learning}; (c) Here we see a taste of false Bible teachers and preachers as those "who speak from himself" and "seeks His own glory"—what is the source of the itching ears teachers who ears itch because they are stopped up and can not hear: Their teachings have no authoritative source, only the source of their own imagination; and they seek their own status or glory rather than of God the Father as Jesus did; (d) this speaking from one's self and seeking one's own glory is called "unrighteousness", although we know that they claim, like the Pharisees and Saducees, and other religious leaders to do it in the name of God.

II. So much more important is it to know about the kingdom of Christ and God more than about a local church or denomination, that we should spend some time considering the most single important source of Jesus' teachings of the kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, and primarily the most thorough presentation in Matthew 5-7. {I think right here it would be wise to use the thorough treatment by A. T. Robertson in A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

First the subject according to Robertson of the Sermon on the Mount is "PRIVILEGES AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE MESSIANIC REIGN {this by the way is another way of saying the kingdom of Christ}...CHRIST'S STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. You can, I believe still purchase

a copy of this helpful book. I will not try to list the details of the verses as you read them for yourselves, and you can recognize the similarity to the characteristics of kingdom members that were previously put in a table for comparison with good and bad church behavior characteristics. I will, however, list where the outline subject is covered in the *Gospels*, for you will see that Luke gets into it as well as Matthew.

1. Introduction: The Blessings and the Woes of kingdom membership which are privileges of the Messiah's subjects. (Matthew 5:3-12 and Luke 6:20-26)

2. The Theme of the Sermon: Christ's Standards of Righteousness in Contrast with that of the Scribes and Pharisees, the religious leaders of Christ's time. (Matthew 5:13-20)

3. Christ's Ethical Teaching Superior to that of the Scribes (both of the Old Testament and the Oral Law) in Six Items or Illustrations. (Matthew 5:21-48)

a. Murder.

d. Oaths.

b. Adultery.

E. Retaliations

c. Divorce.

F. Love of Enemies.

4. The Practice of Real Righteousness unlike the Ostentatious Hypocrisy of the Pharisees, as in Almsgiving, Prayer, and Fasting. (Matthew 6:1-18)

NOTE: All of these are characteristics of worship and personal devotion life—the subject of many heaped Bible teachers today which also pervert the real righteousness into ostentatious hypocrisy only enhanced as no other age in history by the American Democratic Faith characteristic of a dominance by “tolerance”. Therefore would you not expect to see Pharisees and hypocrites today in public worship.

5. Single-hearted Devotion to God, as Opposed to Worldly Aims and Anxieties. (Matthew 6:19-34)

6. Captious Criticism or Judging Others. (Matthew 7:1-6 and Luke 6:37-42)

NOTE: The only legitimate and authoritative source of criticism, or judgment, is judgment based on the same Scriptures by which we are judged. Opinions, no matter how authoritatively made with aggressive behavior or from whom do not get it: only what is clearly based on the Word of God and provided to the listener with evidence.

7. Prayer and the Golden Rule. (Matthew 7:7-12 and Luke 6:31)

8. The Conclusion of the Sermon: the Lesson of Personal Righteousness Driven Home by Powerful Parables (Matthew 7:13-8:1 and Luke 6:43-49)

And this brings us back to parables as examples and influence of the teachings of Jesus, and you will note how most of these have to do, not with churches and denominations, but with the kingdom.

## 28

### Parables of the Kingdom of Christ

While there are 52 parables in the four Gospels, we certainly do not have time for all 52; but we once again will focus on the shorter form and action of Mark where there are much fewer; and again as often in these messages, we will call attention to the kingdom nature of these parables.

I. And before we look with a little more detail at the parables of Mark only, I would like to introduce this message with another borrowing from Robertson's HARMONY OF THE GOSPEL, a section which he calls "THE FIRST GREAT GROUP OF PARABLES".

1. Introduction to the Group, beside the sea of Galilee. (Mark 4:1,2 and Matthew 13:1-3, and Luke 8:4)

Once again Jesus had to use the boat that He and His disciples had reserved as a rescue from the press of the crowd. This time Jesus taught from the boat on the sea while the crowd was on the land.

## 2. Parables to the Crowd by the Sea.

Recall this is the first great group of parables, the first large body of Jesus' teachings where He wanted the kingdom members to understand without the doctors of the law understanding. And what do you think is first on the list of the great group of parables? Yes, the parable of the seed and the sower with the SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND THE FALLING AWAY; and of course, above all the seed of faith planted in the hearts by hearing where the fruit of the new birth is actually produced with a continuation in the sanctification of more fold.

(1). The Parable of the Sower. {Mark 4:3-25, Matthew 13:3-23, and Luke 8:5-18}

(2). Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself. (Mark 4:26-29)

You would have to say that this is an emphasis of the Gospel of Mark since Mark only mentions it, and wouldn't you know it, it is a parable about "the kingdom of God".

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come" [see Joel 3:13]

(a) This teaching of Jesus is also of no private interpretation: Jesus get it from God the Father and the Father made the teaching or truth known to the Prophet Joel as recorded in Joel 3:13. It is a reference to the Judgment after the Second Coming of Christ when the tares are separate from the wheat, member of the kingdom from non-members.

"Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, go down; for the winepress is full, the vats overflow—for the wickedness is great." (Joel 3:13)

{NOTE: It must remind one of how during the Falling Away just before the Second Coming and the end of the last day, Jesus said that because sin or lawlessness will increase the love of many will wax cold. Who are the many? Certainly not kingdom members but certainly church members!}

(b) We do not see the full marvels of the salvation experience that creates kingdom members. Like the marvel of seed growing when planted, with sun and water, etc, so the kingdom members grow through first the new birth, then the Christlikeness called sanctification, and finally at the Return of Christ, the body resurrection.

(3). Parable of the Tares. (Matthew 13:24-30)

The moral of this story or teaching from Jesus is clear: those not really born again in the churches are to be left alone until the time of Final Judgement less any attempt by disciples to ferret them out might out harm the true members of the kingdom. "Let both grow together" Jesus says.

(4). Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Mark 4:30-32 and Matthew 13:31-32)

(5). Parable of the Leaven and many such Parables. (Mark 4:33-34 and Matthew 13:33-35)

Jesus found that His congregation by the Seashore could not take unlimited parables.

"And with many such parables, {like the parable of the leaven that the woman hid in 3 measure of meal that leaven all the bread, or caused it to rise that Matthew records}...spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it: and without a parable spake He not unto them: but privately to his disciples he expounded all things." (Mark 4:33-34)

Matthew adds:

"All these things spake Jesus in parables unto the multitudes; and without a parable spake he nothing unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet {which Prophet, the Prophet David which we can tell by finding the words in the book of Psalms}, saying, 'I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world [see Psalms 78:2].'"  
(Matthew 13:33-35)

NOTE: You can tell that Jesus had talked over this hidden mystery of the kingdom with God the Father from the very beginning of the foundation of the world!

