

A New Day

Keith Gerner

Copyright © Keith Gerner 2001

First published as *A New Day* in 2001

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the author.

Biblical quotations are taken from the following:

KJV – King James Version, Crown Copyright;

NAV – New American Version;

RSV – Revised Standard Version.

Illustrations copied with permission from:

“*Foundation Truths*” by C. L. Parker. Published from: 17 Coverdale Road, Sheffield, Yorkshire, S7 2DD.

ISBN 1 903725 06 2

Printed in England by
Clays Ltd, St. Ives plc.

Acknowledgements

My thanks are due to:

The Lord Jesus for personal love and revelation during this writing.

Praying friends who have made this book possible, especially the Ichthus Fellowship in London and Hepzibah Fellowship in Singapore who have inspired its message.

Bill Turner of Stoke for a clear vision of God's power & Revelation studies and chart in this book,

John Parker who made the studies of his late father on "Foundation Truths" so readily available to me.

My sweet wife Elsie for her proof-reading and encouragement for this book and over many years of happy marriage.

My family for encouragement and help in production.

(All references are from King James Authorized Version of Scripture unless shown to the contrary)

Keith Gerner, June 2001

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.
2. NEW METHODS: **Power**
 - (a) Why has the Church lost power?
 - (b) Is power needed now the Bible is written?
 - (c) How can lost power be restored?
 - (d) Will power make an impact on witness?
 - (e) What power is available today?
3. NEW MESSAGE: **Resurrection**
 - (a) Why is resurrection important?
 - (b) Is immortality possible?
 - (c) What is the importance of death to self?
 - (d) What rewards for this ministry?
 - (e) What are the signs of the resurrection and return of Christ today?
 - (f) What is the main message of the prophecy of the return of Christ?
4. NEW MAN: **Jesus the forerunner**
 - (a) How do we break barriers?
 - (b) Is it possible to have Divine power in a human body?
 - (c) How can a man be led by the Spirit?
 - (d) How can man have intimacy with God?
 - (e) What is the best way to come into supernatural ministry?
5. NEW MISSION: **Go to the world**
 - (a) What is the alternative to Revival?
 - (b) What is God doing with the new wine?
 - (c) Are there any others in this move?
 - (d) What should be our response?
6. NEW MORNING: **A Summary Picture**

1. INTRODUCTION

This book is for human fleas!

Fleas have the ability to jump to excessive heights. If they were human, their capacity is so great, that their jump could be as high as the Empire State Building. But once fleas are put in a box with a lid, they keep jumping and hurting themselves on the lid until they get “educated” that they cannot rise beyond a certain point. Take the lid off, and they are still captive to the same idea. Although their potential power remains, they do not rise beyond the limits of the original box.

This book takes off the lid. It will allow you to see what is possible now for you and what could be possible tomorrow. It sets out a **new day**.

This is a day of power for Christians centred on a new vision of Christ. It sets out to find answers to questions like “What is God's plan for the church today?” “How can the church impact the world?” “How can Christians prepare to change things?” Or simply, “Isn't there more?”

Along the way, this book will take the lid off some traditional Christian beliefs - for example, that Christians won't have to go through the Tribulation, that everyone is born in sin, or that the age of miracles is past.

I hope to show that some beliefs are not Biblical, and actually blind us from seeing what God has in store for His people. Through the forty years I have been in the ministry, teaching and preaching and travelling throughout the world, God has been challenging me and teaching me new things. This book includes some truths that have changed lives already and come from visions given globally through many people.

Do you want to know God better? Then this book is a

must for you.

The writing of it came about in a dramatic way.

A mature Christian friend prophesied to me, in 1999 that God wanted me to write a book with the title “A New Day.” Like all prophecy, I put it through the checks (see chapter 4) and it rang true. This book was born in God and it gives truth we have seen in action during the years as we have travelled round the globe.

The writing is based on experience. It is also Scriptural. These miracles are actually happening. This new day in the Church is not based on denominational tradition or human theology, but a new coming of Christ in power to all believers.

Let me give you an example that I have experienced in Ireland — a country well known for its divisions among its own people, especially along religious grounds.

At the beginning of the 1970’s Charismatic move, when God was bringing together His own people, despite traditional hostility, there was a new, supernatural revelation of our lovely Lord Jesus.

At an interdenominational conference at Gormanston, I was preparing our audio-visual equipment. Suddenly the lady cleaner stopped and asked, “Where is the smell?” Across the room was wafting a beautiful scent. Although it was a Catholic school, there was no incense and no human source for the fragrance.

Puzzled, she shook her head and walked down the corridor.

That afternoon, forty priests and nuns met some Protestants from the North of Ireland, very nervous and suspicious with the whole proceedings.

Suddenly, across the same room, we sensed the same Divine Presence. Many of the Catholic people became one with the Protestants in worshipping in a supernatural language they had never learned. This was a

new beginning for God's outpouring in Ireland.

That morning we had had a foretaste of the blessing of the Spirit that later swept Ireland.

True Christianity, which comes down from Heaven transcends denomination and race.

As we worshipped in unity, divisions melted away. Our visiting speaker, David du Plessis, commented, "God made nations. Man has made denominations - and we have trouble with them both."

Certainly this was the same key to radical change in the Book of Acts when the Gentiles first received the Gospel of Christ. It also fulfils the Book of Acts testimony to our Lord from Peter, when he first preached to those outside his own nation:

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

39 and we are witnesses of all things, which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

42 and he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he, which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead."

Acts 10:38-42.

These verses contain the main themes of this book:

power, resurrection, witnessing and continuing Christ's ministry.

This is a new day for Christians to move in new power irrespective of race or creed. God is forming a ***united army***.

In this book you can catch the exciting vision of a new message, a new model man (woman) and a new calling, all centred in Christ.

These revelations may inspire a new relationship with God.

One thing is certain.

You will gain a new perspective on the grace and power of the Lord, in these new truths.

At the end of each chapter there are helpful questions which apply these truths to our current situations.

If you do this, you will see a new day.

2. NEW METHODS: Power

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power; who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”

Acts 10 v.38.

By the term “new day” I mean a new era of what we may expect to see happening. What is this era?

I believe that we are in a period of time called “the last days” – a time seen as being close to the second appearing of our Lord Jesus. The reasons why I think this are explained later in this book. Obviously however, since the Christians in the Book of Acts talked of it being “the last days” and daily expected the Lord’s return, then now, two thousand years later... we must be at least closer to the Second Coming!

The “new day” is an era of God’s **power**. This is not power as we often think of it in human terms – overbearing, showing-off, domineering. Rather, God’s power expresses His nature – which is supremely loving. In the person of the Lord Jesus we see, from the above quotation, that the power was used to do good, heal, and bring release to people. God’s vision for the church is to continue His ministry.

This is a whole new day in the life of the Church. Paradoxically it is also a return to the church, which Christ left. He is coming back for the same Church Bride He left, described in the book of Acts.

As we shall see in chapter 3, there are signs which point to Christ returning soon. In that context, we see that God has been preparing a Bride (the Church) for His Son in the days in which we live.

Some of us may even be alive to greet Him when He comes. For many of us it is more a question of being “caught on” than “caught up”. We may need a fresh touch of the Lord’s power to prepare us.

(a) Why has the Church lost power?

History has shown that the Church lost supernatural power mainly when it joined with human political power and became a state religion. This happened with a new Roman Emperor, Constantine (about 300 years after Christ), who reigned over most of the known world. Before a key battle, he claimed to have seen a Cross in the sky and to have been told “In this sign you conquer.” He went on to win the battle and Empire. He made Christianity the State religion.

Constantine was then brought into contact with St. Augustine (354-430 AD) of Hippo. The latter wrote a book “*The City of God*” which linked Rome as being the picture of the New Jerusalem coming down from Heaven. This provided a reasoning for the State Religion being a fulfilment of the people of God reigning as found in Scripture. This reign however, was founded on political power, rather than spiritual purity and the supernatural. The whole basis of Church teaching shifted in a profound way.

When I was a student at Oxford, I concentrated on Church History. This may not sound a very exciting subject, but it did convince me that the decline in miracles was more a result of the church losing its supernatural power, rather than that this was God’s plan. My studies also helped me realise why certain church beliefs came about, some of them very damaging to our understanding of God and what God has in mind for the Church and the individual Christian.

Let us examine the validity of some of these old ideas:

- “The perfect is the writing of the Bible. Miracles then passed away”
- “We can expect nothing more ahead”

- “Everyone is born in sin”
- “Salvation is a one-time experience”
- “I was baptized as a baby”
- “Tongues are not for all”
- “These things no longer matter”
- “Christians will be taken out of tribulation”
- “Early fundamental teachings no longer apply”

(b) Is power needed now the Bible is written?

I was taught that speaking in tongues had been done away, since the writing of Scripture brought the “perfect” which did away with the need for early miracles. This teaching was based on 1 Corinthians 13:10:

“But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

Something startling then impacted me to question this conclusion. In 1955 at Exeter in Devon, England I experienced hearing Latin spoken by somebody with no classical education, praising the blood of Jesus.

Suddenly I realized that Paul taught an increase in miracles in the last days, and that the coming of the “perfect” would be a totally supernatural time not a complete loss of miracles.

In fact, the Lord Jesus pointed folk to His miracles to increase their faith. It was His miracles that showed He was the Son of God.

“If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.”

John 10:37.

His followers were promised the same miracles, because the Holy Spirit would fall from heaven after He went back there to His Father.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. “

John 14:12.

What is the damage done by this loss of emphasis on miracles?

It is true to say that St. Augustine (354-430 AD) produced much new teaching into the Christian church. It emphasised human failure at the expense of Divine power.

Augustine was converted to Christ from a life of sexual sin, and saw the monastic life style as being best. He even advocated that the clergy were to remain unmarried whereas New Testament leaders, like Simon Peter were linked to having families.

Augustine had fathered an illegitimate boy called Deodatus; his “Confessions” tell how he heard a voice commanding him to take up the Book (The Bible) and read. He came to Christ through then reading a Scripture verse that challenged his immorality.

“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.”

Romans 13:13.

His personal experiences led him to some very damaging conclusions. Because human birth was a result of sex (even within marriage), he believed that then each person was originally born in **sin**.

Sex became linked with sin.

This ignored God’s plan in making everything (including sex) very good in Creation.

“And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good”.

Genesis 1:31.

Is “Original sin” taught in the Bible?

Some have justified this Augustinian teaching from the text;

“For as in Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

1 Corinthians 15:22.

The problem with this teaching is that the original Greek construction of that verse indicates that everyone automatically dies in Adam and also in parallel manner, everyone is saved in Christ. This removes a large amount of responsibility because it removes individual choice and this contradicts the plain teaching of scripture [1 John 3:26].

Before Augustine, Water Baptism was left off until the moment of death because it was believed to cleanse people from all previous sin in any length of life. Now it was changed to a sprinkling of water that was needed to purge everyone from birth. This was a profound shift, reinforced by the new political concept. If you were born into a “Christian” State, you were automatically Christian once you were sprinkled.

By contrast, what does Scripture really show about salvation for man?

I am indebted to C. L. Parker, a Fellow and Tutor of University College Oxford, for a clearer picture here of what the Bible teaches. “Every theory of ‘original sin’ that implies that the child is born without grace from God, or in any way ‘Dead to God’ is to be unhesitatingly rejected.”

I summarize that physical death entered the world when man was tempted and fell. Adam had a son, Seth, however [Gen 4:25-26] whose child began to call on God. God also made a covering for man’s sin through the death of a *Lamb*. This was the work of our Lord Jesus, slain before the foundation of the world. [Revelation 13:8] God paid the price Himself for sin to be pardoned.

Scripture from the beginning had shown that man has

to find fulfilment by *personal* fellowship with God. It could be better argued that the “original sin” of Adam was to prefer the lie of Satan to “eat of the tree of knowledge” rather than to depend on daily child-like communion with His Heavenly Father. Adam believed the lie of Satan to the woman that he would be as God by having this “knowledge”. Thus he would become more “grown up” and independent of daily fellowship with the Lord.

There are people today who are suffering, not just from traumatic experiences in childhood, but from some lie of Satan that has radically affected their behaviour in life.

The mind, once opened to temptation, is fertile soil for a root of deception.

I encountered one example of such a lie affecting a family in a modern marriage, where the mother-in-law took the part of her son against his wife all the time. The lie was thus implanted in the wife that it was a “man’s world”. The wife actually took on male identity – to the confusion of her family and the loss of God’s blessing.

Christ taught that the attitude of dependence like that of a small child was to be commended in His followers:

“Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.”

Luke 18:17.

