

**WHERE IS
THE
CHURCH
OF
GOD?**

**Answers Revealed in Inspired Scriptures,
Inspired Songs, and Inspired Writings of the Past**

Compiled and Arranged

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With Comments Added

“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

Acts 10:34-35

THE CHURCH CONSISTS OF ALL WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY RISEN WITH CHRIST

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. ... And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. **And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.**” Col. 3:1-3, 15-17. “As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” Gal. 6:16.

The church of God (which is the Israel of God – see 1 Pet. 2:5-10) is composed of citizens of the heavenly world – people who are “risen with Christ” and united with Him in spirit (see Phil. 3:20). The church of God is one divine “family in heaven and earth” (Eph. 3:15), unified in “one body” by the operation of “one Spirit” (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13). “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” 1 Cor. 12:4-7. This “house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15), is a kingdom of “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17). **It exists wherever the spirits of just men have found completeness IN CHRIST** and are unified by their “gathering together unto him” (2 Thess. 2:1). It is a place where the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).

Membership in the church of God has nothing to do with WHO WE ARE apart from a relationship with God Himself. It has nothing to do with our church lineage, how much we know about the Bible, about theology, or about church history. But it has everything to do with how we respond and measure our lives to the words of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” John 14:23. And don’t ever forget, **Jesus Christ is also a remover of “candlesticks” (churches), and he spews the “lukewarm” out of His mouth** (see Revelation, chapters 2 and 3).

Being a part of and remaining a part of the church of God is dependent upon whether or not we are, and continue to be, “**overcomers**.” Whether or not we overcome depends on how we continually respond to both the Word and the Spirit of God. “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” Rev.2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22. “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” James 1:22.

Both the Spirit and the Word are constantly speaking. Do we have hearing ears, and are we “doing” according to what the Spirit and the Word are saying? In Luke, chapter 8, after expounding the parable of the sower and the different kinds of ground on which the seed of the Word of God falls, Jesus warned us, “**Take heed therefore HOW ye hear:** for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.” Luke 8:18. There is a real possibility that we can be a hearer of the Word and end up a complete loser because of how we responded in our heart after we heard it. Hearing

God's Word is serious business! It is either a "savour of life," or a "savour of death" to our souls (2 Cor. 2:16). Whether the Word brings life or death to us all depends on "how" we hear it.

Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because **strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.** ... 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.** ... **Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, AND DOETH THEM, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:** And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And **every one that heareth these sayings of mine, AND DOETH THEM NOT, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:** And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." Matt. 7:13-14, 21, 24-27.

In Rev. 11:1-2 we read how that "a reed like unto a rod" was given to the apostle John and he was told by the angel to "Rise, and **measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein, but the court which is without the temple leave out.**"

Where people often get confused about the church is where they try to measure and include "the court" with the temple. The court is not part of the temple! God's temple is always measured and aligned with His Word. The glory of God is always present in His temple because His Spirit (His Word's own witness) inhabits it and directs all the administrations and operations therein. If we are not perceiving God's glory, we may be in the court instead of in the temple! Based on Psalm 27:4, one songwriter said:

"I ever would dwell in the temple of God,
Where His graces so rich unfold;
Contented to fill just the lowliest place,
That His beauty my eyes may behold."

– Clara M. Brooks

Satan enjoys nothing more than creating some smoke screen of **confusion in the court** that gives the impression to the onlookers that something went awry within the temple, God's church. However, we have but to investigate the pages of God's holy Word to determine where and in what condition God's church is. It is only by the rod of His Word that we can truly measure His temple, the altar, and them that worship therein. In the following pages, we are going to apply that measuring rod and, by the help of the Lord, **show you exactly where the church of God is today and HAS ALWAYS BEEN.**

"He (Jesus) saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And **Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.** And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And **I say also unto thee, That thou are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**" Matt. 16:15-18.

The church of Jesus Christ is not built on shifting sand! It is built on the rock-solid foundation of our personal knowledge of who He is and our commitment to hearing and doing His sayings, backed by His personal knowledge of us and our commitment to follow and obey His Word! Paul said, "... The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, **The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from**

iniquity.” 2 Tim. 2:19. “... If any man love God, the same is known of him.” 1 Cor. 8:3. “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them,” says Jesus, “he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.” John 14:21.

The church that Jesus manifests Himself to are those people who depart from iniquity by hearing His sayings and doing them, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” 1 Pet. 1:23. He told His disciples, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. ... If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide (continue) in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” John 15:3, 10. “If a man abide not (continue not) in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” (Verse 6.)

Apostle Paul said, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” Eph. 5:25-27.

This is the only kind of church that Jesus accepts or recognizes – a glorious church – one that is washed and cleansed, that is without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing – one that is holy and without blemish. The only way we can become or remain a part of such a blemish-free church, is to continually subject ourselves to “the washing of water by the word.” It is the Word that irons the “wrinkles” out of our lives, the blood of Christ that removes the “spots” and “blemishes,” and the Spirit that imparts to us Christ’s own holiness in their stead. John said, “And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water (the water of the Word), and the blood: and these three agree in one.” 1 John 5:8. We must have the witness of all three to be a part of the church of God.