3. To the Disciples privately in the House.

(1). Explanation of the Parable of the Tares. (Matthew 13:36-43)

- a. The good seed is sown by the Son of God, and the field where the seed is sown is the world.
- b. The good seed is the sons of the kingdom. It is generic it means that the good seed is the sons and daughters of kingdom citizenship.
- c. The tares are the sons of Satan, and the sower of these evil seeds is the Devil.
- d. The harvest is the end of the world and the reapers are the angels.
- e. As tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so this also will happen to the tares at the end of the world.
- f. The Son of God sends His angels at the end to gather out and away from the kingdom of Christ: all things that cause STUMBLING, all them that do iniquity: these will be cast into the furnance of fire where they shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

g. Then shall the righteous shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

[see Daniel 12:3]

h. Let him that has ears, let him hear; that is, if the ears are not itching because they are stopped up in order that they may not hear.

(2). The Parable of the Hid Treasure. (Matthew 13:44)

(3). The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price. (Matthew 13:45-46)

(4). The Parable of the Net. (Matthew 13:47-50)

(5). The Parable of the Householder. (Matthew 13:51-53)

## 29

### THE PARABLES OF MARK

It would appear that even as the Apostle John builds his Gospel around only seven miracles, that Mark builds his Gospel around a few of the 52 parables, and those tell much of the kingdom. And wouldn't you know it that even as John chose seven, a magical number in the Bible, Mark chose the number 12, also magical. There are 12 parables in the Gospel of Mark which affords within itself an outline of the Gospel of Mark.

1. The Three Parables about the Ways of the New Kingdom. (Mark 2:18-22)

First, Jesus teaches unique periods of spiritual concern and emphasis where living by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God becomes so the focus that fasting comes natural in order to ignore the needs of living by bread alone. This, of course, is only for dedicated disciples of Christ like the first disciples and apostles. Jesus taught them to enjoy His fellowship now, like the bride for the bridegroom, and that they could fast for his fellowship

later when He went back to the Father. Jesus taught not to sew a piece of un-shrunk garment on an old garment which had already shrunk as it would tear. Jesus did not seek reformation from religious traditions as represented by the Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist who fasted, Jesus sought a new way of faith, salvation, and kingdom membership. This also is represented in the putting of new wine into old wine skins where it is spilled and bursts. New wine, like that represented by the faith and gospel of Jesus, requires a completely new wine skin of the new birth, sanctification, and the new body at the Resurrection.

## 2. Parables about the kingdom of Satan. (Mark 3:19-30)

Satan leads his followers like the religious scribes to accuse others, even Jesus, of being led by Satan when their behavior is different. Jesus said that Satan can not cast Satan, so that if you can find a faith healer that actually cast out Satan then you have found a real one. Jesus established the principle of the immutability of kingdoms: a divided kingdom falls. Jesus applied to this to other institutions such as houses so that we can also apply it to other institutions such as churches and denominations. As they are divided, they fall! Jesus taught that if Satan would rise up against Himself, he would also fall—however, Satan is too smart to do that; and until the end, when Christ casts Him into the lake of fire and brimstone with all his angels and disciples. Jesus then emphasizes that it is not the words of blasphemy that determine eternal fate: it is the inward response to Jesus through the Holy Spirit that either brings forgiveness or eternal condemnation.

## 3. Famous Parable of SNATCHING, STUMBLING, and the Falling Away, the Parable of the Seed and Sower. (Mark 4:3-25)

Well, I think you understand it by now! The seed sown by the wayside is where the Word of God and of faith is planted in the human heart, then Satan—who goes about the world for that very purpose and his fellow demons and disciples—immediately snatches it away; and the cure is don't let him do

that: you have freedom of choice, you must decide for yourself, and just one little cry for help to God in the most rudimentary of all prayers will prevent Satan from doing his dirty work. Something like, "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief", or "God, forgive my sin of unbelief."

The stumbling comes from no root in the Bible and Christ, and comes from an insufficient response to persecutions and tribulations which must come when one stands up for the truth of Christ and the Bible. The cure for this is to recognize the inevitability of persecutions, to recognize that the majority will go the broad way that leads to destruction, and to be aware that God chastizes His own like a Father those that are not bastard children.

The Falling Away can not come into your life as it will inevitably overwhelm the world and the churches, if you do not allow yourself to: (1) be motivated by your own desires, wants, or wishes than more by the Bible; and (2) if you do not develop an intolerance for sound doctrine. The warning should be to you if you tend to turn away listening from any sound of sound teachings of Christ and the Bible.

#### 4. Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself. {Mark 4:26-29}

Do not count of what the world around consider as important as you will not see often and hear often of the seed of the kingdom as it grows. The kingdom of Christ will not be in the history books, or on television, and less and less even from the pulpits and church members as the Falling Away grows full. However Christ's kingdom will continue to grow, unseen and unheard!

#### 5. Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Mark 4:30-32)

Like the mustard seed is the smallest of all seeds, so the kingdom of Christ is so much smaller from the visibility standpoint of the world than was the Roman kingdom, or the nation of Israel, or the kingdom or nation of the United States. Each day and each year, for thousands of years, it has grown—the members of which are written in heaven on the only true church roll of the Assembly of

the Firstborn—and those thousands and thousands will be assembly at the end of time in the New Jerusalem with the new heavens and the new earth.

6. Parable of the Leaven. (Mark 4:33,34)

On this occasion of Jesus' teaching about the leaven, the only part that Mark records is about the subject of parables itself.

"And with many such parables He spoke the word to them as they were able to hear it {spiritual hearing and growth are part of the living and time process, and unsound doctrine because it has not yet been grown into is to be distinguished from a mind-set of the Falling Away where there is actually an intolerance for sound doctrine as personal desires take over as the primary motivation}

And when they were alone, He explained all things to His disciples." (Mark 4:33,34)

You will have to get alone with Jesus, during prayer, and even Bible reading, in order to have all these things explained to you; and I hope that you realize that the way Jesus works personally now is through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus also taught them as recorded in John 14-16 after He taught the way to really see Jesus and be taught by Him.

(1). God and Jesus dwell in the human hearts today through the inward presence of the spirit of God and Christ, the Holy Spirit.

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." (John 14: 15-17)

(2) This Helper, the inward Holy Spirit, teaches parables and other spiritual things, and even uses the memory of the teachings of Christ, to recall spiritual things.

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." (John 14:26)

(3). When you sense conviction of sin, or of the need for righteousness like Jesus, or of eternal judgment about which the world seldom whispers, it is the inward work of the Holy Spirit; and when there is real revival, it is because the Holy Spirit is collectively at work in a special way.

"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more {the main way of see God and righteousness if by looking at Jesus, today looking at Jesus in the words of the Bible}; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." (John 16:8-10)

That this ruler of the world to be judged includes the President of the United States, the kings and governmental officials of all other countries is true; but primarily is the favorite title for Satan, the prince of the air or the ruler of the world. As he is judged in completeness and finality, all unbelievers will be judged in finality.