This is a clear contrast to the idea that every child is automatically by nature a sinner.

What does the Bible actually teach on the subject of salvation?

Understanding what the Bible teaches on salvation is foundational to our relationship with God and so it’s

worth taking some time to consider this. I have found the studies done by the late C.L. Parker to be helpful here.

As a former Chaplain, Fellow and Tutor of University College, Oxford, he taught at Hampstead Bible School for some time in England, and produced a schedule of Scriptural teaching, which gives a more balanced picture.

Adam's spirit, soul and body were made by God and were good. Temptation followed – which is not evil in itself. (Christ was tempted, but did not sin, though He was fully human):

“...but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

Hebrews 4:15

Temptation led to deliberate sin.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way”

Isaiah 53:6

There comes a time when moral law enters, either from instruction in God's Word or the course of Nature. When this happens, the man tries to hide (as Adam and Eve did) from a righteous God and fear replaces love.

When he is willing to retrace that step away and come into relationship with God again, he comes to repent of his actions. Instead of saying “There is no righteous God” or “You cannot expect to be good while you are in the flesh” he comes directly to God and finds that his sin has not caught God by surprise. God has already made a provision by sacrifice of Christ on the Cross:

“...the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Revelation 13:8.

Adam and Eve were supplied with skins in the garden, and were taught this truth.

“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.”

Genesis 3:21

God foresaw that they would sin, from their own free will, and at cost to Himself, paid their penalty out of love.

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

2 Corinthians 5:19.

Salvation is made possible by the work of God when man repents.

Real repentance by man includes sorrow for those he has wronged and a desire to put things right with them and with God (as distinct from remorse, which is basically sorrow for oneself, because personal sin has been exposed and must be paid for).

At this point there is a New Birth, whereby a new spirit comes to man.

Spiritual things are only discerned by the spirit, and so the Lord Jesus informed Nicodemus in John chapter 3 that what he needed was not a new Teacher, but the implantation of a living spirit.

The body and spirit may be compared to a couple of televisions; the one tuned to the natural world and the other to the spiritual. A room may be filled with all kinds of music and pictures from over the world, yet the occupants are in complete ignorance and deadness

to this fact, because they have never had a TV. The world may be full of sounds and sights, but to a man who is deaf and blind, this means little. Just so, heaven is shut to the man, whose spirit is dead, since he cannot receive these impressions

“Jesus answered Verily, verily, I say unto thee. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 3:3.

The more a TV is used, the wider grows the knowledge of this outside world. There is an increase in tuning skills. There are those who spend all their time in front of a TV. Just so, we are expected to likewise live in the Spirit.

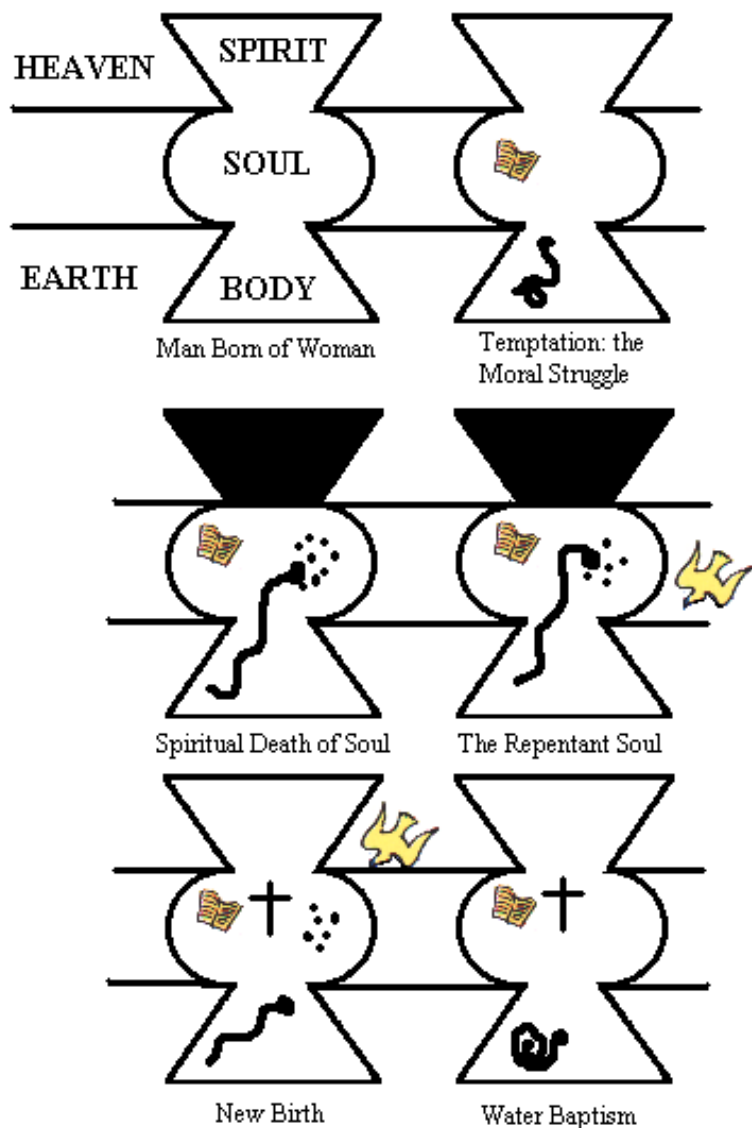
“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father”.

Romans 8:15.

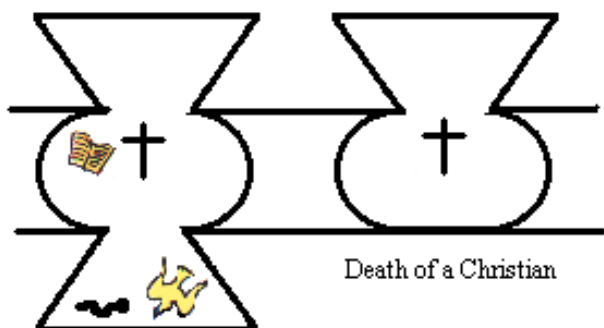
Guide to C. L. Parker Charts

- Serpent represents sin: dead when coiled but made alive when man was tempted and fell.
- Book represents Moral Law: based on God or conscience of wrong.
- Dove represents Holy Spirit.
- Cross represents Calvary.
- Black Line represents the first Heaven, and Cosmos penetrated by Satan.
- Black line shows what is dead to God.

C. L. Parker Chart (1)



C. L. Parker Chart (2)



Death of a Christian

The Spirit filled Christian

Death of
OT SaintDeath of
IgnorantDeath of
Gods EnemiesThe Resurrection
of a Son of God.

Paul in Romans chapters 1 and 2 teaches that God reveals Himself to mankind by the order of his creation [Romans 1:19-21].

Paul admits that, even in his own case, the arrival of temptation gave him a knowledge of sin that brought a barrier with God because he committed what he knew to be wrong [Romans 7:23-24]. Only the Holy Spirit could rescue him out of this state, where he had consciously lost early contact with God by disobedience. (He was not born that way!)

“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Isaiah 53:6.

Then Paul thanks God that he was restored by the work of the Holy Spirit.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death”.

Romans 8:1-2.

Understanding this outlook of Paul's is going to be helpful when we get to chapter 4.

(c) How can lost power be restored?

A new experience can be entered by *faith* whereby the unseen becomes more real [1 Corinthians 2:10-16]. Man lives now in a *supernatural* realm by the Spirit.

Just as the body grows through food and exercise, so the spirit will grow stronger in new spiritual life when fed by Words from God. These come supernaturally through the Holy Spirit and from the reading of the Bible. The new life is also exercised in prayer. Just as the body can die without food and exercise, so it is with the spirit.

This new faith will be tested, but when it comes through the test, man has a testimony. The case of Job in the Old Testament illustrates how faith works through this test. Job lost wealth, family and even health, but continued to trust the unseen God, and eventually received more from Heaven. The main point of this story is not that he emerged wealthier or healthier, but that he was serving God out of pure love, not just for the things, which the Lord provided.

“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him”.

Job 13:15.

This is a priority of emphasis that has sometimes been lost on the self-seeking materialist. It reveals a depth of intimate communion with God, which is the essence of true faith.

“But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold”.

Job 23:10.

The effect of such faith is a peace of mind, which does not depend on our own ability, but upon the known character of God. It is a real death to self.

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the peo-

ple of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his”.

Hebrews 4:9-10.

Water baptism by immersion symbolises this death to self, and a rising to a new way of life. The spirit filled Christian continues this as a way of life, partaking of the power of the world to come [Hebrews 6:4-5]. At his death, what is already real to his soul and spirit continues, though his body is lost.

Old Testament saints did not have the privilege of experiencing this, but they died in the hope of seeing it [Hebrews 11:13].

People who are ignorant of the gospel have a very darkened knowledge of God. (See the chart.)

Under moral law, including the Ten Commandments, there is sin against God and sin against man. Once this law is broken, there is no salvation outside of the shedding of blood.

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

Hebrews 9:22.

The light of Creation and conscience (referred to in Romans 1:18-20) give the heathen the opportunity of living right. Once they have sinned, then they need to be shown the truth of the death of Christ to rid them of the guilt of disobeying the light which they had, and to rid them of their current fear of God.

The sin that really condemns eternally, however, is the rejection of the complete light of God in Christ.

This is *wilful* (not ignorant) blindness to God’s working.

“Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.”

John 9:41.

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

John 3:18

Those who deliberately fight God, with full knowledge of His loving nature, have nothing to which to look forward after physical death.

If people are condemned on the basis of rejecting Christ [John 3:36], what of those who have never heard of Him?

God has appointed a day in which all will meet Jesus and be judged, as Paul explained to the Athenians who were ignorant of the gospel:

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

Acts 17:31

That is the decision point for those who have perished without hearing the gospel.

If it is objected that this will give the ignorant dead “a second chance”, then it must be pointed out that they have never had a “first chance”. The responsibility for this may well lie not with God, but with His children who did not share the Good News.

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that

I am pure from the blood of all men.

27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” Acts 20:26-27.

Attempts to address sinfulness in counselling alone will not succeed. There is still a need to preach God’s goodness and resurrection power by the Spirit over sin. Counselling will never replace this need. If the counselling is secular, it will miss the supernatural elements at work to bring New Birth. If it is “Christian” (without the direct leading of the Holy Spirit), then damage may be done as only the Holy Spirit knows what God has already forgiven and forgotten. No method can replace personal leading by the Lord to deal with outstanding issues.

How can God restore lost power to the Church?

The Holy Spirit is going to break the old limitations. He is going to create a new world.

We need, however, to separate the Church from the old order begun with Augustinian philosophy e.g. the idea that one automatically becomes a Christian by being baptised as a child to remove “original sin”.

Why have the ideas of St Augustine (354-430 AD) continued so long in the Church?

Many of the Reformers in the 16th Century had Augustinian backgrounds. Luther was an Augustinian monk and Calvin embraced some of his teaching on Predestination to Heaven or Hell.

Many later Revivalists have missed the truth of holiness being associated with Baptism in Water. In fact, Luther even attacked it in his opposition to the “Anabaptists”.

Baptism in Scripture is shown by a total immersion **and** rising up again.

The Bible talks about sprinkling the heart but immersing the whole body in water but this had been overlaid by tradition.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”

Hebrews 10:22.

What Scriptures have led traditional Church teaching towards questioning the innocence of children?

Some people have argued that there is evidence in the Bible that children are born in sin. What about Psalm

51:5?

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me?”

Psalm 51:5.

This refers to David, who may have been born in sin through adultery. We clearly know that his father was ashamed of him and hid him, when Samuel came to anoint his sons [1 Sam 16:11]. Yet David became a man with a perfect heart for God [1 Kings 11:4].

More to the point, this Psalm 51:5 does not reflect on the birth of every child in the universe as a product of “original sin”; because David was born that way, it does not prove that everyone else is the same.

David says quite clearly about his own illegitimate son by Bathsheba that he hoped to see him in Heaven.

“But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”

2 Samuel 12:23.

The New Testament reinforces this.

The Lord Jesus actually teaches that little children have angels, and are in contact with Heaven [Matthew 18:10], which can only happen to those who are heirs of salvation [Hebrews 1:14].

How does Water Baptism apply to this picture?

Salvation through water baptism should be taught as relating to Believers, who have a pure conscience, rather than to the formula or the Minister who does it, or the number of times it is done.

Phillip checked the heart attitude of the Ethiopian Eunuch before he baptized him:

“And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said,

See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptised?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”

Acts 8:36-39.

The formula used in Baptism is not so important as the state of heart and mind of the person receiving it.

This is illustrated in the case of Simon Magus, a great magician, whom Phillip also baptized as a Believer.

