

# GENTLE SHEPHERD MINISTRIES

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH ~ MAKING DISCIPLES ~ EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR MINISTRY

PO Box 571 - Priest River, ID 83856 \* [www.gentleshepherd.com](http://www.gentleshepherd.com) \* June 2014

## The Odyssey Part 17 THE FIRE By Rayola Kelley

A big part of my spiritual odyssey was learning about one of the most misunderstood persons in Scripture, the Holy Spirit. For me learning about the Holy Spirit became a necessity. I wanted to be used in greater ways by God, come higher in my understanding of the Lord, and become more effective in my walk. However, I learned I could not be used in greater ways unless there was an anointing present, I could not come higher in my understanding without revelation being imparted from above, and I could not be more effective in my walk unless I was empowered by heaven itself. As I was to learn, each of these works belongs to the Holy Spirit.

For many Christians it is easy to become boxed in by pet doctrines, cemented in heavy shoes of religious rhetoric by theology, and indoctrinated into a religious fervor by zealous schools of religious thought. This is clearly evident when it comes to the subject of the Holy Spirit. I was boxed in by the doctrines of the Baptists that claimed all gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased, yet they could not explain away the Scripture that clearly states not to despise prophesying but to covet it, and not to forbid the gift of tongues (*1 Corinthians 14:39; 1 Thessalonians 5:20*).

I was confined and restricted by religious rhetoric that logics away the work of the Spirit by emphasizing the abuses done in His name rather than being taught and trained in how to properly discern the Holy Spirit (*1 Corinthians 2:12-14*). As a result, I ignorantly became party to quenching the Spirit instead of testing the spirits and properly dis-

cerning Him as Scripture clearly instructs (*1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 John 4:1*).

And, finally there are those schools of thought that often embrace the extremes like a pendulum swinging back and forth. Today these schools of thought are often influenced by popular fads and beliefs rather than being firmly planted on the eternal foundation of heaven. They are unpredictable because much of the methodology of the world has come into many of their attitudes and ways of promoting themselves. In some schools of thought, the Holy Spirit is improperly overemphasized as individuals seek religious insights and experiences in His name, while in others He is completely ignored out of fear, limited because of ignorance, and boxed in by lifeless claims.

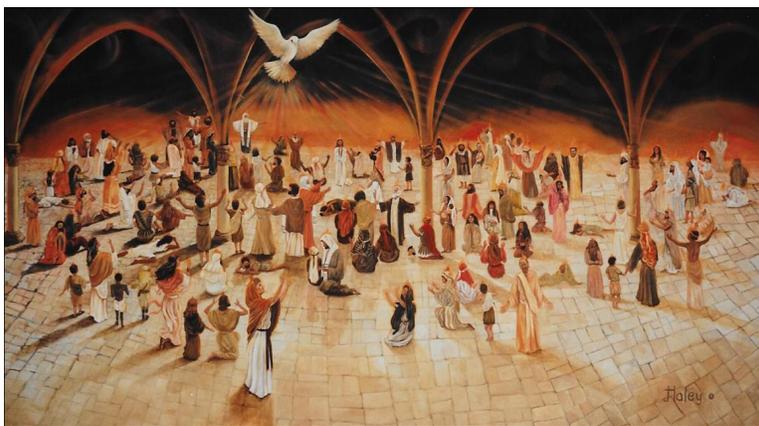
The greatest challenge for me in this particular phase of my odyssey, was finding a Scriptural balance concerning the subject of the Holy Spirit. Many who knew me heard of my struggle to come to terms with the matter of the third person of the Godhead. In my need to understand the Holy Spirit, I discovered that man's doctrine is often self-serving. It is based on that which makes a person comfortable intellectually, and the supernatural work of the Spirit often runs contrary to such comfort zones. As for theology, it is based on one's understanding of God, but theology often lacks enduring quality because it has yet to be tested in the

arena of trials and tribulations. When the fires of testing are put to theology, it will often fail to hold up in such experiences because knowledge alone has no real substance. The problem with theology is it can only judge based on what it knows, rather than discern according to the spirit behind something.

As for the schools of thought, I discovered many operate on the borderline of heresy. Most have developed an emphasis on certain subjects such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit instead of on Jesus Christ who is the essence of all truth. If a matter does not begin with who Jesus is, continue on with His example of righteousness, and end with His work of redemption, then the school of thought is a waste of time, useless, and unproductive in light of heavenly matters.

