

GENTLE SHEPHERD MINISTRIES

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

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THE REALITY OF GOD

Part 10

By Rayola Kelley

One of the challenges Christians face in America is that Christianity is being sold as a lifestyle and not the actual life of Christ being imparted and established in believers through the born-again experience. This new life is resurrected and worked in the inner man by the indwelling Spirit. Lifestyle is the world's take on presenting an idea of living that promotes an elusive identity, unfulfilling purpose, unrealistic meaning, and temporary happiness to a person. The reason that a lifestyle is void of true life is because it is based on cultural influences, worldly standards, and fleshly pursuits. It has no eternal substance to it and will prove to be a practice of vanity in the end.

The reason for Christianity succumbing to the concept of lifestyle is because the Christian life has been presented as a subculture in the midst of the American culture. We Christians have our own language, terminology, and practices. But, what is missing from the subculture of Christianity is the Spirit of God. He is not into promoting a lifestyle that runs parallel to some show of outward piety; rather, the third person of the Godhead's main goal is to lead people to the reality of Jesus, His redemption and example to save, prepare, and sanctify believers for the next world to come (*John 16:7-13*).

In this subculture there is a mixture of the profane and the holy as the Jesus of the Bible is being replaced with a more acceptable Jesus to the world's taste buds and the gospel is not the Gospel of the Bible, but a social gospel of good works and putting all men on the same page taking away any identity or uniqueness and calling it justice. It is no longer about the salvation of souls, but about influencing the masses. It is about bring-

ing all people under one umbrella or covering, the spirit of the world, whose goal is to blind men to their real condition and to the Gospel that saves (*2 Corinthians 4:3-6*). In this confusing, insane environment, sin is cleverly being done away with by the world's philosophy of tolerance, as personal rights run amuck (*Colossians 2:8; James 4:3-4*). There are no absolutes, thereby, doing away with any Biblical standard of truth (*Psalms 119:89*, refer to *John 17:17; 1 Peter 1:23-25*).

Without absolute truth, there is no absolute authority or rule as to what is right or wrong. As a result, man is becoming more amoral even in Christendom as each individual does what is right in his or her own eyes regardless of the destructive fruits (*Judges 21:25; Proverbs 14:12; Matthew 7:16-20*). Everything that has been established as acceptable by God is being defiled by those who hate truth. True repentance is being replaced with outward piety that lacks conviction and conversion, righteousness is being redefined according to worldly tolerance and love, and godliness is being done away with by political correctness. And, what is the final fruit of this lawless, godless way? The world clearly calls good evil, and evil good, redefining people's worldview to embrace everything that is contrary to God and His Word. And, as *Isaiah 5:18-25* states, "woe" to those who prescribe to such delusion and wickedness! "Woe" in this text is an expression of grief, admitting that "alas" one is tasting the bitter consequences of his or her wicked ways.

Such an unholy mixture will dull Christians down who do not maintain the edge of righteousness in their personal life. A spiritual vacuum will be

erected, rendering some of the church powerless, causing it to look to the world and institute worldly methods in order to seduce the masses. Salvation of individual souls will take a back seat as quantity and not quality becomes the focus. In such environments, the work of the Holy Spirit is either being faked or replaced by a religious spirit seeking self-exaltation. Since numbers become the measure of kingdom success, people will lose the excitement and passion to make the necessary commitment to see believers being trained to be disciples of Jesus with changed lives that are focused on doing the will of God and bringing glory to Him.

Although we see some of the visible church playing the harlot by marrying the world in an unholy union to benefit from it, we know there are those who have never bowed before the various altars of Baal. These individuals have believed the Word in regard to coming out and being separate from touching unclean things (coming into agreement with the wrong spirit), resisting the devil, and fleeing youthful lusts to maintain their status as strangers and spiritual pilgrims to avoid partaking of the corruption of the present world (*2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:22; James 4:6-10; 1 Peter 2:11; 2 Peter 3:4*).

The real casualty in this environment is the reality of God. God is often humanized while man is dehumanized to become slaves or commodities in godless societies. Religion simply becomes a platform for heretics, wolves, and hirelings to promote another Jesus, another Gospel, and another spirit (*2 Corinthians 11:2-4*). This is why I am writing this series. For the last couple of months I have been talking about Jesus being Lord (Adonai-deity) and the Man (The Promised One, the Lamb of God). As Christians most of us take this understanding of Jesus for granted. We



have accepted it as so, but have we received it as a personal truth that guides our life? Accepting something operates on an intellectual plane, where one can agree with the idea of a matter but the latter one operates on the heart level, where it is a revelation that confirms our foundation of who Jesus is and must be to ensure salvation.

