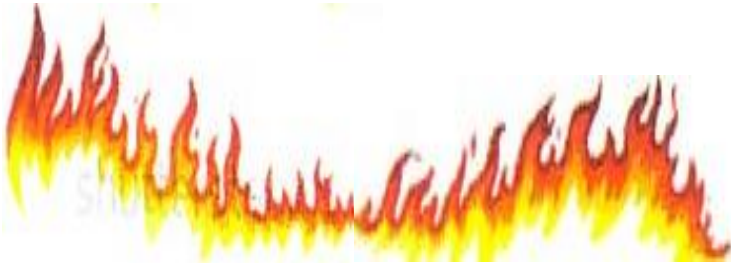


# REVIVAL



**John & Elaine McLachlan**

**2009**

**Revised 2014**

# **CONTENTS**

PREFACE		page 3
INTRODUCTION	Re-vival – About Life	page 4
CHAPTER 1	Revival Prophesied in the Old Testament	page 5
CHAPTER 2	Why Revival was Needed	page 9
CHAPTER 3	Jesus Introduces a New Way of Living	page 11
CHAPTER 4	More Revelation to the New Covenant	page 14
CHAPTER 5	Further Teaching	page 17
CHAPTER 6	Jesus' Completed Work	page 21
CHAPTER 7	The New Covenant in Action	page 25
CHAPTER 8	Problems in Development	page 27
CHAPTER 9	Problems of Complacency	page 33
CHAPTER 10	Holy Spirit Baptism	page 36
CHAPTER 11	The Challenge for the Church	page 42
CHAPTER 12	The Challenge for the Individual Believer	page 45

# **PREFACE**

This book was written in 2009 and arose from working with Pastor Paul Locke, who teaches on "Preparing Harvesters in the Kingdom of God and teaching them how to work with the Holy Spirit". We have re-written some of it because, in the intervening 5 years, we have a lot more experience from what we learnt under his tutelage, especially revelation of the heart of God in these matters. We "graduated" from his training and have moved as the Holy Spirit led us to see the often futile efforts to bring revival, in our own strength and by our own efforts. Pray more, do more training, try another strategy to get people into the church so they can hear the gospel. What we have seen is that people see through these methods and interpret them according to the dictates of the god they serve, the devil, who is actually the source of human wisdom.

This is a very different approach to evangelism, relying only on the power of God and the glory He has given to us to "shine for Him" so that people will see Him in us and be drawn to such a kind, generous and beautiful Spirit.

After we had worked with Paul Locke and his team for several years and witnessed the effectiveness of this way of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, we wanted to investigate the Biblical foundations, which we present in this book, trusting that God will open the minds of the readers to this new approach. Since all the evangelism we have witnessed in the churches in these 5 years has been "knowledge based", that is, trying to convict of sin and then explaining what Jesus has done for us to pay the price for sin, so that people have a mental understanding, we have noticed that there have been minimal

results. Yes, there have been some conversions, but not like in Acts when many got saved in one day.

The Day of the LORD is nearer than it was. People are going to hell because we are not doing enough. Does God have a quicker way? This is what we prayed for many years before we were led to this way to evangelise, but we are still waiting and praying that the church will also pray this way and then practise what God will show them.

John & Elaine McLachlan

2014

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **RE-VIVAL – About Life**

We have written on many topics as the Lord has given us revelation, but this topic is prayed for in all the churches, by faith, without any revelation of HOW it will happen. It is time to discuss the "How?"

Why have we put the hyphen in the title? We love words and plays on words and also the concepts and connotations that words have.

From the Latin dictionary, revival is "vitam alci reddere" which means, literally, "give back the calm and peaceful, happy and prosperous life". The other expression for revival is "ad vitum redire", which literally means "speak into life". The French for "to speak" is "dire". The Latin can also mean "to remake". Because language changes over the ages it is interesting to see the English origins in older languages.

What do people want when they pray for revival? These would call themselves Christians. Are they conscious that their beliefs are not

achieving the results they expect, either in their own lives or in the lives of their families or their churches? There are many songs written to "call down revival", "send the fire", and Bible verses are quoted such as "rend the heavens and come down". (Isaiah 64:1)

Promises or prayers to revive, meaning to make to live again or to have new life are not many, and all in the Old Testament.

1. Psalm 85:6,
2. Isaiah 57:15,
3. Hosea 6:2,
4. Habakkuk 3:2 (The word used in NIV is "renew".)

There are other verses on "prosper" and "restore", but these do not have the same intention.

The best illustration in the Old Testament is Ezekiel 37 – the valley of dry bones.

We would like to look at these Scriptures in detail.

## **CHAPTER 1 – Revival Prophesied in the Old Testament**

1. "You showed favour to your land, O Lord ... you restored the fortunes of Jacob ... you forgave the iniquity of your people and covered their sins ... will you not revive us again?" (Psalm 85:1,2&6)

It would seem that the writer recognised all that God had done. Everything that was necessary for good life had been provided. The land was productive, and at peace. Even their enemies respected that their God looked after them. The problem was that the people did not sense God's approval of them. God's wrath is not anger as we understand it, but distance, because His holiness would burn up all sin. Our God is a

consuming fire. (Deuteronomy 4:24) The Israelites had been warned when Moses led them and they were terrified of the fire at Sinai. (Exodus 19:16)

Revival, then, in this context, was so that people may rejoice in their God, and His glory dwell in the land. It was a hope expressed.

2. "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite." (Isaiah 57:15)

This writer (Isaiah) is prophesying ... "it will be said". But when?

This statement comes after God's accusation against the wicked – those who have not obeyed God's instructions or even registered them in their minds, let alone their hearts. God had pleaded with them to come to Him, to listen to Him, and to seek Him. There is always a moment of time when God's grace and mercy extends to anyone who will respond, but it is not wise to ignore that moment because we do not know when it will come again. The history of God's people shows that God would hear their cry to Him and His compassion would rise up and He would save them. He had, however, given them an instruction from very early, through Moses. "Be careful that you do not forget the Lord..." (Deuteronomy 6:12 & 8:11) This injunction was for their benefit. God knows that losing connection with Him brings doubt and fear, so that a person is afraid to approach God for help and has no confidence that he hears.

One of our favourite songs has these words.

*Come, you sinners, poor and needy,  
weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
full of pity, joined with power:*

*He is able, He is willing; doubt no more.*

*Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream;*

*All the fitness He requires is to feel your need of Him:*

*This He gives you; 'tis the Spirit's rising beam.*

Coming to God as if you have nothing is the attitude that God is looking for. Jesus said "Blessed are the poor in Spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven". (Matthew 5:3)

When Jesus came, He came as Immanuel, God with us.

3. "After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will restore us, that we may live in His presence." (Hosea 6:2)

The prophet is encouraging the people of Judah to return to the Lord. He wants them to face their predicament. The nation had sunk to a point of such corruption that Divine judgment could no longer be staved off. (J Sidlow Baxter) Ten tribes of Israel had gone into captivity during the time of Hosea's ministry and he had seen the wickedness of King Ahaz, (2 Kings 16), who proliferated "high places" to lead people astray from the worship of God. God had forgiven them so many times that Hosea was confident of God's wonderful patience. After all, God had called him to proclaim his message! Hezekiah did indeed heed the message and brought about a very short time of reconciliation of the people to God, but his son, Manasseh, went back to the bad ways of former kings and built "high places" up again. This worship of pagan gods is what God called spiritual adultery.