The question is how do you keep the subject of the Holy Spirit in the right context? First of all you have to realize He is a person. This means He has a will, a personality, and a purpose (*1 Corinthians 12:11; Acts 5:3-4; John 16:7-8*). When it came to my initial teaching of the Holy Spirit, He was mentioned in abstract terms. It is clear that in my early Christian life those who dared to even try to touch the subject of the Holy Spirit, did not really know Him as a person. Since He was in Scripture, these individuals felt obliged to at least mention Him in some positive light.

The late evangelist, Betty Swinford, was the one who made me realize the Holy Spirit is a person. She was intimately acquainted with His person, His mannerisms, and His presence. She knew when He was present, recognized His voice, moved when He moved, and when He lifted, she sat down. She spoke of Him as a friend, would not be content until He made His intent known to her,



and would not settle for any counterfeit spirit.

Betty's example set me to seeking out the person of the Holy Spirit in God's Word. Since He seemed to be a mute issue in the religious camp I was part of, I was surprised to find out how much one could discover about the person of the Holy Spirit in the Bible. If a Scriptural truth is abstract or almost mute, a person is unprepared to see it in God's Word. It was at that time I began to understand why one must seek God out, even in His Word. To seek something requires that a person discipline his or her focus to see what God's Word really says on the subject.

The Bible is clear that the Holy Spirit will never be the aggressor. He is gentle like a dove; therefore, He will be a gentleman when He approaches a person. He is sensitive; therefore, He can be easily grieved when His overtures are rejected. He is pure holiness, undefiled; therefore, the presence of sin or the profane will cause Him to depart. He is sincere; therefore, rebellion and hypocrisy will vex Him. He is honorable; therefore, wrong practices will quench Him. He ensures order; therefore, chaos and confusion are foreign to Him (*John 1:32-34; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Samuel 18:12; Isaiah 63:10*).

The next thing I had to realize is that He is God, divine in nature (*Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16 refer to 6:19*). Because He is divine, He never changes. The way He operates among people is the same today as it was yesterday, except in the Old Testament He came down on His servants and then they operated in His gifts, but today He lives within each believer and will manifest His will in the gifts He gives the saints (*1 Samuel 10:9-12; Hebrews 2:4*).

In our present status, we know in part and are in need of heavenly insight until we see the Perfect One, Jesus Christ, face to face. Therefore, the Spirit's gifts have not ceased, but are for the purpose of edification. The Bible tells us that He will lead us into all truth and warn us of things to come (*John 16:13*). It only makes sense that in order to lead us into truth involves imparting knowledge and wisdom to our spirit, and to warn us of things to come entails prophecy (*Ephesians*

*1:17; 1 Corinthians 14:6*).

Jesus clearly stated that if we have ears, we need to hear what the Spirit is saying. His voice must be discerned among the many other voices in the world. He is not a shouter, but speaks in a still small voice (*1 Kings 19:11-12*). Sometimes His voice can reverberate in our spirit, but it will bring an edge (sharpness) to our spirit instead of causing our spiritual ears to become dull. He inspires us to grow in the knowledge of Jesus in order to line up to righteousness. He seals us to identify us to our inheritance, and sanctifies us so that we can become a vessel fit for the Master's use (*Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Timothy 2:19-21*).

The other aspect of the Spirit is that He brings life to the Word of God through revelation of its true intent, and inspires and leads one into true worship and communion with God. Without His instruction, the Word of God becomes dead letter and without His inspiration true worship will elude us, thereby becoming dead or fleshly (*John 6:63; 4:23-24; 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6; 13:14*).

If a person does not know the person of the Holy Spirit, he or she will not be able to discern, and if people are unable to recognize His works, they will become confused, fearful, and judgmental towards them. And, if the Holy Spirit is missing, life, anointing, and power will be absent in any religious activities, Jesus will not be properly lifted up, and God will not be glorified (*1 John 2:20, 27; Isaiah 10:27*). It is for this reason that the Bible instructs us to walk after the Spirit, be led by the Spirit, and to walk in the Spirit (*Romans 8:1, 14; Galatians 5:16*).

To walk after the Spirit requires one to walk in faith that can be counted as righteousness, and obedience that will end in godliness. The Spirit will lead us into all truth about our place in Christ as children of God, and to walk in the Spirit means to be an overcomer of the flesh.

Although this is a short summary of the Holy Spirit, and most of you probably already know this information, there is one aspect of the Holy Spirit I want to look at—and that has to do with fire.