The problem is that because of the world's influence, many people possess a different Jesus. A Jesus who is not the Jesus of the Bible and cannot save an individual from the wrath of God that abides on unbelievers. This pseudo Jesus might make a person feel good about his or her religion or self, give him or her a sense of being infallible in his or her understanding, and serve as a guiding light of some type, but it is a false light that can be traced to an antichrist spirit (*1 John 2:21-23; 4:1-3*).

The greatest affront committed against Jesus is the rejection that He is God, but the greatest misunderstanding towards Jesus has to do with His humanity. How Jesus' deity and humanity work together often becomes a confusing point that creates misunderstandings for others. For the most part fundamental Christians accept the Triune God without debate. They know that Jesus represented the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form, but how many understand the significance of Jesus having dual natures?

We know that only God could satisfy the requirements of His holy Law. The Law declared all men to be sinners, transgressors of it, falling short of reaching their potential to reflect the glory of God (*Romans 3:23*). Without God's Law there would be no transgression (*Romans 3:19-20*). Without the Law, man would have no idea that he is lost to God and why he is lost. Without the judgment of the Law passed upon all mankind, man would not see any need to be saved, for the wages of sin is death, spiritual separation from God, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus (*Romans 6:23*).

Only God could suffice the Law, pay the necessary wages of redemption in order for mankind to be spared from paying the wages that left each person without hope and a future. It

would take God taking on human form to become the perfect sacrifice because there is no remission (pardon/forgiveness) of sin without the shedding of blood. There would be no covenant established without a cutting or sacrifice to seal it (*Hebrews 9:11-26*). In His humanity, Jesus could become the Lamb of God, the perfect acceptable sacrifice for all mankind. However, it would take the fact that He is also deity to pay the price for all mankind.

It is important to point out that the Law required separate sacrifices from each man and for each sin. Consider the ramifications of this for a moment. If Jesus was simply a man, His death on the cross would only be able to secure salvation for one man. However, as eternal God He could effectively satisfy His Law for each of us by taking away all sin once and for all with one sacrifice, thereby securing a pardon for all of those who come to Him by faith seeking His forgiveness (*Hebrews 9:24-28; 10:4-19*). When Jesus reached out His arms to embrace the cross, His reach would embrace all humanity as a loving God. This is what some people would call the "wow" factor in Christianity.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes (*Romans 10:4*). Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law on behalf of all of us, and through Him righteousness is imputed to all who believe in Him as God's ultimate provision (*Matthew 5:17-18; Romans 4:21-25*). In fact, we know that out of Jesus' death, one Body, His Church would be born, raised up in newness of life, hidden in the fullness of His Life, adorned in His righteousness, established in His sanctification, and marked for the fullness of redemption (*1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:13-14; Colossians 3:2-3*).

How important was it for Jesus to be both God and Man? As perfect, sinless man He paid the price of redemption, but as God He raised Himself up, as did the Father and the Holy Spirit in resurrection power (*Romans 10:9-10; Galatians 1:1; John 2:18-21; Romans 8:11*). The Apostle Paul tells us that if Christ had not been risen, that our preaching of the Gospel and our faith towards God would be in vain (*1 Corinthians 15:14*).

How important was it for Jesus to

be the God/Man? As man He serves as our example as to what the spiritual man looks like (*1 Corinthians 15:47-49*). We see that He was meek in attitude, lowly in disposition, and in total subjection to the will of the Father (*Matthew 11:29; Philippians 2:5-8*). Even though He was deity, as man He was in submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit (*Luke 4:1*). He had to be ordained, anointed, empowered, established, and verified by heaven itself as to His calling and ministry. In His humanity, He had to look to heaven for His authority, power, and instructions. He was totally disciplined in every way by the Holy Spirit, but we know even as God, He would also do all matters according to the Spirit. *Zechariah 4:6c* confirms this, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of Hosts."

I say all of this because of what one person said to me. She was in a cult that preached that Jesus was simply man and not God. When pressed about what consequences such Christians would face who believed in the Triune God, and stood on the fundamental truth that Jesus is fully God and fully Man, the only consequences mentioned that such "foolish" people would pay was that they would not be part of the rapture.