The effectiveness of the rite was limited by Simon's lack of change in his heart and inward attitude. This has important lessons for the new age of the supernatural:

“Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs, which were done.

18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought

that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.”

Acts 8:17-21.

The true teaching of **water baptism** is that it is strictly personal for the Believer as a heart response to God, shown in an outward sign.

Where does this leave us?

If the effectiveness of water baptism depends in this way upon the state of a person's heart and conscience, then how can “Godparents” reply for you? The faith of others may bring you to Christ, but a deep, inner response is needed in your own heart at the point of Baptism. After all, who else can really know what is on your conscience?

Peter puts this link with conscience quite clearly in his Epistle:

“...the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

1 Peter 3:20-21.

We see, in Scripture, that water was associated with the breaking of the power of demons. It was not an accident that the demon-possessed pigs were drowned in the sea at the release of the man of Gadara [Matthew

8:32]. Scripture teaches that demons live in dry places [Luke 11:24].

The same truth is found in the Old Testament.

The Israelites were still slaves when they came out of Egypt under the blood of the Lamb. They were freed from their old masters when they were baptized with Moses in the Red Sea and the Egyptian army was drowned [1 Corinthians 10:2 and Hebrews 11:29].

Death and burial to the old, enables us to rise to a new day free from Satan and sin. What a wonderful method of showing the victory won in Christ.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

Romans 6:3-6.

This is more than a new start to life.

It is a new life to start with - shown in water baptism resurrection.

Our hearts have been sprinkled from the guilt of sin by the blood, but our bodies totally washed in pure water [Hebrews 10:22] and risen to a new life with Christ.

This is good news for mankind to hear and for Christians to share.

(d) How do we get power to make an impact in witness?

In order to witness to the world, the Lord has given His followers a baptism into the Spirit [Acts 1:8].

Spirit Baptism is not the same as “getting the Spirit.” It is an operation to give power for service. We have already seen that Water Baptism is *not* when you get the water, but when the water gets *you*. In the same way, Spirit Baptism is not when you receive the Spirit, but when the Spirit receives you. You receive the Spirit at New Birth. After Baptism you are led by Him as He receives you.

In former days of power, the Spirit Baptism emphasis was on **Holiness** – which was the keynote for Methodists, Salvation Army and Holiness teachers.

We have already shown this is related more to baptism in water in Scripture. Because these teachers missed this total immersion and rising, due to the tradition of baby sprinkling, they taught holiness as “Spirit baptism.”

The Bible, however, clearly teaches otherwise. Spirit baptism was shown by laying on of hands [Acts 8:17] where water baptism was by immersion.

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our LORD. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye

should obey it in the lusts thereof”.

Romans 6:4-9.

Baptism **into** the Spirit means guidance in a new miracle realm.

New Birth makes us aware of the supernatural, but Baptism into the Spirit gives us direction and power to make that real to others.

How does this work ?

The Lord Jesus was born of the Spirit, and was holy all His life.

Nevertheless, at age thirty, He received an experience of a new realm being opened to Him to minister to others as a Son of God with power

“Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased”.

Luke 3:20-21.

Baptism into the Spirit brings the Believer into a new realm of power. It is described in Hebrews chapter 6 verses 4 and 5 as:

“once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come”.

This experience is then linked with the supernatural power of God. It will enable supernatural worship [John 4:24]. It will give revelations including the future [John 16:13].

(e) What power is available today?

This baptism and new experience was predicted by Christ for every new Believer throughout the world.

It was applied by Peter to the first Gentiles in the household of Cornelius.

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?”

Acts 11:15-17.

The Scripture here clearly teaches that the method of God’s working in this New Day will be the outpouring of supernatural praise in tongues on all those truly born again [Acts 10:43-45].

How is this to be applied now?

Many of those who are sealed by God in this way today, may not have the Bible knowledge to explain what has happened to them.

However they are still to be accepted as brothers and sisters in Christ, redeemed by the blood and enjoying a foretaste of their home in Heaven [Hebrews 6:5].

In my experience, this is an important new point. Many religious people in Ireland have lacked a deep knowledge of the Bible. They were not sure whether or not God had finally accepted them despite their work for Him. Their previous ignorance of Scripture prevented them from having confidence from God’s Word

that they had been accepted for Heaven so that they could positively say they had assurance of salvation. The new miracle experience of speaking in tongues [Acts 19:6] enabled them to know God had sealed them as His own and pardoned them [Ephesians 1:13].

This new revelation did not mean that they at once saw through their old traditions. In the Book of Acts, the early Christians remained for a long time worshipping with the priesthood that had crucified our Lord. The Holy Spirit later led the early Christian Jews to the truth of the Spirit being poured out on all flesh and a new kind of worship.

However, those speaking in tongues now had miracle evidence that God has accepted them. They had believed and confessed Christ aloud [Romans 10:10].

God is doing the same today. He is using the same experience of persecution to take Christians from human traditions back into a heavenly relationship.

Some people believe that the Church does not now need such supernatural methods. It is now "established" without a need to worry about future problems. This is a grave error.

Supernatural power will be very much needed in the time that lies ahead when the Church faces severe trials.

The teaching that the Church will never face tribulation is not based on the Bible.

The Lord graciously allowed me to see this in a prayer meeting in Australia in a Christian friend's home.

Suddenly my friend lost the power in half his body. He explained from the Scripture of the sheep and goats on His right hand and left, and from the story of the Ten Virgins in Matthew 25, that this was a prophecy for the period that lies ahead for the Church. There would be a time of separation.

He pointed out later to me privately that of Ten Virgins (Christians) only half would come through the testing period that is soon to come for the Church. The supernatural alone will assure survival.

All the virgins had the oil of the Spirit [Matthew 25:1-13] but only those with **new fresh oil** were able to survive the dark night and be enabled to get into the wedding.

This was a new revelation to me though it was clear in the New Testament, when I looked. The original teaching was one of tribulation for the Church [Acts 14:22, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 1:4].

The teaching that the Church would be raptured was only invented in the 19th Century. I had been wrongly taught that when the Lord returned, He would take away His own by rapture into Heaven. Then a terrible chaos would fall on the earth. Those unconverted left behind, would face a “great tribulation” of the wrath of God blasting the earth. Pictures of trains crashing when their Christian drivers disappeared and the whole of mankind in trouble were projected to create a climate of fear. The idea was that the time of Christ’s coming would bring a massive deliverance to the Church, while the rest of the world wallowed in trouble.

The net result of such teaching was that the Church would not need supernatural power or preparation as God would automatically do it all.

The Lord Jesus speaks of His followers as “the elect” whom He would gather from the whole earth [Matt 24:31] but only after they had gone through a great tribulation:

*“For then shall be **great tribulation**, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved:*

but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened”.

Matthew 24:21-22.

These new elect (according to the use of this Greek term) were not only Jews but also Christians from all nations [Colossians 3:11-12] Paul taught they would face trouble [2 Tim 2:10].

The Lord also showed John in Revelation, that some would die during a period of persecution, though they may receive later comfort.

“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they, which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.”

Revelation 7:14-15.

This confirms the word of the Lord in John 16:33:

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world”.

Early Christians were all taught this message.

For instance, Paul went back to Churches in Acts 14:22

“Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”

There is a **positive message** with this. In fact, it would appear that the Lord is returning at the end of this trouble to rescue His people and cause them to

reign a thousand years with Him. Faithful Christians meet Him coming down in the air, to return to reign on earth.

Christians need to prepare for the days that lie ahead by a deeper walk with God. Thousands of Believers under State persecution in China have already responded in this way.

The Bible also teaches some amazing things about a new day of power based on deeper walking with God. Another feature of the period that lies ahead will be protection and judgement power given to Christians.

A revival of Elijah Ministry is to be expected, which is predicted in Revelation chapter 11, by two witnesses sent by God. This Heavenly power to execute attackers induced respect for the man of God when Elijah was pursued [2 Kings 1:9-12]. Similar incidents are now being recorded in the persecuted churches in Asia.

The new methods of the people of God will include acts of judgement, as the Lord directs them. We have personally already seen instances of this ourselves. This demands a new look at the Almighty holiness of God, instead of seeing Him as a benevolent figure among many other deities. We may need to get back to Hebrew monotheism and throw out the Greek concept of many equal spirits, hinted at in the phrase “God is good and heals; while the Devil is bad and makes people sick.”

“See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand”.

Deuteronomy 32:39.

However, it is important to emphasize that by contrast, the power of God will certainly be shown in healing the sick.

The mercy of God and the power to heal is associated with the personal contact of laying on of hands [Mark 16:16-18].

“And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.”

Deuteronomy 34:9.

This is contrasted in Numbers 14:36-38 with the impartation of an evil spirit by the spies, who brought a bad report of the land of Canaan and influenced the people against Moses. The Divine judgement and death of these men, and that of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts chapter 5, is a solemn warning that God is holy. His blessing should not be taken for granted. James 5:16 links confession of sin and personal repentance with faith for healing.

The power of God and the laying on of hands must be used responsibly.

An impartation of Healing was also given to Paul at his conversion, through the laying on of the hands of Ananias [Acts 9:17-18].

Divine Healing is an essential part of the Gospel, but the application of healing must be done strictly under the direction of God.

This is the method that the Lord Jesus used, and is in line with the emphasis we have already put upon communion of the Son with the Father:

“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.”

John 5:19.

Divine Healing was done with delegated authority by ***word of command***. It was not a “hit and miss” method of laying on of hands.

It was part of the Lord reversing the curse on Adam of physical disease and death.

In the healing ministry, the goodness of God extends alike to the unthankful and the evil.

It is sometimes assumed that once a person meets with the goodness of God, he is automatically saved.

In fact, the light and holiness of God does not automatically bring salvation or damnation. A person’s response is more based upon conscious decisions made over a process of time based on the light enjoyed [2 Peter 2:4-10].

Eternal punishment will be meted out to those who are determined to do wrong, when faced with the love and power of God especially in His healing mercies [John 5:14].

God will in fact, deprive those continuing to do evil, of their bodies. This will frustrate their ability to harm others. (In the same way as demons desire bodies today to use to express their evil desires, and must be bound on earth when deliverance takes place.) This will be a real torment. Eternity will be spent in frustrated hatred, based on pride that will not allow them to admit their own folly and sin even while they are being punished. Even torment does not always bring repentance.

In this way, even Satan will not change his attitude, after being locked up during the Millennium when God rules with his people one thousand years. Evil will come forth again to battle goodness and God [Revelation 20:2-7]. Satan then can be righteously judged with his followers, as justice is not only done, but also seen to be done.

The severity of punishment may also be the beginning of wisdom, as many see what are the end results of sin – which can often appear attractive at first. Saints will also be steeled in their determination to serve God by the smoke from Hell.

Annihilation, therefore, is not the answer. It deprives man of his essential nature of being eternal. In contrast, those who believe he is just an animal, should not be surprised if he behaves like one.

Man is a spiritual being created for fellowship with God in this new world.

Question:

Have you yet faced the fact that God *will* judge the world?

Question:

Have you seen your sin laid on Christ, to avoid the judgements to come?

Question:

Will you take advantage right *now* of His mercy and healing?

3. NEW MESSAGE: Resurrection

“we preach Christ crucified.”

1 Corinthians 1:23.

I have often seen this quoted in a sign over churches - however, this is only part of the message, because the keynote message for the church is not death, but resurrection! Resurrection was the emphasis for the New Testament Christians following the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Not only were the sick healed, but also the dead were raised.

The New Testament message is clear: death and the Devil have been conquered.

A new day lies ahead.

(a) Why is resurrection important?

I trust you have followed me in the last chapter giving the revelation of some testing times that lie ahead for Christians.

Against this background, it is vital that we see that our risen Lord has given a new emphasis to be proclaimed: death is not the end.

One Pastor's son spent time in fasting and felt he had an experience that Paul described to the Corinthians [2 Corinthians 12:2-3]. This young man felt exactly the same.

The vision however, went further even than Paul. He saw himself being killed in a coming wave of persecution.

Immediately however, he felt the power of God come upon him and he came back to life. The persecutor remarked in the vision: *"We cannot kill the last day Christians. They have the power of the first resurrection."*

Visions and Holy Spirit experiences need to be checked against the Scriptures. This would seem to agree with what the Bible teaches about the two witnesses of God in the Last days.

"These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

9 *And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

10 *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

11 *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

12 *And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."*

Revelation 11:6-12.

Resurrection, not crucifixion, is the keynote message for the Church.

Resurrection was the emphasis for New Testament Christians following the ministry of the Lord Jesus. Not only were the sick healed, but also the dead were raised.

