

They Shall All Be Taught of YAHWEH



An apostolic people

The apostolic Pattern

The apostolic Purpose

Come follow Me

Revival Ministries Australia

They Shall All Be Taught of YAHWEH

**"All your children taught by YAHWEH,
and great the peace of your children"
Isaiah 54:13**

As we continue with the Lord, He continues to release teaching to us that edifies us and reveals His will and purpose to us. We commend this teaching manual to you. We encourage you to check all the Scripture references and come to know for yourself the many mysteries that are in the word of God, ready to be revealed to every genuine disciple.

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THE ABCs OF THE GOSPEL

Dwelling with God

“For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in a high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones’” Isaiah 57:15. We can dwell with the High and Lofty One when we have a contrite and humble heart and spirit. He will revive us.

This is a wonderful description of repentance and faith being outworked in the life of the one coming to God, and God is seeking such to come to Him. He will revive us.

JESUS CAME PREACHING THE GOSPEL

“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’” Mark 1:14-15. The time here is the Greek *kairos*, the grace time, appointed time, a time of heart preparation, the ‘ready’ time. The time is fulfilled, the time is now; today is the day, and all is prepared. The kingdom of God is at hand, ready to manifest; we can touch it; it is ready to be entered and received.

The response to the Gospel

1. **Repent** = change your mind; an attitude we are to have all the time - being willing to change; do not be ruled by mindsets or thought patterns; do not be ruled by emotions or legalism; be willing to change.
2. **Believe in the gospel** = be ready to believe; fill up the vacuum in your life with faith in Jesus the Messiah. Put your trust in Him.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day’” Luke 24:46. The Messiah had to suffer, to die and to rise again. Why? Because **it is written!** It was necessary for Christ to suffer, to die and to rise again on the third day. This is the summary of the gospel. Paul confirms this in **1 Corinthians 15:3-4**.

The building blocks

Jesus then gives us the basic building blocks of the gospel: because Jesus suffered, died and rose again we can **repent** and receive **remission** of sins (**Luke 24:47**).

- a) **repentance** will only work when it is based on the reality of the gospel, on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah. Repentance is facing up to your sins, and wanting to be free of them.
- b) **remission of sins** – means being free from sin; having sins **sent away**; being cleansed of all unrighteousness by the blood of Jesus (**1 John 1:9**).
- c) we are to **preach repentance and remission of sins in His name**. We must preach repentance and remission of sins. We are not asked to preach to scare people about going to hell; we are to preach repentance – that people can change; and remission of sins – Jesus will forgive you.

- d) it is all done **in the name of Jesus**. Remember **Romans 10:13**; *“For whoever calls on the name of YAHWEH [the Lord Jesus] will be saved”*. Remember Paul’s instructions in **Romans 10:9-10**.
- e) it is **to all nations**; repentance and remission of sins must be preached to all nations [Gk. **Ethnos**, every ethnicity, people group] to every people, tribe and tongue.
- f) this preaching must **begin** somewhere: Jerusalem! SHILOH! Wherever you are!

The power to preach

“And you are witnesses of these things” Lu.24:48. Somebody has to tell somebody! And what are we going to tell them? That Jesus suffered, died and rose again so you can repent, have your sins remitted in Jesus name, being saved and become part of the Messianic community.

To fulfil this we must be **empowered by the Holy Spirit**. We need the power and the anointing to witness (**Lu.24:49**). We will receive that power when the Holy Spirit comes upon us to be His witnesses (**Acts 1:8**).

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL

“For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. Paul declares to us the basic facts of the **gospel**. It is written! It is according to the Scriptures.

Paul preached the gospel, and many received. By believing the gospel, we enter into the kingdom of God (**Jn.3:5**), and we are **able to stand (1Cor.15:1)**, able to stand against the devil, because we are now in a different kingdom (**Colossians 1:13**).

When we receive the gospel we are **saved**, that is, **delivered**. We are forgiven, and released from the power of demons in our lives. We are saved by holding fast the word (**1Cor.15:2**).

The basic facts of the Gospel

- 1) **Christ died for our sins** – we are forgiven through Him (**1Cor.15:3**)
- 2) **Christ was buried** – He actually died and was buried **according to the Scripture (v.4)**. **Isaiah 53:9** says, He was buried with the rich. We are buried with Him through baptism (**Rom.6:4**).
- 3) **Christ rose again the third day according to the Scripture (1Cor.15:4)**. In His resurrection Christ Jesus was seen alive from the dead by over 500 people (**v.6**). We are to know Christ in His resurrection, and again this is the work of God in us through baptism, *“Certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Rom.6:5)*.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PETER

Peter preached the **life, death and resurrection** of Jesus the Messiah in **Acts 2:22-36**. When the hearers were *“cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do’”*, Peter gave them the ABCs of the gospel in **verse 38**.

Peter’s instructions

- a) **repent**
- b) **be baptised** - immersed

- c) **into the name of Jesus the Christ:** “Jesus” = “Yahweh (God) saving me”; Christ is the anointed deliverer, the great King who was to come.
- d) **for remission of your sins** – they are remitted by being baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, sins already forgiven by the blood of Christ are completely washed away and cut off; the old man of sin is done away with (**2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20**).
- e) **you will receive the gift of Holy Spirit;** you will be filled with His Spirit.

This is the beginning, the ABCs of the gospel. These are the first steps that must be taken by those who have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ adequately preached. Only then will the new believers be able to *“continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”* Acts 2:42.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

“The Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” Mark 1:1.

- i. **The beginning** – the gospel began somewhere, **Genesis 3:15** – the Seed of the woman will crush the head of Satan. God preached the gospel to Abraham (**Gal.3:8**) and Abraham believed God (**Gen.15:6**).

The gospel began in the New Testament with the appearance of John the Baptist preaching and baptising. John came to *“prepare the way of the LORD to make His paths straight”*

(**Mk.1:2-4**). John’s ministry was the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy.

Through John, Jesus the Messiah, was introduced to Israel, and this was through Jesus being baptised by John. As soon as Jesus was baptised and filled with the Holy Spirit, *the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness* to be tempted of the devil (**Mk.1:12-13**).

When Jesus overcame the devil, He came out of the wilderness preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God (**v.14**).

- ii. **the gospel** – Gk. *Euangelion* – the good news, initially it meant the reward coming from the good news. This means you have a reward when you repent and believe the gospel. The gospel includes both the promise of salvation (deliverance) and its fulfilment in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah.
- iii. **Jesus** – who is Jesus? Literally “Jesus” is ‘the Eternal One [YAHWEH] saving us from our sins’. Jesus is the Saviour; Jesus is the incarnation of the Eternal God.
- iv. **Christ** – Literally “the Anointed One, the King”. He is the greater son of David prophesied to come. **Christ** would be the Deliverer of His people; He would ascend the Throne of His kingdom
- v. **Son of God** = Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, the Incarnation.

THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM - Matthew 24:14

“This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” The end of the gospel is the preaching of the kingdom of God at the end of the age.

The last picture we have of the apostle Paul in the Scriptures is that of him *“preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him”* Acts 28:31. The gospel has never changed. When we first believe the gospel, we are to repent and be baptised. Having believed the gospel we are to

continue to preach it until the end of the age. In fact this gospel of the kingdom must be preached universally before this age will end.

Jesus gave clear instructions in Mark 16:15

- a) **Go into all the world**, that is, to every nation, to all people, to every place, even such places as the island nations of the Caribbean, including Haiti; very difficult places such as Somalia and Libya.
- b) **Preach** #2784 Gk. *Kerusso*, “to herald as a town crier”, to proclaim. This word is translated preach 51 times, twice as proclaim, and five times as publish. Preaching is a very active broadcasting of the gospel message, even drawing the whole town to hear, as this is the task of the town crier.
- c) **the gospel**: *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes ... For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith” Rom.1:16-17.*
- d) **to every creature**, men and women, all people everywhere.

The fruit of the gospel being preached

- He or she who believes and is baptised will be **saved**; they will be delivered; they will be rescued.(**Mark 16:16**)
- The believers will function in the power of the gospel (**v.17-18**). They will: cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, drink poison as it will not harm them, lay hands on the sick and they will recover.

Therefore let everyone of you **repent**

and have **your sins remitted**

as you are **baptised into Jesus Christ**

and **be filled with the Holy Spirit.**

It is time to **believe** in the **gospel** and **be rewarded**, be set free!

YOUR WORD IS TRUTH

The church is to be the pillar and ground of the truth

In **1 Timothy 3:15** Paul said to Timothy, *“I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”* The church is to be founded on truth and is to be proclaiming the truth. **Verse 16** tells us that the key foundational truth that the church should be proclaiming is the mystery of godliness, *“God was manifested in the flesh ...”*.

A falling away from truth

There has been a falling away from the proclamation of truth by the church. Peter prophesied this, *“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction”* **2Pet.2:1**.

Heresies, Gk#139 ‘haireseis’ – from word meaning ‘to choose’. The word originally denoted making a choice or having an option; progressing to having a preference because of an opinion or sentiment; it easily slipped into a mode of disunity. Means: choosing sides, having diversity of belief, creating dissension, and substituting self-willed opinions for submission to the truth. [Word Wealth SFLB page 1776]

This was the cry made even by the Old Testament prophets. Isaiah proclaims that the transgressions of the people have made them depart from God, and then says, *“Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street”* (**Isa.59:14**).

Jeremiah mourns for the people saying *“they are not valiant for the truth on the earth”* (**Jer.9:3**). Hosea says *“Hear the word of the LORD [YHWH], you children of Israel, for YHWH brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: ‘There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land’”* (**Hos.4:1**).

There needs to be a restoration of the truth of the word of God; returning to preaching and teaching the word as it is written: not the ideas of men, or private interpretations, or doctrines that have developed from denominational traditions but a return to the truth – the word of God, as it is written.

What is truth?

Many have become confused as to what the truth is. Pilate asked this question of Jesus *“What is truth?”* (**Jn.18:38**). This was after Jesus had said to him, *“You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice”* **Jn.18:37**. To know the truth we need to know who Jesus is, and to listen to what He is saying.