Because I do believe in what the Bible says about Jesus, I am assured of being taken up with the rest of the Church when He comes back for His people, but these people's idea of the consequences that believers will pay for believing what the Bible says about Jesus being the God/Man gives me insight into their attitude towards Jesus. To them it is not a big deal if you get Jesus right or not. After all, the point that Jesus came as man is a historical fact. The Gospel's proclamation that Jesus died is also a historical fact, and even though His resurrection has been debated it can even be proven in a court of law by the historical records of those who wrote about it according to the testimonies of witnesses. Therefore, the fact that Jesus came as man and died requires no faith. If His resurrection is researched, it requires no real faith. However, what requires faith is that Jesus is both God and Man. It is because of whom He is that He was able to accomplish the impossible and

continues to do so. It is for this reason *Hebrews 11:6* tells us that, "But without faith, it is impossible to please him: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (for who He is)." (Both emphases added.)

The Bible declares if you do not believe the record given about Jesus Christ, you will not be saved! (See *1 John 5:4-13*.) In other words, these poor deluded souls have a lot more to lose (their souls) than those who approach the Bible in childlike faith to believe what it says about Jesus being the God/Man. As Man, Jesus satisfied the requirement of the Law and secured redemption, but as God, He completed the task by taking the sting out of death and making the victory that the grave once claimed upon man, hollow by His resurrection. This God/Man is the only One who can save a person and if a person does not possess His life, the judgment he or she faces is eternal damnation, forever separated from the one true Savior that he or she failed to receive by faith.

When I questioned this lady as to why she refused to believe what the Bible said about Jesus being the God/Man, her answer surprised me. She told me if Jesus was God, there was no way she could come into compliance with the Bible to be like Him (*Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 1 Corinthians 15:49*). Even though I explained that Jesus serves as our example in His humanity, not in His deity, she still could not see herself ever becoming like Jesus because He was God. She knew she was far from perfection and with that view in mind the bar was too high for her to reach if Jesus was God. She let Jesus' deity overshadowed the fact that in His humanity He had to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk in the way that was pleasing and acceptable to the Father.

Next month I am going to delve deeper into Jesus' humanity. However, my goal in this month's article is to challenge or encourage people to operate on the outside fringes of confusion and vagueness. We need to understand the significance of Jesus being both God and Man and how His dual natures were necessary to save

us to the uttermost. We need to be able to give an account of why we believe what we believe with the intent of obeying *Jude 21-24*, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." †

GSM QUOTES

"Facts are not truths. Truth sets the record straight while facts are tangible evidence. Facts that do not line up to the intent of the truth must be discarded. Facts are often selective and are based on people's personal calculations and twisted agendas. Truth has a spiritual and moral aspect to it, facts do not. Truth is vital. It contains the moral integrity and spiritual reality of something. Truth is unchangeable. If facts don't line up to the intent of truth they have no authority or power. The spiritual aspect of a matter should bring life and the moral aspect character. Without these elements facts are not truth. Facts without truth can set up an environment where a wrong spirit comes in." - Rayola Kelley

"When you try to be the Holy Spirit in people's lives, you open yourself up to a religious spirit, and you will be operating with a fake humility, and an underlying desire to control people which is the essence of witchcraft." - Jeannette Haley

"I think most people go to church expecting to be bored." - Rayola Kelley

"The light is diminishing in the American church because we are playing at church instead of being the Church.

"The reality of personal growth comes down to death. Personal strength must be offered up, our present life must be sacrificed, future hopes must give way to eternal purposes, and personal expectations must be replaced by total confidence in an unseen God." - Rayola Kelley

RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

Difference between sin and evil?

Q: "I have been wondering if there is a difference between the terms sinner, wickedness, and evil. I have noticed that some sinners aren't as bad as those who are called wicked or evil."

A: According to Strong's Concordance there is a difference between these terms. However, all three find their basis in idolatry, unbelief, and rebellion. Regardless of how each term may express itself, God sees that it brings a separation between the person who is giving way to the attitude, ways, and practices associated with these terms.

The term "sinner" points to a person's spiritual condition that has been passed down from Adam. A sinner is one who is missing the mark of what God designed for mankind to bring glory and honor to Him and will ultimately bear the blame for it. Their condition will cause them to offend God in some way, either through transgression (the breaking of the law) or through iniquity (moral deviation from what is right). As a result, they are forfeiting their right to be a recipient of God's blessings, promises, and eternal life. Sinners are usually facing an eternal damnation because of unbelief towards God about their condition and need for a Savior.

Evil is a state in which a person is operating and usually finds its roots in idolatry, while wickedness is the manifestation or practice of evil. Evil is the opposite of good, while wickedness is the opposite of righteousness. Evil points to a troubled, bad, adverse, distressed state that will displease God, while wickedness points to a rebellious attitude that will openly rebel against Him.

