

GENTLE SHEPHERD MINISTRIES

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

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The Reality of God

Part 14

By Rayola Kelley

It never ceases to amaze me as to how people conceive God. All too often they allow mere man to convince them that he serves as God's sole mouthpiece, making his word the same as God's. However, when all the smoke finally clears, it is obvious that such a person is in all actuality claiming to be God. It is not only

frightening to see people fling all reason out the door, shut down any discernment they may have, and commit mind,



heart, and soul to bow down to the insane reality of such individuals but it is not unusual. Man is quick to make man God, and demote God to respond, think, and act as a human. As one person implied, "Those who place themselves in the place of God throw out moral boundaries and create the worst type of tyranny possible for those who are deluded and foolish enough to come under their anti-Christ spirit." Sadly, these deluded wolves in sheep clothing promote the wickedness of their insanity as doing it in the name of God, profaning His name, bringing reproach to His witness, and blaspheming His character.

It is also important to point out that although God has spoken through prophets in the past, He also has spoken through His Son in these last days (*Hebrews 1:1-2*). His Son's goal was and is to reveal Himself through His many-membered Church, His one true Body to a lost world, and His Body in turn was instructed to carry out its commission to preach the Gospel and make heirs of salvation, followers of Christ. No one person is to hold absolute authority over other believers except the true Head of the

Body, the Lord Jesus Christ. Any person who declares such authority and position is of an anti-Christ spirit and people should flee their idolatrous seduction.

Through the years I have seen the devastating fruits of this tyranny. It reigns with an iron hand that has no semblance of love, mercy, or grace. Its demands come from the heights of arrogance as it claims that all is spoken is the infallible word of God and must not be questioned in any way. For many who might read this, you will think that only bon-a-fide cults fit this scenario, but I have seen so-called "Christian leaders," who claimed to be the modern-day prophets, apostles, or the latest leader that amounts to nothing more than a guru, wield the same claims at their deluded followers, and I have watched in complete abhorrence as many of their followers sold their souls to these religious heretics to do their bidding.

The Bible is clear that there is only one God by nature (*Galatians 4:8*). God is not simply a title but describes the very essence of God. *Deuteronomy 6:4-5* makes this declaration that Jesus quoted in places such as *Mark 12:29-31*, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." God is divine all aspects of His character, ways, and works. In essence He is deity by nature, and is eternal. As Isaiah has declared in more than one place, there is no God beside Him, He is GOD, Jehovah God, the only Savior and Redeemer (*Isaiah 45:5, 17, 21-22; 46:9-10; 47:4*).

The question is what makes God unique, and stand alone in His nature, attributes, and works? In other words, what makes God, God? The one thing that sets God apart is His glory. One might ask, what constitutes glory? In an article in Zion's Fire magazine, Marvin Rosenthal penned this information, "The Hebrew root from which

the word "glory" (*Kabod*), comes is from a word that means 'weighty,' That which gives weight to God is His nature and attributes. When the nature and attributes of God are revealed in and by his creation, God is glorified." Rosenthal goes on to explain that God's glory is intrinsic. In other words, it is not dependent on any outside influence, and to understand it should be humanity's highest intellectual pursuit, and its outworking, humanity's greatest priority.

It is clear that it is the quality or character of something that constitutes glory. Therefore, glory has to do with what sets someone apart. It entails those qualities that make someone distinct, qualities that are manifested through attitudes and actions.

There are different glories being manifested in the world today. For example there is the *vainglory* of man (*Philippians 2:3*). Since man's life is nothing but a vapor, his vainglory is comprised of waning strength, perverted thinking, fleshly works, fickle zeal, and failing beauty. All of these qualities are void of any real lasting substance (*Psalms 103:12-16; James 4:14; 1 Peter 1:24*). Eventually all that causes man to stand apart in creation will give way to the harsh reality that death works within him to bring his present existence to naught. The only thing that will follow man into the next world will be that which is marked by the eternal glory of God.

The world possesses a *fading glory*. There is much glitter to the world. It presents an elusive image of happiness and success which hides a spiritual vacuum that is clearly void of any life. It operates from the perspective of fleshly attractions that are based on false promises. Since it cannot give life, it offers a lifestyle to try to fill the spiritual vacuum within man's soul, but it leaves him lean and desperate. The world is temporary and its attractions change with the winds of cultures and philosophies lacking any

lasting foundation (*Matthew 7:24-27; Colossians 2:8; 1 John 2:15-17*).