Jesus is the truth

Jesus Himself is the truth, *“I AM the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me”* **Jn.14:6**. Knowing the truth is the only way we can come to the revelation of who He is, the revelation of the Father!

Jesus comes as the Spirit of truth

Jesus promised He would send *“the Spirit of truth”* when He said, *“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you”* (**Jn.14:17-18**). It is the Spirit of truth in us that will enable

us to discern what is truth and what is not. Jesus said, ***“However, 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”*** Jn.16:13.

The word is the truth

In **John 17:17** when Jesus is praying for his disciples, He says, ***“Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth.”*** The word of God, as it is written, is the truth. This is what we are to believe; this is what we are to teach and preach. **Psalm 119:160** says, ***“The entirety of Your word is truth”***.

Abide in the word – abide in the truth

The key to knowing the truth is to abide in the word. ***“Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free’”*** Jn.8:31-32. We all need to be discipled in the word. This is how we come to know the truth so that we will not be easily swayed or confused when others come bringing a different doctrine. This is one of the signposts of the church coming to maturity, having been properly set in order, with the all the five ascension ministry gifts functioning: ***“That we should no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting”*** Eph.4:14.

Be discipled in the word

There are many today who are challenging the truth of the pure doctrine of the word of God, but as we are discipled in the word, we will be established in the truth and will then be able to speak ***“the truth in love”*** to those who are contending against the word (**Eph.4:15a**).

Paul exhorts Timothy, ***“A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth”*** 2Tim.2:24-25. We must patiently and lovingly teach the word so that those who are in opposition will come to repentance and be established in the truth.

The truth is only found in Jesus

Being discipled in the word is coming to know and understand Christ and the truth that is only found in Jesus, ***“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”*** (Eph.4:20-21).

The word *truth* in this verse means truth in all its fullness and scope, as embodied in Him. He is the perfect expression of truth (**Jn.14:6**). If we want to know the truth, then we need to know Jesus and who He is.

The truth is the truth of the gospel

The gospel is the word of truth that all are to hear. In **Colossians 1:3-6**, Paul is giving thanks to God for the brethren in Colosse who have ***“faith in Christ Jesus ... love for all the saints”*** and who know of the ***“hope which is laid up for [them] in heaven.”***

This knowledge has come to them because they have heard ***“the word of the truth of the gospel”*** that was preached to them. This truth of the gospel which they have received ***“is bringing forth fruit”***. The truth is to be preached in ***“all the world”*** and it will bring forth much fruit.

Established in the present truth

Peter exhorts us to be “*established in the present truth*” (2Pet.1:12). To be established is to *set fast; to turn resolutely in a certain direction, or to confirm* [SC Gr. #4741]. This means we are not easily swayed from what we know to be the truth. The ‘present truth’ is the word that we are living by today. The word of God that is “*living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*” Heb.4:12.

The ‘present truth’ is based on having a solid foundation laid in our lives, which is listed for us in 2Pet.1:5-7. “*But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.*” If we have these foundations laid Peter says we “*will never stumble*” (v.10b).

Walk in the truth

The apostle John knew the joy of seeing brethren established in and walking in the truth: “*For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth*” 3 John 3-4.

This truth comes out of John’s prayer in verse 2: “*Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.*”

The word for ‘health’ is *hugiaino* SC Gk.#5198, and metaphorically, the word refers to sound doctrine, sound words and soundness in the faith [Word Wealth SFLB Page 1797]. John is praying that the brethren become sound in doctrine, sound in word and sound in faith. If we are firmly grounded in these areas than we will not stray from the truth.

Jerusalem, the City of Truth

There is a call going out to return to the word of truth as it is written. The writer to the Hebrews says, “*But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, ... to the general assembly and church of the firstborn*” (Heb.12:22-23a).

Zechariah tells us that YAHWEH “*is zealous for Zion with great zeal*”, and then says, “*Thus says the YHWH: ‘I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth’*” (Zech.8:2-3). Then Zechariah goes on to give a wonderful description of what that City of Truth will look like (v.4-17). Truth will be a foundation of this city, “*Speak each man the truth to his neighbour; give judgement in your gates for truth, justice and peace*” (v.16).

This is what the LORD of hosts says to the ones who have come to the City of Truth: “*They shall be My people and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness*” (v.8).

AN APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

“But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light; who once were not a people, but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy” 1Pet.2:9-10.

There are many descriptions of us as an apostolic people, calling us back to our Scriptural identity that God has given us in Jesus the Messiah.

A CHOSEN GENERATION

The word for ‘chosen’, is the Greek *eklektos* and means to ‘gather out of’ or ‘to pick out’. God has chosen us:

- He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless (**Eph.1:4**).
- He chose us in love to become the sons by Jesus Christ to Himself. We are to manifest God in the flesh; we are to manifest His glory. How awesome is our God (**Eph.1:5,Rom.8:18-19**).
- We were predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (**Rom.8:29**).

God foreknew us; this means He knew us beforehand, before the world was created.

How does a generation come to pass?

In the natural, it is through a seed nurtured in a woman to become a child. In the spiritual it is through the seed of the word of God, the imperishable seed (**1Pet.1:23**). This seed brings forth fruit after its own kind. This generation that is to come forth is the fruit of the word being preached. We are regenerated by the word (**Titus 3:5**).

We must be preachers of the pure word of God to bring forth a generation of the word. There is a famine for the word of God, but when the word of God is preached again, the word will bring forth fruit (**1Sam.3:1-19**).

The generation of Jacob

“This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face” Ps.24:6.

We can be this generation: a generation of lost and broken people who have been born again to become the children of God and who are able to grow up to the time and place of total transformation. Jacob was twisted in his flesh, but Jacob wanted to change. He would not let the Man from heaven go until he, Jacob, was changed. It is time to be like Jacob and seriously seek God; to seriously seek His face.

Appointed to eternal life

When Paul and Barnabas preached the word in Antioch in Pisidia, amongst much disturbance and opposition, the Scripture says, *“Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed” Acts 13:48.* The chosen generation is the generation which is appointed. We need to be serious about God’s appointment of us. There are more to find to fill up this generation; they will only hear if someone is sent to preach (**Rom.10:14-17**).

A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

We are to reign on the earth as kings and priests (**Rev.5:10**). The time will come when *“the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” (Rev.11:15)*, and we shall reign with Him.

What do kings do?

Kings administer the word of God governmentally; they decree and declare the word of God, exercising the keys of the kingdom of heaven (**Matt.16:19**). They make sure that the word of God is known. When kings speak, they must be heard because they have kingly authority.

What is the result of our being kings?

Every home will be a home of discipleship; children will be growing up as disciples, knowing the word of God. There will be no misuse of the internet; no silly worldly games! Let us live as Christians, reigning *“in life through the One, Jesus Christ”* (**Rom.5:17**).

What is priestly ministry?

It is worship and prayer at the altar of incense: is there an altar in your home? Is there a time and a place to meet the Lord? Is the Table of the Lord celebrated in the home?

A HOLY NATION

“But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy for I am holy’” **1Pet.1:15-16**. How do we become holy? How do we become a holy nation? The Scripture says, *“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”* **1Pet.1:13**. This means putting on the belt of truth; this means filling our minds with the word of God.

We are holy by *“not conforming ourselves to the former lusts”* but as obedient children living our time on the earth in godly fear (**1Pet.1:14&17**). Elsewhere Paul says, *“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”* **Rom.12:2**. Being holy is being changed by the word and the Spirit to become more like God, living in His kingdom and not living in the world and loving the things of this world (**1Jn.2:15**).

A nation

A nation came forth from Jacob through his twelve sons. The holy nation comes forth as a result of genuine apostolic ministry. The names of the original apostles of the Lamb are set upon the twelve foundations of the wall of the holy city (**Rev.21:14**). The city is built from a nation, a holy nation.

The commonwealth of Israel

Before we came to Christ, we were *“aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ”* **Eph.2:12-13**. Now in Christ we share in all the promises and the glory and the adoption promised to Israel. There is no hierarchy or partiality in a commonwealth, everybody is included; everybody is benefited.

HIS OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE

“Our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works” **Titus 2:13b-14**. To redeem means to buy back. Jesus has redeemed us; He has acquired us; we are His purchased possession!

What does this people look like? **Ephesians 5:18-21** describe a special people:

- They will not be drunk with wine
- They will be filled with the Holy Spirit

- They will speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs
- They will be a thankful people, always giving thanks to God
- They will be a submitted people

AN APOSTOLIC PEOPLE

God calls us a nation; God calls us a people; God calls us a generation; God calls us a priesthood. All of these terms refer to many, not to one or even to a few. This is the apostolic people of God.

This people has been delivered from darkness and *“conveyed into the kingdom of the Son of His love”* (Col.1:13).

This people *“have obtained mercy”* (1Pet.2:10). Paul said that he had obtained mercy, because he *“did it ignorantly in unbelief”* (1Tim.1:13). He had been an arrogant man, a persecutor of the church and a blasphemer. We can all change and we are to change and we will change as we submit to the word of God by the Spirit of grace and supplication.

What manner of persons ought we be?

In the midst of warning us of the severe judgement that will come upon the earth to those who live by the elementary principles and evil spirits that are in the world, Peter challenges us as to our manner of life (2Pet.3:10-11). Our behaviour should be characterised by holy conduct and godliness. We are *“looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God”* (v.12).

This is an amazing proposition that Peter presents to us: the judgement of the world [this age] is inevitable! Judgement of fire [fervent heat] will dissolve and melt [expose and destroy] all that is ungodly. Jesus said *“The Son of Man will send out His messengers and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire”* Matt.13:41-42a.

“Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless and consider that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation” 2Pet.3:14-15a.

Who are these apostolic people?

1. It is the ekklesia: the called out ones, the picked out ones, those chosen (Matt.16:18)
2. It is the church: the house of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth (1Tim.3:15)
3. They are the body of Messiah, many people; people will see the Messiah in the people who represent and manifest Christ. It will be the perfect man of Ephesians 4:13.

How do we become this people?