This sustained them also in persecution.

This message brought hope to many that were going through doubt and even prison, like John the Baptist. The Lord Jesus explained this sign to the disciples of John who queried whether He was the Messiah:

“When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.”

Luke 7:20-21.

The same message was proclaimed after the persecution and death of Christ at the hands of the Jewish priests.

Peter in his sermon at Pentecost drew attention to it:

“This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus,

whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ”.

Acts 2:32-35.

How was this message related to what happened to Christ?

Simon Peter applied the Old Testament Scriptures in a new way on the day of Pentecost.

The Jews were not only given by Peter a reference to the fulfilment of the prophetic psalms, but also they were given an added insight into the use of tongues of praise.

Under the Old Testament, when the High Priest went into the Holiest of all with the sacrifice of the people, he would be invisible. The only way that they knew that God had accepted the sacrifice, was the **sound** of the bells around his garments, as he continued to live and move.

“A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about. And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy place before the LORD, and when he cometh out, that he die not”.

Exodus 28:34.

Paul uses the same word in the Greek from the Hebrew, to imply that the sound of Believers speaking in **tongues** shows that Jesus, the Great High Priest, is **alive** and His sacrifice is accepted of God.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.”

1 Corinthians 13:1.

The bells or gongs making this sound for the assurance

of the Hebrews worshipper were a type of the Heavenly sounds of praise in tongues that assured the New Testament believers they were sealed of God [Ephesians 1:13]. The sinless and perfect sacrifice of Jesus, was thus owned and sealed by God, to show He was still alive.

This brings new meaning to the Scriptures about confessing Christ.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”.

Romans 10:9-10.

We have already seen that baptism in water was not delayed at conversion, and that Baptism in the Spirit with tongues was intended to happen quickly to all believers [Acts 11:15-18].

Immediate Baptism in the Spirit (praising God in a heavenly language) is the witness to the resurrected High Priest alive in Heaven. He is alive there for **you** today.

Not only Peter, but also Paul goes to some length to underscore the importance of Christ’s rising from the dead.

“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 for if the dead rise not, then is Christ raised:

17 *and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.*

18 *then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.*

19 *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

20 *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*

21 *for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."*

1 Corinthians 15:14-20.

The Gospel is based not only on this resurrection yet to come, but is also a foretaste of immortality to the Believer today.

This message is needed in these days as well as in the early days, to sustain Christians through periods of persecution.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not accord of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles."

2 Timothy 1:8-10.

(b) Is immortality possible to humans?

Even way back in the Old Testament, Enoch walked with God [Genesis 5:24] and foresaw the coming of the Lord as a time of immortality. Years before Calvary and the outpoured Holy Spirit, he proved in his own body that you could have an “Uppertaker” instead of an undertaker.

“...by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God”.

Hebrews 11:5.

This brings new meaning to the words of the Lord when he raised Lazarus from the dead:

“And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

John 11:26.

This whole teaching is brought out well in the story of Aaron’s rod in the Old Testament [Numbers 17:1-13], based on resurrection power

“...and the LORD spake unto Moses,

2 saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.

3 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.

4 And thou shalt lay them up in the tab-

ernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

5 *And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.*

6 *And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.*

7 *And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD in the tabernacle of witness.*

8 *And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.*

9 *And Moses brought out all the rods from before the LORD unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod. And the LORD said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against these rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not. And Moses did so: as the LORD commanded him, so did he."*

The new Ministry in the Church today will not be the product of the choosing of men, but of God. It will not depend so much on academic ability, as on supernatural vindication from the Lord.

There will be a death to the flesh and a rising in the

Spirit. This is set out in the book of Hebrews regarding Christ:

“And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

5 So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.

6 As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Hebrews 5:4-6.

The ordination that really counts is choosing by God. When my own calling was in doubt while at Theological College, I waited in prayer and received a very definite word from the Lord, through the Bible.

“My sons, be not now negligent: for the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that ye should minister unto him, and burn incense”.

2 Chronicles 29:11.

Although a Graduate of Oxford and one who had been approved for ministry by a Church Body, I found this personal calling by God marked a watershed in my experience.

This call has been foundational over the last forty years, when we have faced opposition during the years of ministry in Ireland outlined in our book *“Obey the Vision”*. It has been an anchor, when I had to launch out into the wider area of calling to go to the Church overseas.

In time of storm, you need to be sure you are building on the Rock of God’s word.

"... whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not:"

Matthew 7:24-25.

Such a word is now vital for the period of testing in the years that lie ahead for Church leaders. Be sure you have a definite call of God to the ministry.

Others attacked Aaron, but basically he had to know that it was God who had ordained him. This is the only rock on which he could survive the storm.

The Church has made the mistake in the past of over-emphasis on education. While there is no premium on intellectual ignorance the new ministry and message will spring from contact with the living God. Its validity will be tested in new areas of spiritual conflict, and will depend upon personal communion with the Lord.

John the Baptist rightly declared: "*He must increase, but I must decrease.*" [John 3:30].

(c) What is the importance of death to self?

Moses did not bring deliverance to Israel through his education, although it was good. In Exodus chapter 3, he had to take the shoes off his feet and rely on the power of God. His previous attempt in the flesh to deliver Israel, by murdering an Egyptian, put him back forty years to wander in the desert. God, he later found, could slay the whole Egyptian Army in minutes at the Red Sea, by drowning. Moses needed supernatural power to win and, in the process, became the meekest man in the world [Numbers 12:3].

Unfortunately, the challenge to this power came not only from without, but from his own people.

“When they became envious of Moses in the camp, and of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD,”

Psalm 106:16 (NAV?).

Men attacked Aaron in the camp and came into a dangerous place with God. This miracle of the rod was designed to prevent the people from sinning by showing that God’s supernatural power could tackle the pride of man and even the challenge of the occult. From the beginning this was the way in which the rod had been used as we see from Scripture

“And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.

11 Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with

their enchantments:

*12 For they cast down every man his rod,
and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod
swallowed up their rods."*

Exodus 7:10-12.

God vindicated by miracles those who were in true relationship with Him. This also graciously allowed the people to see who were His true servants, and not lay them open to further discipline.

The church today will have to face the same challenge to its message. It needs the same power.

(d) What are the rewards for this ministry?

The answer also lies in this story.

What is the message from this incident of the rod that budded?

The **fruitfulness** of this ministry comes out of fellowship time with God in the Holy place, not mere human activity.

The sticks lay up in the **sanctuary** for an extended time.

“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing:”

Psalm 92:12-14.

The fruitfulness of Joseph was based on the presence of God in his life [Genesis 49:2] also shows that he was different in this respect from his brothers.

The story of the rod that budded also emphasizes the important point of **delay in the application of God’s message**. There has to be a death to human effort in the ministry, before God can bring in the Divine power at his moment of resurrection.

The Lord Jesus Himself was shown that He would have to **die** before His ministry could bring forth fruit [Luke 9:30, Hebrews 12:1-4].

He was shown this clearly on the Mountain where He was transfigured and had to believe God for resurrection to follow.

“And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.”

Luke 9:30-31.

The Lord Jesus saw the joy of Easter at the same time as He foresaw the Cross.

This was the vision that sustained Him through the suffering that he foresaw coming.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

4 Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”

Hebrews 12:1-3.

Just so the calling of God may only be applied at an appropriate time.

The Lord Jesus Himself had to face his coming death in Jerusalem on the Mountain of Transfiguration. He also needed to believe God for the resurrection of his soul from Hell that would seal redemption for millions. He got help from one who had died and been buried and another who had been caught up to Heaven. (A foretaste of what would happen to Christians at the

Second Coming [2 Peter 1:16-17].)

“And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem”.

Luke 9:30-31.

This private prayer experience is often missing in the stories written of the preparation of modern ministries. The result has been a shallow Ministry commitment to immediate results. This principle also applies to what God reveals about the future.

We need to remember that prophecies, once given, may take a period of real testing, before they happen.

How does this enable us to understand the book of Revelation?

John, with his brother James, had sought a leadership role from Christ, with an immediate place on a throne.

“And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the bap-

tism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.”

Mark 10:35-40.

Christ here prophesied the martyrdom of James [Acts 12] and the imprisonment of John in Patmos, as the key to leadership in Heaven. During that period in prison, the Lord gave John a message for the future, which would sustain him through the trials of the present, and reveal the wonderful creation of a new world from the old – the greatest resurrection of all.

The problem with the interpretation of this book has been the lack of reading it from a simple viewpoint of what it actually says.

The first four chapters are specifically devoted to a supernatural insight into the main churches of the time. The rest is devoted to the message of resurrection and reward for all those who are faithful to God through trial. Those for instance, who are martyred in the Great Tribulation, are specifically mentioned:

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?”

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.”

Revelation 7:13-15.

A promise is also made for those who are faithful during preliminary trials.

I think this message can be applied to Christians under pressure today, as encouragement for the future.

“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

28 And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Revelation 2:26-28.

When we flew to the USA on one of our visits, some eleven years ago, my Christian Bank Manager wished me to make contact with a prophet in Washington State, that he had met on a trip to Mount Ranier. Because my bank manager was helping to finance my way, I agreed to this request and consequently met Bishop John Stanley from Vashon Island at the Yakima Convention Centre. There he shared with me his conviction that the present calling forth of Apostles and Prophets would lead to a new body of powerful Christian leaders in the Church for the last days. This body of men, in his view, was already present on earth today.

At first, I was inclined to question this revelation in the light of some aberrations of Manchild teaching in recent American history.

Suddenly, he proceeded to accurately recount by word of knowledge the circumstances of my own calling in Ireland and to predict the birth of a child to our married daughter. He asked me to take notice of the Scrip-

ture as a call to *all Christians* and in particular, to my own life. The arrival of our grand daughter seven years later has fulfilled his prophecy.

(e) What are the signs of the resurrection and return of Christ today?

There are those who have mocked the message in the past, but there are Scriptural signs that seem to be certain, due to their fulfilment in part already.

The Bible indicates that the Second Coming and the resurrection of the dead is sure, as prophecies for Christ's first Coming have proved true in history.

Where one part of the prophecy has been vindicated, we may be sure that the second is also likely to be true.

For instance in the book of Micah we read:

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

Micah 5:2.

The New Testament records the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, in fulfilment of this (which was also pointed out to the wise men by the Scribes at the time). It does not record that Jesus is yet ruler over Israel but this must surely come to pass.

Similarly it records that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, but not that He is yet made King of Israel.

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”

Zechariah 9:9.

All the sayings of the Lord Jesus, when alive on earth

agree with further signs to be fulfilled in the future, as recorded in the New Testament.

“In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”

John 14:2.

Christ was so sure of this that He affirmed it when on trial for His life. When all other witnesses failed to agree and the case against Him was breaking down, He took a definite stand on the fact that He would come again in glory.

“...nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.”

Matthew 26:64.

He had already shared this end time prophecy with His disciples:

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Matthew 24:30.

Obviously both these prophecies refer to the Last Judgement and End Times, as predicted in the Book of Daniel:

“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.”

Daniel 7:13.

The contemporary fulfilment of many of these signs makes Scripture even more relevant today.

It is amazing to read some of the signs given by the Lord in Matthew chapter 24 and to compare them with historical events. For example, the Lord foretold enlarged wars.

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.”

Matthew 24:6.

Not just war on a local scale, but International major wars in 1914 and 1939 and a constant fear of new ones breaking out have marked this Century.

“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places”

Matthew 24:7.

Famines and earthquakes were predicted also in this passage. History records that in 1347 Black Death came with high mortality. Even in 1918 twelve million died in a ‘flu epidemic. This was more than in the Great War. Now we have bacteria warfare threatened, to say nothing of recent disease outbreaks in Africa and the worldwide outbreak of AIDS.

The newspapers are similarly full of modern earthquakes. The history of the escalation of earthquake incidences is interesting.

The 15th Century recorded some 115, the 16th Century experienced some 253, the 17th Century another 373 and in the 18th Century the number rose to 640.

The number then jumps to 2119, with some outstanding occurrences. For example, in 1913 in Messina (Italy) some 75,000 died, while in 1920 at Kansu (China) over 100,000 lost their lives. The 1923 Tokyo (Japan) earthquake is estimated to have killed

some 143,000 people.

There has also been a proportionate amount of property damage. The October 1989 earthquake at Lorna Prieta is supposed to have caused some \$6 billion in damage. The January 1994 Los Angeles earthquake also cost some \$7 billion damage. The secular papers featured the fact that its epicentre was in the porno industry district.