Probably the best way to put it is we are all born sinners, but the state of evilness can become a preference as to the lifestyle people live and wickedness becomes a choice of expression. Despots are evil people and those who insist on walking according to the corrupt ways of the flesh and the profane ways of the world are wicked.

I hope this answers your question. †

WHICH WAY ARE YOU LOOKING?

By Jeannette Haley

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; And unto them that look for him shall he appear the Second time without sin unto salvation” - Hebrews 9:28

In the good old days of comedy television (a few decades ago) the truly hilarious television series such as McHale’s Navy, “F” Troop, and The Andy Griffith Show entertained a much happier bunch of Americans. Those of us old enough to remember those simpler times, and the silly antics of Tim Conway, Joe Flynn, Don Knotts, Ken Berry, Don Diamond and many others with like talents lived in a world that was far less threatening and complicated than the current one we find ourselves in. We laughed and giggled when our favorite comedians failed to look where they were going, walked into walls and closed doors, crashed their cars, tumbled down stairs, flipped over hitching rails, and fell flat on their faces.



What isn’t so funny is the fact that those “good old” days of “America, Mom and apple pie,” and the American way of life as portrayed by illustrator Norman Rockwell are gone forever. The beautiful American dream of yesterday stands in sharp contrast to the “real world” of today. An increasing number of people are, at long last, beginning to wake up to the lateness of the hour as they look to the dark clouds of destruction looming on the horizon. Silliness is melting into sobriety, frivolity into fear, and in some cases playfulness into panic. People of understanding are beginning to recognize that the satanic “transformation of America” is leading to its demise, as well as negatively affecting the rest of the world. The hushed spirit of fear that descended over America after the 2008 election—a fear that even Bill O’Reilly mentioned on “The Factor”—has not dissipated, but has only grown heavier and darker. At the same time multitudes of people living in other parts of the world have little, if any, hope of deliverance from fear, terror, suffering, persecution and death. Just

when we think it couldn’t get any worse, the headlines and updated news alerts bombard our spinning senses with a daily escalation of bizarre, evil, immoral, and devastating horror stories that challenge the mental and emotional stability of the most balanced among us. Concerning the days in which we live, *Luke 21:26* says, “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.” Therefore, where can we look for help to make things “right” again?

Looking to the world and its systems: It is interesting to note people’s responses to the onslaught of powerful and destructive forces that threaten to destroy the world, our nation, our beliefs and our way of life as we know it. Christians, who are aware of the signs of the times, but who are also quite human, are no exception and often look to the ways of the world to solve the problems of the world. But Jesus warned, “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” *Luke 9:62*. Making a commitment to follow Christ means that we are forsaking all others and everything else to follow Him. It means that when the going gets tough, we will not so much as even turn around to look at the world we left behind as did Lot’s wife, who, instead of “being the salt of the world” turned into a hardened “pillar of salt.”

As Christians, our purpose, calling, and reason for being in this world is to be the “salt” and the “light” and to obey Christ’s commandments to go and fulfill the great commission. (See *Matthew 28:18-20*). While it is true that God does call and prepare certain believers to serve in governmental positions for His purposes, such as Daniel, Esther, Mordecai, Nehemiah etc., it is idolatrous, displeasing to God and unwise for us to look to, and put our trust and faith in any government, political leader, king, guru, or pope to save us. The Word cautions us that the anti-christ, who will pose as the greatest problem-solving peacemaker in the history of the world, steps onto the world scene, humanity’s weakness for a hero figure will be put to the ultimate test. As Christian soldiers, we must not “grow weary in well doing.” “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation

hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” Titus 2:11-13. [Emphasis added.] Thus, looking to the systems of the world, and people of power for deliverance when everything is being shaken, is futile at best, and destructive at worst. Even so, multitudes of Americans continue to look to the government to solve all or our problems when the truth of the matter is, our government is a huge cause and big part of the problem! We would do well to heed the words of King David, who declared, “Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God” *Psalms 20:7. Psalm 146:3* says, “Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.”

Looking to money: Because of the imminent threat facing us all of a national and global financial crash, the wealthy are in a frantic scramble to secure their wealth, in an effort to try and preserve their lives and lifestyles. Even many people of humble means are investing in gold and silver as a way to survive the inevitable financial tsunami. However, the Word of the Lord warns, “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch” *Proverbs 22:28. Psalm 52:7* says, “Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.” While it is not a sin to be wealthy, or even modestly well off, trusting in money to save and deliver you from problems in this world is the sin of idolatry and unbelief. The Apostle Paul instructed Timothy, “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy” *1 Timothy 6:17. Proverbs 11:28* warns, “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish, as a branch.”