- I. Respond to the call of God – it is costly.
- II. We need to be discipled and taught in the word, which is the truth; the truth only comes by revelation and then by deep understanding.
- III. We need to be trained and equipped to be sent out into the world to witness.
- IV. We become a functioning member of His body as we grow up under the ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Eph.4:11-16).

THE APOSTOLIC PATTERN

There is clearly an apostolic pattern in the New Testament Scriptures that ought to be followed, and must be followed so that the church can be restored and fulfil God's purpose in the earth. This requires that there be **apostles** in the church today. For two decades now God has been restoring apostles in the church, but there needs to be a clear understanding of why we need apostles and that we understand the apostolic pattern that must be followed, so that the church may become *"a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Ephesians 4:13b).

1. WE NEED APOSTLES TO REVEAL CHRIST

In **Matthew 10**, Jesus commissioned the first twelve apostles and sent them out. He gave them many and various instructions and then in **verse 40** He said *"He who receives you [the apostles], receives Me [Jesus the Messiah], and he who receives Me receives Him [the Father] who sent Me"*

The mystery of God

If we receive apostles sent by Jesus we actually receive Jesus. If we receive Jesus in this way, we actually receive the Father. There is a deep revelation of God to be received, and according to Jesus it comes by receiving the apostles He sends.

Paul talks about this in **Colossians 2**: *"For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and for those in Laodicea, and as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of Father and of Christ" v.1-2.*

God is Father and God is the Son

The mystery of God is the deep understanding of God as revealed in the whole Bible, but especially in the New Testament. **God is Father to a Son and Son to a Father – this is the mystery of God.** The Father is revealed in the Son and can be known no other way. *"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'" Jn.14:6.* Jesus then said, *"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him" Jn.14:7.* How were the disciples going to know the Father? Only through knowing Jesus, after He has risen from the dead.

The doctrine of Christ

The apostle John went to great lengths in his writings to make known to us the mystery of Christ. He says, *"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son" 2John 9.* He says, *"For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" 2Jn.7.*

In the modern world we have the Jehovah Witnesses going all over the world declaring that Jesus Christ is not Jehovah [Yahweh] in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. We have Muslims aggressively opposing the doctrine of Christ and even being prepared to kill. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Even in the Christian churches there has been a pulling away from the doctrine of Christ, replacing it with other doctrines that men have taught to explain the Godhead. There

needs to be a clear preaching of the doctrine of Christ; there needs to be a clear teaching of the divinity of Christ. This is the only foundation of the Christian faith (**1Cor.3:10-11**).

2. WE NEED APOSTLES TO LAY THE FOUNDATION

A picture of the pattern

In **Ephesians 2:19-22** we have a picture of the pattern, after which the church is to be built. The household of God is built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets. This is a remarkable statement and one that has been ignored for too long. Every church is built upon some foundational doctrine, but what is that doctrine? The household of God can only be built on the Biblical foundation and that is the preaching and teaching of the mystery of who Christ is. Therefore the building of God's house is only possible if true holy apostles and prophets are in place as foundational ministries, teaching and preaching the mystery of Christ (**Eph.3:5**).

God to be seen

The purpose is for God to be seen in the earth through His church. God needs a people fashioned according to the pattern. Apostles are necessary with prophets to lay the foundational knowledge of Jesus Christ in the church. Relying upon historic denominational foundations will never bring the church to maturity, that is, to the full revelation of who Christ is.

Through the church

In **1 Timothy 3:15** Paul was instructing Timothy how to conduct himself "*in the house of God, which is church of living God the pillar and ground of the truth*". The primary truth that is to be found in every expression of the church is the declaration of the mystery of godliness: that "*God was manifested in the flesh*" (v.16). God was seen in flesh! And today God reveals Himself through His Word in the church of the living God. The living God is found in the church through the word that is preached and taught.

What did the first apostles preach? Acts 5:42

The apostles had been in trouble again for preaching Christ. The high priest and his companions were deeply troubled. They said, "*Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!*" **Acts 5:28**. What an accusation to have made against us: that we have filled our city, our nation with the doctrine of Jesus Christ!

These apostles, after being released, having been beaten with stripes, were rejoicing to have suffered "*shame for His name*" (v.41). And what did they do then? "*And daily in the temple and in every house they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus the Christ*" v.42. This is the fundamental knowledge of God, knowing Jesus the Messiah; that He is the revelation of God in the flesh.

3. APOSTLES ARE NEEDED AS WISE MASTER BUILDERS 1 Corinthians 3:10-11

Apostle Paul had received grace from God to be as a "*wise master builder*" (v.10). A master builder has to know the plan, so that we can all build according to the pattern. There is a master plan that apostles are responsible to make known. The building must have a sure foundation. The only foundation that can be laid is "*Jesus the Messiah*" (v.11). This Jesus who is Yehovah [Yahweh] in the flesh, bringing salvation. He is the promised Messiah, the King of kings and He has a plan.

The foundation is the knowledge of who Jesus is. God is not a concept; He is a person whose name is Jesus.

The church is to be built up into maturity and every saint equipped to function so that the church will begin to measure up to the stature of Christ (**Eph.4:13**). Apostles are needed, along with all the ministries Christ has given, to bring the church to be a perfect man in the earth reflecting Christ. God will be seen in the earth!

4. WE NEED APOSTLES TO MAKE KNOWN THE REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY

Apostles function in the realm of revelation. Paul speaks of the grace he received to know the mystery and to make known the mystery through his writings and through his preaching (**Eph.3:2-4 & 8**). This knowledge is given by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets. We will only see the mystery when we receive the apostles and prophets that the Spirit has revealed it to. There are many today calling themselves apostles and prophets but they do not speak of the mystery of Christ. **Ephesians 3:5** clarifies this: the mystery is revealed *"by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets"*, that is, those who set themselves apart in prayer, enabling them to receive from the Spirit (**Acts 6:4**).

There is one body

In the book of Ephesians, Paul refers to the **one body** (**Eph.4:4**) and to the **one new man** (**Eph.2:15**). One of the primary aspects of the mystery is that the *"Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel"* **Eph.3:6**. There is one body, made up of Jew and Gentile. The body that Jesus is forming in the earth is made up of Jew and Gentile. There is no such thing as 'a Gentile church' in the Scriptures. There is only the one body of Christ.

There is not a separate destiny for the nations [Gentiles] to the nation of Israel. Christ has *"broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments 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"* **Eph.2:14b-16**.

This is a most important aspect of the mystery that few are preaching today. Many are coming up with sophisticated doctrines and eschatologies concerning the future of Israel and the church, therein denying the clear teaching of Paul in the book of Ephesians and elsewhere, and Jesus' own words in **John 10:16**, *"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd."*

Grace was given to Paul to *"preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah [Christ]"* **Eph.3:8**, so that so that we could all **see the fellowship of the mystery** (**v.9**). This is the mystery of Messiah, the Anointed One. It is a fellowship! That means that we are all to become participators in this mystery. This mystery has been hidden since creation. It was hidden by God, but it is revealed in Jesus Christ. This is all referred to in **verse 9**.

The result of seeing the fellowship of the mystery is that the principalities and powers will bow the knee to Jesus, when the mystery [manifold wisdom] is made known by the church to the principalities and powers (**Eph.3:10**).

WHAT IS THE PATTERN?

The early church was undisputedly led by apostles. When Paul was converted he was taken to meet the apostles. Who led the church? The apostles. The first church was apostolic.

The pattern is expressed as **follow me as I follow Christ**: this is the pattern of leadership! This is the **apostolic pattern**:

- apostles lay down their lives for the brethren
- the heart of apostles is to raise up brethren into the callings that the brethren have
- all that apostles have to offer is a lifestyle of following Jesus

Paul's example: Philippians 3:7-14

If you do what Paul did, you will become an apostolic person. Then you will be functioning in the apostolic pattern as a member of an apostolic company who are a pattern people.

v.7 *"What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ."* This is the beginning of our walk to maturity: laying down everything for Christ

v.8 *"indeed I count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus My Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ."* We need to have this same attitude as Paul: full commitment! Laying down everything for the sake of gaining Christ! Not mourning what we have lost, but purposely deciding to count them as loss. The reward is gaining Christ!

v.9 All we need is to be *"found in Him, not having my own righteousness ... but ... the righteousness which is from God by faith"*. Faith is the key, not your feelings.

v.10 This is a remarkable prayer from the heart of Paul. His great desire was to *"know Him and the power of his resurrection."* Most of us like that part of the prayer, but Paul does not stop there. He goes much further: to know *"the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death"*. We often fail to understand the importance of embracing His sufferings in our own lives; we fail to really die to ourselves.

v.11 *"If by any means I may attain to [arrive at] the resurrection from the dead"*. This is speaking of a lifestyle experience of the resurrection. This is walking in the power of the resurrection here and now. Our goal is to walk in Jesus, for Jesus, and through Jesus.

"Always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body" 2 Cor.4:10. Paul speaks of a lifestyle of *"death working in us, but life in you [others]"* (v.12).

v.12 Here is the decision! Will we press on? Will we *"lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me"*. Do not get stuck where you are and what you feel right now. Make the decision to **press on**. Why did God call you in the beginning? Do you know?

v.13 This is the attitude. *"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead."* Forget the past! Make a decision: press on into the future. It does not matter if you have been successful or a failure, walk into the new man. Do not let people hold you in the past. Do not let yourself remain in the past.

v.14 "press toward goal of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

In verses 12 to 14, Paul uses strong words of action. We are to make decisions to press on, to lay hold of, to apprehend, to forget the past, to reach for the future. Brethren you can do it! You can press on! You can lay hold of all that God has in store for you. He wants you to be an over comer, to be part of a pattern people, to walk in maturity.

Being a pattern people - Philippians 3:15-17

v.15 "Therefore let us". Paul has changed from personal testimony: I press toward the goal etc, to the plural: let us. "**As many as are mature**". Paul is now talking to a company of people who have the same commitment and attitude and zeal as he describes of himself in **verses 7-14**. If you and I have a similar commitment and choose to go on, counting the cost and choosing to forsake all, then we are mature. This is the qualification to be a member of the apostolic company; to be part of a pattern people.

"Let us ... have this mind": we are to think differently. We are no longer just individually orientated in following Jesus, but we have become a functioning part of the body.