This call to revival is then a call to acknowledge the Lord... "He will appear...He will come to us like the winter rains..." (Hosea 6:3)

4. "Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O Lord. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known." (Habakkuk 3:2)

It is very interesting that when someone is concerned with what God wants, and sees that his society falls far short of justice and mercy then decides to ask God questions, God is very pleased to answer. Habakkuk is doing this and God gives him revelation that he is told to write down. He starts out quite distressed but by the end of this revelation he knows for sure that God **IS** in control, because he receives the peace in his heart. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6&7)

Revival begins with an individual who seeks God and His ways. It begins with a fresh commitment to seek His presence on a daily basis. God has answered Habakkuk's prayer, which lifts him to new "heights". God is his personal Saviour and he can rejoice in this, even if all around him fails. He has indeed received peace and calmness.

These personal testimonies are written for our instruction and for training in righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16)

5. Ezekiel was a mighty prophet, who was given visions of God. (Ezekiel 1) This gave him a thirst to serve God and he was found faithful so he was given more revelation. In the Spirit he was taken to a valley of bones – death valley. (Ezekiel 37) There are these types of valleys in many countries where there is no water and excessive heat. In the spirit realm it is the same. The excessive pressures of life and no water to satisfy thirst bring about this situation.



In this story God asks the question. "Can these bones live?" We love reading about when God asks the questions because it reminds us that God really wants to work with us as His "team". He really meant it when He gave authority to man in the Garden of Eden, and our agreement means that what has been decided in Heaven can come to pass on earth. Jesus actually asked us to pray "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10) for this reason. But this is new revelation for Ezekiel. His answer shows his expectancy that God will reveal His secret. "Prophecy", proclaim My will to these dry bones. "Bones, hear the word of the Lord." Jesus did not have any problem with this concept. He "sent" God's word and did miracles, deliverance and healings (eg, Luke 4:35; 5:13; 6:10 etc) regularly. In this story the bones "heard" God's word through the prophet's mouth and the bones came together, and tendons and flesh came on them, but there was no breath in them.

This called for fresh prophecy. The bodies were restored but they were not revived. It was only then that the breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet – a vast army. There is truth here that we would like to discuss next.

It is not surprising that all these promises rely on prophets. God does nothing without revealing His heart to prophets so that they can speak into being what He desires. (Amos 3:7)

## **CHAPTER 2 – Why Revival was Needed**

From the beginning a living being was a man, formed from the dust of the ground, who had received the breath of God. (Genesis 2:7) This man, made in the image of God, was to fill the earth and subdue it. (Genesis 1:28)

After the sin of Adam and Eve pain, toil and subjection would be their lot until physical death, because they lost their glory-covering. Effectively they had broken covenant with God. Death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses. (Romans 5:14) Death has a different definition from what we have come to believe in modern times. Being a slave to sin is what the New Testament defines as death. (Romans 6:16) We are dead in our transgressions and sins. (Ephesians 2:1)

Until we are made alive with Christ by God's grace, we could be described as no better than animals which live and move by their animal instinct, or perhaps "automatons", which are separate from Christ, who is "the Way, the Truth and the Life". (John 14:6) This is the picture painted by Ezekiel of those bodies which have just received their flesh and tendons. There seems to be a great difference between "restored" and "revived". Restoration is a return to the old way or form, but revival is bringing new life – a new creation.

Jesus came to introduce a better covenant. The sin problem that was holding mankind in a death thrall was to be dealt with once and for all. It was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins (Hebrews 10:4) yet without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. (Hebrews 9:22)

Jesus' ministry was three years of teaching and demonstrations of power so that His first disciples could be equipped to continue His work. The Breath of God that was needed for Ezekiel's restored bodies to become a "vast army" is the same that will vitalize Jesus' army to move into the world, from a local area to the ends of the earth.

## **CHAPTER 3** – Jesus Introduces a New Way of Living

Exploring the gospel of Matthew, the ministry of Jesus, and comparing John's gospel with its Spiritual insights, helps us find the clues as to what His army was to do.

- **Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit.** (Matthew 1:20) Jesus said that unless we are born of water and the Spirit we cannot enter the Kingdom of God. (John 3:5)
- **He would baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire.** (Matthew 3:11) There is a difference between the baptism of John and of Jesus. (Acts 19:4-7)
- **The Spirit descended on Him like a dove.** (Matthew 3:16) The Holy Spirit conveys peace and joy, the fruits of the Spirit and the Gifts of power.
- **Jesus was led by the Spirit.** (Matthew 4:1) If you are led by the Spirit you are not under law. (Galatians 5:18) "He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit". (2 Corinthians 3:6)
- **Jesus said "It is written".** (Matthew 4:4,7&10) "All Scripture is God-breathed". (2 Timothy 3:16)
- **Jesus went...teaching...preaching...healing every disease.** (Matthew 4:23) Manifestation of the Holy Spirit is wisdom ... message of knowledge ... healing. (1 Corinthians 12:8&9)
- The centurion said to Jesus, "Say the word and my servant will be healed". Then **Jesus said "Go! It will be done"**. (Matthew 8:8&13) Another gift of the Holy Spirit is faith. (1 Corinthians 12:9)

- **Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves.** (Matthew 8:26) "Anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing." (John 14:12)
- **Jesus delivers a demon-possessed man.** (Matthew 8:32) "You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." (John 14:13)
- **Jesus forgives sins.** (Matthew 9:2) Jesus said to His disciples, "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven..." (John 20:23)
- **Jesus revived a girl.** (Matthew 9:25) "He will do even greater things than these because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)
- **Jesus restored eyes and speech.** (Matthew 9:30&33) "I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring honour to the Father." (John 14:13)
- Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers. (Matthew 9:38) **Jesus sends out the twelve disciples and gives them authority.** (Matthew 10:1) They are to do the same as He has shown them. "He who receives you receives me." (Matthew 10:40) "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

❖❖❖ Let's take a break at this point. Jesus spent three years teaching these concepts, line upon line, precept upon precept, so that the disciples could see and practise this new way of living. We find His principle helpful because overfeeding has the inherent danger of causing rejection of the good promises of God if we cannot process them fast enough. This has happened to many who have started well, but did not finish the course. Talking is not action. God's hearing is always followed by response, by action. (1 John 5:14&15) If God has heard, He does act. Faith knows this because faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (Hebrews 13:1)



Jesus begins to confront the religious leaders because they begin to demand proofs as to who He is. They only knew the Old Covenant and did not want to change. Because Jesus had been given the responsibility to introduce the New Covenant, and He had come primarily to the house of Israel, He wanted to teach them too. God does not change, but he is always up-to-date in His strategies to extend the Kingdom by reaching the lost. The Apostle Paul writes, "Live by the Spirit (walk and live habitually in the Holy Spirit, responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit – *Amplified Bible*)...and since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit". (Galatians 5:16&25) Jesus also says, "My sheep listen to my voice". (John 10:27) However the Pharisees began to plot how they might kill Jesus. (Matthew 12:14)

When Elijah was similarly threatened he fled to a safe place. (1 Kings 19:3) but Jesus' response was to withdraw into His Father's presence. However His followers went after Him because there was so much need and so much hunger for His blessings. Apostle John writes that Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under His power, and that He had come from God and was returning to God. (John 13:3) Matthew writes that Jesus knew the prophecies concerning Himself. "Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the One I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on Him." (Matthew 12:18; Isaiah 42:1)

As the people are more and more amazed at Jesus' power and authority, so also are the Pharisees more desperate to prove that they are right and Jesus is wrong. **Jesus was sinless because He only did the will of the Father to honour the Father.** (John 7:38 & John 5:19) Jesus has an answer to every accusation, to challenge the Pharisees to open their hearts, and begins to teach in parables. "The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom has been given to you [the disciples] but not to

them. Though seeing they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear." (Matthew 13:11-13) If we refuse to hear Jesus' voice we are not His sheep, and our hearts become more hardened.