The next type of glory is produced by the *false glory* of man's religion. Man hides behind a religious robe that may exude good works, pious standards, and claims but lacks heart, life, and spirit (*Matthew 15:1-20; 23:1-33*). Like the other aforementioned glories, there is no weight behind it. Once stripped of the vanity, surface glitter, and the false light, these three glories cannot stand alone. They are dependent on images, impressions, and a false narrative that can attract, seduce, and delude people into a pseudo reality that always leaves people disillusioned and disappointed.

It is important to understand the different glories that are vying for our attention. Our imagination can get caught up with our personal vainglory as we bow to its arrogance. Our affection can be taken captive by the fading glitter of the world, and our mind can become rigid with self-righteousness as we perceive ourselves becoming religiously or spiritually enlightened and elite in some way.

This brings us back to God's glory! It is eternal. We know that our finite mind cannot comprehend the fact that every aspect about God carries the intrinsic quality of being everlasting. Every attribute of God possesses an eternal dimension that in our present state, we can only see glimpses into. For example, Moses could not look into the full glory of God without it costing him his very life (*Exodus 33:18-23*).

When it comes to man, the fullness of God's glory has always need to be veiled. In fact, the fullness of the Godhead was veiled in the humanity of Christ. Granted, the veil of Jesus' humanity was parted enough on the Mount of Transfiguration for the Apostle John to declare in *John 1:14*, "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*" On the mount, the three disciples beheld the glory of the Son of God, but was it fullness veiled by the cloud, overshadowed by the presence of Moses and Elijah, or simply subdued in some way (*Matthew 17:1-8; Mark 9:1-9; Luke 9:28-36*)?

The eternal aspect of God's glory is beyond our comprehension, let alone possessing the words to describe it. I remember one time when I asked God about a matter. It was as if a dam broke and a river of information rushed through my mind. It was overwhelming and I knew if it did not stop, it would send me into complete madness because my human mind was not capable of handling the fullness of something that possessed the eternal quality of heaven. This experience left me in a state of deep sobriety.

Yet, how many of us pride ourselves in what we think we know? How many of us really understand that we know in part, a very small part indeed, compared to the eternal wisdom of God? The fact that we cannot comprehend the eternal aspect of God with our minds, but understand Him with the eyes of faith shows us that God's ways and thoughts are much higher than man's abilities to understand and comprehend what is unseen, spiritual, and eternal (*Isaiah 55:8-9*). No man can expect to know God when he approaches Him from an intellectual level. He can only see, discover, and know God from the basis of child-like faith and a pure heart (*Matthew 5:8; Romans 10:17; 14:23; 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1-6*).

There are two aspects of God's glory that must be brought out if we are going to better understand who He is. The first one is that of *majesty*. When it comes to God, His majesty and glory walk hand in hand. The Apostle Peter said this about His majesty in relationship to the Mount of Transfiguration, "*For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his **majesty***" (*2 Peter 1:16*). (Emphasis added.)

"Majesty" is associated with words such as excellence, splendor, beauty, glorious, greatness, and mighty. Everything God does is excellent. For example His creation speaks of His splendor, mankind His beauty, while His ways speak of His glorious righteousness, the heavens of His greatness, and His power to bring things about of His might and strength. It is for this reason He is worthy of receiving all honor, consideration, and glory from His creation.

Clearly, majesty gives us insight into that which brings incredible weight to God's attributes. *Psalms 29:4* tell us the voice of the LORD is full of majesty. *Psalms 93:1* tells us that He is clothed with majesty and *Psalms 96:6* tells us honor and majesty are before Him. *Isaiah 2:10* warned people to enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of His majesty, and that in *Isaiah 26:10*, it clearly stipulates the unrighteous will not behold His majesty.

Hebrews 1:3 and *8:1* tells us that Jesus sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. Majesty not only adds the necessary weight to God's glory, but it is also one of His names. It is easy to get excited about the greatness of God, speak of His incredible splendor, rejoice in His incomprehensible beauty, bask in His glorious light, and marvel at His authority and power, but still fail to give Him His due glory.

In essence, it is easy to stop short of bringing honor and glory to the Lord. We can emotionally get excited, but fail to worship Him in Spirit and truth. We can get caught up with sentiment about the idea of God, but fail to exalt Him in our minds in order to offer the sacrifice of praise. We can succumb to self-righteousness because we are doing good things in the name of the Lord, but totally miss doing His will. In the end, we will secretly touch His glory by focusing the limelight on ourselves or others instead of humbling ourselves and offering all things back to Him for His glory and honor.

The problem with much of the worship, praise, and service that is taking place within Christianity is that it is man-centered and not Christ-centered. In man-centered activity, God will be stripped of His majesty in people's minds. At such times it is about what man is doing for God; rather than what God is doing in and through man. It is about a person feeling good about self, and not doing what is right before the Lord because He alone is worthy of such commitment regardless of whether a person gets any recognition or not.