Looking to self: While wise preparedness, learning basic survival skills, first aid, and so forth are good

things to know, the idea that a person can look to one's self alone for protection and preservation is folly. I am the first to admit that having a good supply of water, food, and toilet paper is probably a good idea, even in the best of times. But, here is what the Lord says: says, *"Thus saith the LORD; cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD"* Jeremiah 17:5. Whatsoever you put your trust and confidence in will become your "god." If, in your pride, you trust and look to yourself more than to Jehovah God, then you are "trusting in the flesh of your own arm," and you are your own god, and without a doubt when everything spins out of control, the "house that you built on the shifting sands of self" will surely fall. God's solution is Himself. His Word is truth and will forever stand and remain truth. *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"* Proverbs 3:5, 6.

Looking to family: Can we trust the members of our family to help us in trying times? That is a question that only each person can answer for him or herself. Not every Christian is blessed with a supportive family who understands and recognizes him or her for who he or she is in Christ. While most of us can only dream of belonging to a loving, "Waltons" type of family, the truth is family cannot be trusted above reliance upon God. Jeremiah wrote, *"For even thy brethren, and the house of thy father, even they have dealt treacherously with thee; yea, they have called a multitude after thee: believe them not, though they speak fair words unto thee."* Some people make the idea of "the family" into an idol that must be exalted above all else, and served at any cost. The Mormons are a good example of this extremely idolatrous devotion. Jesus cautioned, *"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death"* Matthew 10:21. Now that the cancer of communism (which we were all supposed to believe was "dead") has come back with a vengeance, this Scripture concerning betrayal among

the closest of relationships is once again an unfortunate reality which will only escalate until Jesus returns. In the meantime, we must be *"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled"* Hebrews 12:15. [Emphasis added.]

Looking to false prophets and the occult: Discerning Christians who know and understand the Holy Bible are keenly aware that we are indeed living in the latter days foretold by Jesus and the prophets. When asked by His disciples what the sign of His coming would be, and the end of the world, Jesus answered their questions in a concise and direct manner. There was no attempt on His part to confuse, convolute, or craftily cause mystification on this subject (as many attempt to do today as a means to deceive others.) The first thing Jesus said to them was, *"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. Again, in verse 24 Jesus warned, *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."* (The book, *The Beautiful Side of Evil* written by Johanna Michaelsen is a great book on this subject for believers and unbelievers alike, and is a real eye-opener for people dabbling in the occult, metaphysics, witchcraft, signs and wonders, supernatural phenomena, etc.)

"Christ" means "Anointed One." Therefore, deceivers, such as the antichrist, will claim to be Christ Himself, "returned" to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Such groups as the Manifest Sons of God, NAR, which is the New Apostolic Reformation and the Dominionists teach, in some form or the other, that Christ is "returning" in His Church to take over the kingdoms of this world. Many of today's popular "Christian" politicians belong to this false movement. Instead of looking to Christ's coming to rule and reign, they look to positions of power where they believe they can turn back the tide of unconstitutionality, lawlessness, immorality, debauchery, etc. by legislating righteousness and establishing God's kingdom on earth. While this may sound wonderful to those whose spirits

are sorely vexed by the insane and evil flood of deceitful political correctness, injustice, crime, terror, oppression, and so forth, the bottom line is you cannot have a "kingdom" without a king! And, there is only One King who can rightfully rule and reign over His kingdom, and that is Jesus Christ the LORD.

False workers with a deceptive spirit of antichrist may claim to be the "Christ" and that they are "anointed ones" from God, and "prove it" by showing great signs and wonders to deceive, but their end is in the lake of fire. The source of such power is totally demonic. Never forget that Satan counterfeits the true work of God, the gifts of the Spirit, and he comes as an "angel of light" who transforms his ministers as "ministers of righteousness." (See *2 Corinthians 11:13-15*.) Deceivers always have their own self-serving agendas of power and control, and are able through Satan to perform signs and lying wonders in order to deceive even the most discerning. (See *2 Thessalonians 2:9*.) Tragically, such deceivers are in plentiful supply today, have drawn multitudes of professing Christians after themselves, and are redefining Christianity through their adeptness at Scripture twisting, adding to or taking away from the Word, misquoting it, and cleverly employing deceptive "ear tickling" tactics. Such wolves, hirelings and false prophets are busy deceiving gullible sheep who have never been properly disciplined, grounded, rooted and established in the Word. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God"* John 1:1, 2. Such sheep do not depend on the Holy Spirit to be their Teacher (imparting the revelation of the Living Word into their hearts when it is read, taught, or preached); nor do they know the voice of their Shepherd so that they will not follow another! You cannot follow Christ and Satan at the same time any more than you can serve two masters. *Hebrews 10:27* declares that there is a judgment coming for God's enemies, *"...a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."* [Emphasis added.]