The Holy Spirit is represented by

water, oil, and fire (*Titus 3:5; Luke 4:18 refer Exodus 27:20; 30:22-26; Acts 2:1-8*). As water He cleanses us, as oil He anoints and designates us, and as fire He purges and empowers us. Without the oil, there can be no real fire. For the lampstand in the Holy Place, it was the oil that kept it aflame. The priests would obtain the fire from the Altar of Burnt Offering in the outer court, to use in the Holy Place for both the lampstand and the Altar of Incense. However, the lampstand was to burn continually. This meant once the fire was put to the lampstand, the priests had to keep it filled with oil to ensure the light would never go out.

When I consider the challenges facing the Church in America, I question where is the fire that purges and empowers? Where is the light that burns brightly in the night? I ask these questions because without the fire, we as believers might not be able to withstand the present darkness that is clearly consuming the hearts and minds of people. When you consider the parable of the ten virgins in *Matthew 25*, five were wise for they had oil to burn in the night, but there were five who were unwise and failed to obtain oil before the bridegroom came in the night for his bride.

The first thing I realize about some of our present-day churches is that the fire is missing. The Altar of Burnt Offering in the outer court represented Jesus' work of redemption. For the fire to be present, the life of Jesus must be present in us. We may be the wick, but without the life of Christ there will be no fire, and there will be no life. The fire that ignites us as wicks is love. Without the love of God, there will be no fire. For some believers they may have fervor for religious works that make them feel good, but they lack the passion of love for Christ. This was also true for the Church of *Ephesus* and Jesus warned that its particular candlestick could be removed. We know that the Holy Spirit sheds love in our hearts (*Romans 5:5; Revelation 2:1-7*).

The last couple of years, I have come to understand better how fire works once something is ignited. I burn the debris left by the many trees in our yard after windstorms. Jeannette figured we have well over

three dozen trees on the property we rent. What I have learned is that fire initially consumes the debris, but once the fire dies down, it is the heat that will continue to break down the remaining debris, rendering it into a small pile of ashes. However, for the heat to be present there must be flammable material that burns hot.

The one material that fits the above description is pine needles. Twigs and branches will quickly be consumed by the actual fire, but pine needles are a different story. If they are dry, they catch fire easily enough, but they are not immediately consumed by the fire. At first these needles burn quickly, but once the fire initially renders them down to a lesser state, they smolder a bit as if to resist being totally consumed. Even though they smolder, the heat they produce will eventually succeed in breaking them down into nothing but ashes. This reminds me of the "old man" in us. It refuses to be consumed by the reality of God. Therefore, it needs heavenly heat to render it into a small pile of ashes. The heat for me has been created when I have properly applied my cross to the ways of the flesh in order to allow the fire of the Holy Spirit to consume it on the altar.

As I considered this scenario, I had to wonder if the presence of the Holy Spirit is missing from much of the church in America because it is full of carnality and worldliness. The presence of fleshly ways and worldly attitudes will drown out the heat of passionate devotion as truth is turned into the ash of unbelief. The truth is the Holy Spirit is always there to set the wicks of God's people aflame with heavenly fire, but without passionate devotion it will simply singe the terrain, but it will not change it. It will quickly burn out leaving a mark, but there is no deep purging and separation from the flesh and the present age.

Sadly, like the church in Laodicea, Christians of today give me the impression that they believe they have enough of everything, including religion, but without the Spirit they will prove to be poor in spirit. They appear to have become comfortable in the boiling pot of the world; therefore, they see no need for the consuming fires from the altars of consecration to

be applied to their lives. They think themselves to be rich because of the world, when in reality they will be deemed as being poverty stricken in faith (*Revelation 3:14-19*).

We pick on the complacent *Laodicean* church a lot. However if you examine the other churches, you will see that they either lacked an important aspect of the oil of the Holy Spirit or they needed His ongoing work to ensure that they would endure to the end (*Revelation 2-3*). We have already considered those at *Ephesus* who lacked love, but for those at *Smyrna*, they needed to remember that the Holy Spirit is the one who will meet them in their plight and will comfort them in times of testing and loss. To the church in *Pergamos*, they needed to remember that it is the Holy Spirit who leads believers into all truth and enables them to properly discern doctrine, but only if a love for truth is present. For *Thyatira*, the believers needed to realize that the Holy Spirit only points Christians to Christ and His example, but for the flame of the Spirit to burn in their midst, they needed to take on the holy attitude of God towards the pagan fornication taking place in their midst to bring necessary righteous judgment and needed separation. To *Sardis*, these Christians needed to remember that the Holy Spirit is the One who quickens believers when they hit a lifeless state, but they can only be quickened by the Spirit upon genuine repentance. For the church of brotherly love, *Philadelphia*, the Spirit is the One who enables followers of Christ to endure to the end.