Properly worshipping God should be part of everything we do. Worship is about bringing glory and honor to the God of majesty, not only

in songs and words, but actions. Even though we may be looking up during worship, it is easy to adore the ideal or emotion of worship and not the one who is worthy of all worship. It is easy to open our mouth in praise while our hearts are not in it. We can sing of God's greatness, while believing we hold the keys and formulas for spiritual victory, which strips us of all reliance on God. We can feel quite important while being busy for God, but still not be doing the business of God.

Clearly, man-centered worship, praise, and service are subtle replacements for a Christ-centered life and walk of honorable worship, sacrificial praise, and acceptable service. The reason that people end up with such a backward perspective is because they keep God small, indifferent, and needful of their intervention for His kingdom to work properly. The truth is He does not need any of us! Granted, He desires to use us, but in the end His will and plan will not be hindered, thwarted, or stopped. He can and will use a most unlikely vessel to accomplish His will, while ensuring His glory is not touched by man.

Our level of worship depends on how big God is to us. Our service depends on our motives and agendas, whether they are self-serving and self-exalting, ever promoting self-importance; or if we do it because it is part of our high calling, our reasonable service, and the right (obedient) thing to do as a means to honor our Lord.

This brings me to the second aspect of God's glory. In my book, *The Christian Life Series*, I deal with the various issues that ensure, affect, and establish us in our Christian walk. The first part of the book deals with issues such as redemption, love, faith, and grace. It was my goal in the book to explain how redemption, love, faith, and grace enable us to possess this incredible life. However, in my section entitled, "The Ultimate End to a Matter," I wrote this, "The question is, what is God's ultimate end to a matter when it comes to man? In other words, what is God after? What is His intention or desired end when it comes to redemption? Is it simply the salvation of man or is salvation the means in which God uses to bring man to the ultimate end?"

In another paragraph, I answered the question in this way: "This brings us to what God's intended end is for each of us. It is something that we often like to ignore or adjust, but few of us want to consider it head on because we just might have to rethink some of our attitudes and ways. However, the Scriptures are quite clear as to what God must accomplish in our lives to bring about and ensure salvation. God's intended end for man has been, is and will always be that of holiness."

When I think of holiness I think of such Scriptures as *1 Peter 1:14-16*, "*As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.*"

We also have *Hebrews 12:14*, "*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*"

Holiness is one attribute that clearly gives God the weight as to what distinguishes Him as God. Sadly, it is the attribute that is greatly misunderstood and ignored which will require another article. It is for this reason that I will be dealing with holiness in next month's newsletter.

The question you must answer is, "Is my understanding of God big enough that I allow Him to be God and trust Him in all matters? Am I stagnant because of personal beliefs or am I still growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ because I love Him and want to please Him? †

COMMENTS

"I'm always nourished and encouraged by the articles and quotes contained in the NL. This month, [October] I was especially encouraged to see Rayola address the issue of hearing from God [Q&A Section]! Most "believers" think that God is going to speak to them like a loudspeaker at the mall making announcements! Unfortunately, they are too lax and lazy to KNOW GOD via His Word, or they would recognize when God "speaks."

"The ongoing series on discernment always stirs my heart, simply because it is an issue that is also close

close to my heart, as it is yours. The "Church" for too long has been confused between judging and discerning. Then again, His Word DOES judge one, doesn't it? Therefore, it's not ME that is judging, but what God has already spoken that judges the intent of the heart of man. Basically, this is why we get such negative reactions to those we share God's Word with; it is already judging them. I loved the quote from Havner: I'm under new management!! This should be the heart-cry of every one who has implemented the Blood of Jesus Christ in their life.

"Eternal thanks to all of GSM for the ongoing nourishment provided to the Body of Christ. Soldier on!!!" - FL

"Dear GSM newsletter readers: I had the awesome privilege and pleasure of being with the ladies of GSM for 2 weeks. With 3 Bible studies a week, travel time, baked goods for Bible studies attendees, calling on shut-ins and blessing many with heavenly voices at various time plus an all-day Leadership training seminar, what can I say. And all of these activities do not include the requirements of daily living: these ladies are extremely busy to say the least. In the OT (Deut 17:11) when Moses hands were upheld Israel prevailed so please keep these ladies uplifted in prayer as they battle spiritually for many hurting, oppressed and lost souls that they may prevail in energy, spiritual wisdom and that God will be glorified." - ID

"Thank you for a faith-building newsletter. Both articles were challenging in making sure we are on the narrow path that leads to the door of eternal life in Christ Jesus and to make sure we are vigilant to discern truth and the spirit behind a person.