Apostle Paul also tells us that, “through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Eph. 2:18. In other words, the Holy Spirit gives all mankind access to God through Jesus. Then he goes on to say, “Now therefore **ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints (the holy people), and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.**” Eph. 2:19-22

Apostle Peter adds just a little more dimension to Paul’s description of the church when he says in 1 Pet. 2:5-6, 9: “Ye also, **as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.** Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. ... But **ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;** that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

How beautiful! The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (who were directly inspired by the Holy Spirit in the writing of Scriptures), Jesus Christ Himself is the

precious chief corner stone of the building, chosen and laid by God, and the whole church structure is composed of living stones who have been “fitly framed together” by conformation to Jesus’ life-giving Word. God Himself inhabits the building through His Spirit, and His Spirit directs the spiritual sacrifices of the “holy priesthood,” making them acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. According to Rev. 1:5-6, these “kings and priests,” or “royal priesthood,” are **all who are washed from their sins in Jesus’ own blood**. Thus, they are identical with the living stones that Peter says make up the “spiritual house,” the “chosen generation,” the “holy nation,” and “peculiar people.” **What a house! What a generation of people! What a nation – a nation of kings and priests!**

Jesus warned the leaders of the Jewish nation, “Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? [Psa. 118:22-23] Therefore say I unto you, **The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.**” Matt. 21:42-43. “And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.” Matt. 8:11. Even before Jesus said this, John the Baptist, His forerunner, told the Pharisees and Sadducees, “And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that **God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.**” Matt. 3:9.

Apostle Paul explains, “... they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but **the children of the promise are counted for the seed.**” Rom. 9:6b-8. “**Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.** And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. ... Now to Abraham and **his seed** were the promises made. **He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. ... And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**” Gal. 3:7-8, 16, 29. “**Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.**” Gal. 4:28. “What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but **the election hath obtained it**, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written [Isa. 29:10], God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.” Rom. 11:7-8. “**For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter**, whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Rom. 2:28-29.

This is that “chosen generation” that Peter wrote about. Again, Paul says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he **hath chosen us in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. ... That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might **gather together in one all things in Christ**, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him” Eph. 1:3-4, 10. “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ... There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Gal. 3:26, 28. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Gal. 6:15.

Note that the Word of God declares **the kingdom of God to be “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”** Rom. 14:17. Prophesying about the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost would be outpoured, Isaiah said, “Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? **Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?** for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” Isa. 66:8. Turning to Acts, the second chapter, we find the fulfillment of this prophecy: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. ... And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Acts. 2:41, 47b.

The day of Pentecost marked the birth of the “holy nation” to which the kingdom of God was given instead of the nation of old literal Israel. A nation was “born at once” that day! That very day, the kingdom of God came “with power” (Mark 9:1), when the Holy Spirit came down from Heaven and set in order the “house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1 Tim. 3:15b. The Lord has been adding living stones to this spiritual house, this holy priesthood, this holy nation ever since. “The blessing of Abraham” has “come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:14). **That same Holy Spirit that He sent down on the day of Pentecost is still here, directing all the operations of this holy nation, the seed of Abraham, the church of God! This nation brings forth the real fruit of God’s kingdom!** It is not a “denomination,” but it is a “good tree” (Matt. 7:17-18), growing out of a holy “root” (Isa. 11:10; Rom. 11:16), from which no evil fruit has ever been produced. See Gal. 5:22-23, 1 Cor. 13:4-8, Jas 3:17-18, etc. for verification of just what kind of fruit this tree brings forth. Wherever you find these fruits, you can be sure you’ve found **THE ISRAEL OF GOD – THE CHURCH OF GOD.**

Concerning New Testament Israel, God spoke through His prophet Isaiah, saying, “Thy people also shall be **ALL RIGHTEOUS: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and A SMALL ONE A STRONG NATION:** I the LORD will hasten it in his time.” Isa. 60:21-22. “... That they might be called **trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD,** that he might be glorified.” Isa. 61:3b. These “trees of righteousness,” or “branches” as Jesus called them, are all grafted in to the “true vine” that we read about in John 15: 1-8. That is why they are “all righteous” and bring forth the fruit of God’s kingdom. In Christ, they are the real seed of Abraham.

But, speaking to the elders of the church of God at Ephesus, Apostle Paul said, “**Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.** For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Acts 20:28-30. Apostle Peter also warned the church in general, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” 2 Pet. 2:1-2.

Sadly, these prophecies have been fulfilled to the uttermost over the past 2000 years of the Gospel Dispensation. Nevertheless, the foundation of God still stands as sure as when it was

laid, and the church of God still stands unmoved and unshaken. It is “a kingdom which cannot be moved” (Heb. 12:28). Therefore, we can join with the Holy Spirit-inspired songwriters and sing:

“I love the church of God, The house that Jesus built,
And purchased by the precious blood, For us He freely spilt.

Upon the sure foundation, Not laid by human hand,
The glorious rock, Christ Jesus, The church shall ever stand.”

– A. J. Kilpatrick

“Crowns and thrones may perish, Kingdoms rise and wane,
But **the church of Jesus Constant will remain;**
Gates of hell can never ‘Gainst that church prevail;
We have Christ’s own promise, And that cannot fail!”

– Sabine Baring-Gould

“And the LORD said, Behold, **there is A PLACE BY ME, and THOU SHALT STAND UPON A ROCK:** And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that **I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand** while I pass by.” Exodus 33:21-22.

“A wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord, A wonderful Savior to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock, Where rivers of pleasure I see.

**He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock, That shadows a dry, thirsty land:
He hideth my life in the depths of His love, And covers me there with His hand”**

– Fanny J. Crosby

Think about it! There is a place beside the Lord! It is accessible through His mercy and grace! We can share a place in His house, His temple, and behold His beauty!