#### 7. The Parable of the contrast between Stomach and Heart. (Mark 7:1-23)

Jesus tried to make it clear what was wrong with the religion of the Pharisees and scribes after their criticism of the disciples eating without a ritual of cleansing of hands. Here is the sequence of these verses—(a) The Pharisees and all the other Jews in that time, according to the traditions of the elders, wash their hands in a special way; (b) When they come from shopping, they will not eat without that ritual; and there are many other little rituals they hold to like the washing of cups, pitchers, vessels, and couches; (c) These religious leaders asked Jesus why His disciples did not also hold to the traditions of the elders {you see here was more effort to put the new wine in old wineskins, the unshrunk garment on the old garment}; (d) Jesus taught how this was foretold by the Prophet Isaiah as people who honor God with their little rituals and lips while their hearts are far

away from God {Isaiah 29:13}; (e) And Isaiah warned of a vain worship that many could and would practice throughout time {more so, of course, during the Falling Away} while they were (f) teaching for doctrines the commandments of men {sound familiar as a characteristic of the Falling Away "when they will no longer endure sound doctrine} and with the substitution of "desires" is the commandments of men for justification; (g) Jesus said that such religious people and leaders lay aside the commandments of God, replacing them with the "traditions of men" {does that not sound like the heaping up process of teachers with itching ears, heaping out the commandments of God and heaping in the traditions of men—caution about accepting only what is traditional, or old, or what could come from traditions of men}; and (h) Jesus said that they reject the commandments of God in order to keep their traditions.

(1). Jesus gives a specific example of a tradition passed down that replaced the commandments of God to honor Father and Mother. They were so religious that what they would have given to parents, they gave to their religious establishment, with great fanfare I might add, so that only a note went to their parents saying, "The support for you was given to charity."

(2). Jesus taught that it was true that nothing which comes into a man's stomach can defile him spiritual: the things which come out of the heart is what defiles a man.

(3). Jesus explained later to the disciples that what comes out of man's heart are: evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; and don't those remind you of the bad behaviors of church members listed in II Timothy where there is a form of godliness {religion if you please} without the inward power. Could some of the bad church behavior come from the hearts of church members, not born again? These things defile church members, defile the churches, and defile the name of

Christ. They promote a lack of loyalty to Christ, to what churches should stand for; and eventually this extends to the pastors that are run off {heaped away}.

#### 8. The Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard. (Mark 10:17-31)

Once again Mark does not record the parable itself of the laborers and the vineyard, but rather derives from it some of the conclusions about the kingdom: (1) many that are first now in Christ's kingdom, that take the first place and the upper status will be last, and the last first; (2) there are none who give up houses and relatives now for the sake of the Gospel who will not be compensated in this life and the life to come; (3) How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God; and (4) When the disciples wondered who then could be saved if not the well-to-do moral majority, Jesus told the disciples that all things not possible to man are possible with God.

#### 9. The Parable of the Withered Fig Tree. (Mark 11:20-24)

Now right up to the time of the end of Mark, you will see in the actions of Jesus and the parables and other teachings an emphasis on the Fig Tree as a very symbol of the nation of Israel itself. More importantly, it is also a representation of any where and in any nations or church where the seed of the Word has been sown without the tenfold, thirty-fold, and one hundred fold fruit. Why was Jesus so concerned for this particular fig tree. He was not. It was a parable of the ultimate rejection in three and a half years of the Jews of the nation of Israel, a rejection not to be reversed until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete. This only assured the preservation of the United States as the world leader among the Gentiles in the spreading of the Gospel of Christ, but for which we now see more signs that this protective umbrella has been moved: indeed the time of the Fullness of the Gentiles may be nearing completion. We eagerly look for some revival among the Jewish people.

#### 10. The Parable of the Wicked Winedressers. {Mark 12:1-12}

We must remember that at this point Jesus has not yet been killed; however Israel as representing "God's people on earth" had killed many of the Old Testament Prophets when they faithfully spoke the Word from God. So Jesus in this parable speaks of the wicked windressers who would not allow the owner to make His profits from the fruit. They killed servants sent by Him and they killed His own Son. What will the Father do after the crucifixion of Christ? He will wait a few years and then He will cut off that nation of windressers from even the ability to see and hear spiritual truth.

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." (Jesus quotes from Psalm 118:22,23)

You see, more of the withered fig tree. The Jews are rejected in a few years as the Gospel is preached increasingly to the Gentiles. The building becomes the new spiritual temple of the kingdom or the church, the building not made with heavens, eternal and in the heavens.

#### 11. Another Parable of the Fig Tree. (Mark 13:28-31)

Again the fig tree: you know that when you see the leaves come on the fig tree that summer is near; even so Jesus having listed all the signs of the end time, refers to these as the leaves which foretell the imminent spring of God. And you will come a lot closer to understand how all these signs of the end time started happening in the lifetime of Jesus disciples, although they grew in magnitude later: (1) the beginning of sorrows of deceitful preachers, wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines; (2) the persecutions for Jesus sake, the preaching of the Gospel to every nation, the abomination of desolation with the destruction of the temple and the daily sacrifice of Daniel along with all of Jerusalem as the sorrows continue and grow; and (3) tribulation more than the world has ever seen—the great tribulation as contrasted to the very

end time last tribulation caused more by natural things as fire and the dis-integration of the universe.

12. Parable of the Porter. (Mark 13:32-37)

Jesus said it is like a man going on a trip, leaving his house into the care of servants and the doorkeeper, demanding to "watch" since the exact hour of return would not be known. The angels do not know that Day of the Lord, only God the Father knows.

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SOME MORE UNDERSTANDING OF THE SOUNDS OF THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

In this message we continue to add to the "kingdom" teachings of Jesus and Mark, the miracles of Jesus. You are probably amazed at how many of the 35 recorded miracles of Jesus are listed in the little 16 chapter book of Mark. One would almost think that in the testimonies of Peter and James which Paul left for John Mark to write the *Gospel of Mark* and for Dr. Luke to write the *Gospel of Luke*, they were listed by the miracles of Jesus. Certainly in the minds of the Apostles Peter and James, although they themselves never wrote a biography of Jesus, when they taught and preached the miracles must have stuck in their minds far more than any other aspect of the ministry of Jesus besides the resurrection, also a miracle performed on Jesus by God, and the Ascension of Jesus back to the right hand of God the Father. We know that the miracles were the basis that the Apostle John used to write the *Gospel of John*; however John carefully chose only 7 of those miracles and wove the biography of Jesus around them. Of course, the young John Mark would have some of his own memories of these miracles, and the stir it caused in the small country of Palestine. You have previously seen how that step by step this performance of miracles, as the work of God and only possible by God, was what led the disciples like Peter, James, John, and consequently also John Mark to come to accept Jesus of

Nazareth as the Son of God, also as the Promised Messiah of the Old Testament who would save His people from their sins.

We still do not fully appreciate the full implications of who this Jesus of Nazareth is and was: how the very Word Himself of Creation could humble Himself to be born of the virgin Mary, by the power of God—just imagine He the Word who when the Father said let there be light, and stars, and dry land, etc was the mediating cause to make it so. No wonder He could walk on water which He and God the Father made; still the wind which He and God the Father created; and patch up the broken bodies that He and the Father made as the crown of creation.