Instead of looking to ourselves,

looking to money, looking to our family and friends, looking to the government and leaders in high places, looking to extra biblical and unscriptural sources, we need to seek God for His wisdom, power, strength, truth, guidance and perspective. It is amazing how gaining God's perspective lifts us up out of our habitual mental cycles, limited vision, mental fog, spiritual slackness, emotional dullness, and lukewarm heart condition. God's perspective gives us a whole new outlook on things. We gain heavenly vision that penetrates the limits of our cloudy earthly point of view, and renders our own take on things as unimportant, vain, empty, ineffective, lifeless, foolish, and spiritually blind. This may seem excessively harsh, but the truth is, we are all spiritually blind, and limited to only "seeing through a glass darkly" until the light of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, gives us light to truly seek the light. "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" Psalm 36:9. It is then that our spirit is set on fire by the Holy Spirit, our soul awakens to the reality of Christ, and our hearts become alive with love, peace, joy, praise and adoration to the One who knows all things and who will reveal the secret things to His servants— those who trust Him, obey Him, and are looking to Him and for Him. (See *Deuteronomy 29:29*.) "He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him" *Daniel 2:22*.

Which way are you looking? Is it backward, forward, and right or left, up or down? Hopefully your answer is that you are, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" *Hebrews 12:2*. [Emphasis added.] Hopefully you can say, "For [my] conversation is in heaven; from whence also [I] look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" *Philippians 3:20*. [Emphasis added.] And, finally, may all God's people declare with Job, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" *Job 19:25, 26*. †

LETTERS & EMAILS

"I appreciate all you ladies do for me. I am thankful for your willingness to obey God and use your ministry to help people like me who lose their way. May God bless you exceedingly abundantly above all you can ask or think in Jesus name!!" - ID

"I have really been blessed by your newsletters. It's such an evil and demonic time we are living in it's good to read good spiritual, uplifting news of the Kingdom. The Word and the love of God keeps us, no matter what goes on around us. Fresh manna and living water are needed every day. I so have enjoyed the music. Again thank you for them. [CD's] Love to you all! - OR

"WHY aren't the 'churches' teaching the sheep that they do NOT have to SUBMIT to an ungodly government????? Nooooooooooooo . . . they wrongfully teach that they must submit to the powers that be!" - FL

"The hand writing has been on the wall in regard to Obama and how strongly he is against Israel, so very, very sad and what is also truly sad is how many Christians are truly asleep at the switch so to speak, way too busy doing heaven knows what." - ID

"I have noticed that when disasters occur, Israel are always on the scene first, when Israel needs help, everyone is against them!!! The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me. *Lev 25:23*" - UK

"I am so enjoying Rayola's Bible studies on line it blesses me so much it is almost like being with all of you, well not quite but you get my point." - ID

"It [June newsletter] was excellent as always! Enjoyed your article on what it looks like to be 'A Living Sacrifice' unto God. It is so easy to 'crawl off the altar' as you put it and how deceptive pride is. Now, I understand why Jesus said that we must die daily. Also, enjoyed Rayola's article on the deity of Jesus and He is the fullness of the Godhead and how God's Law pointed us back to our need for the perfect sacrifice that God would send to suffice the Law and that was the person of Jesus Christ. Once again your writings both intertwined with the same theme. Bless you!" - ID

ARE YOU IN EXPECTANCY?

Our citizenship: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." - *Philippians 3:20*

Our inheritance: "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." - *1 Peter 1:4, 5*

Our enrichment by Him in word and knowledge: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." - *1 Corinthians 1:7*

Our waiting: "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." - *1 Thessalonians 1:10*

Our hope and joy: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" - *1 Thessalonians 2:19*

Our lifestyle: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." - *Titus 2:11-13*.

Be patient and established: "Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." - *James 5:8*

Keep looking: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." - *Hebrews 9:28*

Watching: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." - *Revelation 2:7*— "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." - *John 14:3b*

THE ONLY ANTIDOTE: THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

(Excerpt from June 1, 2015 TBC article, by T. A. McMahon, *The Only Antidote: The Power of the Spirit*)

Few believers in the US have experienced the kinds of physical trials that Paul and Peter have described, yet there are trials of a different sort that are destructive spiritually even though they are not necessarily physical. There are the trials of one's faith in the realm of religious seduction, e.g., being deceived by popular false teachers and unbiblical doctrines, being ostracized from one's fellowship for not going along with a new teaching or practice that isn't supported in Scripture, or for being a "thorn in the side" at a Bible study group for not compromising the truth of God's Word. These are things that often create conflicts simply by one's trying to be steadfast in the faith.