In fact America has been more recently hit by an increasing series of disasters, which have made front-page news. In April 1992 we read that wind, hail, and tornadoes hit Texas and Oklahoma bringing some \$760 million loss to insurance, while in August, the hurricane Andrew round Florida cost something in the region of \$15.5 billion. The following year in the USA, damages arising from the March storms were assessed at an estimated \$1.6 billion and in July, Mid West floods were said to have cost some \$10 billion, while the December wind and freeze in 41 states cost some \$880 Million. TIME Magazine reported that the 1995 January floods in California cost some \$1.3 billion while the October Hurricane "Opal" in Florida ran up a bill of \$2 billion.

In the same way, persecution and killing of Christians were other signs named by the Lord Jesus

"Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

Matthew 24:9.

The connection of this with the rise of Capitalism is even mentioned in the Bible.

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

3 *Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*

4 *Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."*

James 5:1-4.

The Apostle John not only related the rise of Communism but also the persecution of the saints and he even localised the rise of large armies *in the Orient*.

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

Revelation 16:12.

The growth of strange teachings is also prophesied as being a mark of the last days.

The words of the Lord Jesus are clear in this respect:

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many".

Matthew 24:11.

Jehovah Witnesses prophesied a return of Christ in 1914.

The message also that God will not punish sin in Hell has been promoted among them. A founder member, Judge Russell, also taught that there is no doctrine on an eternal Hell in the Bible. On the contrary, Christ Himself makes more mention of Hell (Gehenna) than anyone else in the New Testament. Gehenna, unlike Sheol, is a place of torment.

“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Mark 9:44.

Because God is eternal, His presence will bring eternal consequences for reward or punishment, according to Christ.

Foreign missions also figure prominently therefore, in the teachings on the Last Days. These teachings are not merely linked to an increase in decisions being made for Christ, but to ongoing discipleship through a difficult period.

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.”

Matthew 24:14.

It is interesting to see the rapid growth of Christianity across the world in our own times, and to see that the supernatural Gospel of the first Century (*“this Gospel of the Kingdom”*) is now being accepted and preached in greater depth than ever before.

Certainly, if Pentecost began the “last days” period, then we can account for the current increase of millions of people speaking in heavenly languages across the world.

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood,

and fire, and vapour of smoke”

Acts 2:17-19.

While these tendencies can be traced at some stage through world history, the most significant pointer to the period of “the last days” has to be the rise of Israel again as a nation. This is epitomised in the modern story of the release of Jerusalem from the grip of the Gentile nations.

Christ forecast the destruction of Jerusalem as recorded in Matthew chapter 24.

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes”

Matthew 24:15-18.

Much of this prophecy was fulfilled in AD 70 when Romans overran Jerusalem. After the Jewish revolt, the Roman general Vespasian crucified five hundred Jews daily and it has been calculated that over one million died in famine. The siege was suddenly lifted for no apparent reason, and many Christians remembered Christ’s words and fled the city, before the Romans came back to finally destroy Jerusalem. Among the Jews that survived, over ninety-seven thousand were sold as slaves and the Roman Eagles were set up in the Temple, precisely as Christ forecast.

“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all na-

tions: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

Luke 21:24.

Until this present Century, Jerusalem was in Gentile hands, with a final occupation by the Turks in the Great War of 1914-1918. A British Army approached the city in 1917. It was under the command of a born-again Christian, General Allenby.

One morning he read in his Bible:

“As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.”

Isaiah 31:5.

The General asked an aide-de-camp to order aeroplanes to fly over the city.

The Turks were so intimidated that they fled all their carefully fortified and prepared positions, and Jerusalem fell to the British.

The Jews then began to arrive back in the land and a Jewish State was declared, in 1948. Subsequently, the Jews defeated many times their number of Arab enemies in the so-called “Six Day War” and Jerusalem fell once again into their hands. Scripture is very clear how critical these events are, to the return of Christ and the resurrection of Jerusalem again.

“When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory”

Psalms 102:16.

At one time it was fashionable to decry the authenticity of such prophecies, and the notion that the world could be destroyed by fire. Now even scientists admit that possibility. It might even be possible to do it through human means.

We can even trace in the Bible, the fervent heat of atomic fission.

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

2 Peter 3:10.

In Hiroshima, Japan, one hundred thousand people died as a result of the original atom bomb. It has now been calculated that a ten-megaton bomb would exterminate all living matter within a five-mile radius. Two hundred and sixty three such bombs in USA would destroy two million houses and half the USA crop would be covered. Six million people would die in New York from one bomb. (Even more interesting is the use of the Greek words here in 2 Peter 3:10 *“the heavens will melt with fervent heat”* in the Greek is *“hoi uranoi”* – Uranium in its derivation – showing the source of that heat.)

What Bible predictions have still to be fulfilled? Scripture is clear that Christ is to return in the last days and set up a Kingdom:

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these”

Daniel 2:44.

Furthermore, Jerusalem will become the centre of a demonic world Government ruled over by Anti-Christ.

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty-

and two months.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. ”

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb”

Revelation 13:5-7.

The returning Christ directly intervenes from Heaven to defeat Anti-Christ and set up a kingdom of righteousness.

“...earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.”

Revelation 11:13-15.

During a period of one thousand years, Satan will be bound and the earth will have Godly Government.

This Government will be constructed from those who have been spiritually gifted and proved faithful during a time of previous trial [Revelation 20:4-5].

5 “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

6 *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

7 *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,⁸ And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.”*

There will be a final rebellion against this good Government, which will be defeated and the Lord will then burn up the old world and create a new righteous Heaven and Earth.

This arrangement will show the folly of men and allow a final righteous judgement upon sinners as we have already seen.

Nobody will be able to plead ignorance and the full records will be opened at this final assize. The righteous will then, forever, be with the Lord Jesus as his Bride and a new Jerusalem will come down out of Heaven.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

2 *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

3 *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

4 *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. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful”.

Revelation 21:1-4.

The establishment of this New Heaven and Earth will be the greatest resurrection of all, through the power of God.

In order to make clear God’s Programme, set out in this vision to John by the Lord Jesus, I attach a diagram by my friend, Mr. William Turner of Staffordshire, England, to whom I owe a great debt for study and practical prophetic insights over the last forty years. The effect of this message has allowed him to see, in measure, some manifestations of Divine resurrection power in raising some very sick people in hospital and by contrast, the disciplinary powers of an Elijah ministry on those trying to hold up the move of God.

We trust the reader will be inspired to respond in the same way to this message.

There will then be a rebellion, which will be defeated by the Lord. He will set up a new universe for those who have been faithful to Him.

“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.

5 *And he that sat upon the throne said,*

Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful”

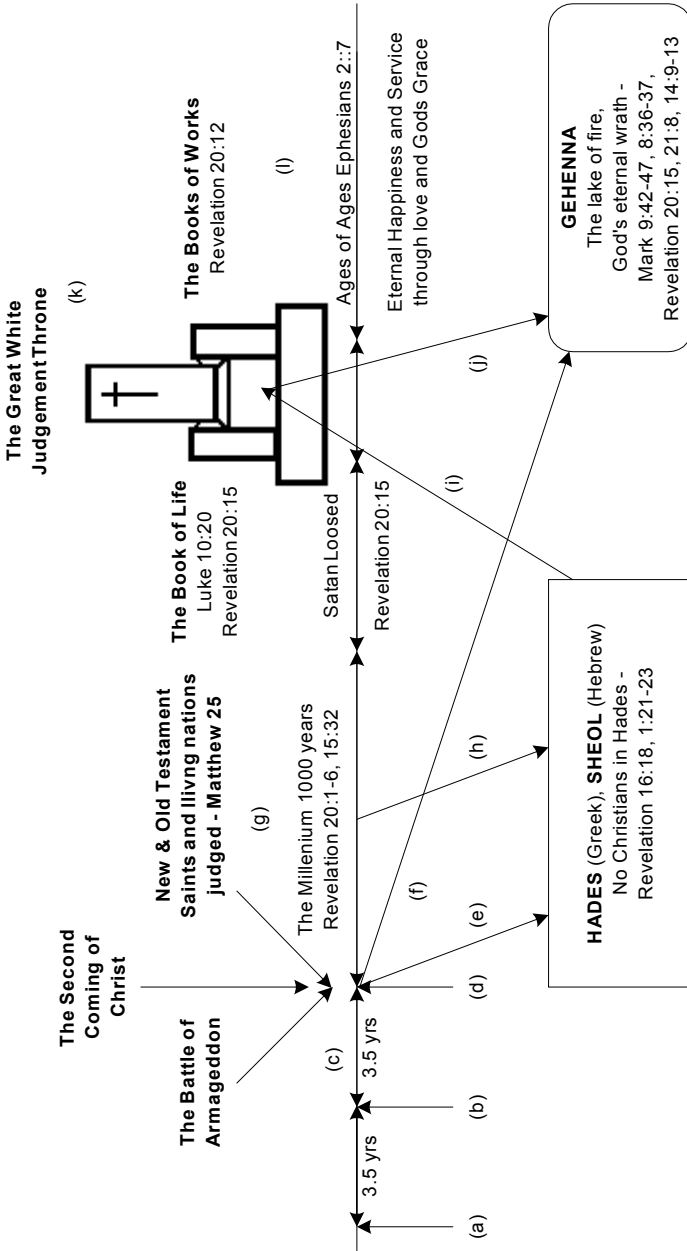
Revelation 21:4-5.

The establishment of this New Heaven and Earth will be the greatest resurrection of all, through the power of God.

Signs of Christ's Coming Again

(Adapted from William Turners diagram of Last Days)

- The Temple at Jerusalem Built – Matthew 24:15
- The growth of Israel – Psalm 102:15
- Man's power to destroy the world – Matthew 24:22
- Peace conferences – 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3
- Christians hated and persecuted – Matthew 24:9-10, Mark 13:9-13
- Scoffers of Christ's coming – 2 Peter 3:3-4
- Worldwide Gospel teaching – Mark 13:10
- Apostasy – Matthew 24:11, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, 2 Thessalonians 2:3
- Abounding iniquity – Matthew 24:11, Luke 17:26-30
- False prophets and deceivers – Matthew 24:4-5, Matthew 11:23-27
- Earthquakes, pestilence, famine and wars – Matthew 24:6-8
- Great storms, the sea and waves roaring, strange and fearful sights in heaven, stars fall, sun dark, moon red – Matthew 14:29-31, Luke 21:25-26



Legend:

- (a) Antichrist makes treaty with the Israelites – Daniel 9:27, 11:22, 28, 30; The first seal – Revelation 6:1-2.
- (b) Antichrist puts his image in the temple. The treaty is broken. Here the Beast of Revelation 18 begins to reign in full Satanic power. Satan is cast out of Heaven to the earth, and the woman of Revelation 12 flees to the wilderness. The two witnesses start prophesying – Revelation 12. (The fourth seal? – Matthew 24:15-21).
- (c) The Great Tribulation.
- (d) The second coming of Christ. The Millennial Kingdom is set up. The resurrection and rapture – Revelation 11:15-19, 7:14-end, 14:1-6; 14:14-16, 19:9, 20:4, 1 Thessalonians 4:13 to 5:6, 1 Corinthians 15:51-54, Zechariah 14:14; The wicked are destroyed – Revelation 14:17-20, 19:20-21, Isaiah 42:13-17, 63:1-6.
- (e) The non-Christian Dead.
- (f) Antichrist and his followers – Matthew 24:46, Revelation 14:9-11
- (g) Christ and the Father Reign, the overcoming Christians Reign – Psalm 2:6-9, Revelation 2:26-27, 11:15, 19:6, Isaiah 23:24, Zechariah 14:16-19
- (h) Those who sin or die in the Millennium.
- (i) Second resurrection
- (j) The lost Death and Hades.
- (k) The Judgement Seat of Christ – 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 2 Corinthians 5:8-14
- (l) The new Heaven and Earth – Revelation 21:22, Isaiah 65:17

(f) What is the main message of the prophecy of the return of Christ?

Correct interpretation of the Bible and timing is vital. It is important to wait and not let discouragement bring unwise action. Premature personal interference without God can be disastrous, though the original message from Him is genuine.

Abraham got in the way with his personal efforts and had a son of flesh born in Ishmael [Genesis 16:11-16]. Folk have pointed to him as the first Arab, at whose hands the Jewish race has been suffering ever since, because God's promise of eternal destiny had to work in all Abraham's family.

Moses murdered a man in enthusiasm to free the Jews. As a result, he had to wait forty years until the generation that knew his sin was dead. By the time he saw the burning bush, all his early enthusiasm for ministry had also died [Exodus 3:2-4].

When the Divine time came, the Lord had to appear in the burning bush and promise to be with him. Even so, Moses was unwilling to go for God to His people through discouragement arising from his earlier mistake:

"And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart."