Familiarity breeds contempt. Jesus said, "Only in his home town and in his own house is a prophet without honour". (Matthew 13:57) He also said "Blessed is he who takes no offence at me (and finds no cause for stumbling or is not hindered from seeing the Truth" – *Amplified Bible*) (Matthew 11:6 & Luke 7:23). Jesus takes the Father at His word and we should take Jesus at His word, likewise. The hungry follow His every word and action and those who do not want to "taste and see" turn away. It was like this then and nothing has changed.

## **CHAPTER 4** – More Revelation to the New Covenant

The healings and miracles continue and there is more revelation for the disciples, Jesus' inner group, the twelve, and also many who participate in the healings and miracles, even those who are outside of God's covenant people like the Canaanite woman. (Matthew 15:21-28)

- Jesus asks a question of His disciples that impulsive Peter steps up to answer. "Who do you say I am?" (Matthew 16:15) When Peter answers "You are the Christ," Jesus assures him that it is God that has revealed this to him. Yet this incident is followed by Peter being rebuked as a stumbling block to Jesus because he does not have in mind the things of God. (Matthew 16:23) There is a very important warning here. When God speaks into our hearts to do something there always seems to be someone to dampen or even ridicule the idea. Jesus moved very quickly

to rebuke Peter so that the negative suggestion would not take root in His heart. It is often those we love who can influence us most.

- Jesus asks His disciples to deny themselves, take up his cross and follow Him. We are reminded that the Bible says "Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance ... do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those He loves ... God is treating you as sons ... No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it". (Hebrews 12:1,5-7&11)

### ❖❖❖ **We need to consider these concepts –**

Who is Jesus to us?

Is He worth dedicating our lives to?

Are we willing to learn His ways and practise them? ❖❖❖

- When Jesus was teaching parables of the Kingdom (Matthew 13) we believe He must have been thinking of the reason He came to save the world. "He will see His offspring and prolong his days ... He will see the light and be satisfied ... will justify many". (Isaiah 53:10,11) "Who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross". (Hebrews 12:2) "The righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." (Matthew 13:43) "Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens and those who lead many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever." (Daniel 12:3) "You may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault ... shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life." (Philippians 2:15) It

is exciting to know that on the earth Jesus was a man like us and had His hopes and dreams too. It is interesting that the saints, as portrayed in art, had haloes. Was the glory of God seen like this on them? Certainly Jesus was overwhelmed by God's glory in the Transfiguration. (Matthew 17:1-8) God again confirms that Jesus is His Son in a recognizable voice from Heaven.

### ❖❖❖ **Does the concept of shining with God's glory**

**attract us?**



We find the sin that most easily entangles is one that someone else has tossed onto us by being rude to us. It is so easy to take offence and then fume over it. This is why we repent frequently so that we do not carry this "mud" which dirties our glory-garment, which is what "shines" to other people.

❖❖❖ Why not take another break! We could just take this opportunity to put our heads on Jesus' lap to meditate on all these concepts, and enjoy His company. Sometimes when we pray we do this and even fall asleep. We wake up and apologise, but He just assures us that He not only doesn't mind, but He is happy that we are peaceful. He reminds us that He fell asleep on the boat.





## **CHAPTER 5 – Further Teaching**

- **Jesus challenges the disciples more** during the feeding of 5000 people. (Matthew 14:16) "You give them something to eat." He looks to Heaven and multiplies five loaves and two fish so that there is enough for all and more left over than they started with. "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never be hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6:35)

❖❖❖ **Are we hungry and thirsty, or are we OK?** Spiritual "dieting" reduces the "fat", which is the anointing of God. (Isaiah 10:27) Being "in Christ" means we are living in the Anointed One and His anointing. OK is not a good state. Someone has said that "good" is actually the enemy of "best". Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. (Matthew 5:6) ❖❖❖

- **Jesus walks on water.** (Matthew 14:28) Peter walks on water, but only as long as he did not look at the impossibility, but at Jesus. Jesus told him he had little faith and asked "why did he doubt?" If you have faith as small as a mustard seed you can say to this mountain, "move from here to there". "Nothing will be impossible for you." (Matthew 17:20,21) "Everything is possible for him who believes." (Mark 9:23)

- **Jesus teaches on who is the greatest,** because His disciples are caught in the worldly conception of "great". "Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven...whoever humbles himself like a child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 18:3,4)

- **Jesus demonstrates supernatural supply.** (Matthew 17:27) "My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

❖❖❖ **Do we really believe God is our whole source and our strength,** or do we only pray for "big" things, and work out the "little" things for ourselves? Faith begins as a grain of mustard seed and grows, so it is important to develop our faith by seeing God work in the small things. ❖❖❖

- Jesus is now beginning to teach why His disciples need to understand and practise Kingdom principles. **He reveals the preciousness of the "lost sheep".** (Matthew 18:12-14) "Your Father in Heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost." "The Son of man came to seek and to save what was lost." (Luke 19:10) "There will be more rejoicing in Heaven over one sinner who repents..." (Luke 15:7) The lost son was welcomed back with open arms and great rejoicing. (Luke 15:20-24) Jesus also warns about having a bad attitude to a repentant sinner. (Luke 15:31)

- **Jesus teaches on the power of binding and loosing and of agreement in prayer.** (Matthew 18:18-20) "Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven". (Matthew 6:10) "How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity...for there the Lord bestows His blessing..." (Psalm 133:1,3) "If two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." (Matthew 18:19)

- **Jesus emphasises forgiveness and the danger of unforgiveness.** (Matthew 18:21-35) "If you hold anything against anyone

forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins".  
(Mark 11:25)

❖❖❖ **God is really interested in our relationships**, because in this world He wants us to be like Him. (1 John 4:17) Do we really want to reach out to those He loves? ❖❖❖

- When the disciples ask who can be saved, **Jesus answers that with man it is impossible but with God everything is possible.** (Matthew 19:25&26) The gospel is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes...a righteousness from God that is by faith. (Romans 1:16&17) The reward for the Apostles and everyone who has put following Jesus above all else...[they] will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life. (Matthew 19:29) "God, who is rich in mercy made us alive with Christ..." (Ephesians 2:4)
- It is very plain that **Jesus is conscious of the prophecies about Himself – the servant of the Lord.** (Isaiah 42) "God...who gives breath to the people, and life..." (verses 5&6) "I will... make you to be a covenant for the people". Even though some do not want to follow, Jesus assures us in the Parable of the Workers that He is ready to receive any who are willing to do His will as soon as He calls. (Matthew 20)
- Jesus knows His teaching and training ministry is drawing to an end and again He warns His disciples. (Matthew 20:17-19) "The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life as a ransom for many." (verse 28)