Then how can that steadfastness be maintained without causing conflict and division? It can't, except in rare situations where there is a willingness to repent and to submit to the truth of God's Word. Nowhere does Scripture promise that there won't be opposition to God's Word. Instead it makes available a condition of "exceeding joy" that takes place within the heart and enables the believer to "conquer" or handle the situation in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. How is that accomplished? First Peter 4:14 tells us: "... for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you...."

The work of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary in the life of a believer. That's why Jesus said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you....Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John:16:7,13-14). Every true believer in Jesus is born of the Holy Spirit (John:3:5), sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians:4:30), and enabled, em-

powered, and led by the Holy Spirit (Romans:15:13, 8:14) in order to glorify God and to live one's life in a way that is pleasing to Him. According to the Scriptures, this is the only way that a believer can be spiritually fruitful.

In the late 1960s, Dave Hunt edited a book by William Law titled *The Power of the Spirit*. In the 18th century, Law wrote *An Affectionate Address to the Clergy* (full title: *An Humble, Affectionate, and Earnest Address to the Clergy*). It was brought back into print in 1896 by one of Dave's favorite Christian authors, Andrew Murray. Murray retitled Law's book *The Power of the Spirit* and said of it: "I confess that in all my reading I have never found anyone who has so helped me in understanding the Scriptural truth of the work of the Holy Spirit....I beg of my brethren in the ministry to give it no cursory perusal. I am confident that a patient and prayerful study will bring a rich blessing."

Dave certainly concurred: "It is my conviction that Andrew Murray has not been unduly high in his praise of this volume by Law. And although, like Murray, I cannot agree with all of Law's teachings, I too believe all included herein to be soundly based upon Scripture." Dave further noted the relevance of Law's writing to the current issues stemming from the spiritual abuses of the Pentecostals and Charismatics and the criticism of conservative and fundamental Christians: "What William Law had to say is, I believe, a very important contribution to this present discussion. He would rebuke the pride, lack of love, and inconsistencies in both camps, and would seemingly take side with neither extreme. But he would unquestionably maintain a Scriptural basis for the present full display and vitality of New Testament Christianity. To the mainline denominational adherent he would press home the necessity of the sovereignty and power of the Holy Spirit for today; and upon the Pentecostal he would impress the fact that the power of the Spirit is bestowed primarily to enable one to witness and to live a holy life. And his very delineation of that life would bring conviction of sin and a sense of falling short to both fundamentalist and Pentecostal."

The following excerpts are from chapter one, "The Indwelling Spirit of

God Essential to Salvation," of TBC's exclusive edition of *The Power of the Spirit*, edited for today's reader by Dave Hunt:

The Spirit of the triune God, breathed into Adam at his creation, was that alone which made him a holy creature in the image and likeness of God. A new birth of this Spirit of God in man is as necessary to make fallen man alive again unto God as it was to make Adam at first in the image and likeness of God. And a constant flow of this divine life by the Spirit is as necessary to man's continuance in his redeemed state as light and moisture are to the continued life of a plant. A religion that is not wholly built upon this supernatural ground but that stands to any degree upon human powers, reasonings, and conclusions has not so much as the shadow of truth in it. Such religion leaves man with mere empty form and images that can no more restore divine life to his soul than an idol of clay or wood could create another Adam.

True Christianity is nothing but the continual dependence upon God through Christ for all life, light, and virtue; and the false religion of Satan is to seek that goodness from any other source. So the true child of God acknowledges that "no man can receive anything except it be given him from above" (John:3:27). All goodness comes from God just as surely as all life comes from God....

Man's fall from his first state brought separation from God and thus from the life, light, and virtue that is in Him. Man's salvation can therefore only be effected by a reconciling of his spirit with the Spirit of the Creator. "Be ye reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians:5:20), wrote Paul. Nor can this reconciliation be accomplished by man's own efforts, but it must by its very nature be a gift from God. No angel or man could begin to show any love, faith, or desire toward God without a living seed of these divine affections being first formed within him by the Spirit of God. And as a tree or plant can grow and bear fruit only by the same power that first gave birth to the seed from which it sprang, so faith, hope, and love toward God can grow and fructify only by the same power that created the first seed of them in the soul. Therefore, the con-

tinuous inspiration and working of the Holy Spirit in the spirit of man is no less essential to that salvation, which God has provided through Jesus Christ, than the new birth itself.