We are indeed living in dark times. It is clear that the bridegroom will be coming for His Church soon, but like the tabernacle candlestick of old, we need to be filled daily with the refining oil of the Holy Spirit to prepare us to stand upright in such wicked days, empower us to withstand in truth in the midst of great delusion, and distinguish us in extreme darkness as we continue to stand in faith, patiently waiting for the fulfillment of the Lord's promises.

To ensure the oil, we must ask for more of the Holy Spirit. *Luke 11:13* exhorts us to ask for the Holy Spirit, but I have learned that to receive more of the Spirit involves having a desire for more of God, a greater revelation of

Christ. The more we ask and seek after God, the more the door of opportunity will open up to us to discover the person and work of the Holy Spirit (*Luke 11:9-13*).

Today where these seven churches used to thrive, the light has almost been completely extinguished by Islam. As believers, we cannot let the light of Christ's life and the flame of the Holy Spirit be dimmed by lack of love, dulled down by the absence of genuine devotion, and taken out by unbelief. If our oil is low, we must ask God for more regardless of the price. If our fire is smoldering underneath carnality and worldliness, we must ask for the fire from the altar to be put afresh to our spirits so that we can once again burn with the passionate flame of love. If our flame has been reduced to a small flicker, we need to stir ourselves up and once again offer ourselves as a consecrated sacrifice for the purpose and glory of God.

The culmination of the present crisis is coming at us like a locomotive. The question is do each of us have enough oil to endure the collision of the world's powers and kingdoms, as well the complete collapse

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

- R.A. Torrey -

If we think of the Holy Spirit . . . as merely a power of influence, our constant thought will be, "How can I get more of the Holy Spirit?" But if we think of Him in the Biblical way as a Divine Person, our thought will rather be, "How can the Holy Spirit have more of me?" The conception of the Holy Spirit as a Divine influence or power that somehow, we are to get hold of and use, leads to self-exaltation and self-sufficiency. One who so thinks of the Holy Spirit and who at the same time imagines that he has received the Holy Spirit will almost inevitably be full of spiritual pride and strut about as if he belonged to some superior order of Christians. . . But if we once grasp the thought that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person of infinite majesty, glory and holiness and power, who in marvelous condescension has come into our hearts to make His abode there and take possession of our lives and make use of them, it will put us in the dust and keep us in the dust. †

## THE LAST TIME

By Jeannette Haley

There is a rather well known saying by the Quaker, William Penn that goes like this: "I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness or abilities that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again." These are wise words from an interesting man who was imprisoned several times in the Tower of London due to his faith. Penn's life is an integral part of American history, which can be studied through various resources on the Internet, and in biographical books of his life.

Lately I have been musing on the fact that there is indeed a last time for everything in this world. This all started while watching a certain movie that had a particular scene of two people riding horses on a merry-go-round. It got me to thinking about the last time I happily rode on a merry-go-round. Then it occurred to me that little did I know it would probably be the last time I ever rode on one. If, at that time, I could have known that it would be the last "ride", no doubt I would've been sad. The same holds true for my last horseback ride, last hike up a mountain trail, last trip on the vessel, Princess Marguerite, through Puget Sound to Victoria, B.C., last clam dig, and maybe even my last long stroll on an ocean beach with pockets full of agates. Who is to know, except God, when the last time will be for every detail of our lives? Then I began to remember a lot of other things in my life that definitely fall into "the last time" category, and how merciful the Lord is to conceal our future to us lest we faint in despair over the people, pets, places, and things we assume will always be there whom we never want to part with.