❖❖❖ As we study these Bible verses **do they stir us to a desire, even a passion, to serve Him?** Would serving Him give us the fulfilment that our hearts search for and the results for which He longs, and paid such a high price for? ❖❖❖

- Jesus warns that the **Kingdom of God will be...given to a people who will produce its fruit.** (Matthew 21:43) "You did not choose Me, but I chose and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last." (John 15:16)
- The "wedding banquet" story illustrates this point, because those who had originally been invited were too busy to come, so the servants were sent to gather those who would, both good and bad. The one stipulation was that they must have the wedding garment, a robe of righteousness. (Matthew 22:1-14)
- Jesus redefines the commandments, love God and love your neighbour. (Matthew 22:37-39) **"My command is this: love each other as I have loved you."** "You are My friends if you do what I command." (John 15:12&14) "A new command I give you: Love one another...by this all men will know that you are My disciples..." (John 13:34&35)
- Jesus warns His disciples about the Pharisees one more time. He longs that they would believe Him because He was sent to them, but their hearts are hard, and their religious spirits have blinded them to the fact that their Messiah has come. (Matthew 23)

❖❖❖ We can see that it is **love, not law** that opens not only our eyes, but also the eyes of the unsaved. Do we feel the **warmth of love** and the **coldness of law**? ❖❖❖

- Jesus teaches on the end of the age, and the signs of the time. There is one more story to illustrate. **Be ready, because we do not know the hour.** The oil in the lamp represents the Holy Spirit in our lives, keeping our lamps bright. We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit and continue to be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 25:1-13 & Ephesians 5:18) We need to be investing our talents, the gifts of the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit which lasts, and brings pleasure to the Master. We need to be blessing others as we can. (Matthew 25:14-46)

Jesus had finished saying all these things but He had one more thing to say. "The Son of man will be handed over to be crucified." (Matthew 26:1) His prayer is recorded in John's gospel.

## **CHAPTER 6 – Jesus' Completed Work**

"Father, the time has come...I have brought you glory on earth by **completing** the work you gave Me to do". (John 17:1&4) This is a very interesting statement because He has not yet gone to the Cross. He has offered eternal life to all that the Father has given Him, and has revealed the Father to those whom the Father gave Him "out of this world", those who have accepted and obeyed the words that the Father gave Him. The word of God runs contrary to the world's thinking. The Apostle, John, warns, "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in

him...The cravings of the sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father..." (1 John 2:15&16) This calls for a follower of Jesus to choose God's way all the time against what the world wants. "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:10)

"I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name...so that they may be one as we are one." (John 17:11) Unity brings blessing and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 133:1&2)

"I am coming to you now, but I say these things **while I am in the world**, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them." (John 17:13) Jesus proclaims the power of the Holy Spirit within, by the authority He had as a man.

Jesus had taught very fully on the Holy Spirit. "If you love Me, you will obey what I command. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever – the Spirit of Truth." (John 14:15-17) "When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth...He will testify about Me. And **you also must testify**, for you have been with Me from the beginning." (John 15:26&27) "It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment." (John 16:7&8) "He will guide you into all truth...He will bring glory to Me by taking what is Mine and making it known to you." (John 16:13&14)

"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is Truth" (John 17:17) "I have sent them into the world." (John 17:18)

This prayer reveals Jesus' own heart. We have asked questions as we looked at Gospel passages which indicate Jesus' desire to equip His disciples, but the heart's attitude is the first requirement.

❖❖❖ Please stop and speak to Him personally about your own heart.

**Are we conscious of His love in and for us?** Can we feel His Presence in our hearts, that all-pervading Love, wide and long and high and deep, which surpasses knowledge and fills to the fullness which only God can give? ❖❖❖

❖❖❖ This prayer of Jesus also indicates very clearly that **He had trained His disciples to continue His ministry**, to do the works of the Father as He had done in the same power as He had done. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power...He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him." (Acts 10:38) ❖❖❖

The second part of the prayer is more challenging. "My prayer is not for them alone...also for **those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one**, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You." (John 17:20&21) Down through the ages every believer is expected to do the works in the same way as Jesus and the disciples. Jesus "saw" that His work would be continuous until the end of time. He had been limited by His physical body being confined to one locality, but by the Holy Spirit the work had no limits. Jesus has given the glory that the Father gave Him to all disciples, all who love Him and follow Him. This is the Anointing – Christ in us, the hope (expectancy) of glory.

(Colossians 1:27) "The anointing you received from Him remains in you...remain in Him." (1 John 2:27)

"I have made you known to them and **will continue to make you known...**" (John 17:26) "He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them." (Hebrews 7:25) **Jesus takes His "follow-up" work very seriously** so that, even in Heaven at the right hand of the Father He is still moving the hearts of people to want the salvation that He offers.



It is after this prayer of commitment that the final phase comes – the Cross. This is the necessary sacrifice for the sin of the world, the reason for which He came into the world – to be its Saviour. The last thing He said on the Cross was "it is finished." (John 19:30) Not only was the teaching finished but the world now had **the potential** to be free of Satan's rule. The keys of the Kingdom were in Jesus' hand and He could give the authority to whom He pleased. "I will build My church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in Heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in Heaven." (Matthew 16:18&19) Jesus chose to give the keys to His church as soon as He got them back from the devil. "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades." (Revelation 1:18) "God made you alive with Christ. He forgave all your sins, having cancelled the written code, with its regulations...He took it away, nailing it to the cross...having disarmed the powers and authorities...triumphing over them by the cross." (Colossians 2:13-15)



❖❖❖ Think on this, meditate on this. **Are we ready for the "graduation ceremony"?** This is what empowering with the Holy Spirit is for – works of service. Although we continue to learn from Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, all our lives, if He calls us He empowers us, anoints us and commissions us. All we need to do is obey His call and we become His ambassadors, God making His appeal through us.

(2 Corinthians 5:20)



Jesus had one more thing to do. Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you...as the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." (John 20:19-21) Then **He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit"**. This is a similar prophecy to that which Ezekiel had done, but to be the vast army of that prophecy Jesus instructed them to "stay in Jerusalem until you have been clothed with power from on high". (Luke 24:49) Even though He had breathed on them He still had to send "what My Father has promised". Then repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations. Only after this commissioning did He ascend to the Father, to sit at His right hand.