Exodus 4:13-14.

A lady in America came to me for a vision for her min-

istry. I clearly saw her at home, washing up dishes with her husband.

She was unwilling to accept this call to “ministry” at first, but went home to obey.

When I returned the following year, she came to thank me for the message.

“We washed up dishes together and had some wonderful communion. Then he suddenly dropped dead with a massive heart attack. I thank God for those times that we had together. We would have missed so much if I had been too busy about my religious activities.”

This incident underlines the importance of getting the right time to begin ministry.

Just so, the Lord Jesus was *hidden* seventeen years at Nazareth in home duties, though He knew His call of God at 12.

“And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?”

50 and they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 and he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.”

Luke 2:49-51.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Fruits of the Spirit are now just as important as Gifts.

The **formation of character** in ministry is not emphasised in the modern “fast-results” society. As a result the message is often shallow, and devoid of the element of personal and family relationships that must back the message.

The new message for the Church will emphasise family life. The new leaders will have died to self and risen to new levels of love and long-term commitment.

It is significant that Christ's first miracle at Cana was in a domestic marriage setting, and His mother instinctively turned to Him with the problem, after years of home experience. Those seventeen hidden years were the invisible bedrock foundation on which God could build a solid structure of message and ministry.

When this structure and ministry was challenged, and even rejected, Christ came forth like the root out of a dry ground. He was able to do this through Communion with God.

“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath neither form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.”

Isaiah 53:2.

His repulsive appearance on the Cross, masked the real triumph of His spirit in finishing the work of God. In fact He was vindicated and delivered from Human accusation only by Divine resurrection.

The same will be true of those giving God's message in the last days.

Out of the darkness of death, we will experience **a new day**, when not only can the sick be healed, but the dead be raised.

This has already happened to a friend of mine who was a missionary in Africa. He and his wife ran a clinic in the bush. One day the local witchdoctor poisoned one of their patients. As the corpse was being taken home in a fishing net, they stood around in prayer. Suddenly the Holy Spirit came on them in boldness, and they commanded resurrection to the body through the

power of God. Suddenly, the body moved and the patient sat up. It was the occult witchdoctor that now lost his hold on the people. Resurrection proof was the new message.

This kind of message and miracle will produce a whole new kind of message for the end times. It will lead to new men and women.

Question:

Are you enjoying the “last days” experience of a prayer language in tongues?

Question:

Is your church preaching and preparing for the imminent return of Christ?

Question:

Are you personally ready for Him to come or are there areas of action, which you need now to take?

4. NEW MAN: Jesus the forerunner

“... as he is, so are we in this world.”

1 John 4:17.

This quote from the Bible dramatically changed the life of one person – John G. Lake. This American missionary in South Africa dared to believe that it is possible to have the power of Christ in an ordinary human body. He went on to prove this by producing medical evidence of disease dying as it touched his body. He even offered several hundred dollars reward for anyone *not* healed after a period at his healing rooms. This money was never claimed over a period of years.

Can you imagine what an ordinary church service would be like if all the believers there took this on board as part of their normal Christian life? To be like Christ and to have his power operating through their lives – not, as we have seen earlier, a power to show off, or misuse, but a power to serve and make God real to those we meet.

Does it sound incredible? History (and especially Church history) is full of God doing amazing things through ordinary people – the Bible is full of examples: Daniel in the den of Lions, David killing Goliath, Moses parting the Red Sea, Peter raising the dead Dorcas, Sarah bearing a child at the age most women are great-grandparents... And their life stories are recorded not just as Sunday School stories to amuse children, but as examples to encourage Christians in their faith! [Hebrews 12]. In the Book of Acts, normal Christian life and church experience was to have the sick being healed, the dead raised, prophetic words giving direction, a constant flow of people coming into relation-

ship with God. And they also expected the Lord to come back for His Church, the Bride, prepared and made like Himself!

In this chapter we will explore the queries:

- “Is it possible to have the power of Christ in a human body?”
- “How does this work?”
- “How can we be sure we are not deluded? What are the tests?”
- “What is the best way to come into this supernatural ministry?”

(a) How do we break barriers?

As humans, we can set mental barriers about what can or can't happen. When I was a student of history, another student actually made history – Roger Bannister. He ran the mile in under four minutes – which was previously believed impossible.

He broke not only an athletic record, but also the limited expectations of his generation. Later in the year other runners, following his example, also ran the same distance in under four minutes. Roger Bannister was a forerunner, literally!

In the same way, Jesus is the forerunner of the new man or woman, who has become a Christian and submitted their life to God.

“Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”

Hebrews 6:20.

In fact, the Lord Jesus set the standard for the new man or woman! Paul taught this new life to the Gentile converts, based on what God did in Christ. The Divine plan was that Jesus should break through the barrier of defeat for all people:

“That he might be the firstborn among many brethren”

Romans 8:29.

Jesus offered release to the whole of mankind from the power of death [Hebrews 2:10-15] and showed that sin was not merely inevitable as a human, but that through the work of the Spirit in New Birth, man could also live a life of victory and Divine fellowship (such as God had offered to Adam and Eve at the start).

When Adam and Eve sinned, sin entered the world and

began to influence weak people [1 John 2:15-16]. When men and women go on choosing evil, then God can turn them over to it, but when good is chosen, then the opposite, positive, process can also happen. The Lord Jesus was born with a human nature open to temptation but he became a new, living example of victory over sin.

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”

Hebrews 4:15.

(b) Is it possible to have Divine power in a human body?

At this point, I can hear you thinking: “But I’m just ordinary! How could I ever, possibly, be like Jesus, in this life? Life is hard enough without giving me an impossible standard!”

Just thinking about trying to be like Jesus can be so intimidating that we feel like giving up on the idea. But the positive way to look at it is to accept that since this is God’s plan, then He will provide the resources. Also, as we’ve just seen in the Hebrews quote, Jesus understands what it is to be tempted, but can show us victory. Let us look at a very human example of being changed to be like Jesus – the apostle Paul.

The apostle Paul went so far as to say that he had no consciousness of sin in his life; “*I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me.*” [1 Corinthians 4:4]. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the light he had; although he humbly admits that he was open for more that might show his shortcomings. This victory was possible for him through the work of the Holy Spirit.

It is an amazing turnaround that Paul, who had murdered Christians in his zeal for God and ignorance [1 Timothy 1:13], now went so far as to say that he knew of no way in which he was now in sin [1 Corinthians 4:4]! We can retrace his life to see how God brought about this change in him.

Paul had been innocent in his childhood.

He talks about this as the general condition of the whole human race in Romans chapters 1 and 2.

“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it

unto them.”

Romans 1:19.

He explained that although people have this instinctive knowledge of God, they gave themselves over to sin, and their perception was clouded by that action.

“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.”

Romans 1:21.

According to Paul, people are corrupted by acts of impurity; but they are not born that way [Rom 1:24-25]. In fact mankind has instinctive consciousness of what is right and what is wrong [Romans 2:14-15] even before God gave His Law from Heaven. He applies this to unnatural sexual behaviour [Romans 1:26-28].

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”

Romans 1:28.

Being human is ***not entirely bad*** - non-Christians are capable of family and personal love.

Due to Adam’s sin, physical death entered the world.

“...thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”

Genesis 3:19.

This passed on to all mankind.

“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

1 Corinthians 15:21-22.

“Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.”

Romans 5:14.

We need to see that at the same time Adam experienced spiritual separation from God as a result of his personal act of sin.

This spiritual death was not automatically passed on.

His son Seth for instance, had a son with a relationship with the Lord

“And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD”.

Genesis 4:26.

With the sin of Adam, sin entered the world and began to influence weak men [1 John 2:15-16].

When men and women go on choosing evil, then God can turn them over to it. When good is chosen, then the opposite process can also happen. It is a definite choice leading to character.

The Lord Jesus was born with a human nature open to temptation but He was able to not sin.

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

Hebrews 4:15.

Paul also was born innocent and in touch with God. Later he became aware of his acts of sin through knowledge of God's law

“For I was alive without the law once: but

when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.”

Romans 7:9.

He then got redemption from the **penalty** of sin by confessing it and seeing it laid on Christ

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”

Romans 5:9.

Now the Holy Spirit had given him the overcoming life. He showed this by following the Lord Jesus through Baptism

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”

Romans 6:1-4.

The Holy Spirit that raised Christ from the dead had also brought Paul to a new level of living above the **power** of sin. He teaches this for **all** Christians.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in

Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

Romans 8:1-2.

He found it was possible for him not to sin and expected others to follow him in this.

Paul now looks forward to a time when sin will no longer be in the Cosmos (Greek word for world system) at all. Christ would return for a prepared and victorious Bride when “the perfect would come”. Even the **presence** of sin in the world would be done away. Everyone will be moving in supernatural power and holiness. Also Paul looked forward to a new body (like that of the risen Christ), which could appear and disappear and not have to fight temptation.

Meanwhile he lived in victory over sin in his human body.

Was he deluding himself? How can you be sure of being led by God?

(c) How can a man be led by the Spirit?

Salvation is more than a one-time decision, though it must begin with that. It is a whole new way of life. Christians must face this fact.

New life in the Spirit faces many challenges after the initial experiences of conversion and baptism.

This is even recorded of the Lord Jesus Himself:

“The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, ‘I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours.’

8 Jesus answered, ‘It is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve him only’”

Luke 4:7-8.

The issue is one not of **power**, but of motivation. Was miracle power under the control of God the Father or else motivated by an independent spirit?

If the Spirit of God’s family seals the Believer, then it follows that his life must now be under His Father’s control.

When the Lord was on earth in His human body, He was able to give direction to His disciples. After He left, because the Holy Ghost was given at Pentecost, the same miracles may still happen under the sovereign direction of the Spirit. The Apostles were guided clearly to those whom they should heal.

This is seen in Acts 3, the Apostles had passed this beggar without being led to believe for his healing, on several occasions.

Now Peter was **sure** of his leading:

“Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.”

Acts 3:6-8.

The Baptism into the Spirit allows the Holy Ghost to control our actions; just as the Disciples were guided by the Lord Jesus, when He was still with them on earth.

How in practical terms, can the Holy Spirit guide in a positive way?

True guidance from the Holy Spirit comes in various ways: through the Bible, prophecy, and prayer in an attitude of listening openness.

Obviously if the Bible was inspired by the Spirit, then He will guide those who read its pages.

It is evident, for instance, that Christ was studying Old Testament Scriptures covering Israel’s “Baptism” in the Red Sea and journey through the wilderness, and His replies to the Devil are all from these books.

As in His case, after blessing often comes a period of testing to make us depend more on the word of God and less on our feelings. During this period, it is important to have a point of reference in judging the true and the false sources of messages.

It is important to emphasise that visions and voices from Heaven will not contradict the moving of the

Spirit in the Bible.

“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Acts 8:19-20.

This means a man spending time in Scripture along with God, if he is to develop the kind of relationship that enables him to distinguish the Divine voice. This is so important, that it will be dealt with in the next section, on intimacy with God.

Testing Prophecy

Development of spiritual gifts however, is done in the Church and not just privately.

“Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.”

1 Corinthians 14:29.

It is only possible to test prophecy by speaking it out and submitting it to others. This is done in a group. Love is the key here.

Paul writes to the Thessalonians:

“Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophecies. Prove all things.”

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21.

Check all prophecy against what God has already shown and the fruits of the character of life in the one giving the message.

Consistent good or bad results in an ongoing fellowship by individuals giving guidance seem to be the key.

“Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

Matthew 7:16.

Practical life style and obedience must back up a person's words.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew 7:21.

The emphasis is not on outward appearance, but on inward motivation and attitudes that will affect the Church [Matthew 7:15]. This usually comes out of relationships with people over a period of time and the kind of life style seen, as well as the revelation of the Lord. This is more important than the outward appearance of our skin or sex, and goes into judgement by the Spirit [John 8:15-18]. It can only be developed in a Church group. Hence the importance of love.

How do I distinguish God's voice from the enemy's?

Christ's own temptation gives some answers in Matthew chapter 4, as the Tempter speaks.

The first wrong suggestion is **doubt** on what God said.

This even happened to the sinless Christ.

“And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.”

Matthew 4:3.

This challenged the Word just given to Jesus by God, that he was the Son of God in a voice from heaven at His baptism.

“And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is

my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:17.

In the same way **baptism** and **tongues** are presented the new Believers as "misleading nonsense", although the experience was very real at the time.

This is particularly tempting when the new language is not understood by the mind but by the spirit, so that it cannot be rationalized. The whole experience attacks the pride of a person who always likes to understand and be in personal control of what is happening, rather than realize his dependence on God and be at peace. Isaiah clearly forecast this would happen to God's people in the Old Testament [Isaiah 28:11 covers this].