It is at this point in Mark, chapter 9, that less of the 35 miracles are recorded by John Mark and more of them by Dr. Luke. It would be interesting to know which outline, or the personal experience of John Mark or even the leadership of the Holy Spirit, was determinative in this little bit of history, the outline from (1) Peter, (2) James, (3) the Old Testament quotes from Paul, (4) John Mark's own personal outline from being part of the history of Jesus on earth, (5) or even an agreement between John Mark and Dr. Luke with the collaboration of the Apostle John as Dr. Luke and John Mark survived and researched and wrote at the home of John and Mary in Ephesus. It would be quiter, of course, while John was in exile on the isle of Patmos. And here we see another check and source of the writings of the three Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John—that of Mary's testimony—and of course, the tax collector and Apostle Matthew with so many quotes and miracles from Jesus would have written by now His account of the life of Jesus so that became part of the research.

Dr. Luke was in a way speaking for all of them when he began the Gospel of Luke with the following words.

"Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled {you see right here how the narrative of Dr. Luke as well as the other biographers of the narrative on earth of the life of Jesus was based on the fulfillment of Old Testament Scriptures}...just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us {obviously Matthew, and Peter and James through the recorded testimonies by Paul, and John where Luke and John Mark wrote}...it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first {Dr. Luke had some personal experience and even more personal understanding}...to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus {this narrative from Luke had a very simple beginning as a testimony from Dr. Luke to a ruler—of course, a possible sponsor and publisher, but even as Paul had much greater things in mind for Luke and Mark as part of the New Testament Canon when he left the manuscripts and parchments for John Mark and Luke, so also did God Himself, the Great Maker of History, have in mind a complete book of 66 books that would be authoritative, as from God which it is, to be an immutable standard for the Gospel and all truth from God as the Fulness of the Gentiles was carried out, and the salvation of approximately 100,000 Jews before the three and one half years was complete, with the salvation of no more Jews, after Jesus' triumphant entry. {This was part of the message given to Daniel of the history from Daniel's time to the end that made him so sick as he learned the fate of most of his own people.}}

Six of the miracles as far as recording are skipped in Mark while Luke and John record them, and then in the tenth chapter of Mark, both Matthew, Luke, and Mark record the healing miracle of Jesus on blind Bartimaeus and his companion. {It pays to keep good company, especially when that companion is about to be healed by Jesus Himself!}

We must list some of the miracle of Jesus' own resurrection, especially the appearances of the Risen Jesus that Mark records.

1. The appearance of the Risen Jesus to Mary Magdalene, Mark 16:9-11, though whom He gives an oral message to the disciples.
2. The appearance of the Risen Jesus to two disciples, Cleopas included, on the road to Emmaus, Mark 16:12,13.
3. The appearance of Jesus to all of the first disciples {the eleven remaining} except for Thomas as they ate supper in a locked room, Mark 16:14

NOTE: Once again you notice the condensed, action filled nature of the Gospel of Mark as, contrasted to the other records, it takes only 6 verses in Mark 16 to mention these three appearances. "Is there no end to these appearances and the testimonies that would come from them of disciples," the Jewish leaders who had Christ crucified must have thought. They needed to counter this faith in the Resurrected Christ, so they invented {would religious leaders really do this in order to protect truth as they saw it and their own positions} a story when they heard the testimony of the Roman Centurion as to what really happened at the tomb as he saw it, the tale would be that some disciples came to steal His body.

4. Jesus had appointed a place and time of meeting with His disciples before His crucifixion {Jesus always planned ahead as He did at the beginning of His ministry when He had the ship ready on the shore of the Sea of Galilee as an escape from the pressing crowds}, and we are told only that it was a mountain in Galilee where over 500 disciples witness the Risen Christ, Mark 16:15-18. {It is only the Apostle Paul who records the appearance of Jesus to the Apostle James, in I Corinthians 15:76, before He appeared to the 11 with

Thomas present: James, as the future leader in Jerusalem and pastor of the first local assembly, would have given this info to the Apostle Paul in His testimony, also Paul would have heard something himself from the Ascended Christ in Saudi Arabia.}

5. Mark 16:19,20 records the last resurrection appearance of Christ at Mount Olivet, between Jerusalem and Bathany, with the witness of the 11 remaining disciples that He led to that pinnacle as a launching pad for His Ascension back to heaven and to the right hand of God the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for our sins and is preparing to come back a Second time to get us. {And by the way, this is the last two verses of the Gospel of Mark.}

Mark	Miracles of Jesus in Mark	Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles
Mark 9:47	Jesus Himself	Entrance into the kingdom of God is the only other alternative to hell, so horrible that the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched, and that there should be so much priority for every word from God as the loss of physical vision. {NOTE: this is not a recommendation for the loss of an eye, it is a sacrifice of pleasure, security, and comfort that lands a place in the eternal kingdom of Christ rather than in hell.}
Mark 10:14	Jesus Himself	The kingdom of God is a kingdom of little children under God the Father. "Our Father" is essential.
Mark 10:15	Herod the Great	The kingdom of God must be received in faith and sincerity like a little child receives truth in humility.
Mark 10:23	Jesus Himself	It is hard for a rich man, a wise man, or any man of status and achievement to enter the kingdom of God, a concept we still do not learn in our respect of persons concepts and ways, and even our world-like motivations.
Mark 10:24,25	Jesus Himself	It is so hard for a man of many possessions to enter the kingdom of God that Jesus compares it to a camel passing through the eye of the needle. You might ask why: because cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke out the Word of Faith. Rich men are not eliminated from Faith, the fact is that like camels passing through the eye of the needle, there will be very, very few.

10:4 6-52	Jesus on the way out of Jericho, heard blind Bartimaeus addressing Jesus as the son of David, crying out for mercy; and when Jesus could not quite the man quiet, He sought the disciples to bring him: then Jesus told the two blind men that their faith had made them whole.	Is it possible that it is the faith of the attendees at miracles healing conferences that heals them more than any special powers that come from men like Bennie Hin? And is it not also possible that God like before Jesus came is still healing secretly from His secret place. You can see here how more selective Mark and Luke were to tell only of Bartimaeus while only Matthew tells that there were two blind men.
Mark 11:10	The Crowd at the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem	Seeing Jesus coming humbly on a donkey, the people still sought in Him a kingdom like that of David where they prospered greatly and ruled the known world. Carroll sees this as the beginning of the 3 ½ years of Daniel where Jews no longer entered the kingdom, approximately 100,000 of them being saved in that period and then no more until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.
11:12 -18	Jesus being hungry and finding no fruit on the Fig Tree curses the tree.	This at first may seem almost beneath Jesus; but the choice by Jesus at this particular time corresponds with the last 3 and one-half years that the Jews have for salvation until the Fulness of the Gentiles if complete.
Mark 12:3 4	Jesus Himself	A person who hears and heeds religious teachings can be so close to the kingdom of God, yet miss it because of their cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and other things like the rich young ruler who sought to keep the commandments, but went away from Jesus sorrowful not willing to make the choice of God over mammon.
Mark 13:8	Jesus Himself in the great teachings on eschatology of Mark 13 and Matthew 24	Jesus, realistically, uses kingdom and nation in the manner we most often think as countries; but against each other as the signs that will continue to happen from the time of Jesus to the end. The beginning of the sorrows continues through all the phases of biblical history of eschatology and revelation right up to the end. Carroll teaches that each nation has an angel, some good and some bad but all under the power of God, who seek contrary gospels like Michael for Israel and the angels of the Persians another goal.
Mark 14:2 5	Jesus Himself	Here the kingdom of God is the completed kingdom of God, when the kingdoms of this world become synonymous with the kingdom of heaven, and Christ has the Lord's Supper with His original disciples again.