## **CHAPTER 7 – The New Covenant in Action**

"Can a nation be brought forth in a moment?" (Isaiah 66:8) "Yet no sooner is Zion in labour than she gives birth to her children. Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery?" When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Unity brought in the blessing. **Suddenly...all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.** (Acts 2:1-4) **The**

**chosen people, the royal priesthood, the holy nation was born in a moment.** They were called "out of darkness into His wonderful light" that they may declare the praises of Him who had called them. (1 Peter 2:9) A spiritual house was about to be built, a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. He chose us in Him...to be holy and blameless, and sealed us with the promised Holy Spirit so that we would want the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to know Him better. We would also want the eyes of our hearts to be enlightened to know the hope to which He has called us. This is not the enlargement of knowledge in our minds. This is increase of faith and this leads to appreciating the incomparably great power for us who believe. (Ephesians 1:3-23)

As our faith builds we can really grasp that He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us. This results in His glory at work in the church throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20&21)

The New Testament church demonstrated this power and many were added to the church, even in a single day. Many miracles were done in the name of Jesus, including raising of the dead. There were persecutions, as Jesus had warned, but the church spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria and to other places, as Jesus had prophesied. Many others besides the Apostles did the works of Jesus, because they were fired by the Holy Spirit. There was great hunger for "more", so that new believers devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many miraculous signs were done. There was real commitment and unity of purpose and many salvations. (Acts 2:42-47)

In the natural world, a baby does not need nourishment until it is born into the world and then it cries for food all the time. It feeds, it grows, it expects to receive its needs. New birth into the family of God is exactly the same. If the new believer is not hungry it is either not "born by the Spirit" or there is something else very wrong. "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4) "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone...how much more will the Father in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask Him?" (Matthew 7:9-11)

In the natural world we expect a child to eventually grow up to be independent. On the other hand the church seems to want its members to be dependent, especially by giving money and time to support the pastor and his vision. If a grown child is still expecting his parents to support him when he is able to work it is seen as wrong. The Apostle Paul complains that the Corinthian Christians are worldly, (1 Corinthians 3:3) and the writer to the Hebrews complains that the readers are slow to learn. (Hebrews 5:11) They need to learn the elementary truths of God's word all over again.

It seems that people became lazy and lost their zeal quite quickly, even in the New Testament church. If we examine this carefully we can see a misunderstanding developed.

## **CHAPTER 8 – Problems in Development**

Because the Holy Spirit came on those in the Upper Room sovereignly, it seems that the church interpreted Peter's teaching "repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus" as immersing in water. However, John

the Baptist's prophecy was that **Jesus would baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire**. Peter said that when they were baptised for the forgiveness of sins they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38) Later, when Peter and John went to Samaria they found that the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon them; they had simply been baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts 8:15) This required that Peter and John laid their hands on them. There was enough evidence of power to make Simon want to buy this power for himself.

It is obvious that Philip did not understand this principle because he was the one who had baptised them. He also baptised the Ethiopian eunuch, and "in water" is the way he did this. (Acts 8:38) The Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away but does not say that the Holy Spirit came on the Ethiopian with power, even though it specifies on the other occasions.

Ananias placed his hands on Saul and commanded that he be filled with the Holy Spirit, and immediately...a power encounter. (Acts 9:17&18)

Those in Cornelius' house received the Holy Spirit by believing and receiving the gospel message, but it is clearly specified that they were baptised in water after receiving the manifestation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit because Peter ordered it to be done. (Acts 10:44-48) When Peter is explaining his actions later he says, "the Lord said, 'John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit'..." (Acts 11:16) Peter understood the Baptism of John, but not the Baptism of Jesus, by the Holy Spirit and fire. He was struggling with the concept.

The Lord had to give Peter a vision to reassure him that He wanted the Gentiles to receive the Holy Spirit also. Peter's problem was that he was too imbued with his Jewishness to realise this, because a Jew could not touch a Gentile. Perhaps this is why he did not lay hands on those in the

household of Cornelius, so that God sovereignly baptised them into power.

There was a lot of teaching done by the Apostles and the people seemed to react in two ways, either violently opposed or very interested to hear more. Talking is not action yet God's "hearing" is always followed by action. "If we know He hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of Him." (1 John 5:15) "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." (James 2:17) "Do not merely listen to the word...do what it says..." (James 1:22)

Other mentions of baptism are Lydia and her household (Acts 16:15) and the Philippian gaoler and his household. (Acts 16:33) Many Corinthians who heard Paul preach believed and were baptised. (Acts 18:8) Because no power encounter was mentioned, it is reasonable to assume that they were baptised in water (for repentance).

The church continued to grow in numbers with the teaching of the Apostolic leadership, but it was not until Paul came to Ephesus that he saw a problem. It is the responsibility of a good leader to keep in step with the Spirit so he can teach rightly. Growth is not just numerical but must also be life-changing. If water baptism for repentance is not empowering believers to be transformed "into His likeness with ever increasing glory", (2 Corinthians 3:18) Paul must have asked God why.

It is at Ephesus that Paul has a revelation. He asks "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2) The answer – "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." "What baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism." Paul explains that John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. Apollos had taught about Jesus accurately, but only knew the baptism of John. (Acts 18:25) He only knew that we must repent from sin but had no revelation of empowering, of reviving the

people into the new life. Restoration into a relationship with God is not empowering to do the works of Jesus. The people were believers but were not "new creation". These believers had hands placed on them to receive the Holy Spirit and He came with powerful manifestations. (Acts 19:6) It is not surprising that Paul wrote to the Ephesians such beautiful and powerful words, whereas he wrote to the Corinthians "you are worldly". Later he had to remind them "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come". (2 Corinthians 5:17) We could ask the question why the Ephesians received the encouragement from Paul in their letter, whereas the Corinthians had to be reminded that they were a new creation. The power encounter with the Holy Spirit leaves us in no doubt. It is quite conceivable that the church in Ephesus copied what had happened when Paul ministered, and had a practice of laying on of hands.

From the example in Acts we can see that the laying on of hands transfers a believer to new life more effectively, just as a midwife delivers a new baby more safely and effectively than if the mother is left to handle the birth herself. Maybe in the olden days women were tough but when help is at hand it is much better to accept it. So also is it better to taste God's love through the touch of another believer. It is a known fact that a new-born baby must be touched to experience love and we believe this is true for the new born-again believer too. God is pleased to touch this new "baby" through His New Covenant ministers.

### **There were, then, two teachings to enter the Kingdom of God –**

1. believing in Jesus and being baptised in water, which is how **Peter** seems to put it. (1 Peter 3:21&22) This is explained as the pledge of a good

conscience before God, and is linked with the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2. confessing with the mouth and believing in the heart that God raised Him from the dead. (Romans 10:9) Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But **Paul** also considered that laying hands on the new believer was necessary for the new believer to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. It is interesting that Paul opposed Peter to his face because he drew back from the Gentiles, because he was afraid of some of the Jews. (Galatians 2:11-13)

**These two teachings might seem the same but in effect they are radically different.**

We see the first as a more private belief. This has certainly been the practice in the church down through the ages as children were "baptised" in water without any confession of faith, except that of parents who in many cases did not know God in a personal way at all, and would say what they thought necessary to get their children "done", because of a superstitious fear that their children would not be blessed if they were not "baptised". This practice has resulted in believers losing their faith because their Christian belief did not work. In the streets we meet these people frequently.

The New Covenant is not about law but about God's grace. Paul warns that we can fall from grace, and this alienates us from Christ (the anointed One and His anointing). (Galatians 5:4) It is very common to hear people say they obey the Ten Commandments, as if that were all that God requires (if it is actually possible!).