"Rayola's article was sobering about the Lord being the keeper of doors and that He is the one who will make a way or a door for each born-again believer to discover his or her life, purpose and destiny. We need to make sure we strive to know the true Jesus of the Bible and that we watch, wait and redeem the time for the Lord's return." - ID

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

~GOD BLESS YOU~

DARE TO DISCERN

Part Four

By Jeannette Haley

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; But after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.” – 2 Timothy 4:3

Anyone who has ever camped, picnicked, or walked for miles on an ocean beach knows just how subtle the tide changes can be. There you are, happy, high and dry, enjoying the sandy expanse of beach while the distant surf gurgles and swishes benignly in the distance. Everything seems to be so perfect until suddenly you find yourself retreating to higher ground in an effort to escape a rapid flow of stealthy water. It is as if the gravitational pull of the moon and the untamable ocean currents have joined forces in a conspiracy to wipe you, and everything else off the shoreline.

As menacing and dangerous as the temperamental and unpredictable tides and currents of the ocean are, even more dangerous are those subtle tides of change and “winds of doctrine” that have been, and are, sweeping through the church in these end days. Christians need to keep in mind that Satan doesn’t burst through the church doors, march to the pulpit and announce that he is the devil and that he is there to destroy the faith of the just. Instead, he uses subtle and crafty means to deceive, transforming himself “into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” 2 Corinthians 11:14b, 15. The key to discerning such false workers is to consider the agenda and goal behind their works, and ask yourself these questions: Is the bottom-line goal, and priority, of any individual, ministry, movement, church or organization to lift up the Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified, to present the Gospel (death, burial and resurrection of Christ), to disciple believers according to Jesus’ command, and to bring glory to God? Who is being exalted—Christ or man? Is the leader seeking to gain a following? What is the prevailing emphasis—is it humanitarian in scope, (a temporary work) or are souls being

saved (an eternal work)? Is the whole Word of God being adhered to, are Bibles being made available to the people, and is the Lord leading through the Holy Spirit, or is God’s Word being twisted to fit man’s agenda, while lip service is given to lend credibility to man’s endeavors to build on the wrong foundation? Only Jesus Christ is the true foundation—not good works, not religious traditions, not man’s lofty imaginations or noble efforts, or fleshly experiences.

In the Apostle Paul’s farewell speech to the Elders at Ephesus, he declared, “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” Acts 20:27-31. [Emphasis added.] According to the words of Jesus in Revelation 2:2 it would appear that this church did take Paul’s warning to heart for we read, “I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.” Jesus went on to commend them for their patience for His name’s sake, their labor, and steadfastness; however, what He had against them is that they had left their first love. (See verses 3, 4.)

We learn from this that we must not only discern false workers, but we must discern where we are at in our own relationship with the Lord. This reminds me of something I learned as a young teen going through a Moody Bible Institute Correspondence Course my saintly Great-Grandmother subscribed to for me. It went something like this: “Beware that you don’t get off the track while chasing your enemies.”

Therefore, while we continue our discussion on discernment of false apostles, prophets, teachers, movements, and so forth, let us remember

to guard our hearts and our love for our Lord Jesus Christ, above all else. There is no doubt that we are living in the days Jesus warned us of in Matthew 24. Therefore, it is necessary to point out one of the fastest growing, most dangerous and militant movements within the world today. It comes under many titles and subtitles—some of which are: New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), Latter Rain, IHOP (International House of Prayer), Kingdom Now and Kansas City Prophets, Dominion Theology / Manifest Sons of God (Joel’s Army) / Third Wave / Toronto Blessing, “The New Paradigm Churches,” Replacement Theology, to name a few. As Paul warned, the leaders of these movements are indeed “grievous wolves” who have entered “in among [us], not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” Their goal is as follows:

Latter Rain or Dominion Teaching can be summed up this way - From Apologetic Index:

1. The Church must be Restored & Equipped to rule by the five-fold ministries.
2. It must come to Perfection & Complete Visible UNITY.
3. Out of the purified church will come a Spiritual Elite Corps, a Corporate Christ who possess the Spirit without measure
4. They will Purge the earth of all Wickedness & Rebellion
5. They will Judge the Apostate Church
6. They will Redeem Creation, and Restore the Earth
7. They will eventually overcome death itself in a Counterfeit of the Rapture

The Church will thus inherit the Earth, and Rule over it from the Throne of Christ. <http://so4j.com/new-apostolic-reformation-latter-rain>