This divine life in man can never be in him but as a growth of life in and from God. Hence it is that resisting the Spirit, quenching the Spirit, grieving the Spirit, gives growth to every evil that reigns in a fallen creation and leaves men and churches an easy and inevitable prey to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Nothing but obedience to the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, trusting Him for continual inspiration can possibly keep men from being sinners or idolaters in all that they do. For everything in the life or religion of man that has not the Spirit of God for its source, direction, and end is but earthly, sensual, or devilish....

A lack of...complete submission to the will of God, and a failure to realize that our salvation can be worked out only by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit forming the very life of Christ within the redeemed heart, has placed the Christian church today in the same apostasy that characterized the Jewish nation. And it has occurred for one and the same reason. The Jews refused Him who was the substance and fulfilling of all that was taught in their Law and Prophets. The Christian church is in a fallen state for the same rejection of the Holy Spirit, who was given to be the power and fulfilling of all that was promised by the gospel. And just as the Pharisees' rejection of Christ was under a profession of faith in the Messianic Scriptures, so church leaders today reject the demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit in the name of sound doctrine.

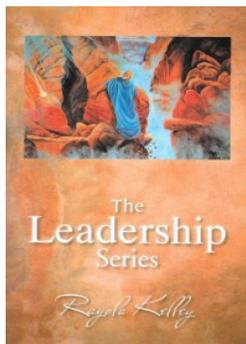
The Holy Spirit's coming was no less to fulfill the gospel than Christ's coming was the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. As all types and figures in the Law were but empty shadows without the coming of Christ, so the New Testament is but dead letter without the Holy Spirit in redeemed men as the living power of a full salvation. This is clear from these words, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. But if I go away; I will send him to

you" (John:16:7). Without the cross and resurrection, Christ could not have "gone away." These antecedent events made possible His ascension, for it was "by his own blood that he entered into the presence of God for us" (Hebrews:9:12, 24). Thus the coming of the Holy Spirit, being the fruit of Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, is essential to the fulfillment of the salvation Christ procured.

Where the Holy Spirit is not honored as the one through whom the whole life and power of gospel salvation is to be effected, it is no wonder that Christians have no more of the reality of the gospel than the Jews had of the purity of the Law. It could not be otherwise than that the same lusts and vices that prospered among apostate Jews should break forth with as much strength in fallen Christendom. For the New Testament without the coming of the Holy Spirit in power over self, sin, and the devil is no better a help to heaven than the Old Testament without the coming of the Messiah. Need any more be said to demonstrate the truth that the one thing absolutely essential to man's salvation is the Spirit of God living and working in the spirit of man? And though we still cling to a religion that does not acknowledge this, it is a full proof that we are not yet in that redeemed state in our communion with God that is intended by the gospel. †

THE LEADERSHIP SERIES

By Rayola Kelley



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THE LEADERSHIP SERIES

BOOK ONE

By Rayola Kelley

The three books that make up the Leadership Series were written after my friend and co-laborer in the Gospel, Jeannette Haley, pointed out that there seemed to be much confusion surrounding godly leadership in the kingdom of God. The main reason for this confusion is that many Christians consider leadership according to the world's standards. Jesus even warned His followers in Matthew 20:24-27 that there is a vast difference between what the world considers to be greatness in leadership, and how the kingdom of God regards leadership that is marked with the excellence of greatness. As this book illustrates, true leaders in God's kingdom are not born; rather, they are forged. In order to effectively bring forth a leader, such individuals must learn to recognize that which hinders them and overcome these enemies. Obviously, a leader cannot lead others where he or she has not yet walked.

The first book, *Overcoming*, addresses the true enemies of the cross of Christ, and reveals that they do not always come from without. Many such hindrances prove to be nothing more than moral deviations that are present in our character.

Therefore, the first book identifies the true enemies of the Christian life and brings insight into what it takes to overcome each enemy. Great leaders also understand how authority and power are to influence and work in their lives. The second book, *A Matter of Authority and Power* reveals that real leaders recognize true authority and understand how power is to be used to carry out their responsibilities. This book will undo any misconceptions about these two subjects and will produce the sobriety that must be present when it comes to possessing the quality of true leadership in the kingdom of God. The final book, *The Dynamics of True Leadership*, follows the lives of the great leaders of the Bible. This book reveals the type of soul each leader possessed. It explains the choices these leaders made and how it impacted the kingdom of God.