The second teaching is baptism into the power of the gospel. We speak God's words which cannot return empty but will achieve the

purpose for which He sent it. (Isaiah 55:11) Confessing that Jesus is Lord – no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:3) This enables us to be His witnesses, to live in His ways and to be filled with Holy Fire, that zeal and enthusiasm that is attractive to others. If the word "hypocrite" is levelled at some in the church, it is because they do not have the power to live their lives like Jesus. Did Paul begin to notice this among the Corinthians and this caused Him to pray?

Apart from Peter and John, James and Matthew, not much is heard in the Bible of the other Apostles and, apart from Stephen and Philip, not much is heard of those who waited on tables. (Acts 6:2) After Paul was converted to make up the twelfth Apostle there are many names mentioned. Luke was there from early in the church and also Barnabas and Silas. At the end of the letters there are commendations and greetings to co-workers and those who encouraged Paul. These must all have been touched by the power of the Holy Spirit and inspired to live their lives for Jesus. There are names of those who gave up too. It would be very interesting to know why. John wrote that Diotrefes loves to be first. (3 John 6) Paul wrote that Alexander did him a great deal of harm and that Demas loved the world and deserted, even though he was a blessing to Paul previously. (2 Timothy 4:10&14 & Colossians 4:14) We could ask the question "why would anyone who has tasted the goodness of the Lord give up His work?"



## **CHAPTER 9** – Problems of Complacency

Diotrephes loved to be first. It is interesting that John was grieved about this. It was his mother who had come to Jesus to ask for her sons to be honoured by Jesus. (Matthew 20:20-28) This must have been a painful and unforgettable lesson to John – whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant. John genuinely loved and was loved by Jesus. He probably tried to correct Diotrephes, with his own experience in mind, but obviously Diotrephes would not listen. Instead it seems that this man went around trying to muster up support for his own opinion, forming a faction and consumed with anger and a terrible witness to the love of God, so that he put other people off.

We heard an interesting interpretation of the one who does not "remain in Jesus". (John 15:6) He is like a branch that is thrown away and withers – no longer is watered by the word of God because it is separated from the "vine". As it dries up it also becomes dead and useless, except for the fire. In the fire it spits and crackles and you have to be careful in case the sparks fly and burn something good. "Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you". (Proverbs 9:8)

This sort of behaviour does happen in churches. The trouble is that the churches still practise friendship evangelism, where people who are not born again are invited to a church and instead of having a power encounter through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, they are expected to slide or drift into belief in Jesus and then are baptised with water as a sign of repentance. There are many people sitting in churches, or attending meetings in churches every now and then, who have never met Jesus in a personal way by asking Him into their heart. Friendship evangelism only works while the unsaved person is treated as a friend.

Satan loves this because he will try to get this person into offence so that they will "fall off the vine".

Alexander did me a great deal of harm. He must have been the sort of person who questions everything for no good reason except that "he had his own beliefs". We hear this statement regularly in the streets. These people are really mockers. Their counsel is described as wicked or twisted. (Psalm 1:1) Because their master is the devil we cannot afford to associate with them but weaker believers are sometimes influenced by them. This would hurt Paul very much because he regarded his "children" as precious. He apparently attacked Paul personally because Paul was in prison and it would be relatively easy to malign and lie about the cause of this. Paul's comfort was that the Lord will repay. God's promise to all of Abraham's descendants is "Whoever curses you I will curse". (Genesis 12:3) "It is mine to avenge; I will repay". (Romans 12:19)

Demas was a great grief to Paul because he had been a trusted supporter. He must have found the going too long and hard. Did he have the right attitude in the first place? Some people come to the church with a hidden agenda which does not come to pass because it is God who promotes. (Psalm 75:6) "He will bring to light what is hidden...and will expose the motives of men's hearts." (1 Corinthians 4:5) "All of a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." (Proverbs 16:2&3)

There are always going to be problems to deal with in a church fellowship because there are many people who are "children" in faith who need to grow and this frequently involves making mistakes. The danger is in not recognising this and thinking we are OK. On the other hand it is not helpful to be calling everyone a sinner either, which also happens. A

sinner is one who is not in Covenant with God. (Galatians 2:15) The Bible clearly states that no one who is born of God will continue to sin. (1 John 3:9)

A church fellowship is a "Body" of believers. Each one is necessary to the other and unity is important. Blessing and honouring each other creates unity. There is the difficulty of then remaining open to new additions to that body. However no one owns anyone else. Each one is free in Christ, to follow only Him. Did Demas take offence at the mistake of someone else?

Jesus taught how to deal with this. Go to your brother and show him his fault, with witnesses if necessary. (Matthew 18:15)

Another reason people leave a fellowship is that they really do not "belong". We meet many people who have tried church, but because they felt like a visitor, soon became uncomfortable with the "jargon" used. People need to be in the family of God to feel as if they belong and this means they must be born again.

Then there is the ceremonial and ritual practised in a church. This also leaves "visitors" struggling; singing strange tunes, sitting, kneeling, reciting prayers and responses that they cannot follow. And worst of all is that if the Holy Spirit is welcomed there they have to struggle to keep their demons under control. We visit many different churches and see these problems regularly, and for the most part no one seems to care. The attitude is, this is our culture, like it or lump it. But those who practise and promote "friendship evangelism" are still hoping that people will flock to their churches, and continue praying earnestly for "awakening" and "revival".

The pattern that was set from Peter's teaching has been followed from the early church. A "temple" style building quickly developed as the right

building, with a sanctuary which, certainly until quite recently, only the priest could enter. There might be teaching about the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:5&9) but it is not generally practised. The early church interpreted Jesus' words to Peter as the "rock on which I will build my church" to be Peter himself and so the Judeo-Christian pattern has been followed without question for more than 1000 years. God never wanted there to be a leader who had all the say-so, because He knew how Satan could introduce a spirit of control to take the place of His power. John has a warning about "those who are trying to lead you astray". "The anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you." (1 John 2:26&27) Even the Reformation did not change this pattern.

**Why would the church adopt the pattern of ministry of one who was sent to the Jews, to whom God had given a spirit of stupor until the full number of Gentiles had come in?** (Romans 11:8&25)

Why we find the teaching of Paul so interesting we would like to talk about in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 10 – Holy Spirit Baptism**

"Confessing with the mouth and believing in the heart that God raised Him from the dead. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:9) There is no mention of water baptism to save at all.

With the heart you believe and are justified – Jesus has done everything necessary to receive the Divine Exchange, His righteousness for our sin.

With the mouth you confess and are saved – have given God permission to control and guide your life. "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame." (Isaiah 28:16) There is no difference between Jew and Gentile.

How can this happen?

God chooses a messenger.

He/she preaches the message.

Someone hears the message.

Someone responds to the message and calls on the Lord.