A discerning Christian, who is rooted and grounded in the Word of God, should be able to not only sense a wrong spirit behind this false doctrine, but also know Scriptures that directly refute it. Beginning with **number one**, the question we need to ask is: *What does it mean to re-*

store and equip the church to be ruled by the five-fold ministries? Admittedly, the Bible does tell us that in the end times there will be a “falling away” (apostasy) from the truth. (See 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4). Failure to make disciples according to the Great Commission of our Lord (*Matthew 28:18-20*) through the centuries is evidenced by the growth of modernism, worldliness, New Age beliefs and practices, Universalism, humanism, occultism, witchcraft, cults, unbelief, false prophets, and carnality interspersed within mainstream churches. These individuals (along with “wolves” and “swine”) are referred to as the “goats” and the “tares” that Jesus will separate from the “sheep” and the “wheat”. *There is a day of separation coming*; but, until that day we are to redeem the time, watch and pray, overcome (the world, the flesh, and the devil), hold fast our profession of faith, be the salt and the light, endure to the end, and watch for His coming.

The Latter Rain, Manifest Sons of God, and Dominionists (Kingdom Now) people that we have encountered through the years initially take advantage of the fact that most Christians long for true revival; therefore, they use this as the “bait” to cleverly establish a point of agreement. We can all agree, to some extent or the other, that the modern church is a far cry from the New Testament pilgrim church. However, it is not up to God’s people to do this work of “restoration” which they define as “laying a new foundation,” (such as Latter Rain “prophet” Dr. Bill Hamon teaches) but it is Jesus Christ who is building His Church. His words are still true, alive, and in effect: *“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock [of Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God] I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” Matthew 16:18.* The Apostle Paul warns, *“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11.* [Emphasis added.]

Once a person comes into

agreement with the Five-Fold Ministries proponents that the Church is falling short in different areas, they subtly begin to introduce just how this “restoration” is going to take place through “equipping” the Church to rule the world prior to the return of Christ in order to set up His kingdom so He can return. They believe that this will be accomplished by the “Five-Fold Ministries” which is based on Scriptures taken out of context from *Ephesians 4:11-13*. Their spin on these three verses is lengthy, serving as another layer in their faulty foundation. To further help you understand the subtle, insidious perversion of these verses, allow me to quote from O. W. Price, who summed it up very well on his Web Site: *“However, Ephesians 2:20-21 [‘Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone’] informs us that the church is, ‘built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.’ If the apostles and prophets were the foundation of the church, are we still building the foundation? **Hebrews 6:1-3** encourages us to move on from the fundamental principles. We are supposed to grow. **The role of the apostles and prophets were** to proclaim God’s revelation, to teach the truth the church would need in order to grow and thrive. The apostles and prophets completed this mission.*

*“How? By giving us the Word of God. The **Word of God is the completed revelation of God.** The Bible contains everything the Church needs to know in order to grow, thrive, and fulfill God’s mission and purpose. The Holy Spirit of God is our revelator/teacher. The cornerstone work of the apostle and prophets is complete. The ongoing work of God is manifested in the Holy Spirit speaking through the Word of God and teaching us God’s Will through his Holy Spirit filled servants.*

*“Therefore, in the usual biblical sense of the term, there are no apostles today. Nor are there any prophets in the traditional Biblical sense (Foretellers of events relating to the kingdom of God and the coming messiah and His speedy triumphant Return), as they were part of the ‘foundation’ laid in the first-century church....**Joel 2:28** may add some light on the use of*

the word prophet as it relates to the new testament Church. The Word “Prophet” comes from the Hebrew word “naba”{naw-baw} which means one who is under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Now let’s keep this in mind as we read **Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:16-18**. The question may remain, ‘Are there any prophets today?’ No, not in the sense of one who reveals new unknown truth from God regarding to the *kingdom of God, the coming messiah and His triumphant Return. Why would we need such prophets since we already have the completed prophecy from God recorded in the Bible and manifested in Jesus Christ?”*

He went on to say, “If prophets and apostles were the ‘foundation’ of the early church, are we still building the ‘foundation’ today? The answer is an unequivocal **No!** Therefore, the concept of the five-fold ministry fails the test and is found to be in error. Now the question still remains as to whether or not I believe in prophecy as Paul refers to it. Do I believe God can give someone a message to deliver to someone else? The answer is **absolutely Yes!**

“The teachers of the “five-fold ministry” are seeking to restore a foundation that has never been moved. They are actually laying a false foundation that will not support the building up of the body of Christ. This is one reason why Christendom has become so polluted with twisted messages of prosperity and self-centered ambitions rather than salvation and self-denial.”

<https://owprince.wordpress.com/five-fold-ministry/> [Note: GSM does not necessarily endorse cart blanc every opinion or belief of those we quote, but we do appreciate factual, scriptural information for the edification of the Body.]