Then Paul says, **"If in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you"**. If you have made the mature decision to follow Jesus, God will reveal any differences in thinking. It becomes more easy now to discern the good acceptable and perfect will of God (**Rom.12:2**), and it becomes easy to repent, that is, to change our minds.

v.16 "Nevertheless to the degree that we have already attained", the level of maturity that we have, we are to walk as a functioning body in Christ, submitting to the word of God, and submitting to one another.

"Let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind". Let us stop arguing and making divisions according to our own opinions. Let us build up the body that we are part of and look to contribute to the building up of the whole body.

We are to walk by the same rule. This means we are to live by the rule, according to the measure, and the measure is **"the stature of the fullness of Christ"** (**Eph.4:13b**). This walk is voluntary; we need to have a generous attitude in the company and be committed to being a pattern people.

v.17 "Brethren, join in following my example". Let us walk with the apostle. One can only be an apostle to those who receive him as an apostle.

"Note those who so walk as you have us for a pattern". Are you willing to be a pattern? Can others follow your lifestyle, your example and thereby grow to greater maturity?

What sort of pattern should we be setting?

The **Thessalonians** were a pattern people, **1 Thessalonians 1:6-8**

- They **"became followers of us [apostles] and of the Lord"**
- They **"received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit"**
- They **"became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe"**
- **"The word of the Lord sounded forth ... in every place"** from this people.
- Their **"faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything"**

Longsuffering is a necessary part of the pattern. The apostle must show forth **"all longsuffering as a pattern"** (**1 Timothy 1:16**).

As an apostle, Titus was to show himself as a "*pattern of good works, in doctrine, integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech*" **Titus 2:7**. The brethren are to follow this example.

The brethren are meant to be able to follow the example of the apostolic leadership, not being disorderly; not eating without working; not being a burden to other brethren, showing themselves "*an example of how you should follow*" (**2 Thess.3:7-9**).

The pattern is a lifestyle of discipleship

Our understanding of the pattern is growing and deepening. Discipleship is meant to be a lifestyle, following the example of the apostles in the midst, and receiving the doctrine through them. Being a pattern people is very different to following the normal traditional church pattern. The normal church pattern is mostly expressed in congregational meetings with one minister up the front, trying to provide everything that the people of God need and then the people of God go home and individually and as families seek to follow the Lord.

In discipleship we function in public - the congregational meeting - and from house to house. We are disciples seven days a week, following the pattern.

THE APOSTOLIC PURPOSE

What is the purpose of God?

To have a mature church in the earth, which fulfils God's purpose in the earth. The church is not an embassy of heaven offering visas.

HOW DOES THE CHURCH FULFIL GOD'S PURPOSE?

Romans 1:5 – Through Messiah Jesus we have **received grace and apostleship for obedience** to the faith among all nations for His name.

There will be a church on the earth that is properly and adequately preaching Jesus the Messiah to all nations.

This church will be functioning in grace and apostleship so that nations become obedient to the Word of God; nations opening up in the timing and the will of God to receive the Word from this mature church!

God will give a window of opportunity in each nation. God will have His apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers ready to go through that window of opportunity.

Through Grace

Grace has been so underrated in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church. The focus was on power, anointing and gifts. However grace is to be accessed. The power of the Holy Spirit is given for witness, but it is through grace that we reach nations.

Grace is the nature of the very personhood of God. **Exodus 34:6-7** says God is gracious; it is who He is. Then the New Testament teaches that it is through **grace** that apostleship is activated to reach nations (**Rom.1:5**).

Through knowledge of the Seven Ones - Ephesians 4:4-6

This is an amazing declaration: there is One Body and One Spirit; there is One Hope, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism; there is One God and Father. Have you considered this amazing declaration? Within the seven ones are the core revelations of what we believe.

To enable us to understand these "ones", Jesus gave us the five-fold ministry, of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher (**Eph.4:11**). For a long time I taught the passage on the five-fold ministries separately to the seven ones that need to be preached and taught.

We need to preach the One Body, that it is the very Body of Christ, of which we have been made members by the very will of God, being placed in it through baptism (**1Cor.12:12-13 & 18**). We need to preach the one baptism and the great need to receive the Holy Spirit in our day. We need to ask ourselves, what is the faith that we are to become unified in? What is the hope of our calling? Who is the Lord? There is one God and Father of us all!

By growing up to be that Perfect Man

Exegesis of Ephesians 4:7-16

v.7 to each one of us grace has been given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

v.8 When Jesus ascended He led captivity captive and gave gifts (plural) to men - the gift has become "gifts".

v.9-10 Jesus had to go down into the lower parts of the earth to bring these gifts up. As the gifts work in the church to bring the whole church to a mature understanding of the purpose of God, then Christ will truly fill all things.

v.11 He gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers.

v.12 He gave these gifts:

- to equip (set in order the body) the saints
- to “do the work of the ministry”: we need apostles working! We need prophets working!
- to build up the body of Christ

v.13 These gifts must function until we all come to:

- i. unity of faith
- ii. knowledge of the Son of God
- iii. to a perfect man. The goal is perfection: **“Let us go on to perfection” Heb.6:1.**
- iv. to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Let us imagine what this could look like.

v.14 We should no longer be children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; we are to grow up, and that will happen as the ministries do their work among us.

v.15 The members of the body are to speak the truth in love, so that we may grow up in all things into Him who is the Head – Christ. Going beyond superficial platitudes and getting into reality: it is time to talk about Jesus.

v.16 The goal is a fully functioning body; fully functioning in love; this includes every member.

Growing up to become the Glorious church

The Church, The Bride, the Wife - Ephesians 5:22-33

- ❖ This mature church is submitted to the Lord
- ❖ Christ is our Head and our Saviour
- ❖ We are to be subject to Christ in everything; our whole lives
- ❖ Christ loves us and gave Himself for us
- ❖ **He is sanctifying and cleansing us by the washing of the water of the Word. The word is the “Rhema” – the quickened word, the word proceeding from the mouth of God.**
Do you learn the Word and find out what God wants to say to you every day from the Word? If we keep immersing ourselves in the Word we will find it easier to receive the “Rhema” word, hearing God speak to us
- ❖ **Jesus is doing this so He might present her to Himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, to be holy and without blame!**

Where is Jesus doing this?

Jesus is doing this in the church in the earth through the ministry of the Word. This is the Word that brings faith (**Rom.10:17**).

The overcomers will be that church

In the seven letters to the seven churches in the book of **Revelation**, there is a reward given to the overcomers. Jesus is looking for a church of overcomers – not a church of Sunday worshippers and Wednesday pray-ers. He is looking for overcomers.

If we do not overcome we do not receive the rewards. An overcomer is one who gets up on his feet after being knocked down ten times. The overcomer will get back up again and go on in the faith. Forget the past! Reach toward what is ahead, pressing for the goal!

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD [the Eternal One], as the waters cover the sea” Habakkuk 2:14. How do we get the knowledge of the glory? It is actually through discipleship, *“teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matt.28:19)*, and continuing steadfastly in *“the apostles doctrine” (Acts 2:42)*.

The goal is the new creation

In **Acts 2:22-36**, Peter is preaching Jesus the Christ proving that *“this Jesus whom you crucified, God has made both Lord and Christ” (v.36)*. Peter is giving a summary of who Jesus is: that God raised up Jesus, *“having loosed the pains of death”*.

The *“pains of death”* is literally *‘birth pangs’*. Jesus was not suffering pain in hell. When Jesus said “It is finished”, the suffering was done. The Scripture says of Jesus, *“Being put to death in the flesh but was made alive in the Spirit” (1 Pet.3:18)*. Jesus was in the Spirit immediately after He died in the flesh and by the Spirit *“He went and preached to the spirits in prison” (v.19)*.

Jesus was birthing something, He was bringing forth the gifts necessary to build the church. Jesus was in birth pangs, bringing forth the new creation. When He rose from the dead everything in all of creation was to change.

After Jesus died, the veil was torn and the graves were opened. Many bodies of dead saints came out of graves after Jesus’ resurrection and appeared to many (**Matt.27:51-52**). This was all part of the process of Jesus completing His work down below, in the lower parts of the earth (**Eph.4:8-10**).

Jesus went through birth pangs after He died in the flesh to bring forth the new creation in the Spirit. Jesus had to come and die and go below in the Spirit and bring forth the new creation.

Where is the new creation?

- ❖ it is in the earth
- ❖ the earth was cursed because of sin
- ❖ Jesus came to take away the curse of sin from the earth

For this to happen it was necessary for Jesus to die, to be buried, and to be raised from the dead. This all happened as it was written in the Scripture (**1Cor.15:3-4**).

The knowledge of the Glory of the Eternal One is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

God has a plan for the earth. God’s plan is not to take you away to heaven. That is why we are to **go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them into the name...teaching them to observe all I commanded**. This is how we give the knowledge of the glory of God.

God’s original mandate given to Adam will be fulfilled. ***“Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth, subdue it and have dominion” (Gen.1:28)***.

Noah was kept safe in the earth in the day of judgement.

God preserves a people, the righteous, in the earth who will fulfil His purpose.
The coming of the Son of Man will be as the Days of Noah (**Matt.24:36-41**).

The Parable of the Wheat and Tares shows how the wicked will be taken out and burned in the fire of judgement at the end of the age (**Matt.13:41-42**). *“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”* (**Matt.13:43**).

Where is this kingdom? It is in the world (**v.38a**).

What are the steps to fulfilling this goal?

Hebrews 6:1 says *“Let us go on to perfection”*. **Hebrews 6:3** says we will *“If God permits”*. God will permit us to go on if foundations are right.

There are six steps:

- i. repentance from dead works**
- ii. put our faith toward God** through Jesus Christ, personally (**Jn 14:1**)
- iii. doctrine of baptisms** – for repentance and remission of sins, to receive the Spirit, to be placed in His Body, to be immersed in His name
- iv. the laying on of hands** to receive Holy Spirit, to be blessed, commissioned, ordained (all of us are priests needing ordination)
- v. resurrection of the dead** – walking in resurrection life (**Jn 5:24-25**), born again, raised by hearing the voice of the Son of God
- vi. Eternal Judgement** – we are to walk in this every day, choosing to believe in Him every day – people only go to hell because they refuse to believe in Jesus; Jesus has dealt with sin.