Again, when under pressure, the suggestion is made that **God has forgotten** and is holding something back from the Believer. Many people are suffering from this lie that is fed to them to impugn God's character and motives.

Satan made this kind of suggestion to Eve, when she told him of the rule that she should not eat of the tree of knowledge.

"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 3:5.

She did not die physically but spiritually, by changing her **dependence** on God as a child for **independence** by sense knowledge.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with

her; and he did eat.”

Genesis 3:6.

Here again we have the appeal to be independent. The temptation is to avoid trusting God by relying on some other source of knowledge than personal relationship with Him.

In fact in a spiritually testing situation, a powerful suggestion may come: “You only imagined the experience.”

The Lord Jesus wisely replied by reference to the Bible. He knew the Scriptures so well, that he was able to use them to back up His experiences with God and refuse to doubt God’s character and intentions. **Who** you believe, is just as important as **what** you believe, in this case.

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.”

1 John 5:10.

The New man can only enjoy the experience of change by realizing that he is sharing this new life in Christ and that he can be certain that it will last, because of God’s eternal trustworthiness.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

And this is the confidence that we have in

him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."

1 John 5:11-14.

This Temptation comes particularly strongly to somebody who has been personally hurt by bad fathering in a home situation. The very word "father" connotes a whole history of disappointments and broken promises. The restoration of love and trust in family life through forgiveness has become critical in these days, for development of the *new man*.

The new man must learn to live by faith. The unseen must become as real as the seen. The Devil had the whole world to offer Christ, by showing him an immediate Kingdom

Many modern people are making similar choices, based on short-term aims. The present world does have a glory but it is *not lasting*.

The new man may prosper, but he is to value more his eternal destiny.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Matthew 24:35.

The apostle Paul expresses this in his letters:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Romans 8:18.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Galations 6:14.

This is the secret of victory by choice. In this the New

Man follows the example of the Lord Jesus, who became poor that others might become rich [2 Corinthians 8:9]. My personal experience of these last 40 years confirms the satisfaction of this choice to be like Him. A simple summary for the young Christian is to ask himself the question "What would Jesus do in these circumstances? What would be His priority?"

The lie that God will let us down must be countered with the truth of his eternal caring and the perfect love that gets rid of fear.

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Hebrews 13:5-6.

When the Devil throws doubt on the character of God, **remember God does not give false Gifts**, as even a loving Human father will not deliberately mislead his child.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Luke 11:13.

The new man, who has spoken in tongues, has had a **genuine Bible baptism**, not because he feels it, but because the Bible says so.

"And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and

magnify God.”

Acts 10:45-46.

The way through this kind of doubt is to continue to speak in the new prayer language and allow the gift to develop, not to stop the process.

An opposite temptation is to go overboard with this new experience and exercise it unwisely. The Devil is recorded as setting Christ on a pinnacle of the Temple and suggesting a public display of his miracle powers to the religious world.

“And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”

Matthew 4:6.

Again there is the suggestion of doubt, but here even **Scripture** is used by Satan to push some big miracle and show off power in front of religious leaders of the Nation.

There needs to be wisdom for the new man in his behaviour in Church.

“If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?”

1 Corinthians 14:23.

The use of this new power, is not just to meet personal needs or show off new miracle power. The young Believer must **wait** on God's time and place, following the leading of God in love. The Lord Himself reminded the

tempter that God will only look after those who walk in His way and control. This is where developing intimacy with God is so important.

(d) How can man have intimacy with God?

Like Christ, most Christian leaders need to spend intimate time with God by fasting and going without food for a period.

Strong opposing forces must be bound, before they can be spoiled. Fasting must include denial of demands of self in every form. Man must also be sure he is waiting on God with right motives to bless others. The whole of Isaiah chapter 58 gives useful and searching suggestions here for the motives to fast.

Although this process is intensely personal, the young Believer should never be above the counsels and advice of others. Paul suggests this to the Corinthian church, though they seem to have advocated fasting for Christian couples on a regular basis:

“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer.”

1 Corinthians 7:5.

Spiritual Gifts must come under the control of our Heavenly Father. This makes it vital we spend time with Him. Although Gifts may in most cases be ministered in meetings, there is usually a time of private development of relationship beforehand. The Lord Himself gave an example in this respect.

“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for

therefore came I forth.”

Mark 1:31-38.

I have learned to value a morning ***quiet time*** at the start of each day.

Prayer in the secret place is essential for guidance. Elijah had public victory only after private prayer [1 Kings 18:36ff.].

How can this be applied now? Is it important to spend extended time with God at the beginning of a ministry? Christ Himself entered a place of fasting, immediately after His Baptism by John, at the very beginning of His ministry.

“And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered”

Matthew 4:2.

This is a period that enables the one following the Lord to get important direction.

(e) What is the best way to come into supernatural ministry?

While it is right to seek gifts, it is better to start by loving others.

“But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.”

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3.

This new power is given to be a blessing not a show-off. Therefore, rather than pushing forward or hanging back for personal reasons, there needs to be a desire to help which lifts the New man above pride and shyness. The final suggestion in Christ's Temptation is the temptation to worldly goods and power by use of the new experience.

“And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”

Matthew 4:9.

Here we have Satan suggesting to Christ “Don't be too peculiar” or you “will have to be crucified”.

He also advises not going too far for God and making

money for yourself in the process.

One such case in the Bible is that of Lot, Abraham's relative, who came with him out of Ur in obedience to God. At a point of crisis, Lot's choice was **selfish** and **worldly**.

“And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

10 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.”

Genesis 13:10-12.

Once this choice was made, even worldly people ceased to respect Lot for his standing:

“And they said, ‘Stand back’. And they said again, ‘This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them.’”

Genesis 19:9.

Many modern people are making similar choices, based on short-term aims. The present world does have a glory but it is **not lasting**.

A simple summary for the young Christian is to ask himself the question “What would Jesus do in these circumstances? What would be His priority?”

This **new man** brings an end to worldly discrimination and distinction because it is based on a heavenly nature.

“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds. And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.”

Colossians 3:9-10.

Paul sees that the job of an Apostle therefore, is to provide not only the correct teaching that this is possible, but also the example to encourage the ordinary Believer to go for it. He encourages Timothy to do the same.

“Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12.

The true leader gets respect not by demanding obedience, but by personal right modelling. He should live Christ. As we've seen, Jesus is the model in living a sin-free life, obedience to the Father, baptism, being led by the Holy Spirit, resisting temptations, intimate communion and dependence on Father God, knowing the difference between God's voice and the enemy's, living by faith, motivated to enrich others, treating people equally and living righteously.

Being changed into Christ's image is not an exercise of personality or human effort, but it comes with focus – a heart attitude of looking to Jesus and focussing on Him as Paul did, as not only the author of our faith, but as its Perfecter [Hebrews 12:2]. This chapter has been concerned with the individual's change to become like Christ, but as the church as a whole moves in this way, then God's glory is revealed in the Bride.

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

2 Corinthians 3:18.

Question:

Is it God’s will for me to be like Christ?

Question:

Are you limiting God in your personal expectations?

Question:

What vision do you have for the Church and for the local body of Christians?

Question:

Are you prepared to follow the Lord Jesus in His choice to make others rich rather than grab at self-enrichment?

Question:

Are you living for the passing things of time or the things of eternity?

5. NEW MISSION: Go to the world

“And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he, which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.”

Acts 10:42.

In January last year we found ourselves on the platform at Brownsville Assembly of God, Pensacola. We were asked to prophesy into that mighty Holy Ghost movement. Personally I saw a vision of Isaiah chapter 6, and the Lord asking, “Who will go for us?” [Isaiah 6:8]. God wanted to send out His holy servants in the same way that He did the prophet after the cleansing vision of Isaiah chapter six. This was a prophetic challenge to which Brownsville AG responded, but I believe it was for the whole Church worldwide.

The call of God is to bless others and raise up a holy people, worshipping God and doing miracles in the world. It is also a *call* to move to a world lost in darkness. It is a **new day for a new people**. We believe this is the latest move of God for the Bride of Christ.

This chapter answers:

- “What is the alternative to Revival?”
- “What is God doing with the new wine?”
- “Are there any others doing this?”
- “What should be our response?”

(a) What is the alternative to Revival?

I would like to give my own eyewitness account of a revival in Ireland, as an example of the themes of this chapter.

When we first came to Ireland in the 1960s, we saw that almost all the churches preaching this full gospel were concentrated in the City of Belfast. During a mission in rural County Down, the Lord emphasised a new calling to speak to those outside this “Gospel circle.” We went to Newry Town Hall to conduct a series of meetings, although we were told that there had not been a major mission in that hall for over fifty years. One night, God did a miracle in healing a blind eye and over one hundred people came into the glorious light of this Full Gospel in a matter of days.

Suddenly we were involved in a move that covered the Catholic part of Ireland as well as the Protestant.

New believers with little knowledge of Scripture began to experience immediate speaking in tongues and the certainty that they were accepted of God through the immediate miracle of speaking in a new, supernatural prayer language. The whole of our country had a supernatural visitation to which we referred at the beginning of this book and in our account in “Obey the Vision”.

This move had the potential to heal Ireland by bringing a new unity based on the Holy Spirit and not tied to politics. People began to meet in groups as “Christians” no longer with the label of being “Protestant” or “Catholic”. Traditional attitudes were however, hard against it. Sadly I was present when many Bible-believing Pastors voted that this Charismatic outpouring was a “move of the Enemy.”

One aged Pastor who had an Apostolic ministry in Af-

rica, asked me if it had resulted in more Bibles being read. When I assured him this was so, he commented with dry humour: *“I believe the Devil must have been converted.”*

It is sad however, that the new move was rejected in such a widespread way. The world saw it as *“Christians fighting each other”*, while many innocent people have died in the continuing troubles.

There is a price to pay for refusing to recognize the work of the Spirit. Those that rejected Christ for Barabbas, suffered at the hands of the Romans in AD 70.

That is why it is so important to discern the plans and purposes of God’s new day. The alternative to Revival is often death and judgement.

(b) What is God doing with the new wine?

God is putting new wine into new wineskins. Where the wineskin will stretch, this is great; and is the literal meaning of the Greek word for “new” (“kainos”). They are not fresh in time, but different in **form and quality**. Too often, sadly, this has not happened and a split has developed. Be prepared to walk humbly but firmly onward with God whatever the opposition.

The Lord started among His own people, the Jews, but looked forward to “other sheep” which He would be given by God [John 10:16]. He could not immediately share this revelation, even with the twelve apostles, because of their prejudice [John 16:12].

Revival in the New Testament Church spread from the Jews to the Gentiles and the whole known world, but not without much opposition from traditional thinkers [Acts 15:7]. Nevertheless it was said of the first Apostles:

“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also”

Acts 17:6.

The purity of the early Apostles, was replaced by an alliance between Church and State during the period of the Emperor Constantine and the teaching of St Augustine. We have traced from that alliance, a period of “dark ages” when (with some few exceptions) personal knowledge of God and of salvation was lost, as was the teaching of the Scriptures. In an atmosphere of sin and fear, God and even Christ became remote and only to be approached by appeasement and by “saintly” intermediaries. With some exceptions, confident personal relationship with the love of God was at an all time low.

Martin Luther by revelation, found personal peace with God from the truth that man could be **justified** (reckoned righteous) by his faith in what Christ did on Calvary.

The invention of printing helped to spread the new truth right across Europe. God could be approached with confidence again by many folk.

At the same time, the emphasis swung to such an extent that “good works” were rubbished, and replaced by an emphasis on Grace and Faith. According to many Reformers, all mankind was in “total depravity” and babies were born in “original sin” deserving the wrath of God. John Knox is said to have addressed his daughter as a “Child of the Devil...” She pointedly replied: “Good morning, dad...”

Two hundred years later, John Wesley itinerated round his “class meetings” setting a standard of holy behaviour, based on total obedience to known light. This he taught however, as a “Baptism of love” or “fulness of the Spirit”. He based it on his Anglican experience of impartation of the Spirit by laying on hands at Confirmation, as a “Second Blessing” of “Total Sanctification.” His doctrine was followed by the Salvation Army and much of the Keswick Convention teaching.

Once more the Church took a step forward to the kind of purity which had been taught to the Bride of Christ in the book of Acts.

Unfortunately it also produced a two step experience to salvation, based on Church tradition. In Scripture, victory over the **power** of sin came at once with New Birth and was shown by Believers’ Baptism through immersion. Wrong practice and teaching on sprinkling babies made some holiness people miss this.