These self-appointed so-called “apostles” and “prophets” demand full allegiance and obedience from their followers at all times as they go about to establish “the kingdom of God” on the earth so that Jesus can return. Of course, their control and error defines the entire movement as a major cult.

Concerning item **number two** “It must come to Perfection & Complete Visible UNITY” we read in *Ephesians 5:24-27* that the church is subject unto

Christ, that He “loved the church and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” He is the One who perfects His Church, and He is the Head of the Body—not the so-called “apostles” and “prophets” in the Five-fold ministry! It also needs be noted that Jesus is the Head of the Church, His Body, and not the King of the Church. He is the King of Israel, and the King of kings, and He will reign over the earth as King. But, concerning the Church, He is our Head, and there is no other. (See *Ephesians 1:20-23*.)

The “unity” that the new “apostles” and “prophets” of the Five-Fold Ministry are determined to achieve is not the unity that Jesus prayed for in *John 17*. By contrast, the “unity” that these false apostles and prophets are working to achieve is a Nicolaitan hierarchy wherein everyone has checked out their brains and has come into agreement with everything and anything that the leadership believes, teaches or practices. Jesus hates Nicolaitanism! (See *Revelation 2:6, 15*.)

Discernment Ministries International reports, “Hamon and others see the restored fivefold ministries as a divine hierarchy, with the apostle being at the top and the prophet either next to or directly beneath him or her (depending on whose book you read). **Everybody else is beneath them.** The restored apostles and prophets are to give divine direction to the Church. **These heretics have set themselves up not only to be the judges of doctrine but also the formulators of new doctrines.**

“Please understand that the stated goal of this movement is to demolish every denominational distinction and to enforce spiritual unity through the use of supernatural power. They foresee the day when every city will have one Church with many pastors, but each city will be led by a group of apostles and prophets, who will hear from God and give direction for the Church without walls.” <https://discernmentministriesinternational.wordpress.com/tag/fivefold->

ministry/

We know from Scripture that eventually all the tides of destructive heresy will converge into one big, worldwide whirlpool of ecumenism. I asked Rayola how this is going to work since the Roman Catholic Pope, the “Protestant Pope” (Rick Warren), the Manifest Sons of God/Latter Rain/Third Wave/Kingdom Now/Replacement Theology/New Agers, et al. movements each think that they are going to be the controlling power. She said that they will find a common ground where they can all come into agreement and “get into bed with each other” and that they figure once that happens they can fight it out between themselves as to who is on top. All this is just a setup for the antichrist to step on the scene.

Now that we have given a short outline of what the definition, purpose and goal of the Five-Fold Ministry and the “Unified Church” is, the remaining six points can be briefly touched on. Point **number 3** – “Out of the purified church will come a Spiritual Elite Corps, a Corporate Christ who possess the Spirit without measure.” In other words, the elite will cheat death and become little gods. (Just like the Mormons.) “Within the Latter Rain logic that the Church is Christ's Body and that during the Manifestation of the Sons era, believers will experience a corporate “spiritual Second Coming” in them, this radical version simply goes a step further and states that all believers are God.” (See <http://www.banner.org.uk/res/lastdl2.html> for an in-depth study of this cult.) Satan, the father of lies, just keeps repackaging and repeating the same lie he told Eve, “Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil” *Genesis 3:4b, 5*. [Emphasis added.]

Point **number 4** – “They will Purge the earth of all Wickedness & Rebellion.” This they believe they will accomplish through “Joel's Army” which is made up of all the “manifested sons” who are now divine, invincible, and immortal. The “purging” of the earth of anybody who does not agree with them will be accomplished as a second class of warriors in Joel's army carry out their inquisition in the “spirit of Phinehas”. Jesus warned both Jews

and Christians, “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service” *John 16:2*. All of these fanatic, far-out, false fantasies supposedly have been “revealed” to these wolves in sheep's clothing through “revelations.” The truth is, Satan is more than able to provide bizarre revelations through dreams, visions, false prophets, altered states of consciousness, New Age meditation techniques, vain imaginations, extreme periods of long fasts (called “holy anorexia”), and unbalanced emotional hype. It cannot be emphasized enough that Christians must grow in the knowledge and love of the truth, God and the Bible. *Revelation 19:11-21* makes it clear that it is Jesus, the KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS who shall come with his armies to destroy His enemies and set up His kingdom on the earth in fulfillment of many Old and New Testament prophecies too numerous to mention in this article.

Point **number 5** – “They will Judge the Apostate Church.” On the contrary, my Bible makes it abundantly clear that Jesus is the Judge. “*And when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left*” *Matthew 25:31-33*. In *John 5:22* Jesus said, “*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.*” The promise in *Revelation 5:10*, “*And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth*” means with Him, not instead of Him.