What sort of people should we be once the foundations are laid?

Hebrews 5:12

- ❖ We ought to be teachers, teaching others about the glory of God
- ❖ Teaching others the foundations which enable them to go on to perfection
- ❖ We are to grow up from being disciples to be teachers
- ❖ We need to grow up to eat the solid food and handle the word of righteousness
- ❖ We cannot stay on milk all our lives

The word of righteousness is the word preached to release faith (**Heb.5:13**). We must contend earnestly for the faith that once for all was delivered to the saints (**Jude 3**). This is the faith we are to die for with a smile on our face, so that people can see the glory of God.

What is God’s purpose?

It is the establishment of God’s kingdom/government on the earth. The government is on the shoulders of the Son of God (**Isa.9:6**); His kingdom will always be increasing (**Isa.9:7**).

His kingdom is to be seen, functioning in the earth. All those who offend and are lawless will be taken out of His kingdom (**Matt.13:41-42**).

How do we get into the purpose of God?

- **Repent** which is to have a radical change of mind.
- **Believe** in the Word of God, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ
- **Be baptised** into Messiah Jesus, into His name [the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit]. That name is the name of **Jesus**. That **name** means the Person, all that the Person is. There are many fathers in the world but what is His name? There are many sons but what is His name? (**Acts 2:38, Acts 19:5, Acts 8:16-17**)
- **Receive the gift of Holy Spirit**. The gift of the Holy Spirit was foreshadowed in the annual feast of Pentecost, looking back to the giving of the Law on tablets of stone on Mt Sinai.
- **Walk in resurrection life**, that is, laying down our lives for the gospel. Martyrdom is a proof of resurrection life in us.
- **Preaching eternal judgement/condemnation** – that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish [be destroyed or die]. We are to warn and exhort people about this reality.
- **We are going on to maturity, to perfection.**

When Isaiah saw the Lord, he heard the Seraphim declaring “*The whole earth is full of Your glory*” (**Isa.6:1-3**).

**The knowledge of the glory of the Eternal God
will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea**

COME FOLLOW ME

THE SPIRIT OF GRACE AND SUPPLICATION

In **Zechariah 12:10** Yahweh, the Eternal God, says, *“I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look upon Him whom they have pierced. Yes they will mourn for Him as one mourns for His only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”*

The spirit of grace and supplication causes us to focus on Jesus, to see Him as He is. We cannot see Jesus firstly as the glorified One, but firstly as the crucified One. In our desire to grow to maturity, to inherit the glory and many other wonderful things in Christ, we can never go past the reality that the faith is in Christ *“and Him crucified”* (1Cor.2:2). *“That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures”* 1Cor.15:3b-4: these are the foundational truths of the faith.

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” Heb.2:9.

Supplication: Heb #8469 ‘tachanuwn’ means: *earnest prayer*; from #2603 ‘chanan’ which means: *to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior, to favour, bestow; to implore, to move to favour by petition*. The word supplication can be summarised as meaning to petition God for grace.

It is praying earnestly for more grace. This is the spirit of grace and supplication.

The house of David

Scripturally speaking the house of David is the house of Messiah and Messiah is Jesus. Therefore the house of David is referring to the church of Jesus Christ [*“whose house we are”* Heb.3:6 & 1Tim.3:15]. In the days of Zechariah the house of David was a very small remnant of God’s people, how had returned to rebuild the house of God in the city of Jerusalem. Prophetically today, the house of David is referring to a remnant church who know they belong to Messiah Jesus.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem, spiritually speaking, are born again, baptised, Spirit-filled children of God who are following Jesus. By submitting to His training and obeying His every word, this remnant are proving to be members of this house, and belong to the Jerusalem which is above.

The last days revival

We are entering in to the last days revival; we are declaring we want to be involved and included. This is the last days revival that has been prophesied to go forth from Australia into all nations, preparing the church for His coming.

We believe that Australia has the potential to be used as a model nation, as the church obediently prays according to **1 Timothy 2:1-12**.

How will the message of Jesus be known in Australia – somebody needs to testify, that is, to speak forth and declare who Jesus is, and what He has done. This is our mission!

WHO IS JESUS?

Messiah, Son of God

“You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God” (Matt.16:16). The Messiah is the Anointed King. When we start to preach who Jesus is, this causes kings to be troubled, such as king Herod (Matt,2:1-8).

Psalm 110 declares that Jesus is the Lord, sitting at the right hand of God (v.1); He is ruling in the midst of His enemies (v.2); *“He shall judge among the nations”* (v.6).

Jesus is the Son of the Living God, that is, He is God manifested in the flesh (1Tim.3:16).

This Jesus is calling to us to *“Come Follow Me”* (Matt.4:19 & Matt.9:9). He did not say to join any church or any ministry. We are to follow Jesus! This is the call to be a disciple.

Matthew 4:18-22

- Jesus saw two brothers, Simon and Andrew; they were fishermen (v.18)
- Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men (v.19)
- They immediately left what they were doing, their livelihood and followed Jesus (v.20)
- John and James were also called from their father and the family business (v.21)
- They immediately followed Jesus (v.22)

We are called to follow a Person – Jesus. Discipleship is firstly a relationship.

Apostle and High Priest (Hebrews 3:1)

Consider Jesus the **Apostle**. As the apostle:

- Jesus is going somewhere;
- He is on the move;
- He has a mission;
- follow Jesus and join the mission

Consider Jesus the **High Priest**.

- He has done something wonderful for us
- Receive what I have done for you
- He has redeemed us from all sin and unrighteousness, He saves us
- This will enable us to follow Him as the apostle

CHARACTERISTICS OF A DISCIPLE

1. A Radical shift - Abraham

In **Genesis 12:1** God told Abraham to make a radical shift in his lifestyle. *“Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you.’”* To be a disciple means for us a radical change in our lifestyle. We are called to forsake all and follow Him: get out of your country (national identity); family, father’s house (culture, lineage); move out from what is ‘comfortable for us’. God will take us to a new ‘country, family and father’s house’.

God told Abram that if he did this he would be blessed and that in him *“all the families of the earth shall be blessed”* (Gen.12:3). We are to be a blessing to the nations.

2. Total Commitment - Nehemiah

Because Nehemiah's heart was already full of faith, he was able to make a total commitment to serve God's purposes in his day, no matter what the cost!

In **Nehemiah 1**, Nehemiah enjoyed what we would call a "cushy" job: he was the king's cupbearer; he was the king's counsellor; he held a privileged position; he was on intimate terms with the king. His was a luxurious job.

However Nehemiah was a man of integrity, a man of God. He had kingdom priorities in his heart; he was not attached to the easy life of privilege. He was willing to give up his position of luxury and privilege due to news that came from Jerusalem.

His commitment was to turn his back on prominence and privilege and to do what God was calling him to do. This meant a dangerous journey into an uncertain future.

3. A different lifestyle - Paul the apostle

Paul's testimony is a true example of a disciple whose lifestyle totally changed when he became a follower of Jesus. Christianity is a lifestyle. Jesus warned that even in our families there would be division over this different lifestyle.

Paul went through a major change of lifestyle, from being a Pharisee who was persecuting Christians, to become a persecuted preacher of the gospel. Paul was the epitome of a highly educated man in his professional field, which for Paul was being a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Even after Paul had become a follower of Jesus the other disciples were afraid of him (**Acts 9:26**).

Paul was not ashamed of the radical change in himself because of Jesus, and he boldly declared his faith to the apostles (**Acts 9:27**), and spoke boldly in the name of Jesus (**Acts 9:29**).

One great thing to learn from Paul is that he never faded but was still sharing his testimony when in prison, and in his hired house "*with all confidence*" (**Acts 28:30-31**).

4. Total Submission - Esther

Esther was willing to submit totally to unknown circumstances. She made a decision to submit totally to the situation that she found herself in. This total selfless submission led her to become queen. When she found herself confined in the chamber of the women, in an alien situation, the chief eunuch became her best friend and helped her.

Esther's willingness to submit herself brought her to the place of being able to make the right choice, even if it cost her life (**Esther 4:14-16**). As it turned out it brought about the deliverance of the Jewish people.

Submission is dealing with pride and trusting God even when situation seems impossible. True submission is a character quality. In the case of Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego, they were submitted but not obedient; submission is of the heart.

To follow Jesus requires total submission

5. The Greatest Challenge - Moses

Moses was sure he was the wrong person to be called, "just don't send me" (**Ex.4:13**). God was not happy with Moses; in fact He was angry (**Ex.4:14**). God had already spoken to Aaron's heart, that he would be a helper to Moses. God knew that Moses needed a helper and He had prepared a helper for Moses, but God wanted Moses to accept the challenge without knowing that God had already provided a helper.

Initially Moses was rebellious to the call and had been disobedient to God, failing to circumcise his son (**Ex.4:24-26**). God was even going to kill him.

Let us desire to perfectly obey God. The greatest challenge is to lay down our life to be obedient to Jesus.

6. Greatest Reward – seeing Jesus

Peter

The story of Peter is amazing and I am sure all of us learn much from the highs and lows of Peter's discipleship. It seems that Peter regarded his experience with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration as perhaps the greatest reward that he had received.

Peter said, *“We were eyewitnesses of His majesty, seeing the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He received from God the Father honour and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory” 2 Peter 1:16-17.* Peter said, *“we were with Him on the holy mountain” v.18.*

Paul

Paul also saw the Lord, *“Then last of all He was seen by me also” (1Cor.15:8).* Paul's vision of Jesus sustained him in his discipleship and ministry until his dying day. He had seen Jesus in the glorious light of heaven.

Stephen

Stephen saw Jesus in His glory. He said, *“Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56).* Stephen did not mind dying because he already had his reward.

To see Jesus in all His glory is the greatest reward!

FOLLOWING JESUS TODAY

What God is doing in the church today is different to revivals of the past. **God is always moving on in history** and every time He sends revival [or a time of refreshing **Acts.3:19**] it is for the **fulfilment of His purpose in that particular time of history**, to bring His church more fully into what He is doing.