14:4 3-52	In the Garden before the arrest and subsequent crucifixion of Jesus, Simon Peter cut off with a sword the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest; and Jesus while remanding the disciples, touched his ear and healed him.	Jesus did not want a kingdom that would be won by war and the sword, like the kingdom of David that his own people wanted; and He reminded the disciples how He could call 12 legions of angels from the Father for rescue, of course one or one legion would be sufficient; and certainly 12 would be enough for a revolution and the re-establishment of a physical kingdom like that of David.
Mark 15:4 3	Mark, the Apostle Paul, Peter and James, and the Holy Spirit	Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who entered through the eye of the needle into the kingdom of God, although a member of the most hypocritical Sanhedrin of Jesus time.
16:2- 8	About sunrise Sunday morning, Mary and the other women find the empty tomb with the young man angel seated there to tell them that Jesus has risen.	The young angel had instructions from Jesus to pass to the 10 Apostles and Peter, to remind them of the appointment on a mountain in Galilee.
16:9- 11	Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, who by the way from whom He had cast out seven devils.	Yet at this point the other disciples did not believe: it was an awesome miracle for One who was crucified and dead as they had witnessed to be three days later walking around and well.
16:12 ,13	Jesus appeared after death to Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus.	Not recognizing the resurrection appearance of Jesus, the two disciples in response to the question from Jesus rehearsed their own short biography about the life and death of Jesus as they saw it.
16:14	Jesus appears in the locked room to the astonished 11 disciples minus Thomas.	Jesus chastized them for not believing the testimony of those who had already witnessed His resurrection, saying it was caused by hardness of heart and unbelief. You see, like this, they still just did not know what Jesus was capable of doing as the Son of God and Lord of the Universe.
16:15 -18	The appointed place and time for 500 disciples to meet	You would think that no one records the name of which Mount to prevent it becoming a shrine, since Jesus desired more a looking for His second coming than a looking for the mount.

	with the Risen Christ on a mountain in Galilee, which is where by the way Jesus gave the Great Commission.	
Mark 16:19,20	Jesus Ascension back to heaven as witnessed by many disciples was certainly His last miracle as only the Son of God could defy the gravity He created by flying back to heaven.	Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed all the observers as a cloud received Him out of their sight.

## 31

## "We Are Safe"

One message that you must gain from Daniel even if you do not understand much of the Book is that God has little regard for the temporal nature of any kingdom or nation as compared to the only permanent kingdom of His Son. Sinclair Ferguson and Lloyd Ogilvie in *THE COMMUNICATOR'S COMMENTARY* on Daniel express it this way.

"The heavenly messenger had already advised Daniel that the Persian Empire {the nation that conquered Babylon where Daniel was first taken Captive and had been since capture in Jerusalem along with the remaining Jewish nation} would be followed by that of Greece. The 'mighty king...who shall rule with great dominion' (Daniel 11:3) is clearly a reference to the 'goat' of chapter 8. That Alexander the Great should be described in these animal terms may seem strange enough to the secular historian; that his life should be summarized here in a few words may seem to defy explanation. This prophecy, however, has

it center in God's reign and its ultimate focus on God's people. {God's reign, of course is through the kingdom of Christ established at Ascension of Christ, growing, but not to be completed until the Second Coming of Christ, and then on earth the will of God will be done as completely as in heaven as the two locations are melded into one with the New Jerusalem on earth and the new earth and new heavens, and with Christ overrule and obliterating all other governments of kingdoms and nations on earth, turning the reigns over to God the Father in order that God the Father may receive all the glory} In the light of that, the great empires and emperors of history are as a drop in the bucket to God (Isaiah 40:15). Even one who 'shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will' (11:3) is dependent upon God for the ability to exercise that will."

You see when Christ comes again there will be no United States anymore; there will be no kingdom of Israel except in the sense of the new Israel of all born again believers of all ages. There will be no nation of Iraqi, no nation of Iran, and China, and no union of European countries which I suppose could be called a kingdom. What was ordained to happen as Jesus established His own kingdom on this earth will indeed happen in fact at the Second Coming.

"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Here is the final sequence as heaven and earth are united under the kingdom of Christ.

"Then comes the end {after His second coming}, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy

that will be destroyed is death. For 'He has put all things under His feet' (Psalm 8:6). But when He says 'all things are put under Him,' it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God {the Father} may be all in all." (I Corinthians 15:24-28)

1. The end of this universe as we now know it happens synonymous with the Second Coming of Christ.
2. At this time Christ delivers the "kingdom" to God the Father after He establishes complete rule on earth just like in heaven. No doubt some of this will come through war, some through destruction of the earth by fire, and some will happen as just a wave from Christ as in the case of the man of sin who is immediately vanquished.
3. At the Second Coming all things are made subject to the complete Lordship of Jesus Christ—all rulers and Presidents, all kings and kingdoms and nations, and all governments or organizations of all kind. The SBC convention will be wiped out as an administration among men, and Civil Service organizations, and the Presbyterian "Church", and on and on with any man-made organization that you can think of.

## The American Democratic Faith

You see then that something we know consider so important as our heritage and our national faith, the American Democratic Faith, will be wiped away with all other kingdoms and movements like pragmatism, communism, socialism, Muslimism, Buddhism, and so on. Granted that there will be some elements of the faith of Jesus and of the Bible in the American Democratic Faith, however very small, and these will be overwhelmed at the body of Christ and the kingdom of Christ, which are permanent-written-in-heaven establishments.

1. The power of the majority of the United States government and all its States' governments will be elimination at the Second Coming. The principle of teaching Jesus established on earth as the majority go the way of destruction and the minority the narrow way to life eternal will become a dominant principle of the fulfilled Kingdom of Christ on earth and in heaven.

2. In the fulfilled kingdom of Christ at the Second Coming there will be no "tolerance" for other beliefs, religions, Bible, and movemnts like the toleration of the American Democratic Faith. It has been a marvelous government, without parallel on the earth and no doubt blessed by God in His permissive if not His directive will, but it has

gone far beyond the principles of the kingdom, the characteristics of kingdom members if you would, that demand Christ as the only way of salvation, God the Father of the Bible and of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the same God who made it all...the American Democratic faith in tolerance has increasingly ignored the single Bible God ordained as contained every word which He spoke; and most of all, with the increase in tolerance of the American Democratic Faith, and increase in sin and lawlessness in the world of which the United States has not been immune, has come a corresponding lack of tolerance toward the sound doctrine of the Word and words of God. Along with tolerance of almost any belief—where we have come to stand for nothing and fall for anything—has come an intolerance toward sound doctrine. This world-wide movement of the American Democratic Faith as part of the Falling Away is still most adequately described by “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but out of their own desires {many of those desires are expressions of the American Democratic Faith} shall they heap up to themselves teachers and preachers with itching ears {notice how many of these heaped up and popular, even dominating teachers wave the American flag}, turn away

from the truth and turn into fables." Lest you think it can not happen, you look carefully how the Mormons with their four Bibles competing with the Bible from God have established DOCTRINES and COVENANTS very counter what Jesus set up for His kingdom, and how the Roman Catholics years ago fulfilled the prophesy from Paul as "the Spirit speaks expressly in the latter times how some will depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; commanding to abstain from meats which are wholesome and forbidding to marry..." {And I feel sorry for you if toleration and unwholesome respect for the majority has so clouded your mind and heart that you can not see the connection to the long ago established practice of Roman Catholicism to abolish meat, except fish on Friday, and to forbid the priests to marry, this also being a cause of much of the degradation of sin and lawlessness among this catholic denomination. If they were do that, what else are they capable of?