As if all this arrogant lunacy wasn't enough, point **number 6** declares, “They will Redeem Creation, and Restore the Earth.” Where oh where does it say that in the Bible? Is this the commission for Christ's Church? Yet, how many Christians are falling headlong into the myth of global warming, and the environmentalists' agenda to “save the world” while blaming and destroying human life? The Apostle Paul describes such foolishness in *Romans 1:21, 22, 25*,

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools...Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever." Furthermore, it is God, not man who will create a "new heaven and a new earth!" (See *Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1*.)

As for points **number 9 and 10**, which state, "They will eventually overcome death itself in a Counterfeit of the Rapture" and "The Church will thus inherit the Earth, and Rule over it from the Throne of Christ," are nothing more than an unbiblical, bizarre and blasphemous tale. The folly of these headlines speaks for itself. Jesus said that the "meek shall inherit the earth" not an angry, aggressive, militant, bloody, sword-wielding, unloving church that on all points lacks the fruit of the Spirit. No mere flesh-and-blood, fallen human being, regardless of how fanatical or zealous he or she is may be, will ever vanquish death. Only our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the "resurrection and the life" can destroy death. Let this beautiful promise from *Revelation 21:4, 5* sink deep down into your heart, "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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Is this your hope? †

Next month: How militant members of the MSOG cult attempted to kill me.

THE STONE OF DANIEL'S VISION

"Suddenly and swiftly, Christ, the King of kings, will come and usher in His universal reign....The Church is not here to destroy any earthly kingdom but to extend her influence as a spiritual kingdom.....World-kingdoms destitute of God must end in dust, and as we journey on to Christ's millennial reign the less enduring and the more worthless are the mere kingdoms of this world." - Herbert Lockyer, *All the Parables of the Bible*

RAYOLA'S Q & A CORNER

CHURCH LIGHT

Q: I attend a church that is in transition. The main goal of those involved with the politics of it is to keep the doors open no matter what. My question is, is this the right emphasis?

A: I appreciate your question. There are many churches struggling and going through transition in America. Some are on life support, as only one or two people are keeping the doors open, some are limping along due to the sacrifice and loyalty of a few committed saints, and sadly, even a few end up closing their doors.

It is a tragedy when the doors of a church close, but it is obvious that in *Revelation 2-3*, Jesus' main emphasis was not keeping the physical doors of the church open in regard to the seven churches, but ensuring the quality of their testimonies. He was quite clear that the lampstand of the church would be taken away if the light of each church's testimony failed to stand according to the light of their high calling.

This brings us to an important aspect of what constitutes the real Church of Jesus Christ. The real church is not made up of buildings but people. The biggest church in the world is one that has grown underground and the fastest growing church is the one that is experiencing grave persecution. It is important to point out that when it comes to God's kingdom, He counts souls and not bodies in a pew.

Let us consider the example of the seven churches in Revelation, but before I go any further on this subject, I need to make something clear. I am not here to debate about the spiritual heart condition of the people in the churches, whether they are saved or not, for only God can judge such a matter. I do not care if each church in Revelation represents a different dispensational period in relationship to the Church age we live in. What I am concerned with is what Jesus said to them and why.

The excessive debates that go on



over a simple mention of some Scripture or doctrine are unprofitable. Sadly, most of the debates we get into have nothing to do with whether a matter is truth, but whether Scripture personally applies to the individual. In fact, there appears to be an actual divorcement of some Christians from considering how the Lord Jesus looks at a situation. As followers of Christ it should be our first priority to come to an understanding of Jesus' attitude towards a matter (*Philippians 2:5*). If He has any concern, we need to take it to heart, and properly apply any examples, instructions, and warnings that have been set Scripturally before us. The issues of righteousness and godliness are not matters of debate, but of faith—faith as to whether we believe what God says is true and properly apply those truths to our Christian walk.

The Bible tells us that we are to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (*Matthew 4:4*). We are to rightly divide the Word of truth for the Bible gives us various examples as to what is right, instructions in righteousness, and exhorts us to walk in the ways of godliness (*1 Corinthians 10:1-6; 1 Timothy 4:6-8; 2 Timothy 2:15-16; 3:15-17*). The truth is that the challenges the seven churches faced is still as prevalent today as it was in their particular day. Nothing is really happening that is new under the sun.

When you consider what Jesus' main concern was about the seven churches, it was not keeping the doors of the buildings open; rather, it was challenging the people to keep the doors of their hearts open to humbly accept His rebuke, receive His instruction, properly deal with His complaints against them and warnings for them, and repent if necessary (*Revelation 3:20*). These seven churches clearly show us what is important to Jesus, who is the sole Head of the Church and the One who will bless a local church or withdraw His presence from it. If the light of His Spirit is not present in a local church, it will not be effective in standing as a viable testimony in and to the community as a witness.