We have personally experienced revival some years ago. It began sovereignly in 1995 when about twenty of us gathered on a Wednesday night to seek the Lord because we were hungry and thirsty, desiring more of Him. There is much more we could relate about those years, but the main thing is that God brought us into the apostolic restoration that we have been flowing in now since 1998. For us the purpose of that revival was to be swept into the apostolic revelation by the Holy Spirit who had captured our attention in that time of refreshing.

The quickening of the Holy Spirit

Today God is sending:

- a time of refreshing;
- a time of revival;
- a time of being quickened by the Holy Spirit;
- a time of experiencing new life in the anointing and manifest presence of the Lord.

To empower the church

This time of revival is to empower the remnant church to arise apostolically and proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of God (**Matt.24:14**). Most have heard something of the gospel of salvation, but most have not heard of the authority of Messiah Jesus (**Matt.28:18**), that He is the anointed King, ruling and reigning in the earth today through His saints (**Acts 2:32-36**).

Most do not realise that the world is actually His field and Jesus is raising up His sons in the world so that at the end of the age, the world will be loaded with the sons of the kingdom whom Jesus has planted (**read Matt.13:36-43**). According to the word there is coming such a revival that ***“all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness will be gathered out of His kingdom”*** (v.41). This takes place when the sons of the kingdom have come to maturity and the Lord Jesus sends out His [angel] messengers to proclaim His word.

Paying the price

The Scripture says ***“and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him”*** (Matt.4:22).

Riches

It is good for us to examine our hearts to see how much we trust in riches, even if it is only a social security pension. So many of our brethren live in nations where there is no pension, and very few jobs.

Family relationships

How much do we rely upon family relationships and how much do we prioritise those relationships above and before our discipleship in the kingdom of God?

Culture

How much do we depend on culture and language that we have grown up in and allow that to define who we are and what we think?

Achievements

How much do we trust in our own achievements, or how much do we excuse ourselves because of our failures? We must back away from our achievements and failures of the past and find ourselves in Jesus. ***“And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law [what we can do], but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith”*** Phil.3:9.

Being positioned as disciples

Discipleship is not based on what we have done, but discipleship is being led by the Holy Spirit in godly disciplines that bear witness to others, enabling them to come into the kingdom of God.

In **Genesis 24**, the servant of Abraham was given a very important task, to find a wife for Isaac. Isaac was the heir of God in the earth. As the servant came to the knowledge that God had led him to the young woman who was to be Isaac's wife, he proclaimed, ***“I being in the way, YAHWEH led me”*** (Gen.24:27).

We need to position ourselves as disciples, ready to do the will of God. If we do this, then God will be able to lead us. Last year's plans and priorities have already been left behind.

Now is a new opportunity to follow Jesus in the twenty-first century

THE WILL OF GOD

David says in **Psalm 40:8**, *“I delight to do Your will, O my God.”* This is probably the desire of many of us; to know the will of God and to be walking in the will of God. In this teaching we are going to look into the Scripture to get a fuller understanding of what the will of God is for us and how that is outworked in our lives.

Pray for God’s will to be done

In **Matthew 6:10** and in **Luke 11:2** when Jesus is teaching his disciples how to pray, He says to pray *“Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* This is a powerful prayer exercising kingdom authority. Jesus is instructing His disciples to pray for the will of God to be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

To desire His will to be done requires total death to our own will or what we think should be done. Jesus demonstrated this for us in the Garden of Gethsemane when He prayed, *“O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done”* **Matt.26:42**.

Jesus came to do the Father’s will

Jesus came to the earth not seeking to do His own will, but the will of the one who sent Him. *“I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear I judge, and My judgement is righteous because I do not seek My own will, but the Father who sent Me”* **Jn.5:30**. Again in **John 6:38** Jesus said, *“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”*

Jesus said that to do the will of the Father was as food to Him: *“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work”* **Jn.4:34**.

What was the Father’s will for Jesus?

Jesus was clear about what the Father’s will was for Him. In **John 6:39** He says, *“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.”* He went on to say in **verse 40**, *“And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”* It was the Father’s will for people to be saved by Jesus coming to the earth.

The Scripture confirms in **1Timothy 2:4**, that Jesus came in the will of God to be the Mediator through whom men could be saved. God *“desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”*. This is confirmed again in **Matthew 18:14** when Jesus said, *“Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”*

It was the Father’s will for Jesus to manifest in the earth as the Son of God so that those who had eyes to see and ears to hear, might believe in Him and received everlasting life.

Jesus came from the Father for a purpose and He did the Father’s will. He is the pattern for us to follow. He wants us also to know the Father’s will and obey the Father’s will in our lives.

Those who do the Father's will enter the kingdom

Jesus said, *"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"* Matt.7:21.

In **Matthew 21:28-31** Jesus is speaking about those who will enter the kingdom of God. He is telling the parable of the two sons to illustrate this.

The first son said he would not go to work in the vineyard when he was asked by his father, but later regretted it and went.

The second son said he would go but did not. Jesus asked the question, *"Which of the two did the will of his father? They said to Him, 'The first.'* Jesus said to them, *'Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you.'*"

Jesus is looking for those who will do His will, the will of the Father.

Punishment for those who know the Father's will and do not do it

In **Luke 12:42-48** Jesus is speaking to His disciples about the faithful steward/servant. He commends the faithful servant who is ruling well over his master's household, but then he goes on to say of that same servant who acted unfaithfully: *"That servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."*

Relationship with Jesus

To do the Father's will brings us into relationship with Jesus. When His own natural mother and brothers came to call Him, Jesus *"stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother'"* Matt.12:49-50.

Knowing God's will

To do the Father's will, we need to know His will. God actually desires for us to know His will! When Ananias commissioned Saul, who became Paul, he said *"The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will"* (Acts 22:14).

How can we come to know what His will is? By asking! We can ask God to reveal His will to us. *"For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God"* Col.1:9-10.

We can pray for ourselves and for others to know His will. This is wisdom for us. Paul tells us in **Ephesians 5:15**, *"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise"* and goes on to say *"Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is"* (v.17). The wise person is the one who understands what the will of God is.

WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR US?

- 1) It is good, acceptable and perfect.** After Paul has beseeched us to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to God, he tell us to *"not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God"* Romans 12:2.
- 2) It is God's will for us to be sanctified.** *"For this is the will of God, your sanctification"* (1Thess.4:3). **Hebrews 10:5-10** is showing us how Christ's death fulfils God's will. By Jesus being obedient to the will of God and becoming the sin

offering for us, through His death on the cross, we have been sanctified. *“Then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” v.9-10*

God has done everything that was necessary, in sending Jesus to ensure that His will for us, to be sanctified, would come to pass. We simply have to agree with His will for us, because He has promised us in **1 Thessalonians 5:23**, that the God of peace Himself will *“sanctify you completely”* and that your whole spirit, soul and body will be *“preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

- 3) It is God’s will for us **to receive the adoption as sons**. **Ephesians 1:5** says we have been *“predestined to the adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.”* This adoption comes at the age of maturity, no longer being children, no longer young men and women serving a master, but being placed into sonship, whereby we begin to walk in our inheritance.
- 4) It is God’s will for us **to come to perfection**. Paul wrote to the brethren in Colossae that *“Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” Col.4:12.*
- 5) It is God’s will for us **to be delivered from this evil age**. Paul tells us in **Galatians 1:4** that the Lord Jesus *“gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.”*
- 6) It is God’s will for us **to be thankful people**. *“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” 1Thess.5:18.*
- 7) It is God’s will for us **to understand the deeper mysteries of the word of God**. The apostle Paul encourages us in **Ephesians 1** that one of the spiritual blessings we have received from *“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v.3)*, is that He has *“made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself” (v.9).*
- 8) It is God’s will for us **not to be deceived by false doctrines**. Jesus Himself said in **John 7:16-17** *“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.”* If we will to do His will, then He has promised that we will know the true doctrine, and not come under deception.

Knowing and walking in the will of God was a key aspect of the early church

One is an apostle through the will of God

The apostle Paul knew he was an apostle by the will of God, as this is the way he introduces himself in a number of his letters. *“Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God” 1Cor.1:1 [also 2Cor.1; Eph.1:1; Col.1:1].*

We travel in ministry in the will of God

In **Romans 1:10** Paul was sharing how he was longing to be with the brethren in Rome and that he was praying that *“by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you.”* Paul knew that if it was the will of God for him, then a way would be made for him to go to Rome to see the brethren.

Again later in this letter to the Romans, Paul pleads with the brethren to *“strive together with me in prayers to God ... that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you” Rom.15:30-32.* Paul’s longing to be with them was subject to the will of God.

Giving sacrificially by the will of God

In Paul’s letter to the church in Corinth he speaks of the grace on the churches of Macedonia. These churches had been in much affliction and were in deep poverty (**2Cor.8:2**), yet they freely gave to Paul. Paul commends these ones as being obedient to the will of God. *“And not only as we had hoped, but they first give themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God” v.5.*

Accepting the will of God, even if it leads to tribulation

In the **Acts 21** Paul and his team were journeying back to Jerusalem, and they came to the house of Philip the evangelist. Here they met the prophet Agabus, who prophesied that Paul would be bound and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles (**v.8-11**). The brethren sought to dissuade him, but finally when they saw that Paul would not change his mind, they said, *“The will of the Lord be done” v.14.* Paul had already shared that he was ready *“not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus” v.13.* Therefore the brethren realised that they all needed to submit to the perfect will of God.

Live by the will of God

We need to be willing to lay down our own will and humbly submit to the Father’s will for our lives. The apostle James gives a short teaching on this in **James 4:13-15**. He teaches we are not to presumptuously say *“Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city”*, we should humbly say, *“If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that” v.15.*

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE WILL OF GOD

- **Do the will of God from the heart**

Paul teaches us that we should serve as to Christ, not to please men, *“but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph.6:6).* Not just serving in a pessimistically resigned way, but from the heart.