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Eph. 2:4-6.

“I’m sitting with Jesus, oh, wonderful grace! **With Him I am reigning in heavenly place;**
I’m filled with His glory, transported above, Yes, **sitting with Jesus in heavenly love.”**

– D. S. Warner

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Rev. 3:21. We can become spiritually “risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” (Col. 2:12).

“Yes, all glory be to Jesus! By His might I overcame,
In the fullness of His blessing, On His throne of love I reign.”

– D. S. Warner

HOW CAN I FIND ZION, THIS PLACE OF SPIRITUAL BLESSING?

“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there.” Isa. 35:8-9.

“Yes, my soul has come to Zion, On the high and holy way,
And I’ve seen the darkness flying, Driven by the light of day.”

– D. S. Warner

“They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, **Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD** in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.” Jer. 50:5. “**But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.**” 1 Cor. 6:17. “Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and **thy land shall be married.**” Isa. 62:4. (Read the whole chapter!)

“**I am dwelling on the mountain, Where the golden sunlight gleams**
O’er a land whose wondrous beauty Far exceeds my fondest dreams;
Where the air is pure ethereal, Laden with the breath of flow’rs,
They are blooming by the fountain, ‘Neath the amaranthine bow’rs.

“**Is not this the land of Beulah [land of the married to Jesus], Blessed, blessed land of light,
Where the flowers bloom forever, And the sun is always bright?”**

– Authorship attributed to William Hunter

“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” Heb. 12:22-24.

“Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. ... **GOD IS KNOWN IN HER PALACES FOR A REFUGE.** ... Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For **this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.**” Psa. 48:1, 3, 12-14.

“Have you walked about Mount Zion? ‘Round her towers great and tall?
Have you seen her mighty bulwarks, Have you seen her shining walls? (Isa. 26:1)

“This fair City is Mount Zion, ‘Tis the New Jerusalem;
‘Tis the Church of God, He bought her, She’s the fair Bride of the Lamb.

“Walk about Mount Zion, brother, See the Bride in spotless white;
With her name enrolled in Heaven, **She is walking in the light.**”

– Ulysses Phillips

**“Jerusalem, O Jerusalem, Blessed city where no darkness ever falls;
Jerusalem, O Jerusalem, Joy and peace forever be within thy walls.”**

– D. O. Teasley

**“There’s a city bright and fair for the saints of God to share,
‘Tis a city coming down from God above
Into souls redeemed from sin, who are citizens within,
Living out the blessed fruits of peace and love.**

**“In Jerusalem the new are the tried and faithful few,
Who are saved from sin and wholly sanctified;
‘Tis a city built above All whose hearts are filled with love,
Pure and holy, walking by the Savior’s side.**

**“Many think it good to be old Jerusalem to see,
In that land where strife and wickedness abound;
But a brighter city fair, that with nothing can compare,
IN THE BLESSED HOLY SPIRIT WE HAVE FOUND. ***

**“In the New Jerusalem we are living now with Him
Who laid down His life for us and rose again;
Hid away with Christ we see grace and peace abundantly,
And with Him o’er sin and evil daily reign.”**

– Leslie C. Busbee

*This truth will become yet clearer on the following pages. The substance of this new, heavenly Jerusalem of the New Testament is found **IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**. It is the Holy Spirit who brings down from Heaven all that creates the church of God, and it is by the Holy Spirit that God’s church is organized, animated, and sustained. The Spirit is Heaven’s lifeline.

“And it shall come to pass in the last days [the Gospel Dispensation], that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Isa. 2:2-3.

So, from God’s perspective, what and where is His church? Does He accept or acknowledge as a part of **“the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the firstborn,”** anything less than He has revealed it to be in His own Word? The following was the conclusion of a man of God who diligently considered these questions 138 years ago. Was he right?

WHERE IS THE CHURCH OF GOD?

“It is not any of the existing sects, neither is it all of them together. **God’s church is not separated in spirit. She is one in Christ, wherever you find Her.** Men, by the help of the devil, have sought by many inventions to divide Her, and they have succeeded in their work of deceiving themselves, and many others. The devil has been trying to make the people believe that the worldly, proud, jealous, formal, lukewarm, and abominable divisions, called churches, compose the Church of God.

“**God’s church is composed of all who are His indeed.** Now we find many of God’s dear children inside these human enclosures, but thank God, **THEY ARE NOT OF THEM, THOUGH THEY BE IN THEM.** God’s church is not a sect, nor a party, but **She is composed of all those who are His indeed, either inside or outside of these walls or divisions.** Glory to God! But God has promised to gather His people from all places where they have been scattered in the ‘dark and cloudy day.’ – Read the 34th chapter of Ezekiel.

“‘Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins.’ – Read the 18th chapter of Revelation [also 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 7:1]. You can see that many of God’s children are in bondage somewhere, but God is going to deliver them, unite them, purify them, and try them, before the coming of the Lord. – See Daniel 12th chapter. ...That you, my dear Christian brethren, may see the light, and walk in it, is the sincere prayer of your true friend and brother in Christ. Amen!”

– H. R. Jeffrey, *The Gospel Trumpet*, July 1, 1885

A GREAT MISTAKE

“‘The Church of God is today courting the world.’ – Dr. Howard Crosby.