It is also clear that Jesus did not die for buildings; rather, He died for people, for you and me. It is also obvious that according to *Acts 2:47* that

the Lord is the one who grows His Church, not man. He must ordain a matter in order to bless the work being done in His name. There must be vision and heart for the lost, and a living testimony and reflection of the Lord's glory to ensure the local church does not serve as the Dead Sea where the only thing that counts are the people sitting in the pews. It must become a hospital where people can find spiritual healing for their souls (salvation), edification for their growth (discipleship), and be firmly established in their calling so that they are able to carry the torch in whatever harvest field they are led and called to (service). The Lord's main concern is the well-being of our souls. When you consider *Ephesus*, this church appeared to be an exceptional body, but according to Jesus, the people of it had left their first love. When you leave your first love, you fail to keep the Lord the center of all you do.

In light of the second church, Smyrna, this body was experiencing persecution. Jesus' main concern for the members is that they would be faithful unto death so He could give them a crown of life. It is clear that like the Apostle Paul, Christians need to faithfully finish the course set before them to ensure they receive the crown of life (*2 Timothy 4:7-8*).

For Pergamos, the people of this body had works and faithfulness, but they were becoming a stumbling block to others because they had an unholy mixture due to wrong doctrine. Jesus actually told the members of this church to repent because if they didn't, He would fight against them.

The church of Thyatira had works, showed charity, was faithful in service, and had patience, but it was about to taste the Lord's judgment. The members of this body allowed a false prophetess in their midst who was seductive and encouraged them to commit spiritual whoredom with that which was associated with idols. Jesus' warning is that if they failed to repent and rid themselves of such defilement, they could expect great tribulation and there would be no future for their children.

The church of Sardis had works, but lacked any real life. They were not ready or prepared for any real visitation from Him. Even though much of

the church was void of life, there was a remnant that had not defiled their garments, and was accounted as being worthy to walk with Him.

Philadelphia, the church whose name means "brotherly love" was commended for being faithful and keeping His Word, but they needed to hold fast their crown to ensure no man would take it away. Like the other churches, they had to overcome the trials of their environment in order to experience the promises awaiting them in the next age to come.

The final church is the Laodicean church. This church was worldly and lived in denial as to its spiritual poverty. The members were neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm and repulsive to the Lord. They were rendered ineffective by equating worldly abundance with God's approval. They failed to test their spiritual fruit and had lost their edge to be affective in their Christian walk.

As you study where each these churches were located, you will realize it is now modern day Turkey. As many know, Turkey is now Muslim. The question is what happened to the light of the churches? Other than the example we have of them in Scripture, it appears that their candlestick has been removed.

Hebrews 12:1 talks about the great cloud of witnesses that have gone on before us. This witness was not established by groups of people, but by individuals who dared to walk by faith on the path set before them. They dared to trust God with the details of their life and risk all to gain Him as their portion, reward, and inheritance. They represent the remnant of those who, in their ordinary status, were used in extraordinary ways because of their faith.

It is clear that Jesus has a body, but it is also obvious that the body is made up of individuals who have the free will to decide how serious and committed they are going to be to Jesus Christ. It is also clear that if a church is going through transition and it desires God's hand on it, it needs to seek the face of Jesus to know how He looks at its present condition. If there is something amiss, they must be quick to repent and right it.

Meanwhile, in every body, you will see different levels of commit-

ment and growth causing various dynamics in a body that only the Lord can rightfully judge as being pleasing or displeasing to Him. However, the most telling statement the Lord made in relationship to those who would be found exceptional in their walk before Him was simple and to the point, "Many are called, but few are chosen." †

QUOTABLE

"Carnal Christians have to have their religion turned into play. They drink a while, throw the bottle on the floor, laugh about nothing and get blue about nothing, which is carnality. Spiritual Christians have a life of labor; they look upon the world not as a playground but as a battleground. - A. W. Tozer

"Jesus Christ is on every page of the Old Testament!" - Pastor Rob Greenslade

"Men and women see themselves as they really are only when they first see God as He really is." - Marvin Rosenthal

"The place for the comforter is not that of one who preaches, but of the comrade who says nothing, but prays to God about the matter. The biggest thing you can do for those who are suffering is not to talk platitudes, not to ask questions, but to get into contact with God, and the 'greater works' will be done by prayer (see John 14:12-13)."

- Oswald Chambers

"We are to judge to know the spirit and not judge the consequences, or we could be close to blaspheming God."

- Rayola Kelley

CHRISTMAS IS COMING...



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