Even as they acknowledge the gospel, hear themselves speak it out, belief comes supernaturally because they believe what they are saying with their own mouths. "So is My word that goes out from My mouth; it will not return empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." (Isaiah 55:11) "I was found by those who did not seek Me; I revealed Myself to those who did not ask for Me." (Isaiah 65:1 & Romans 10:20)

There is only one possible power that can accomplish this miracle and He is the Spirit of God. From the Samaritan experience (Acts 8:17) and the Ephesian experience (Acts 19:6) Paul saw God work in a very different way to touch believers with His power, so that they could taste and see that the Lord is good. (Psalm 34:8)

Paul was a most zealous Jew who knew every Jewish tradition and practice, but when he fell to the ground on his journey to Damascus he had to throw out every one of these valued traditions and learn directly from God Himself the New Way, by revelation by the Holy Spirit. Some of this was even out-of-body experience and visions which amazed him. He was prepared to be imprisoned for these revelations, but, because his ministry was to the Gentiles, he never tried to change the minds of those

whose ministry was to the Jews. He had been given his revelation for the Gentiles! Again we ask the question. Why then did the church down through the ages adopt the pattern of ministry for the Jews?

God has always and will always keep Covenant with His chosen people. Paul makes this very plain. (Romans 11:1-32) But God did an extraordinary thing. Because they did not recognize what God was doing when He sent His Son to confer righteousness on those who put their trust in Him – a completely new way, a completely new covenant, God gave them "a spirit of stupor". (Romans 11:8) This is so important for us to understand – a NEW WAY, a NEW COVENANT. **We do not relate to God in either the Jewish way or the transitional (John's baptism) way.** [There is always room for the baptism for repentance and symbolic washing away of sin, because Jesus submitted to this and said, "let it be so for now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness". (Matthew 3:15) Someone recently attacked us for promoting Jesus' baptism as superior.]

For 1900 years Christians have related to God through espousal to the church and through water baptism and, with the exception of "saints" who rose up to "shine like stars in a crooked and depraved generation", (Philippians 2:15) the church continued in the pattern of Peter, called to minister to the Jews.

The rise of Pentecostalism changed this. Some started to practise the ministry of Paul, with laying on of hands to impart the power of God, and they experienced the same results as Paul had in Samaria and Ephesus. Miracles started to happen again in these meetings and people began to be excited and zealous, as the Fire of God changed lives dramatically. Persecutions from the Establishment tried to put out the Fire of God, but

the Holy Spirit persisted, because there was hunger in the people and faithful leaders who encouraged them.

In the 20th century there were many rises and wanings of this fire. The Establishment was just as much a problem as the Judaisers of the New Testament to the move of the Holy Spirit, but once the Fire has touched a life no one can put it out. God is patient but purposeful. His plans always come to pass, and we might oppose Him but we will be cast aside if we do not want to follow Him, just as His own chosen people were after the time allowed to "get into line".

This brings us to the 21st century.

In 1961 Tommy Hicks received a vision that God was about to do a new thing.

*As I beheld the sight before me, people stood up all over the world! They were lifting their hands and they were praising the Lord.*

*At that very moment there came a great thunder that seemed to roar from the heavens. I turned my eyes toward the heavens and suddenly I saw a figure in white, in glistening white – the most glorious thing that I have ever seen in my entire life. I did not see the face, but somehow I knew it was the Lord Jesus Christ, and he stretched forth his hand, and as he did, he would stretch it forth to one, and to another, and to another. And as he stretched forth his hand upon the nations and the people of the world – men and women – as he pointed toward them, this liquid light seemed to flow from his hands into them, and a mighty anointing of God came upon them, and those people began to go forth in the name of the Lord.*

*I was bewildered as I watched it, but these people that he had anointed, hundreds of thousands of people all over the world, in Africa, England, Russia, China, America, all over the world, the anointing of God was upon these people as they went forward in the name of the Lord. I saw these men and women as they went forth. They were ditch diggers, they were washerwomen, they were rich men, they were poor men. I saw people who were bound with paralysis and sickness and blindness and deafness. As the Lord stretched forth to give them this anointing, they became well, they became healed, and they went forth!*

*And this is the miracle of it – this is the glorious miracle of it – those people would stretch forth their hands exactly as the Lord did, and it seemed as if there was this same liquid fire in their hands. As they stretched forth their hands they said, "According to my word, be thou made whole".*

*As these people continued in this mighty end-time ministry, I did not fully realise what it was, and I looked to the Lord and said, "What is the meaning of this?" And he said, "This is that which I will do in the last days. I will restore all that the cankerworm, the palmerworm, the caterpillar – I will restore all that they have destroyed. This, my people, in the end times will go forth. As a mighty army shall they sweep over the face of the earth".*

The rest of this vision can be read on [www.munumin.com](http://www.munumin.com) under Articles to Encourage, page 10. Charles Capps prophesied that the 6000 years of "Man's Rule" are finished and the seventh millennium would be the rule of the Holy Spirit, the Sabbath rest for man. God will always use a willing vessel but He would have the command. The Apostle Paul's strategy for ministry is coming into its time. This was also prophesied by Amos. "The days are coming when the reaper will be overtaken by the ploughman" – [people will come into the Kingdom without the traditional preparation (eg, Bible classes)] and "the planter by the one treading the grapes" – [will be empowered even before they are planted in a church.] (Amos 9:13)

We see that the church needs a radical conversion in the same way that Saul did to become the Apostle Paul. This is not just an awakening (a moribund church rousing itself) but a revival, the dead coming to life. **There needs to be a putting to death of the old traditions.** Jesus said we cannot put new wine into old wineskins otherwise the skins will burst. (Matthew 9:17) Those who are born by the Spirit of God will pull away just like the new fabric on an old garment. Paul instructs us to be filled



(continuously) with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18) "When we believed we were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession..." (Ephesians 1:13&14) God has us on lay-by, and intends us to be in the great in-gathering. (Matthew 13:43) This is why Paul gives thanks and prays that "the glorious Father may give the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that [we] may know Him better, and that the eyes of [our] heart may be enlightened...to know the hope to which He has called [us]...and His incomparably great power for us who believe..." (Ephesians 1:15-23) He puts it another way. "He who has begun a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6) "And that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ." (Philippians 1:9&10) Notice that growth is expected and that we do not continue as sinners but are overcomers in the power of the Holy Spirit.

There is nothing worse than living below potential, breathing but not thriving. We should be prepared to do what it takes to be able to serve our beloved Master and Friend. If Paul suggested to the Samaritans and the Ephesians that they needed the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, let's not argue about it. Let's do it! **The church is called to minister to the Gentiles with Paul's gospel of Jesus Christ**, because this is the strategy that was anointed by God. To quote Hilton Sutton, a well-known Bible teacher on end-time prophecy, "this is Bible!"

## **CHAPTER 11** – The Challenge for the Church

Because the mainline (so called) church has practised the ministry of Peter and also actively opposed Pentecostals who have practised Paul's ministry, there needs to be a great reconciliation towards each other. The denominations need to repent of being in competition with each other, because there is only one Christian church. We meet in different places and we do variations on the theme. Each group is responsible for its own meeting before God. Jesus said it very plainly. "Love one another...by this all men will know that you are My disciples..." (John13:34&35) There is no need for sectarianism, and this has deterred many from Christianity. It would seem that God, in His wisdom, has revealed His truth in portions to many groups and religions. The more we love and respect each other, the more truth we acquire.