“Is that so? Can it be possible that the divine organism of which Christ is the Head, the church which is His body, that holy nation and peculiar people which have been joined to the Lord, redeemed from all iniquity, and washed in His blood from all sin, and clothed in her pure raiment of righteousness – is it possible, I say, that she would reach down her snow-white hand from her heavenly place in Christ Jesus, and woo the companionship of this drunken, sin polluted world, that lieth in iniquity? Would not that kind of mating be a case of extreme amalgamation, and of unequal yoking together? We supposed that courtship always implied some degree of affinity, and adaptation. But ‘what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?’ Is it possible that such direct antipodes are seeking a matrimonial union?

“Surely this Dr. has made a grave mistake! He further says, ‘The ball, the theatre, nude and lewd art, social luxuries with all their loose moralities, are making inroads into the sacred enclosure of the Church.’ Well, that would be an awful sight to behold! But how can these things be? Where is there a door that will admit such things ‘into the sacred precincts of the church?’ Christ says, ‘I am the door,’ and there is no other. Can men pack all such abominations into Jesus Christ? Does He admit such stuff? Surely the Dr. has widely missed the mark again!

“Again he says, ‘It is the old trick of the devil,’ this union with the world. ‘The Jewish Church struck on this rock, the Roman Church was wrecked on the same, and the Protestant Church is fast reaching the same doom.’

“Well then, this ‘Protestant Church’ cannot be the church of God. For while the former is fast reaching its doom, no ‘old trick of the devil,’ nor all ‘the gates of hell’ shall ever prevail against the latter. Surely there is room for the sounding of the TRUMPET of God’s truth, while [many] are still in such ignorance as to what the church of God is. Had the man said that *Babylon was courting the world*, it would have been some nearer the truth: but not exactly the straight thing either. For the courtship of Babylon and the world has terminated in the matrimonial bond long ago, though they are still celebrating their union with numerous feasts of revelry.”

– D. S. Warner, *The Gospel Trumpet*, June 1, 1884

A QUOTE FROM DARIUS GIBSON (A Minister of the Church of God in the early to mid-1900s)

“Almost every movement that you can find over the globe, they’ll tell you that it’s not what it used to be. Thank God, I want to say tonight, the church of God is what it used to be! It hasn’t failed any. It’s not lost out. ... I’ve got a wife at home. ... When we married, she had every member on her body. ... She’s not lost a one of her members yet! ... She’s got every member that she had when I got her. The church of God has got every gift, and all that she had when He started her out. ... **She’s the same today.** ... The gates of hell cannot prevail against her. It’s the home of the soul! ... I’ve heard different ones say, ‘Oh, it’s lost out!’ You might lose out. You might do this. You might do that. And you’ll hear some say, ‘Well, we’re not where we used to be.’ Just say, **‘I’m not where I used to be!’** That makes it sound better. **‘I’m just not where I used to be. I’ve not got that love in my heart that I used to have. I’ve not got that first love in my heart. I’ve not got that joy in my heart.’** ... If that’s the case, just say, ‘I haven’t got it.’ Listen here! **In the church of God, in Mount Zion – that’s the home of the soul – everything is moving on fine! ...”**

– from a recorded message he preached around 1950 A.D.

The words Bro. Gibson said here are true! The church, Christ’s bride, is the same yesterday, today, and forever because her Maker is so. Her Maker is her husband (Isa. 54:5), and He makes her in His own image.

“Church of God, ‘beloved city,’ Thou art of celestial mold;
Lo! from God and out of Heaven, Came the city of pure gold.
Stones of jasper, clear as crystal Is the building of thy wall;
And the Lamb, thy light forever, **Jesus, Jesus, all in all.**

“God’s own holiness within thee, His own beauty on thy brow;
Glorified in His own image, This thy wondrous portion NOW.
In thee dwells the triune fullness, Blessing all thy pilgrim days;
All around thee His salvation, And before thee gates of praise.

**“Church of God, in Heaven written, Thine the risen life of Christ,
And the treasures to thee given, Never, never can be priced.
Far above this world’s confusion, Walking close by Jesus’ side,
Leaning on His loving bosom, Is the church, His chosen bride.”**

– D. S. Warner

If we think “the church” is not what it used to be or what it should be, we obviously have placed our focus on something that’s not the church! We’re probably focusing on “the court which is without the temple,” and trying to measure it! We’re not viewing what God views and recognizes as His sacred temple – His church! We need to turn our eyes upward to where He has built His church! **“Far above this world’s confusion, walking close by Jesus’s side, leaning on His loving bosom, is the church, His chosen bride!”** Maybe we are not personally there, or maybe the people we worship with are not there. We may find ourselves in a spiritual climate where we don’t see the church from this perspective. We may be spiritually down on the mountainside where the mists and fogs of human reasoning becloud our vision. But if we simply come on up to the summit of Mount Zion where the glory of the Lord is, we’ll begin to view the church, and all things else, from a different perspective.

**“I can see far down the mountain, Where I wandered weary years.
Often hindered on my journey By the ghosts of doubts and fears;
Broken vows and disappointments Thickly sprinkled all the way,
But the Spirit led unerring, To the land I hold today.”**

Zion is indeed “the land of Beulah, blessed, blessed land of light, where the flowers bloom forever, and the sun is always bright!” The climate is glorious on the summit of Mount Zion! The Lamb is the light there. There are no confusing mists or fogs there, and “the air is pure ethereal, laden with the breath of flowers.” Allow **“the Spirit”** to lead you higher! He’ll lift you “up to a heavenly place,” as songwriter L. E. Brooks said, and flood your soul “each day with His grace.” You’ll then find the church **IS INDEED** everything that her Maker created her to be.