In the midst of our God-given days on this earth, however, what is of utmost importance is our walk with the Lord, and our response and obedience to Him. Before we can put William Penn's summation of the Christian's duty towards others into daily practice, however, we first must get past self. The problem is, if we are caught up with self from the moment we crawl out of bed in the morning until we crawl

back into it at night, we will be oblivious to those precious, silent opportunities to show kindness to others that unobtrusively present themselves. It takes self-discipline, and practice to become aware of one's environment where others are concerned. Sensitivity must also be developed in order to be able to sense, notice, and anticipate where others are at in their lives *at that moment* and wisdom to know how to best enter in, and do right by them (*lift the burden, however small*). An opportunity that is lost to do what is right, kind, good, honest, and honorable in any situation is the greatest of losses. Most of the daily opportunities that present themselves to show kindness are what we would consider to be very small, non-essential, or unimportant in the grand scheme of things, such as giving a cup of cold water to a thirsty child. *"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" Matthew 10:42.*

The reason we tend to miss so many *small* opportunities to show kindness, and do good is because it is our natural bent to admire people who achieve a modicum of notoriety, and fame as a big hero who has done big things. We like to think of ourselves as potentially being such a grand hero. It's easy to fancy ourselves as the type of person who, if given the chance to do grandiose acts of heroism, would rush into a burning house to save someone, or jump into a river to rescue a non-swimmer, or throw themselves in the path of a charging bull in order to protect someone else. That's all well and good, but God doesn't expect us to wait until such an opportunity presents itself to prove how wonderful we are. Instead, He watches us (all the time, I might add) to see how we are going to respond to the little daily opportunities to show kindness, be generous, understanding, and just plain useful to others in *practical ways*. Opportunities, whether great or small pass off the scene of our lives, for we shall not pass this way again. Each day is the last time.

You have to wonder if Adam had known that the day he chose to eat of the forbidden fruit would mark the last time he would walk and talk with the Lord God in the Garden of Eden. No

doubt our first parents, after their expulsion from the Garden, thought back with great sorrow to their last day in Paradise. One wonders if there were times when Jacob, after fleeing to his uncle Laban, thought of the last time he saw his mother, Rebekah. The captive Jews living in Babylon surely remembered their last day in Israel, and the last time they saw Jerusalem and the temple. After Jesus' ascension, surely His disciples talked about the last time they laid eyes on Him. And, so it goes, all through the Bible from cover to cover we see "the last time" for individuals, cities, and nations.

The question is, what would you do if you knew that today was "the last time" you would be alive on this earth? Would you redeem the time by sharing Christ with someone who is lost? Looking back, I can honestly say that two of the lost opportunities I regret the most (a deep, aching regret that I will carry to my "last day") are the two times the Spirit of God pressed upon my heart to go and share Jesus with two individuals. I disobeyed the Spirit's prompting, putting it off until a more convenient time. Not long afterwards, one of those people suddenly died of a heart attack, and the other drowned in her car when she missed a turn in the road and ended up driving into a lake. Lost opportunities to obey the Lord are great losses in our lives—losses we will sorely regret with shame and sorrow.

We can look back with regret or with thanksgiving (depending on the situation) at all "the last times" in our lives. We can look toward the future with dread or anticipation as to what could possibly be "the last time" but, the key is, we only have today, and what we do today is what matters in eternity when we stand before the Lord, and the books are opened. *"And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" Exodus 32:33. "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" Psalm 69:28. "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not,*

that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" Luke 10:19, 20. See also Revelation 20:11-15.

Consider Job, and the last time he saw his seven sons and three daughters, his oxen, asses, sheep, camels, and all his servants except for four who were spared by Satan to be the bearers of bad news. Job's great loss occurred in a single day, yet "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" Job 1:22. On top of his great loss and grief came a day when Satan "smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown" Job 2:7. Then in addition to Job's grief and loss, financial ruin, and physical suffering, his friends came to sit with him. No doubt they were well meaning, but they all had the wrong doctrine, wrong advice, and wrong conclusions for Job's unique situation. But, praise the Lord, the day came when it was "the last time" for Job's suffering when he had a powerful encounter with the God of heaven. "And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before" Job 42:10.

Likewise, there will come "the last time" for those who live in the end of the latter days. There will be a last time for deception, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" Matthew 24:4, 5. Are you weary with hearing the news about wars, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes? The good news is there is coming "the last time" for such bad news. Jesus said, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows." Matthew 24:5-8. As we continue to follow Jesus' words through Matthew 24, we know that the time will come when it will be "the last time" for these events as assured us in verses 29-31, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not

give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." [Emphasis added.]

There will be "the last time" for sorrow and weeping, pain and suffering, death and destruction. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" Revelation 21:4. In the meantime, Let us say with the Apostle Paul, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" Romans 8:18. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" Philippians 20, 21.