There are some religions who do not even call themselves Christian who practise Godly ways, and some of these groups are incredibly zealous to propagate their faith and put the apathy of the Christian church to shame. There are several churches who insist that they are right and that the others are in error. This is not love. "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God IS Love." (1 John 4:8) In this "we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. It is God who works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose." (Philippians 2:12)

Until we are filled with the Holy Spirit we are unable to do God's work. There are, however, many people of good conscience who try to do noble and kind things. They falsely think that they are Christian because the idea is prevalent that Christianity is doing good. The church needs to get back to basics. **Christianity is about allowing Jesus to be Saviour**

**and Lord of our life, and then being empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the works that God has prepared for us.** (Ephesians 2:10) If we are not empowered by the Holy Spirit we are not able to do the works of God, only what we think might be the works of God, and these will be destroyed when the Day brings them to light. (1 Corinthians 3:13-15) Each of us will stand before God at the judgment seat and some will have no good works recorded. Not everyone who says "Lord, Lord," will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father... (Matthew 7:21-23) **A personal relationship is essential.**

The leaders in the churches should also look to the command to **"prepare God's people for works of service** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (the Anointed One and His anointing). (Ephesians 4:12&13) The people of God do not gather week by week to serve the Pastor. He has a very hard but privileged responsibility to be as Jesus was to His disciples, to teach them and motivate them to be empowered by the Holy Spirit to their works of service. As they walk in their "calling", whether as a parent, an employee, a business man or woman, a tradesman, a student or whatever, they experience God's presence and power and so testify to God's faithfulness every day. In this way a fellowship of believers in any place will grow in faith and love and be in unity because everyone has a "story", in which everyone can rejoice.

God has appointed other ministers besides Pastors and each has a specific task. We went to a church where the Pastor told us he was the Pastor and Teacher, Evangelist, Prophet, Principal of the school, and also father and husband. All we could say was "WOW". This would have to be very unusual! In his church there must have been others who

had one of these gifts. When Jesus sent His disciples and also the seventy out to practise His ministry, they came back full of joy. (Luke 9:1-6 & Luke 10:1-17) This filled Jesus with joy too that the Father had revealed His secrets to them. (Luke 10:21)

In our ministry we encourage even new believers who have been touched by the Holy Spirit to pray with others and take hands to minister the Holy Spirit, and they receive an infilling of joy because they have done the ministry of Jesus. Children taste the power as much as adults and many return for more blessing. There are so many hungry, lost people outside the walls of a church. The parable of the great banquet is a great encouragement to understand that Heaven is not about being a member of a church but an inheritor of the Kingdom of God. Paul's teaching is most appropriate for this – go into the streets and invite to the banquet anyone you can find. (Matthew 22:9) There is one stipulation; make sure they have their wedding clothing. This is of course their robe of righteousness. They must take off their sin-spattered covering and put on God's glory, but what a beautiful thing!

When the church is willing to do what it takes, to seek God with all their hearts there will be –

**REVIVAL, New Life in His church.**

## **CHAPTER 12** – The Challenge for the Individual Believer

God asks questions and leaves us to answer them. He will never manipulate us because He respects that we have free-will, which He gave us, because He loves us and wants to relate to us in love.

**Where are you?** (Genesis 3:9) O God, look at me. I'm naked and ashamed. I am so sorry God that I disobeyed you. Will you forgive me? We know this was not Adam's response!

**Will you leave your country, your people and your father's house?** (Genesis 12:1) So Abram left. God's offer was too good to refuse, or was it faith?

**What about your brother, Aaron the Levite?** (Exodus 4:14) This was God's last plea to get Moses to rescue God's people. Moses had thought up every excuse. Who am I? Who shall I say sent me? What if they don't believe or listen to me? I am not a good speaker. Please send someone else. But this also caused Moses some problems.

**Who is on the Lord's side?** (Exodus 32:25) Only the Levites responded, and eventually became the priests. Aaron was part of the problem because he did nothing to prevent the people's rebellion.

**What are you doing down on your face?** (Joshua 7:10) God will withdraw His presence when His people tolerate, even unwittingly, what God has forbidden. He wants His people to be clean and open.

**Am I not sending you?** (Judges 6:14) What God begins, He fully intends to complete, when we cooperate with Him, as Gideon did. Obedience brought success and spiritual growth.

**What do you want Me to give you?** (1 Kings 3:5) Solomon chose a discerning heart...to distinguish between right and wrong rather than riches. But God gives good gifts too.

**Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct Him? Would you discredit My justice?** (Job 40:2&8) I am unworthy – how can I reply? I know You can do all things; no plan of Yours can be thwarted...I repent. Many people blame God for their misfortunes, but when we look at ourselves we can see that we are mostly the cause, because of our folly or unbelief.

**Why should you be beaten...why do you persist in rebellion?** (Isaiah 1:5) God always wanted relationship with His people. "Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives transgressions." (Micah 7:18)

**Whom shall I send and who will go for us?** (Isaiah 6:8) Here am I. Send me! When Isaiah saw a vision of God he fell in love, and stayed in love, as is clearly seen in his book. He was given God's best secrets to proclaim.

Possibly the biggest questions of all for us to answer are, **have you received power when the Holy Spirit came on you? Have you become my witness?** (Acts 1:8)

These are a few of the questions that God has asked. How would we have answered them?

What questions would we ask God and expect to hear His voice in answer? Jesus said "My sheep listen to My voice; I know them and they follow Me". (John 10:27) Do we seek this kind of relationship? We have already used the new-born baby example. Do we lack hunger, love, zeal? Are we enthusiastic to lead others to know our beloved Jesus?

Every follower of Jesus denies him/herself and takes up His cross to follow Him, (Mark 8:34) laying aside everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. (Hebrews 12:1) We choose to believe God rather than man, listening for His voice and His instruction, and obey as soon as possible. "If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching." (John 14:23)

The Fire of God purifies us, refines us as gold, so that we shine with the glory of God – shine like stars. (Malachi 3:3 & Philippians 2:15)

Revival – new life, does not happen "out there", but in the heart of a truly born-again believer. If we are born of God we do not continue to sin, because God's seed remains in us. (1 John 3:9) This is the seed from the same source that fertilised the egg in Mary's body. We are dead until the Holy Spirit gives us new life – God's life and breath in us. We choose to remain as animals or we become vessels for the Holy Spirit, to do God's will on earth. There can be no half and half – if Jesus is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all. We are not too proud to come to God for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit, to say the "sinner's prayer" as we stand by a new believer. There is no such thing as "once saved, always saved". King David prayed, "keep your servant also from presumptuous sins". (Psalm 19:13 AV) Paul warns us not to be arrogant...continue in His kindness...otherwise you also will be cut off. (Romans 11:20-22)

What does it mean to continue in His kindness? God's kindness leads towards repentance. (Romans 2:4) Unrepentant hearts are self-seeking, unbelieving and reject the truth. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin

and His voice is soft. This is a great paradox because we do not sin and yet we should repent regularly if we want His glory covering to be bright and clear, so that others see Him in us. Repentance is a means to indicate our intention to believe God and go His way instead of our own. This keeps us in the centre of the "narrow way" so that Satan cannot tempt us so easily. We offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God...to be transformed in our minds... (Romans 12:1&2)

The Kingdom of God is forcefully advancing and passionate people lay hold of it. (Matthew 11:12) Let us be those with the Fire of God in our inmost being, then there will be –

**REVIVAL, New Life in His church. AMEN**