**“Without spot and blameless, O Savior, What a glorious church Thou hast built!
For this Thou didst patiently suffer, For this was Thy blood freely spilt.**

**“Without spot and blameless, so holy, See the church in her beauty sublime;
She lives on the bright hills of glory, She reigns over sin all the time.**

**“Without spot and blameless He bought her, In the likeness of Heaven above;
From depths that were sinful He sought her, And filled her with infinite love.**

**Without spot and blameless, my brother, She lives ‘neath the all-cleansing blood;
In Heaven and earth is no other, Her builder and maker is God.”**

– B. E. Warren

**“Out of the shadows hanging Dark over the valley of fear,
We mount up to Zion’s glory, As crystal eternally clear.”** – D. S. Warner

A QUOTE FROM H. M. RIGGLE
(Published A. D. 1903 in *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary*)

“Though great and popular counterfeits of the church have been formed on earth, which are very mutable in all their elements; and though it is also true that the real membership of God’s church may increase and decrease in numbers, and during the middle ages they were trodden down, and so worn out by the persecuting powers of darkness, that but few remained on earth to keep alive the holy seed: yea, and though it be also true that the truth itself, and nearly all the doctrine and principles of the church of the living God, were trodden under foot by the adversary and almost entirely hidden out of sight beneath the traditions and inventions of men, yet it still remains true that **every doctrinal element of the divine structure is eternal and unchangeable**. Many factious bodies have arisen since Christ purchased and founded his holy community, but, ‘The portion of Jacob is not like them; for he is the former of all things.’ Jer. 51:19. **The fold of Christ is the same thing on earth to-day that she was before the first ‘molten image’ of sectism was evolved from strife and spiritual ignorance**. We have seen that God is the builder and maker of the church; and the wise man says, ‘I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.’ Eccl. 3:14, 15.

“... **No power short of the throne of God can change one thing in the divine church. ‘Nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it. . . . That which hath been [in the church at the beginning] is now; and that which is to be [in the church in all future time and eternity] hath already been [in it from the beginning]; and God requireth that which is past.’**

“... The same purity, unity, glory and power and perfect peace that God put in his church, are yet there, though only appropriated by few men on earth. The same miraculous gifts that the Lord set in the body have never been taken out. Gifts of wisdom and knowledge, healing and discerning of spirits, and the gift of casting out devils, these are all yet in the church ... and *awaiting the faith once delivered to the saints to grasp and develop them into use*. There is not one non-essential incorporated into the Word of God, nor yet one element that was to drop out after the death of the apostles, or at any subsequent time. ... **So we repeat that the church as it stood in its primitive glory and unity exists unchanged to-day.**

“... Upon the erroneous supposition that the church Christ built was entirely destroyed, Mormon fiction has built her house. **They argue that the apostasy destroyed the church, hence it became necessary for man to build another; and that under divine inspiration Joseph Smith reestablished the church of God upon earth. But if we can prove that the church of God was never destroyed, but exists to-day, we establish the fact that the Mormons*, with all their modern sects, are but human frauds imposed upon the people.**

[*Note: There are many others today, besides Mormons, who promote this same ideology and extol their own special leaders who they say are reestablishing or “restoring” God’s true church on earth. Mark well, dear reader, that **ALL who proclaim such a message are frauds and do not have a divine revelation of what the true church is.**]

“In Daniel 2:44 the New Testament church was prophesied of as a kingdom set up by the God of heaven, ‘which shall never be destroyed: . . . and it shall stand forever.’ This accords with the language of Jesus in Matthew 16:18: ‘And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ These solemn declarations of Heaven’s truth are sufficient to establish the fact that the church Christ built will stand forever. If the gates of hell could not prevail against it, it exists today. **Yes, dear reader, that divine temple exists just as solid, and firm, and shines with as much luster and brilliancy as in days of yore.** Though it has waded through bloody seas of martyrdom, and for centuries has been largely hid from human view under ecclesiastical rubbish of men, yet **IT NEVER WAS DESTROYED. NEVER! ...**

“Let us briefly view the elements which compose this temple. **Christ is its head** (Col. 1:18), **foundation** (1 Cor. 3:11), **door** (John 10:7, 9), **and governor** (Isa. 9:6, 7). **Its walls are salvation** (Isa. 26:1). **Its law, the truth** (Gal. 6:2). **Its bond of union, the love of God** (Col. 2:2). **Its membership, the saved of all nations.** Now then it will be seen at a glance that, to destroy the church, you would have to destroy its foundation (Christ), which the apostle Paul declares ‘standeth sure;’ its head (Christ), who is ‘alive forevermore;’ its door, which ‘no man can shut;’ its law, which ‘endureth forever;’ its walls (salvation); yea, all the people of God who compose it. But **since there never has been a time but what God had a people, and all the above elements are eternal, THE CHURCH OF GOD IS INDESTRUCTIBLE. Its walls of salvation no man can batter down!**