3. When Christ comes with the establishment of His full kingdom, the peace of the world will be replaced with the peace of Christ which only provides real peace between God and man and between men and men.

"Peace on earth and good will toward men" planned and intended with the birth of Christ will come into full fruition.

4. When Christ establishes His kingdom war and competition, so much a part of the American Democratic Faith, will be replaced with real peace.

#### "WE ARE SAFE", the Temple Message of Jeremiah

Although a little shattered at 9-11 and causing additional thoughts after Katrina and other hurricanes, and earthquakes, and fires which are legally recognized as "acts of God" though the messages of the Old Testament Prophets on the same subject are not admitted or clearly understood, it is still that the people of the United States like the people of Jerusalem and during worship in the Temple are saying to themselves and each other, "We Are Safe".

Well, even if you survive the Falling Away and the physical tribulations of the before the Second Coming of "fire, and wind, and vapor of smoke", you will not survive the burning up of the whole earth along with the heavens by fire. Your business, your governments, your movements and institutions will not survive as Jesus sets up the complete reign of His kingdom. It is only a matter of time. You might say, "Well, we are a good kingdom and they are bad kingdoms". It does not matter has all kingdoms and nations will come under the rule of Christ.

The Prophet Jeremiah told the people of God of his day, and the same message echos through the pages of the Bible to us and our country today, that they were like a den of thieves, and Jesus quoted that to echo the emphasis. Yet we still fail to appreciate that the main point is that the people of Jerusalem and the Temple—supposedly God's people though already victims of a Falling Away for the most part—these people were living any way that they wanted to during the week, so of like thieves who go through the country robbing, killing, and murdering and then go to a hideout called "a den"; from which they will again after some time of secure feelings go out to do more. You see that is what God's people were doing during the time of Jeremiah. God saw it and gave Jeremiah the message to preach to these people directly from Him—how God had sent their worship of other gods which are not gods, how they had mistreated the people in the land, and so on. Well, let's read it directly from Jeremiah 7.

"The word that came to Jeremiah from Yahweh: 'Stand in the gate of Yahwehs' house and proclaim there this word. Say {God directly tells Jeremiah to say this, giving him the words, and do you think these word any less apply to us and our churche-temples and our nations today}...Say, Hear the word of Jahweh, all you of Judah {Judah was all that was left of the nation since Israel to the north had already been taken into Captivity}...who come through these gates to worship

Jahweh! {you are about to get God's own perspective of their weekly worship} This is what Yahwek of Hosts, the God of Israel, has said: Reform your way of life and your actions and I will allow you to remain in this place. Do not put your trust in the words of the Lie and keeping saying, 'This is Yahweh's temple, Yahweh's temple, Yahweh's temple! {Does that no sound like people today in large and small churches saying, 'This is the house of God', and the ministers saying, 'these are the people of God!'} }

Only if you truly reform your way of life and your actions, if you really act justly with one another ,do not oppress the resident alien, the orphan, and the widow, shed no innocent blood in this place, and od not run after other gods to your own ruin, then I will let you remain in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers of old for all time.

But look, you are putting your trust in the words of The Lie to no good purpose. Can you steal, murder, commit adultery, swer falsely, burn sacrifices to Baal, run after other gods which you have not known, and then come and stand befoe me in this house which bears my name and say 'We are safe!—just so tht you may continue doing all these abominable things? Has this house which bers my name beomce a robbers' cave in your eyes...." (Jeremiah 7:1-15)

America, in your vast land of the free and home of the brave, and in your many churches through the land, YOU ARE NOT SAFE. You are not safe from the world wide movement of the terrorism of Muslims, you are not safe from hurricanes like Katrina, you are not safe from earthquakes, you are not safe from drought and winds and fires—you are not even safe from Tsunamis and temperature and climate changes caused by the disappearing Ozone layer, and you are not safe from “fire and wind and vapor of smoke”, the world-wide signs in the heavens above and the earth beneath during the Falling Away and just before the end at the Second Coming. Some of these signs and workings of God, according to the Old Testament Prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles are on automatic control, others are direct interventions by God through angels to get the attention of the world. Indeed that is what signs are: they point to something besides themselves. They point to heaven and a watching for the end with the return of Jesus.

### 32.

#### OUR DEVELOPED OUTLINE OF MARK

Since we developed this outline of Mark together, I hope you will both find special feelings for it and use it in the future to guide your Bible readings in Mark which in turn will turn into good total Bible experience. Just remember to just let the Bible say what it wants to say; that “no Scripture is of any private interpretation”; that

the API, the Authorized Public Interpretation that originated in the mind and heart of God and that was transmitted through Prophets, Apostles, and Jesus provides the consistency to the Bible that all of us need. It is the same consistency that God through the Holy Spirit put in there in the first place. It is also a consistency with real life and real science of the world, all creations of God, which can not contradict the Bible which the same God wrote.

Mark	Miracles of Jesus in Mark/Old Testament Quotes in Mark/PARABLES OF JESUS	Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles/Jesus proper interpretation of Old Testament quotes in Mark
1:2,3	Isaiah 40:3: John the Baptist is the voice of the one in the wilderness preparing the way for Christ	The interpretation by Mark and the Spirit through Mark is that John the Baptist of Jesus' time was that preparatory voice, and it is obvious that the Jewish nation accepted John at first as a prophet.
	Malachi 3:1	The interpretation of Mark and the Spirit is that the one John announced, this Jesus of Nazareth, was indeed Messiah and Son of God.
1:14		Jesus preached "the gospel of the kingdom of God"
1:15		Part of the Gospel is that the kingdom of God is here!
1:16-20	Jesus out-fishes the fisherman-disciples who have been shunked all day in their fishing, and calls them to be fishers of men in His kingdom service.	
1:21-28	<u>Jesus Healing of the Demoniac in Capernaum:</u> This amazed the religious leaders because of Jesus authority in doctrine which was a doctrine with the power to heal. I think what we see today is a claim for the power to heal which does not include any authority of doctrine, or adequate doctrinal support. Definitely what you do not see is the casting out of devils and demons, because Satan can not cast out Satan, and it would be too dangerous for these impostors as the demons would disclose them or jump on them.	
1:29-34	<u>Jesus Heals the Mother-in-Law of Simon Peter.</u> It was so routine and without fanfare for the Son of God, the former co-creator of	.