Until that day may the Lord of glory empower us by His Spirit to live each day as if it was "the last time"—helping us to faithfully redeem the time

## COMMENTS

"I really enjoyed the newsletter as usual. I am with you there about being humbled a few times myself, thinking myself "up there" doing God's work. Foolish me!!" - BC

"Osteen doesn't want to lose any money or popularity. I am losing friends right and left over here that want the feel good gospel. The Church (called out ones) are leaving the church quickly. I am praying about starting a home fellowship. Don't want to run ahead of the Lord, but he gave me this large house for a reason."-WA

"I don't know why people have to soften things and God is love, love, love. It makes me sick. I read your newsletter and it was great as always....appreciated Rayola's Q & A about Saul and David. - ID

## HOT TOPICS & DISCERNMENT

"I can't believe how many Christians still rave about *The Shack*. The author is going to be at the home church [of a friend] and she is all excited about it. I emailed him myself when I read it and challenged his statement that Christians are found 'in every faith'. There is nothing at all in the story that is doctrinally sound in any way, and yeah, it may be categorized as fiction, and yes, the story is enjoyable to read, but it takes massive liberties about things which NO one has the right to add 'vain imagination' to. It sells the same kind of "Jesus" (all laid back and I'm-okay-you're-okay kind of dismissal of the matter of fallen sinful nature) that Joel Osteen peddles. The one the Bible calls 'another Jesus.'

"It sells a 'father' that is a mother, like Gaia. It sells a holy spirit that is some ephemeral wispy 'essence' or 'force' like in Star Wars and like the word-faith positive confession junk. So, it boggles my mind how 'Christians' fawn all over an author like that. Then his daughter came out with this '*Jesus Calling*' that was the big Christmas item last year, which is a Beth Moore-esque 'channeler' of the 'VOICE' of God, who sits 'n the silence' and takes supernatural dictation of personal messages from God that can't be supported by the scripture-mandated 'two or more witnesses' (not even one Old Testament and one New Testament passage)." - VA

"That [impartation of the Holy Spirit] is real big over here!!! The music is very radical. I will say that the young Pastors are now, after trying everything else, beginning to preach on Holiness. At least that is what \_\_\_\_\_ is saying. [But] I cannot go. We also have Judaizers coming into the churches and enticing the young believers away into Messianic churches and teaching we have to believe the Torah. These Messianic Churches are filled with ex-assembly of God ministers and Pentecostal preachers. They are a form of Manifest Sons of God teaching. We are in a mess. God help us. I went to Cedar Park a couple of weeks ago and it was the first time I have sensed the

## RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

**Q:** *As Christians, I know that we are to have a burden to help others as a means to fulfill the law, but what does it mean for every man shall bear his own burden?*

**A:** You are making reference to the instructions found in *Galatians 5:2* and *5*. It is important to point out that when the Bible speaks of burdens, they fall into three categories. The first burden that I want to distinguish is found in *Matthew 11:29* and *30*. Jesus tells us this burden is light because He enables us to carry it. When you look "burden" up in this text it has to do with task or service. The Scripture clearly outlines what our task and service is in the kingdom of God.

There are two reasons for this type of burden to prove to be light. The first reason is because God is the one who put the burden on us, which means He will also empower us to carry it to fruition. The second reason it will prove to be light is because the love of God is being shed abroad in our hearts. Godly love is sacrificial; therefore, it sees any godly service as being the least that can be done. Such service is referred to as "reasonable service."

The second type of burden is that which entails personal obligations or responsibilities. These are responsibilities that solely belong to the individual whether it is family, work, or financial responsibilities. These responsibilities often surround personal goals, lifestyles, and commitments. No one else is responsible for these obligations except the individual who through word, contract, or agreement has bound themselves to see these obligations through to their fruition. These are the burdens that *Galatians 6:5* makes reference to, "*For every man shall bear his own burden.*" The Apostle Paul clarifies this even more so, "*For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should they eat...with quietness they work, and eat their own bread (2 Thessalonians 3:10, 12), and "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Timothy 5:8).*

The problem is that we live in an entitlement society. This is where the last couple of generations, which are coming up through the ranks, believe that it is up to everyone else to pay for the type of lifestyle they have been told by the liberal, progressive, communistic educational gurus that they rightfully deserve. They do not realize that they are being enslaved into an ideology that has proven to be a miserable failure from the beginning. Sadly, the burden of such vanity is put on the backs of a few who cannot sustain the masses. The reason for this shift is to break the necks of those who think outside of the box, subdue any rational challenge, and rob people of any individualism in order to usher in a one-world government. The people who operate in this mentality are not only unrealistic, but they are ultimately being conditioned to sell their souls to the world for its bread.