“But one phase of the church went into apostasy – **the people** – and **not all of them.** For there were millions who, rather than bow down and acknowledge the ungodly doctrines of popery, sealed their testimony with their blood. **The foundation, head, door, government, unity, purity, etc., of the church never went into apostasy; and in these last days as we come out of apostasy, we simply return to those primitive elements again. We come to the same Zion which Christ established in the beginning.** The church of God is a spiritual institution. 1 Pet. 2:5, ‘Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.’ Its door of admission is a spiritual door. Jesus says, ‘I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.’ John 10:9. ‘For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.’ 1 Cor. 12:13. Its foundation is spiritual, ‘For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.’ 1 Cor. 3:11. ‘That spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.’ 1 Cor. 10:4. **Thus we cover every specification of the New Testament church and find it wholly divine, spiritual, and eternal.** Therefore, **it is utterly impossible for men to build an organization like it, because they cannot manufacture spiritual things.** This church is the finest organism the world has ever seen. It is truly worthy of God himself. It is His temple, in which He dwells; therefore, there is nothing so august as this church, seeing it is the temple of God. Nothing so worthy of reverence, seeing God dwells in it. Nothing so ancient, since it existed before all modern religious sects. And, thank God! there is nothing so solid, since Jesus is its only foundation and it is declared to be the pillar and ground of the truth. There is nothing more closely united and indivisible, since all hearts are knit together by the perfect love of God, and Christ is its cornerstone. Nothing more lofty, since it reaches as high as heaven. Nothing so regular and well proportioned, since Christ and the Holy Spirit are the architects. Nothing so beautiful, since it is adorned with Christ’s holiness. Nothing so brilliant, since Christ is its light. Nothing so strong, since salvation is its walls and bulwarks. There is no institution in the world so spacious, since it is spread over the

whole world, and takes in all who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. No institution so spiritual, since **all its members are living stones, animated and inhabited by the Holy Spirit**. No institution so lasting, since it is destined to stand forever. In it the poor, the wretched, and distressed of every nation find shelter. **It is the place where God does his marvelous works, where He is to be sought and found, and worshiped**. Such is the sanctuary of the New Testament. She is a strong tower, into which we have run and are safe.”

– Excerpted from *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary*, pages 273 – 279.

H. M. Riggle saw “the church” just like Darius Gibson saw it and like God’s Word declares it to be! Psalm 90:1 says, “LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place IN ALL GENERATIONS.” Since the church of God is non-existent outside the Lord, her Maker, and He is eternal and unchangeable, so is His building, the church. Note the words of H. M. Riggle, “**The foundation, head, door, government, unity, purity, etc., of the church never went into apostasy.**” This is so true! When movements change their course, the substance that constitutes the church does not change. Too often, men turn their focus *on people*, or “movements,” and think that has something to do with the direction the church is going. It does not! **The church is a constant!** Not realizing this, some suppose there is a need for another movement – another message to steer the church in the right direction or correct the direction the majority of the people are going. This is a great mistake! **The real church can be found in the same place she has been IN ALL GENERATIONS – HIDDEN AWAY WITH CHRIST IN GOD!** All we have to do is just come back to and stay in that “place” and we’ll discover the church of God. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Psa. 91:1. This is where God’s church is found. This is the home of the soul. It is the same in all generations and never relocates. **Christian fellowship is not produced by church confederations but happens as a spontaneous result of Christians drinking of the same Spirit** (1 Cor. 12:13).

WHAT DID THE REFORMATION OF THE 1880s RESTORE?

Someone says, “I thought you believed that the Evening Light Reformation of the 1880s *restored* the church of God.” No, you misunderstood! **The 1880s reformation RESTORED CERTAIN BIBLE TRUTHS to the already existing church of God** – truths that had been buried beneath the ecclesiastical rubbish of apostate and humanly-controlled church organizations. Those truths had been there in the Scriptures all along, just waiting to be grasped and put into practice again as in the olden days. The Evening Light Reformation revealed to the church (the saved in Christ among all denominations) the path of freedom from “man-rule.” What was especially restored to the church in the 1880s was a Biblical understanding of the privilege of all the saved to separate themselves from every yoke of ecclesiastical bondage and **find their identity in JESUS ALONE – to be guided and led by the Word and the Spirit of God.** All the substance of the divine church is found within those parameters, and when all hindering elements are cast aside and discarded, **when the Word is fully obeyed and the Spirit is allowed to lead, the church discovers the glory of Zion!**

Allie Fisher, a sister in Christ who was directly involved in the reformation of the 1880s and assisted in the writing of several of the songs from that era, had this to say about it:

“... We saw God did not intend that anyone should be exalted as the head of this reformation, as had been the case in other reforms. This thing was not done in a corner, but the movement spontaneous, and simultaneous, and Christ the headstone we were extolling as we came out of Babylon (sect confusion), bringing the headstone, crying, ‘Grace, grace unto it!’ [Zechariah 4:7.] This is as it should be, for Christ is the Head of all things to the body, which is His church.”

“... Let us always be careful to remember that the Lord is the Head of all things to the church and we shall not make the mistake that brought about the apostasy in the beginning – by exalting man until finally the Holy Spirit and Word were entirely crowded out and man took the reins of government into his own hands and the blessed, precious privilege of looking to the Lord for all things became a thing of the past, or unknown to the generations following. So let us exalt Jesus only, as Brother Warner wrote: ‘We are coming, hallelujah! We are coming home to God; Jesus only we’re beholding, who has washed us in His blood.’”