	<p>the universe. He comes into the house routinely heals the mother in law of Peter, and gets up to graciously serve them a meal. That was much better than the putting on an expected show of jumping and shouting like we see today, a jumping and shouting that is a matter of learning by the examples of others. Well, that is what you are suppose to do when you are slain in the spirit, by the way not at all a Bible phrase or a practice of Jesus during healing.</p>	
1:40-45	Jesus heals the Leper.	This is a good place to note the approachability of Jesus, then and now as the leper came beseeching him, and yet Jesus showed compassion although the man was so irritating to publish abroad the healing which restricted the future activities of Jesus to the desert places.
2:1-12	Jesus heals the paralytic	“the power of the Lord was with him to heal” (Luke 5:17-26)
2:18-22	PARABLES ABOUT THE NEW DISPENSATION	
3:1-6	Jesus heals the man with the withered hand	The doctors of the law and other religious leaders were watching to see if He would heal on the sabbath. Jesus taught them and the others about doing good or harm on the sabbath day, and taking care of the sheep that is in the pit.
3:19-30	PARABLES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF SATAN	
3:19-30	Jesus heals the blind and dumb man in order that he can see and speak, and the scribes from Jerusalem of doing these miracles by the power of Satan.	When they accused him of being in league with Satan, he said that all sins will be forgiven men except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: in other words it is not what is spoken in front of men, but it is the personal unbelief to the work of the Holy Spirit that condemns.
3:24		Divided kingdoms are worse than divided churches and denominations
4:3-25	THE SNATCHING, STUMBLING, AND THE FALLING AWAY: THE PARABLE OF THE SEED AND SOWER.	
4:11		(1) if you desire to define a real disciple of Jesus, it is one who understands the mysteries of the kingdom; and (2) the real outsiders not those in the church who do not understand the kingdom.
4:12	Isaiah 6:9,10: The whole Bible is a parable so that only select persons can understand.	The proper interpretation by Jesus to His disciples was that only kingdom members could understand the mysteries of the

		kingdom, and that all others were “outsiders”.
4:26-29	PARABLE OF THE SEED GROWING OF ITSELF.	
4:26		The kingdom of God grows unseen by history and by much religious activity.
4:30-32	PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED.	
4:30		The kingdom of God and Christ will ultimately be larger than any other religious, political, social, or intellectual movement.
4:33-34	PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN.	
4:35-41	Jesus performs the miracle over nature of causes the wind and waves to become calm.	It caused faith, even fear, as the disciples pondered who is this that nature obeys. They had not as yet come to see Him as the Word active from the beginning in Creation, with the power to make the universe.
5:1-20	Jesus heals the crazy man that is demon possessed and lived in the tombs. In the tombs all night the man was crying and cutting himself; and it was impossible to chain him as he was so strong as to break the chains.	His name was Legion since many devils were inside him; however the man ran to worship Jesus and the devils cried out how He was Jesus, the Son of God, asking if Jesus had come to torment them before the time—look at how much doctrine the devils know, and tremble. Jesus commanded the devils to come out of him, and per the devils request not to be sent out of the country, he sent them into a herd of swine. Now here, Jesus tells the man to publish what happened to him.
5:21-43	Jesus while on the way to heal the daughter at the request of Jairus , the woman with the issue of blood is healed automatically as she touched with faith the helm of the garment of Christ.	The woman had this malady for 12 years which drained all her money while the physicians had done her no good, and she knew as she touched his garment she would be made whole. Jesus to her, “Your faith has made you whole.” Can you imagine any of these current faith healers even allowing themselves to be touched by the crowd, and have you ever heard of one case where the touch of the person unknowingly of the healer, without the fanfare of the slaying of the spirit, has caused healing. Once again when Jesus healed the dead daughter, which He called sleeping, he charged the people there not to make it known; and charged them to give her something to eat. Did they do it? No!
6:23		Unfortunaely then and now, this is the kind of kingdom thinking—of a material kingdom—that dominantes our thoughts.
6:30-44	Jesus performs a miracle of bread provision with fish. Jesus feeds the five thousand men	The disciples gathered up 12 baskets of barley loaves that were left over. When Jesus or

	with five loafs of bread and two fishes.	God as far as that matter do a miracle they do it right, not one that is rescinded latter because of lack of faith.
6:47-52	Jesus walks on the Sea that is so rough that the experienced disciple-fisherman have trouble rowing; and Peter also walks for a short time on the sea.	Jesus says it only takes faith. However in the boat they worshipped Jesus, and said that indeed He is the Son of God.
7:1-23	THE PARABLE OF "CORBAN"	
7:6,7	Isaiah 29:13: the way that many worship who call themselves people of God is with their lips only while the hearts are far from God, much like the people in the temple and Jerusalem to whom God delivered the Temple message through Jeremiah.	Jesus called them "hypocrites" for such religious activity and worship.
7:10	Exodus 20:12; 21:17, and Deuteronomy 5:16—Jesus establishes the continued validity of the Moses and the 10 commandments, and quotes about Honor for Father and Mother.	Perhaps the most religious men of all time had rejected the meaning of the Scriptures with their traditions and interpretations, Jesus tells us.
7:24-30	Jesus heals the daughter of a Greek Gentile. The unclean spirit in the daughter was called a devil.	Jesus challenged faith from the woman as He said bread must first be given to the Jews, and she replied in faith that even the dogs eat of the crumbs under the table.
7:31-8:9	Jesus heals the man deaf and with a speech impediment, and then feeds the four thousand with seven loaves and a few fishes.	The more Jesus charged people to secrecy about the healing, the more they published it; but the people decided that "He has done all things well".
8:13-26	Jesus heals a blind man at the pool of Bethesda. This time the man was brought to Jesus, and Jesus besought just to touch him, knowing that it would bring healing.	It took two touches, the first after a test when the man saw others as tree walking, and a second from Jesus when he saw all things clearly; and this time the charged was heeded not to publish the matter as the man went directly home.
9:1		Jesus defined the time of the establishment of the kingdom as later in the lifetime of many of His disciples, at that it would come with power which you know to be the first day of Pentecost after the Ascension of Christ.
9:14-29	Jesus heals the demoniac boy which the disciples could not heal. Notice how many of the demon possessed were young.	Jesus criticizes the faithless generation for not being able to heal in such cases. All the observers were astonished at the majesty of God, for only that kind of power could come from God Himself.
Mark	Miracles of Jesus in Mark	Sign-Teachings of Jesus: Kingdom and Miracles
9:44, 46, and 48	Isaiah 66:24: three times Jesus quotes from Isaiah that "the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched."	Jesus labels this hell and states that the fire of hell is never quenched.
Mark	Jesus Himself	Entrance into the kingdom of God is the only