The final burden has to do with weights placed on others that are too great to bear. Usually widows and the fatherless are associated to these types of burdens. These burdens also entail causing undue distress on those who are becoming victims to circumstances beyond their control. These are the people who are being crushed by situations, or the systems of the world.

Tragically, due to the different economic collapses taking place, people are finding themselves being steamrolled by the events that are creating a frightening momentum. The truth is every economy of the world has been connected in order to ensure that if one country's economy falls, so will the rest of the world. As a result, many are becoming victims of lifestyles that set them up to fall, along with the rest of the world's dominos that are beginning to already collapse.

We are truly living in the last of the end days. It is exciting to see prophesy fulfilled, but it is to remind us that we must prepare ourselves spiritually. In these times, Christians must be willing to come under the yoke that is being fashioned by the times we live in. We must be ready to carry the burden of the Gospel of peace, and possibly taste the sting of persecution as others try to rein us in with oppressive policies. We must be faithful to occupy where we can, stand for truth when

challenged, and let go of that which could easily entangle us into the affairs of this world. We must choose our battles wisely, accept only the burdens that we have been entrusted with, and beware of getting caught up with vain causes that are void of any eternal mark to ensure we redeem the days we live in. †

### THE WAY THE SAIL IS SET

I stood beside the open sea;  
The ships went sailing by.  
The wind blew softly o'er the lea;  
The sun had cloudless sky.

Some ships sailed eastward, some sailed west,  
Some north, some southward trend.  
How can ships sail this way and that,  
But one way blows the wind?

An old sea-captain made reply  
(His locks with salt-spray wet):  
"Tis not the wind decides the course;  
'Tis way the sails are set."

I stand beside the sea of life;  
The ships go sailing by.  
The winds blow fair from heaven's land;  
No clouds bedim the sky.

But one sails eastward, one sails west,  
One north, one southward goes.  
How can ships sail this way and that,  
With selfsame wind that blows?

A voice made answer to my soul:  
"Tis not how blows the gale,  
Each voyager decides the goal,  
By way he sets the sail." - Unknown

My heart has been a peaceful place,  
Since Jesus came my way;  
A place of joy and happiness,  
Since Jesus came to stay.

I was born a wondering boy,  
In sin and untold grief.  
But, oh, what wondrous love I found,  
When Jesus gave me peace!

Oh, troubled soul, out on the sea,  
Adrift in raging waves and gales,  
Drop anchor in Jesus today,  
And then let Him set your sail!

*From a tract by Pastor Steve Haselip*

## TRUTH DIVORCED FROM LIFE

By A.W. Tozer

There is scarcely anything so dull and meaningless as Bible doctrine taught for its own sake. Truth divorced from life is not truth in its biblical sense, but something else and something less. Theology is a set of facts concerning God, man and the world. These facts may be and often are set forth as values in themselves; and there lies the snare both for the teacher and for the hearer. . . .

The Bible, however, is more than a volume of hitherto unknown facts about God, man and the universe. It is a book of exhortation based upon those facts. By far the greater portion of the book is devoted to an urgent effort to persuade people to alter their ways and bring their lives into harmony with the will of God. . . .

No man is better for knowing that God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth. The devil knows that, and so did Ahab and Judas Iscariot. No man is better for knowing that God so loved the world of men that He gave His only begotten Son to die for their redemption. In hell there are millions who know that. Theological truth is useless until it is obeyed. The purpose behind all doctrine is to secure moral action. †

Where God is honored fully is heaven, and it is heaven for that reason; where He is honored not at all is hell, and for that cause it is hell. Among men we see a mixture of honor and dishonor. Basically this is the cause back of earth's tragic, confused history.

Any doctrine, any experience that serves to magnify Him is likely to be inspired by Him. Conversely, anything that veils His glory or makes Him appear less wonderful is sure to be of the flesh or the devil.

The doctrine of holiness may have been badly and often wounded—but the provision of God by His pure and gentle and loving Spirit is still the positive answer for those who hunger and thirst for a life and spirit well-pleasing to God.

All quotations taken from *Tozer on the Almighty God*

## Others May, You Cannot

By G.D. Watson

If God has called you to be truly like Jesus in all your spirit, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility. He will put on you such demands of obedience that you will not be allowed to follow other Christians. In many ways, He seems to let other good people do things which He will not let you do.