– A quote from the *Autobiography of Allie R. Fisher*

The Word and the Spirit bring all who yoke up with Jesus together into a divinely administrated body. The truth of God is eternal and unchanging and, as Apostle John says, it “shall be with us forever” (2 John 2). Jesus said, **“If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”** John 14:23. This Shekinah glory is enjoyed by every soul with whom these heavenly Guests make their abode. Whenever people access this sacred fellowship with the Father and the Son through the indwelling Holy Spirit, it produces the same effect – it leads them to **ZION**, the native home of the soul. They can sing with D. S. Warner,

“I’m at home, blessed home, I am safe in the bosom divine;
Oh, the home of the soul, thy Heaven of glory is mine!”

“We are only at home in the bosom of God, on earth or in Heaven above;
Every one who would enter must pass through the blood and reign in the kingdom of love.”

This was what the reformation of the 1880s restored to the people of God – an understanding of where “HOME” is.

“Thy children are gathering home, with joy they are gathering home;
From all the divisions in which they were scattered, Thy children are gathering home.”

– C. W. Naylor

Home never did go anywhere, but God’s children have sometimes wandered away from home, or the understanding of what and where home is, and have needed to be pointed in the right direction. “They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, **Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.**” Jer. 50:5. **That’s where they find home – joined to the Lord in a perpetual covenant!** In joining the Lord, they leave the confusion of the churches and religions of men behind. The Lord Himself then becomes their Organizer by the administrative functions of His own Spirit who leads them into an understanding of God’s will as it is revealed in His holy Book. The Spirit guides every member of Christ’s body in understanding the mind of Christ, the Head. (See John 16:14; 1 Cor. 2:9-16).

**“Back to the blessed old Bible, Back to the city of God,
Back to the oneness of Heaven, Back where the faithful have trod.
Back from the land of confusion, Passing the wrecks and the creeds;
Back to the light of the morning, Jesus our Captain leads.**

“Back to the blessed old Bible, Leaving confusion and strife;
Fleeing from Babel to Zion, Back to the joy of our life.
Over the mountains we wandered, Looking in vain for the right;
Now in the evening we’ve found it, **Truth of the Gospel light.**

“Back to the blessed old Bible, Back at the Master’s call,
Back to the words of our Savior, Loving, obeying them all.
Back to the blessed old Bible, Back to the light of its Word;
Be on our banners forever, ‘Holiness unto the Lord.’”

– D. O. Teasley

“The many ways of strife Are leading souls astray;
The Word of God is life, The truth, the way.

“No human creed or church Will answer in that day,
When God each heart will search; Then **choose HIS WAY.**

“There is but one true way; He’ll save your soul from sin’s control THE BIBLE WAY!”

– B. E. Warren

“Oh, precious Bible! burning words from Heaven, We’ll ever cherish thee in our heart;
Sweet is the counsel by thy pages given: On life’s dark ocean our only chart.

“Oh, precious volume! only in thy pages We read the duty of all our race;
Only thy sunbeams, shining though the ages, Reveal the wonders of saving grace.

**“This Book of Heaven shall endure forever; And from its wisdom we’ll never turn;
Weighed in its balance all the creeds that sever, Are only stubble, ere long to burn.**

**“Dear Book of mercy, on thy sure foundation We build a dwelling place for our soul;
Hearing and doing all thy revelation, It stands unshaken, though billows roll.**

**“Blessed Bible! blessed Bible! Joyful tidings from our home;
Thou art the rock of everlasting ages; Hope of eternal bliss at Heaven’s throne.”**

– D. S. Warner

**“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!
What more can He say than to you He hath said – To you who for refuge IN JESUS have fled?**

– George Keith

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Tim. 3:16-17



“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
2 Tim. 2:15

ZION IS A HOME OF SPIRITUAL COMPLETENESS, SPIRITUAL REST, SECURITY AND SAFETY!

“Glorious things are spoken of thee, Thou city of God, thou home of the free;
Fair as the morning, clear as the sun, Great army with banners, conquering one.

“Glorious things I cannot declare Are found in thy courts so wondrously fair;
Those who remain within thee shall rest, O Zion of God, thou home of the blest.

“Glorious things shine forth in thy light, Thou city so fair, no sorrow can blight;
Blessings so rich, unnumbered, untold, More precious are they than diamonds and gold.

**“Glorious things DIVINELY COMPLETE Within thee are found – thy love is replete;
Down through the ages, spotless and pure, Thy God hath preserved thee, thou art secure.**

“Zion of God, thou home of the free, Washed in the blood, I’m dwelling in thee;
Glorious home, oh, gather us there, Church of the firstborn, thou art so fair.”

– B. E. Warren

The glory and the *divine completeness* of the church is found in her connection to Jesus Christ, her eternal Head. The church is indeed “complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power,” because she is **“buried with him in baptism,”** and **“risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead”** (See Col. 2:8-12). The only thing we must do to discover the location and condition of the church is to simply become personally **buried with Christ in baptism and raised with Him through the faith of the operation of God!** (Note: that baptism is more than a water baptism – it is a spiritual baptism! Water baptism is but an outward symbol of what is meant to be an inward spiritual reality.) Has your “old man” been crucified and buried and has your soul been raised up to sit with Him in the heavenly places? Can you say with songwriter Ulysses Phillips,

“A resurrection, I confess, has taken place within my breast;
I’ve been awakened from the dead, And now I live with Christ instead?”

It is only in this spiritually quickened, heavenly place in Christ that you’ll discover the church – Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of other just men made perfect – complete in Christ Jesus. (See Heb. 12:22-24.) Remember, the Lord has promised, **“There is a place by me!”** **He is now freely offering that place to YOU AND ME!** When we find that place, we also become united with others who have found it. Our purified souls just simply blend in perfect harmony with the spirits of other just men who have found their completeness in Christ. That’s how God builds His church.