- **We are to live for the will of God**

Peter exhorts us that we *“no longer should live the rest of our time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God” (1Pet.4:2).*

- **We may suffer for doing the will of God**

Peter also says, *“Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator” 1Pet.4:19.* For that reason we need endurance, *“For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise” Heb.10:36.*

- **If we ask according to His will, He hears us**
“Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us, and if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him” 1Jn.5:14-15.
- **Doing the will of God releases life**
“And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever” 1Jn.2:17.

God’s desire for us

God’s desire is for us to do His will, and He has done what is necessary to enable us to do it.

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen”
Hebrews 13:20-21.

THE ORACLES OF GOD

We must be able to teach

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles [rudimentary beginnings] of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food" Hebrews 5:12. In the verses prior to this, the writer has been explaining some deep things concerning Christ the Son being *"a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Heb.5:5-10)*. Then the writer says concerning Melchizedek, *"of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing" (v.11)*.

The problem with these Hebrew believers, is explained in four ways:

- they are dull of hearing
- they should have grown up to be teachers by now
- they need to be taught again the first principles of the oracles of God
- they need milk and not solid food.

As a result of still being babes in terms of understanding the word of God, they are *"unskilled in the word of righteousness" (Heb.5:13)*. In the context, the word of righteousness is referring to the oracles of God. It is the mature word that comes, enabling the minister to rightly divide the word of truth (2Tim.2:15). It comes as a result of diligent study, giving oneself to the word. But God wants every believer to grow up into this maturity, for He says, *"But solid food is for those who are of full age [mature], those who by reason of use [practice] have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil [bad]" Heb.5:14.*

WHAT ARE THE ORACLES OF GOD?

The oracles of God are **the Scripture**, that which is written. Jesus said *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'" (Matt.4:4)*. Jesus said three times *"It is written"* and each time He quoted from the Scripture. So the oracles of God are the Scriptures, but in the verse that Jesus quotes, the Scripture gives us further insight into the oracles of God: **they proceed from the mouth of God.**

The Greek word used in this quote is *rhema*, normally translated 'word', but refers more to the spoken word, an utterance and is defined in the quote: *"that proceeds from the mouth of God"*.

Summarising what we learn from **Matthew 4:4** about the oracles of God; they are:

- i. the Scripture
- ii. that which is written
- iii. the word that proceeds from the mouth of God

The oracles of God are all of Scripture

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" 2Tim.3:16. Notice it says **all Scripture!** The Bible is the word of God and it is the word of God in its sum total and in all of its parts - every part of the Bible is the word of God.

The Scripture is given by inspiration of God: this means the Scripture is God breathed. The Greek word is *Theopneustos*, meaning literally **God breathed**. Peter, in describing how the Old Testament Scriptures were written, says, *"but holy men of God spoke as they were*

moved by the Holy Spirit" (2Pet.1:21). This means literally that they were 'being borne along' or 'coursed along' by the Holy Spirit, as in a river - the river of God!

The Scripture is profitable for: doctrine [teaching], reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. Remember the Hebrew believers were *"unskilled in the word of righteousness" (Heb.5:13).* We need to be taught and trained in the word, in the Scripture, so that we can receive the oracles of God. The Lord promises a *"crown of righteousness" (2Tim.4:8).* To receive this crown we need to be keeping [abiding in] the word of righteousness and standing in the word of righteousness.

The oracles of God are the word of God

"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart" Heb.4:12.

There is nothing to compare with the word of God:

- **it is alive;** it is the word of life; *"The words that I speak to you are spirit, and are life"(Jn.6:63).*
- **it is powerful!** The Greek word is *energes*, and elsewhere is translated as 'effective'. This word is used in two other verses in the New Testament, *"For a great and effective door has opened for me and there are many adversaries" 1Cor.16:9.* It is the word of God that opens great and effective doors for ministry, because the word of God is powerful. *"That the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgement of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus" Philemon v.6.* Our testimony is powerful when we testify according to the word of God. *Energes* can mean energetic and is the opposite of idle, inactive and ineffective.

The words of Jesus are forever

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away" Matt.24:35.

The word of the Lord grows mightily and prevails, Acts 19:20.

We are learning about the word. The main Greek word translated as 'word' is *logos* SC#3056, which has many meanings, but mostly translated as 'word'. It means: a transmission of thought, communication, a word of explanation, an utterance, divine revelation, an oracle, divine promise, divine doctrine.

True doctrine is a very important aspect of the oracles of God that must be understood. It is the doctrine of God: *"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 I speak on My own'" Jn.7:16-17.* True doctrine comes from heaven; it originates from heaven; *"Your word is settled in heaven" (Ps.119:89).*

We are to take heed to the doctrine. *"Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you" 1Tim.4:16.* For there is no other doctrine. Paul says, *"that they teach no other doctrine" (1Tim.1:3).*

The oracles of God in the Old Testament

The word 'oracle' appears seventeen times in the Old Testament in the King James Bible. In **2Samuel 16:23** it is the word *dabar*. This word primarily means the *word* and is mostly translated *word* (807x). *"Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days,*

was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom." The word that this man spoke was received as a reliable and authoritative word that was to be trusted and obeyed; it was as the oracle of God.

The Hebrew word 'debir'

The Hebrew word is *debir*; SC#1687. This word has the sense of oracle, but actually refers to the shrine or the innermost part of the sanctuary.

The word appears 16 times and in the King James Bible is translated as *oracle*. The references in question are: (1 Kings 6:5, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 31; 1Kings 7:49; 1Kings 8:6, 8; 2 Chron.3:16; 2 Chron.4:20, 5:7, 9; Psalm 28:2). Please check these references in both the King James Version and the New King James Version, because in the New King James the word is translated as *inner most sanctuary*, not as *oracle*.

The point is that **the Oracle of God is that word coming forth from the inner sanctuary from above the Mercy Seat**. As Vines puts it: *'The place from which Deity speaks'*.

There is a mystery here, and this mystery is also reflected in the New Testament in **Revelation 15:5**: *"After these things I looked, and behold, the temple [sanctuary, the inner shrine] of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened."* This verse is ill-translated by the word 'temple', because the Greek word is referring to the same thing as the ancient Hebrew word, *debir*, was referring to, that is, the inner sanctuary of the house of God, where God speaks.

So **the oracle of God is linked to the inner sanctuary of the house of God** and is referring to the Holy of Holies in both the Temple and the Tabernacle, where the Ark of the Covenant was placed.

The speaking place of God

The oracle of God is that word which originates in the inner sanctuary of God's house. This is confirmed when God was instructing Moses in the building of the Tabernacle and its furnishings. *"You shall put the Mercy Seat on top of the Ark, and in the Ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the Mercy Seat, from between the two Cherubim which are on the Ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give in commandment to the children of Israel"* Ex.25:21-22.

This is confirmed in **Numbers 7:89** *"Now when Moses went into the Tabernacle of Meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the Mercy Seat that was on the Ark of the Testimony, from between the two Cherubim, thus He spoke to him."*

Originally God intended to meet with His people face to face, but the people became afraid and they refused to meet with God. They requested Moses to meet with God and then to speak to them (Ex.20:18-19). In the new covenant God wishes to meet with everyone of His people and be able to speak to them face to face, even as He spoke to Moses. He intends for the people of God to be able to teach others the very word that God speaks to them.

A defiled prophet cannot speak the oracle of God

There are other uses of the word 'oracle' in the NKJ Bible, but it is a different Hebrew word and does not really mean oracle. For example, in **Numbers 23 and 24** it says that Balaam *"took up his oracle"* (Nu.23:7,18 & 24:3,15). The word in the Hebrew is translated 'proverb' and 'parable' in the KJV. The fact that Balaam was a defiled prophet who used sorcery, means

that he could not speak the oracle of God, that is, the pure unadulterated word from the mouth of God. However he could not do other than speak the word God gave him to speak, but that is different to the oracle of God. God caused a donkey to speak as well and that is not the oracle of God.

The oracles of God in the New Testament

The word translated as 'oracle' is *logion* SC#3051. It means 'an utterance [of God]' and is translated four times as oracle. Vines says that *logion* means a word, narrative, statement; a divine response or utterance an oracle.

1. The contents of the Mosaic law are the oracles of God

In Acts 7:38, Stephen is speaking of Moses receiving the law word, *"This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give us."*

2. The Old Testament Scriptures are the oracles of God

"What advantage has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God" Rom.3:1-2.

3. The Christian doctrine of the New Testament equals the oracles of God

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God and you have come to need milk and not solid food" Heb.5:12. We learn from this verse that all Christians are expected to grow to maturity and to be able to teach the oracles of God. To be enabled to do this, one must be properly founded in the first principles of the oracles of God.

These first principles are listed for us in **Hebrew 6:1-2**: repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgement. These are the first principles of the oracles of God. They are the first principles of the faith which is in Jesus Christ. God will not allow His people to handle the oracles of God if they are not properly founded and trained in the elementary doctrines of Christ. There will be no permit to go on to perfection [full maturity] (**Heb.6:3**).

4. The oracles of God are spoken through the utterances of the ones ordained to bring forth the word

"As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and dominion [sovereignty] forever and ever. Amen" 1Pet.4:10-11.

The need for grace and the enablement that grace gives is the context in which Peter says that we can speak as the oracles of God, that is, to bring an utterance from the mouth of God. In the context of Peter's teaching, he says any member of the body of Christ can be enabled by grace to speak as the oracles of God.

Conclusion

To be able to **receive the oracles of God**, which are

- the Scriptures,
- the doctrine,
- the pure unadulterated word of God,

we need to be properly founded on the first principles of the oracles of God.

Foundations must come first: then we will be able to receive the oracle, the word of righteousness.

Let us continue to lay the foundations, where they have not been laid;
and let us continue to shore up the foundations where they need to be strengthened.

The oracles of God are given to us so that we can be:

- ❖ taught,
- ❖ reproved,
- ❖ corrected
- ❖ and instructed in righteousness (**2Tim.3:16**).

**Then we are able by His grace to speak of the glory of God in Jesus the Messiah,
who has all sovereignty forever and ever.**

AMEN.