9:47		other alternative to hell, so horrible that the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched, and that there should be so much priority for every word from God as the loss of physical vision. {NOTE: this is not a recommendation for the loss of an eye, it is a sacrifice of pleasure, security, and comfort that lands a place in the eternal kingdom of Christ rather than in hell.}
10:6-9	Geenesis 1:27 and 2:24	One man and one woman with children for life.
10:13-21	<b>THE PARABLE OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD.</b>	
Mark 10:14	Jesus Himself	The kingdom of God is a kingdom of little children under God the Father. "Our Father" is essential.
Mark 10:15	Herod the Great	The kingdom of God must be received in faith and sincerity like a little child receives truth in humility.
10:19	Exodus 20:12-16 and Deutoronomy 5:16-20: the Ten Commadments	Although religious to the point of supposedly keeping the commandments, at least on the surface, it is hard for a prosperous man to enter the kingdom of God.
10:23	Jesus Himself	It is hard for a rich man, a wise man, or any man of status and achievement to enter the kingdom of God, a concept we still do not learn in our respect of persons concepts and ways, and even our world-like motivations.
Mark 10:24,25	Jesus Himself	It is so hard for a man of many possessions to enter the kingdom of God that Jesus compares it to a camel passing through the eye of the needle. You might ask why: because cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other things choke out the Word of Faith. Rich men are not eliminated from Faith, the fact is that like camels passing through the eye of the needle, there will be very, very few.
10:46-52	Jesus on the way out of Jericho, heard blind Bartimaeus addressing Jesus as the son of David, crying out for mercy; and when Jesus could not quite the man quiet, He sought the disciples to bring him: then Jesus told the two blind men that their faith had made them whole.	Is it possible that it is the faith of the attendees at miracles healing conferences that heals them more than any special powers that come from men like Bennie Hin? And is it not also possible that God like before Jesus came is till healing secretly from His secret place. You can see here how more selective Mark and Luke were to tell only of Bartimaeus while only Matthew tells that there were two blind men.
11:9	Psalms 118:26: Blessed is the kingdom of David that comes in the name of the Lord.	While appearing triumphant, this failure to accept the kind of kingdom Jesus taught, marks the beginning of the three and one half

		year period of salvation for the Jews until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.
Mark 11:10	The Crowd at the Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem	Seeing Jesus coming humbly on a donkey, the people still sought in Him a kingdom like that of David where they prospered greatly and ruled the known world. Carroll sees this as the beginning of the 3 ½ years of Daniel where Jews no longer entered the kingdom, approximately 100,000 of them being saved in that period and then no more until the Fulness of the Gentiles is complete.
11:12-18	Jesus being hungry and finding no fruit on the Fig Tree curses the tree.	This at first may seem almost beneath Jesus; but the choice by Jesus at this particular time corresponds with the last 3 and one-half years that the Jews have for salvation until the Fulness of the Gentiles if complete.
11:17	Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:1: you have made My Father's house a den of thieves.	The temple message of Jeremiah, quoted from Isaiah, was that the people of God lived as they desired, then said in the Temple worship of Jerusalem that they were safe in order to go out and live the same way next week.
11:20-24	THE PARABLE OF THE WITHERED FIG TREE.	In this outline for Mark, when we can put together more than one parable, like the two here, with a subject in common, then we have made a giant step on our outline and on spiritual understanding. Even more is this true in chapter 4 of Mark where Jesus tells in rapid succession 4 parables and Mark records all four of them.
12:1-12	THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED WINEDRESSERS.	
Mark 12:34	Jesus Himself	A person who hears and heeds religious teachings can be so close to the kingdom of God, yet miss it because of their cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, and other things like the rich young ruler who sought to keep the commandments, but went away from Jesus sorrowful not willing to make the choice of God over mammon.
12:10	Psalms 118:22,23	
12:26	Exodus 3:6,15	
12:30,31	Deuteronomy 6:4,5 and Leviticus 19:18: more from the Law of Moses	
12:36	Psalms 110:1	
Mark 13:8	Jesus Himself in the great teachings on eschatology of Mark 13 and Matthew 24	Jesus, realistically, uses kingdom and nation in the manner we most often think as countries; but against each other as the signs that will continue to happen from the time of Jesus to the end. The beginning of the sorrows continues through all the phases of

		biblical history of eschatology and revelation right up to the end. Carroll teaches that each nation has an angel, some good and some bad but all under the power of God, who seek contrary gospels like Michael for Israel and the angels of the Persians another goal.
13:14	Daniel 11:31 and 12:11: there are three “abominations of desolation”	One by the Syrian Antichocus during the time of the Greek Empire; one by the Roman general Titus, later Caesar; and one by the man of sin they foreshadow.
13:28-31	ANOTHER PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE.	As we start putting together the real meaning of these parables, you can bet that much of it has to do with characteristics of the kingdom like that of a withered fig tree, and we begin to like Daniel’s two three and one half years and the interpretation by Carroll.
13:32-37	PARABLE OF THE PORTER.	Then once we can get the previous ones together we must meld into it this parable from Jesus.
Mark 14:25	Jesus Himself	Here the kingdom of God is the completed kingdom of God, when the kingdoms of this world become synonymous with the kingdom of heaven, and Christ has the Lord’s Supper with His original disciples again. Those who foolishly think of the Lord’s Supper as a sacrament that saves and forgives sins, do not see the redeemed of heaven taking the Lord’s Supper with Jesus.
14:27	Zechariah 13:7: The DAY of the LORD	All of you first disciples will “stumble” because of Jesus, scattered like sheep.
14:43-52	In the Garden before the arrest and subsequent crucifixion of Jesus, Simon Peter cut off with a sword the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest; and Jesus while remanding the disciples, touched his ear and healed him.	Jesus did not want a kingdom that would be won by war and the sword, like the kingdom of David that his own people wanted; and He reminded the disciples how He could call 12 legions of angels from the Father for rescue, of course one or one legion would be sufficient; and certainly 12 would be enough for a revolution and the re-establishment of a physical kingdom like that of David.
Mark 15:43	Mark, the Apostle Paul, Peter and James, and the Holy Spirit	Joseph of Arimathea was one of the few who entered through the eye of the needle into the kingdom of God, although a member of the most hypocritical Sanhedrin of Jesus time.
15:28	Isaiah 53:12—Jesus will be crucified between common criminals that are thieves.	This is what happened at the crucifixion as recorded by the Gospel writers.
15:34	Psalms 22:1: Jesus would say “My God, My God what have you forsaken me.”	Jesus did say that on the cross.
16:2-8	About sunrise Sunday morning, Mary and the other women find the empty tomb with the young man angel seated there to tell them that	The young angel had instructions from Jesus to pass to the 10 Apostles and Peter, to remind them of the appointment on a mountain in

	Jesus has risen.	Galilee.
16:9-11	Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, who by the way from whom He had cast out seven devils.	Yet at this point the other disciples did not believe: it was an awesome miracle for One who was crucified and dead as they had witnessed to be three days later walking around and well.
16:12,13	Jesus appeared after death to Cleopas and another disciple on the road to Emmaus.	Not recognizing the resurrection appearance of Jesus, the two disciples in response to the question from Jesus rehearsed their own short biography about the life and death of Jesus as they saw it.
16:14	Jesus appears in the locked room to the astonished 11 disciples minus Thomas.	Jesus chastized them for not believing the testimony of those who had already witnessed His resurrection, saying it was caused by hardness of heart and unbelief. You see, like this, they still just did not know what Jesus was capable of doing as the Son of God and Lord of the Universe.
16:15-18	The appointed place and time for 500 disciples to meet with the Risen Christ on a mountain in Galilee, which is where by the way Jesus gave the Great Commission.	You would think that no one records the name of which Mount to prevent it becoming a shrine, since Jesus desired more a looking for His second coming than a looking for the mount.
Mark 16:19,20	Jesus Ascension back to heaven as witnessed by many disciples was certainly His last miracle as only the Son of God could defy the gravity He created by flying back to heaven.	Jesus lifted up His hands and blessed all the observers as a cloud received Him out of their sight.