The Brethren Movement in the 19th Century brought back the truth of Believers’ Baptism and with it, the

separation of the Church from the world system. For them, the Church was made up of those who had experienced personal salvation by New Birth. They also gathered as a Body, in which ministry was open to all Believers. Unfortunately they did not see prophetic gifts continuing beyond the New Testament Church. Healing the sick and raising the dead were not for today.

At the turn of the 20th Century, the emphasis on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, led to the Pentecostal movement. This restored miracles and Divine healing on a world-wide basis. The more recent outpourings have led to the Fivefold Ministries of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers and Pastors and teachers [Ephesians 4:1ff] and an emphasis on Cell groups for development of Gifts.

This progress must also be balanced by the fact that the main opposition to the each new step has come from those in the last move. Those with new revelation began to regard themselves as having ultimate truth. We need to remain humble and follow the Lord rather than just one aspect of His truth.

There has always been a tension in trying to contain new wine in skins that will not expand. Just as the Catholic church opposed Luther's move, so the national church in turn, refused the challenge of Wesley. Methodists had problems with the emerging Salvation Army, to say nothing of the new Brethren Movement, or the Pentecostal outpouring in Gifts of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not limited however, by human reactions. He moves to a new people where He is rejected. Step by step, He is going onward and upward in revelation until the Church is ready as the Bride of Christ.

(c) Are there any others in this move?

At Pensecola, in 2000, I saw a picture of people falling like dominoes, under the power of God, following the move of God. This was confirmed later that year, when I saw an exciting example of how a part of the Church is preparing to reach out to the world and become ready for her Lord's return. Last year, a Pastor at Singapore received a call from God that the Bride of Christ was to be washed and anointed daily, like Queen Esther, for the coming of her Lord [Esther 2:12] to His wedding.

The whole church responded, with services that lasted the whole of Sunday and saw children and housewives, living in holiness and doing the miracles of the risen Lord.

They began to move in unity like the Army in Joel and miracles became common.

"They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded"

Joel 2:7-8.

Under the Pastor's encouragement, each member of the congregation, including the children, sought a word from God anointed by the Holy Ghost. Body Ministry of sharing became general at the meetings.

New converts were encouraged to obey the missionary call and go to China, where miracles began to happen. Services at Singapore, which started, early on Sunday morning, went right through to the evening, with a

break for a mid-day meal with people seeing and feeling the power of God, as well as several chapters of the Scriptures being read in each meeting.

Disciplined leadership led to a holy walk with God, while the anointing was such that folk began falling under the power of the Holy Spirit. Programmes of man, gave way to the humble participation of the whole Congregation.

Ordinary Christians began to do extraordinary miracles as their eyes were opened to the power of a living Christ today.

The move spread to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia and to Australia and was embraced by those who had left a life of sin and were hungry for all of God.

Amazing opposition came that year from those still inclined to see Revival as the visit of an anointed speaker, who would demonstrate the power of God and then leave people to their own devices. The impact of such a visit was therefore limited, and there was little expectation that the ordinary Believer could rise to God's calling.

This was foretold by Christ as happening in parable form. The Lord applied it to the Marriage Feast when He came back for His Bride.

The King had given an invitation to the wedding of His Son. The guests originally invited, made excuses. Only the outcasts were interested.

“Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as

many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. For many are called, but few are chosen”.

Matt 22:8-10.

When I saw this new army of God in action in Singapore, it was an inspiring sight to view God at work among ordinary believers of different ages and backgrounds.

(d) What should be our response?

When you see this new calling, you may have to go in a new way and be prepared to take off limitations from the Holy Spirit working in you.

The Church must move forward in close relationship with God. Slack biding, leads to back sliding. Once we stop going forward, we begin to go back.

Like the Jews at the time of Christ, we have seen religious people here in Ireland, preferring the way of violence to the power of the Holy Spirit. Folk today are still choosing Barabbas instead of Christ [Matthew 27:17-21]. The results in civil war, have led to the people of God paying a high price in bloodshed. The Lord is still weeping and praying over this reaction and its inevitable results in slaughter [Luke 19:41-44]. We need to remain humble and open to enable a blessing for all, including those not going to Church.

Be open to new revelation. Christ Himself brought a different message from that of John the Baptist – yet both were sent of God.

Be aware that a prophet with a new message may find experience unsought opposition when people hark back to previous ministries:

“Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive

it, this is Elias, which was for to come.”

Matthew 11:11-13.

The Lord has restored spiritual gifts, brought in cell groups and restored the ministries of Apostles and Prophets, but not every Christian will immediately welcome this fact, let alone a new vision of an army of God.

With the teaching for instance, that God is a good God, and heals the sick, how will the truth of a new Elijah ministry (before Christ's second coming) that engages in spiritual warfare and brings judgement, be accepted by those who have majored on God's love?

And yet the Bible prophesies this new outreach on a world basis for the time ahead:

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”

Revelation 11:3-6.

The truth is that there is a whole new world challenge by the power of Satan, which must be met by a new supernatural judgement gifting and this is still from a loving God.

When Moses tried to bring God's people out of Egypt, their condition got worse and he was even attacked by his own people, but his success was based on his ability to "out miracle" the magicians of the land and rescue God's people.

"And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward heaven; and it became a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast.

And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians."

Exodus 9:10ff.

Just so, today there is a great growth in the occult, and these new powers will be given to the church (as they were to Paul in his first Missionary journey [Acts 13:11-12]) in order to bring this Gospel to the world.

When the Lord first spoke to me about entering this ministry, it was from

"The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master".

Luke 6:40.

The disciple can be as his Master, but He will not give this power to those not prepared to pay the price of disciplined character [Luke 9:54].

Question:

Have you studied the verses mentioned here from Scripture?

Question:

What new things has the Lord shown you through this book? How can this teaching make you a *new person*?

Question:

What will following Christ mean to you?

6. NEW MORNING: A Summary Picture

“In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain did he fly.

3 And one cried with another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.

8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

[Isaiah 6:1]

It was a tragic day when President Abraham Lincoln

was shot in America. What restored the people's vision?

The Vice President came to the podium and announced that the Lord was still alive and on the Throne. He restored faith by a new vision of God where man seemed to have failed.

I trust this book has done the same for you, in opening the possibility of a new vision.

What, in summary, have we seen?

The disciple is no longer limited because he or she is human, "born from Adam" with "original sin". God is not bringing people to birth with a fixed destiny to defeat and damnation. He has, in fact, made a sacrifice of His Son on the altar, to bring cleansing and a new holiness for those He wants to go forth.

1. The Christian can today come into *new methods* of operation. Through supernatural *new birth* by the Holy Spirit, shown forth by total immersion Baptism, the disciple can rise to a new holy life. The Baptism into the Spirit also brings him into a foretaste of the power of Heaven, while he is here on earth. In fact only those moving under the direction and Gifts of the Holy Ghost will survive the tribulation yet to come to the Church. Meetings will be led by the Spirit and protected by supernatural miracles in places designated by God. This shows us the almighty power and ultimate victory of the Lord.
2. The disciple carries a *new message*. Resurrection rather than crucifixion is its main theme. This will inspire hope and faith. And will be accompanied by the signs of the raising of the dead by those who preach it.

This shows us that we have a God who can do the humanly impossible.

3. Significantly, the Disciple is also, **a new man**. Christ as God's Man, gave mankind a new standard to live by. Like the Apostle, He came to break all barriers and wrong concepts as to the potential of God's working in a human being. Over Church History, there has been a pushing forward to the restoration of the Divine Bride for Christ at His Second Coming. This shows the perfect cleansing power of what God has done for man so that He can put fire in his heart and a supernatural power in his words.
4. With this promise of being like the Master, there comes a **new mission**. This is a call to every single Christian and not limited to a few special people. Those who accept this call, however, will have to pay the same price as the Lord Himself, if they wish to obtain the same results. Like the prophet in Isaiah chapter 6, they will have to realize that not everyone will accept the message in the midst of what lies ahead. There needs to be a careful counting of the cost of this new day. Isaiah had been quite happy to prophesy "Woe" to sinners in the first five chapters of his book. Now, in the light of this fresh vision, he cries "Woe is me!" [Isaiah 6:5] The messenger must be prepared for a death in his own personal vision, for God to give the morning of a new day.

Not only was it obvious that Christ invited His followers to be like Himself, but they would have to pay the same price in fasting and prayer to bring deliverance to the world.

I took this very seriously at the beginning of my ministry over thirty years ago. The Lord met me in a series of encounters and graciously gave the series of visions noted in this book. As a result, we have been privileged to see God work round the globe with every miracle in the book of Acts.

Although Christ was born of the Spirit and Heaven was opened to Him during his Baptism at Jordan by John, He still had to spend time in prayer. There can be no easy way for the Disciple: he is not above His Master.

After a forty day fast, the Lord impressed upon me that, with the Baptism in the Spirit, all the necessary power was already there, but it would only be used in love. Compassion is the key to the right use of power [1 Corinthians 12:31].

Over the last thirty years, we have proved this to be true not only right round the world, but also in the dangerous and divided land of Ireland.

If you are prepared to follow the Lord all the way, He has promised you can be like Him.

Love is the more excellent way than merely desiring gifts for their own end. God always has power for the man or woman wishing to meet the needs of others, but it will take Gifts of the Spirit [Luke 11:6-12].

It is as simple as A, B, C.

Admit: your need to the Lord in prayer and your desire to bless others.

Believe: that our Lord has died to carry your sin and disease but is now alive. As you open your life afresh to him, He will come in. He stands outside the door of your life, and promises to enter immediately you open the door [Revelation 3:20]. Believe His promise, when you have done this. Remember that

He enters as guest but stays as Master.

Confess: your love for Him aloud by using your new prayer language. Open your mouth in praise and let His new words come out as the Holy Spirit gives them [Acts 2:4]. Then do not be ashamed to tell others of your commitment.

God always has new things he wishes to show His people. This not only makes life exciting, but also enables you to enjoy a new day to share with a needy world.

This is the Lord's personal invitation to you.

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely”.

Revelation 22:17.

Question:

Are you prepared to act today on this challenge?

Question:

Would you like to contact us for further teaching?

Keith Gerner can be contacted by email at:
AVMuk@aol.com

For further information on AVM, our vision and teaching materials:

On the worldwide web at: www.avmworld.co.uk

World depots for books, CDs and tapes:

- **AVM UK**, PO Box 1, Newcastle, Co. Down. N. Ireland. BT33 0BF, UK.
- **AVM USA**, PO Box 10574, Yakima, WA 98909, USA
- **AVM Australia**, 35 Collins Road, WILLETTON, WEST AUSTRALIA 6155
- **AVM Asia**, "HEPZIBAH" 350 Alexandra Road, SINGAPORE 159946

Other materials by Keith Gerner:

- **"Obey The Vision" Personal Testimony of Keith and Elsie** - (New Wine Publication, 157pp)
- **"Christians in the Last Days" Detailed Bible Teaching on Last Days Ministry** - (AVM Asia pub. 32 pages), 12 Revelation Lessons - also available on tape and CD.
- **"Spiritual Warfare"** - (AVM UK publication. 48 pages), 10 Matching Tape Lessons available
- **"Life in The Spirit" Baptism and Gifts of The Spirit Today** - (AVM UK publication. 40 pages) 12 Matching Lessons available on Tape and CD from AVM
- **"Divine Healing" Bible Practical Teaching on Healing the Sick in Body and Mind** - (AVM UK publication. 39 pages), 10 matching Lessons available on tape and CD.

ANNUAL IRISH CONFERENCE

Castlewellan Castle
Halloween Weekend.

INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS.

Only £45 sterling for the whole weekend
including food and accommodation

Book early to
AVM UK
PO. Box 1, Newcastle,
Co. Down, BT33 0BF,
Northern Ireland, UK. Europe

or by Credit card on website
www.avmworld.co.uk

“A New Day”

“What is God’s plan for the church today?” “How can the church impact the world?” “Can I really be like Jesus?” “Does the Bible have anything to say about this time in history?” “Isn’t there more to being a Christian?” This book sets out to answer these questions, shedding new light on the purpose of God, revealing your true potential in Christ and giving an example of vibrant church life and witness. This new day is a day of power for Christians, centred on a new vision of Christ!

About the Author

Keith Gerner (Audio Visual Ministries) is a regular teacher on the Christian radio broadcaster, UCB Europe, and travels the world to preach. He has been married for 40 years to Elsie and has three Christian children. His life story is published in “Obey the Vision”.

Roger Forster (Ichthus Fellowship) writes: “I recommend Keith to you as a man who will, sincerely and clearly, bring God’s word and heart through his ministry”