PERILOUS TIMES

The Supreme Court decision in America

In mid 2015, five of the nine Supreme Court judges of the United States decided to grant marriage status to 'same sex' couples, thus making 'same sex m' legal throughout the United States and taking away from the States of USA the right to rule against same sex m [we are using 'm' because we refuse to acknowledge that the word marriage can mean anything else other than the union of a man and a woman as ordained by God from the beginning].

Anti-Christ at work

This decision which was strongly opposed by four of the nine justices, is a stark example of anti-Christ men speaking *“pompous words against the Most High,”* and persecuting *“the saints of the Most High”* intending *“to change times and law”* (Daniel 7:25). Paul speaks of these men in referring to the coming of the lawless one, *“With all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth ... And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned, who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness”* 2Thess.2:10-12.

“Perilous”

We are living in perilous times. *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come”* 2 Timothy 3:1.

The word “perilous” means: harsh, savage, difficult, dangerous, painful, fierce, grievous, hard to deal with. The word describes a society that is barren of virtue but abounding with vices.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PERVERSE GENERATION

Paul proceeds to describe the perilous times in 2 Timothy 3:2-4. He uses **18 negative words** to describe these times. Men will be:

- *lovers of themselves* – taking “selfies”, that is always self-focused;
- *lovers of money* – people love money whether they have it or not;
- *boasters, proud, blasphemers* – speaking disrespectfully of the things of God;
- *disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving,*
- *slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors,*
- *headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.*

It includes religious people

Then Paul says that these are people who have *“a form of godliness but denying its power”* (v.5). Who are these people? It seems they are people who are satisfied with attending a church, but that church is dead to the things of God. Western countries are full of such people and their churches corporately have openly supported 'same sex m' and some of these denominations openly ordain homosexuals to the ministry. These are dangerous people. Paul says, *“and from such people turn away!”*

“For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, lead away by various lusts” 2Tim.3:6. These ones are *“always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth”* v.7. In Australia we have church groups joining the far left wing and demonstrating on the streets against sensible

conservative policy. We are plagued with what is called ‘political correctness’. No longer is one supposed to speak the truth.

Those who dabble in the demonic

Paul then refers to “*Jannes and Jambres*”. These men were magicians in the court of Pharaoh, who opposed Moses. This is a reference to witchcraft and sorcery. Such ones “*resist the truth, men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith*” (v.8). This can include so called Christian ministers who are resisting the truth, refusing to distinguish between right and wrong according to the word of God. These are ministers who combine spiritism with Christian religion; who support traditional ceremonies but call themselves Reverends in the church. Some are even guilty of using demonic power to copy the miracles of the Bible.

Do not be disturbed by people who seem to have spiritual power. Listen to their words to see if they are speaking the truth. “*They will progress no further for their folly will be manifest to all*” (v.9).

WHAT IS THE ANSWER TO LIVING IN PERILOUS TIMES

Paul immediately gives us the answer. We are to **carefully follow the doctrine and life-style example of the apostle**. Paul gives nine aspects of his life and ministry in and for Christ that are able to be followed carefully:

- i. **my doctrine** – the gospel, the teaching;
- ii. **manner of life** – example of apostolic leaders (**Heb.13:7, 17**);
- iii. **purpose** – this is the “why” we do what we do;
- iv. **faith** – what we believe **Jude 3**, what did the first apostles preach (**Acts 5:42**)
- v. **longsuffering** – it is necessary for living in these days; grace is given to manifest longsuffering; it is a character attribute we need to foster in our lives;
- vi. **love** – **2 Peter 1:5-7**, “love” is the last attribute to attain to in Peter's list; love is the manifestation of maturity;
- vii. **perseverance** – endure, hold up under great pressure;
- viii. **persecutions** – pressure comes in this way;
- ix. **afflictions**.

Paul declares that out of all the afflictions the Lord delivered him. Jesus will help us; we will get deliverance; He will show us the way out. Paul warns us that all who desire to live godly will suffer persecution (v.12). Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse. It is a downhill slope; it continues to get worse. It is a world where many are deceiving and being deceived (v.13).

Disciples are to continue in the things they have learned and been assured of. This is discipleship: being taught and knowing from whom you have learned. We are to know the Holy Scriptures which make us wise for salvation in Christ Jesus (v.15). Throughout the church world discipleship is lacking. But our maturity can only come through discipleship, receiving the word of God which is fully reliable, changing our lives, and enabling us to reach nations with the word. We need to be grounded and founded in the word so we can teach others.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness” 2Tim.3:16.

The Charge to Timothy in the midst of perilous times

"I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom" 2Tim.4:1

- **Preach the Word!** Be ready in season and out of season.
- **Convince** - do your best to convince people of the truth.
- **Rebuke** – it is not popular to rebuke in these modern times, but we need to be ready to rebuke.
- **Exhort** – this is the prophetic word giving people hope.
- We are to do this with **all longsuffering**. Do not give up.
- **Teaching** – giving more of the detail, putting things together clearly; showing the fulfilment of all things in Christ.

'Longsuffering' from the Greek means having a long temper, that is, denoting lenience, forbearance, fortitude, patient endurance. The ability to endure persecution and ill-treatment. It is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22).

We need to develop this fruit of longsuffering in these dark and difficult days that we live in.

Many are not serious for the word

The time has come when people will not endure sound doctrine, but rather turn to fables; these people are described as having itchy ears and following teachers who only feed them what they want to hear (2Timothy 4:4)

To be watchful

Paul charges us to be *"watchful in all things"*. We are to endure; we are to do the work of the evangelist, that is, we are to continue to preach the gospel; we are to continue to tell people about Jesus (v.5). Recently a woman came in off the street into Shiloh and has been born again. She comes from a very difficult and destructive background, but she has found Jesus because we do not fail to preach and teach Jesus at Shiloh.

The result of keeping the faith is to be poured out as a drink offering. What is your hope of reward? Are you willing to lay your life down and be poured out as a drink offering? (v.6)

Paul talking about sons, not "churches" - 2 Timothy 4:9-16

- Demas had forsaken Paul, *"having loved this present world"* (v.10);
- other brothers were away on mission;
- only Luke was with him.
- Paul asked for Mark to be sent to him, saying *"for he is useful to me for ministry"* (v.11). Mark was now useful to Paul. Remember earlier Paul had refused to work with Mark because he had been unfaithful on a previous ministry trip (Acts 15:38).
- Paul had sent Tychicus to Ephesus. He needed Timothy to bring his cloak and books and parchments (v.13).
- Alexander had done Paul harm and he had handed him over saying, *"May the Lord repay him according to his works"* (v.15). Paul says, *"No one stood with me"* (v.16).

Further warnings in 1 Timothy

"Now the Spirit expressly says that in the latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" 1Timothy 4:1. These will be *"speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron"* (v.2). We witness senior politicians speaking such lies; performing as hypocrites.

We see all sorts of leaders in contemporary society who manifest no discernment as to what is right or wrong. Even many who are defending traditional marriage do not understand marriage in truth, but are simply trying to defend a good tradition.

In **verse 3** Paul is referring to those who **forbid to marry**. This has been a major issue in the Roman Catholic church for many hundreds of years and has caused enormous problems for priests and unfortunately for the victims of sexual abuse.

But today the issue is not so much forbidding to marry, but the compromise of many churches to practice same sex 'm'. Recently in Canada a Mennonite church hosted the wedding of two homosexuals. The Mennonite church has a godly history, but by the year 2015 they are beginning to seriously deny that godly history.

Again we ask: what is the answer to this? What do we do? The verses immediately before **1 Timothy 4** are two of the most powerful verses in the Bible. They tell us:

- that the house of God is the church of the living God;
- that we should know how to conduct ourselves in God's house;
- that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth.
- Then there is the amazing confession of the mystery explaining who Jesus is: *"God was manifested in the flesh"* (1Tim.3:15-16).

A good minister of Jesus Christ

The first apostles were preaching and teaching Jesus the Christ (Acts 5:42). People were saved by hearing the preaching of Jesus Christ. Paul goes on to instruct Timothy to be a good minister of Jesus Christ, to instruct the brethren in these things; to be nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which he has learnt from Paul (1Tim.4:6).

To be a good minister of Jesus Christ means that *"we both labour and suffer reproach"* (v.10).

We are to respond to the perilous times we live in by being an example

Paul tells Timothy to *"be an example to the believers in word, in conduct [behaviour], in love [a life laid down], in spirit [the kingdom is in the spirit], in faith [Jesus Christ is the only foundation], in purity [virtue, moral excellence]"* (1Tim.4:12).

Then Paul instructs Timothy to *"give attention to reading"*, that is the public reading of Scripture, *"to exhortation"* which is prophetic preaching that encourages and comforts the brethren; *"to doctrine"* that is the teaching (v.13). These three things should be in every meeting:

- i. reading Scripture
- ii. exhortation – preaching
- iii. doctrine - teaching

We are to stir up the gift of God that is in us (1Tim.4:14); we are to desire earnestly the gifts, especially to prophesy (1Corinthians 14:1).

"Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you" 1Tim.4:15-16

The doctrine is the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ

In Samaria Philip preached the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ (**Acts 8:12**). Philip preached Jesus from the Scripture (**Acts 8:35-38**). Jesus spoke about the kingdom, that it is in the here and now, in the world (**Matthew 13:37-43**).

The apostles were beaten for preaching Jesus. When they were released they continued (**Acts 5:41-42**). Paul lived in a rented house preaching the kingdom of God and teaching everything that concerns Jesus Christ (**Acts 28:30-31**).

The Lord stands with those who stand for Him

Finally Paul found himself on his own, *"but the Lord stood with me and strengthened me so that the message might be preached fully through me and that all the Gentiles might hear"* (**2Tim.4:17**). Paul lived in perilous times, but the Lord stood with Paul. The message was fully preached through Paul so that the nations would hear.

Paul was delivered from the mouth of the lion by the Lord. Paul found himself in circumstances totally out of his control and Jesus delivered him. Paul was confident of continual deliverance and preservation for the kingdom.

Paul blessed Timothy saying, *"the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit"* (**2Tim.4:22**). Paul was saying, 'Timothy, you will need to know the strength of the Lord and His presence with you and in you, in your spirit. You will know you are not standing alone'.

Then Paul says *"Grace be with you."*

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