Others who seem to be very religious and useful, may push themselves, pull wires, and scheme to carry out their plans, but you cannot. If you attempt it, you will meet with such failure and rebuke from the Lord as to make you sorely penitent.

Others can brag about themselves, their work, their successes, their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing. If you begin to do so, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works.

Others will be allowed to succeed in making great sums of money, or having a legacy left to them, or in having luxuries, but God may supply you only on a day-to-day basis, because He wants you to have something far better than gold, a helpless dependence on Him and His unseen treasury.

The Lord may let others be honored and put forward while keeping you hidden in obscurity because He wants to produce some choice, fragrant fruit for His coming glory, which can only be produced in the shade.

God may let others be great, but keep you small. He will let others do a work for Him and get the credit, but He will make you work and toil without knowing how much you are doing. Then, to make your work still more precious, He will let others get the credit for the work which you have done; this to teach you the message of the Cross, humility, and something of the value of being cloaked with His nature. The Holy Spirit will put a strict watch on you, and with a jealous love rebuke you for careless words and feelings, or for wasting your time which other Christians never seem distressed over.

So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign and has a right to do as He pleases with His own, and that He may not explain to you a thou-

sand things which may puzzle your reason in His dealings with you. God will take you at your word; if you absolutely sell yourself to be His slave, He will wrap you up in a jealous love and let other people say and do many things that you cannot. Settle it forever; you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue or chaining your hand or closing your eyes in ways which others are not dealt with. However, know this great secret of the Kingdom: When you are so completely possessed with the Living God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this peculiar, personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of heaven, the high calling of God. †

“If we take time to think quietly over the daily dealings of God with us, and lovingly watch for every little symptom of God's presence in us and around us, we will soon be astonished at the degree we will discover of His presence, and at the perfection with which He weaves things together for our good.”

**George Douglas Watson** (1845-1924) was a Wesleyan Methodist minister and evangelist based in Los Angeles. His evangelistic campaigns took him to England, the West Indies, New Zealand, Australia, Japan and Korea. The Master's work continued to be a part of his life well into his advanced years. But even then, he only refrained from the calling that had been placed upon him when his health was in question. He also wrote several books. It was while serving in the confederate army that the Lord became a living reality to him. So heavy was the conviction of the Holy Spirit when the call was upon him for his eternal well-being that while in the midst of a game of cards, he threw down his hand stating to the others, it was his last game. And so it was! The next evening, August 11, 1863, his name became a permanent part of the registry in the book of life.

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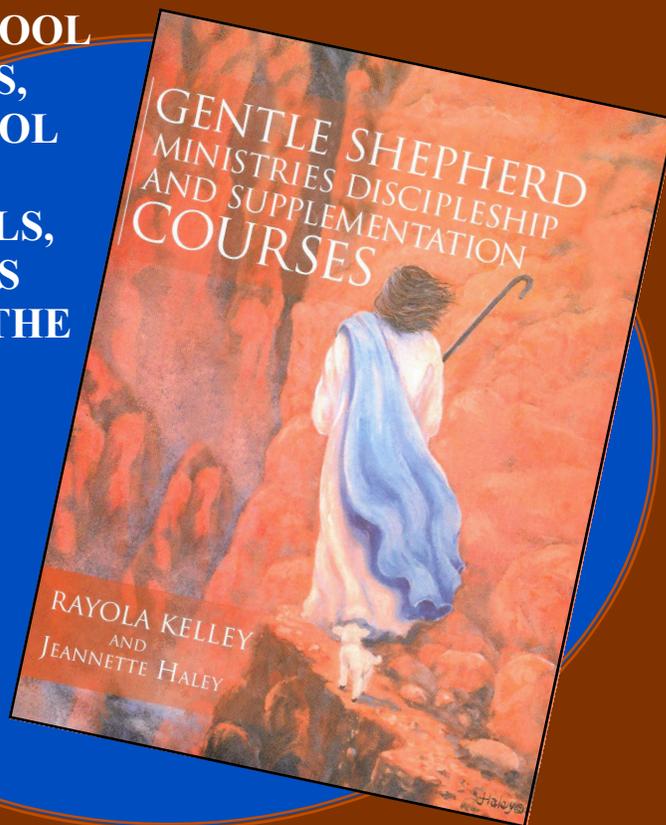
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