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, **That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the**

fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, **Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.**" Eph. 3:14-21.

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But **we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.**" 2 Cor. 4:6-7.

All the power we ever need working within us is now freely accessible to us in Jesus Christ, who is "the head over all things to the church," and "the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (See Eph. 1:17-23.) Through him we all have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (Eph. 2:18.) All we need to do is simply put our faith in the "operation of God," cease from our own works (Heb. 4:10), and let God do His (Eph. 2:10) through the power and might of His Spirit in our inner man. **This is how we enter into HIS REST.**

"Resting in Jesus, oh, it is precious, Making the wounded heart perfectly whole;
I have believed it, truly received it, Wonderful, glorious rest of the soul.

"Resting in Jesus, sorrowing ceases, Since I have found an abundance of grace;
Trusting each moment in the atonement, Sitting with Him in the holiest place."

– Thomas Nelson

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but **the body [substance] is of Christ.**" Col. 2:16-17. "For **the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**" Rom. 14:17.

**"God is in her, hallelujah! And she never shall be moved!
Jesus Christ is her foundation, And her righteousness approved.
All her law is love; and freedom Is her balmy atmosphere.
Far more sweet and blest than Eden, Is her walk with Jesus here.**

"Not a spirit of dissension, Nor discordant voice we hear.
For no alien ever entered, Nor can ever enter here.
Christ the door, and His salvation Is the way to enter in.
And through Him there's no admission, Without leaving every sin.

**"Jesus is our Head and Ruler, And His Word our only guide.
And His gentle Spirit leader – He our peace, a constant tide,
Flowing in our tranquil bosom, Where is reared the mystic throne
Of the King of peace Eternal, Where He dwells and reigns alone.**

**"O the glorious hope of Zion! O the riches of her grace!
Ever happy are the people Who abide in such a place.
God is over all in Glory, And is through them great and small,
And He's in them by His Spirit, JESUS! JESUS! ALL IN ALL!"**

– D. S. Warner

About 700 years before it came to pass, the LORD GOD JEHOVAH made the following prophecies and declarations concerning His wonderful Son, JESUS, whom He gave to be the cornerstone in Zion and the head over all things to the church:

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles ... I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. ... Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: **LET THE INHABITANTS OF THE ROCK SING**, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands.” Isa. 42:1, 6-7, 10-12.

“Therefore thus saith the LORD God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.” Isa. 28:16. Apostle Peter quoted this verse from Isaiah in this manner: “Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and **HE THAT BELIEVETH ON HIM SHALL NOT BE CONFOUNDED.**” 1 Pet. 2:6. Thus, **the inhabitants of THE ROCK** can sing assuredly from the heart:

**“Praise God, I live in Beulah land, My house will all the storms withstand;
It is not built on sinking sand, My home is on THE ROCK.**

“When come life’s trials thick and fast, When clouds are o’er my pathway cast,
Secure, I can withstand the blast, My home is on the Rock.

“When troubles come that would appall, When other buildings round me fall,
I REST IN CHRIST MY ALL IN ALL, My home is on the Rock.”

– Johnson Oatman, Jr.

“In the clefted Rock I hide, Savior, let me here abide;
Sheltered from each stormy gale, All secure within the vale.

“Tempest tossed I came to Thee, Precious shelter made for me;
Cleansed and purified from sin, Thou didst freely take me in.

“When the surging billows roll, There’s a calm within my soul;
While my trust in Thee is stayed, I shall never be afraid.

**“Rock of safety – blest abode, Hid away with Christ in God;
Nothing can I want beside, For my soul is satisfied.**

“Blessed Rock, on Thee I build, Ever be my Sun and Shield;
Help me labor, watch and pray, Ready for the crowning day.”

– Nancy Byers



“Like a rock in the billows, I would never yield To the angry tossing wave;
I would **CLING TO CHRIST, my sun and shield, For HIS POWER ALONE CAN SAVE.**

“Like a rock in the billows of a boiling sea, When its waters leap and foam,
I would **rest secure, my Lord, in Thee,** Till the trumpet calls me home.

“**If I trust in Jesus and obey His Word, If I lean upon His breast,
If I keep low down at His feet, I know He will give me peace and rest.**”

– B. E. Warren

ZION IS A CONFUSION-FREE ENVIRONMENT!

“Blood-washed pilgrims on the highway Chant the sweet, melodious strain
Of their freedom from confusion, Angels join the glad refrain;
One with all the hosts of Heaven, There their names are written down;
JESUS ONLY, JESUS EVER, IN THEIR HEARTS AS KING THEY CROWN.

“**Not like waves upon the ocean, Tossing wildly, rolling high;
Or the tempest’s great commotion As it sweeps across the sky;
But like twilight, gently stealing O’er the verdant, shady lea,
So the holy saints in Zion Rest – from all their sins set free.**

“Love, the theme of all their praises, Doth in holy bond unite
All their hearts in Him made perfect, Turned from darkness unto light.

Thus the saved in Christ together Dwell in sacred unity
IN THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE – HID AWAY, DEAR LORD, IN THEE.”

– Clara M. Brooks

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.” 1 Cor. 14:33. “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that **GOD IS LIGHT, AND IN HIM IS NO DARKNESS AT ALL. ... if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his**

Son cleanseth us from all sin.” 1 John 1:5, 7. “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” Eph. 5:8-10. “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**” John 8:12. “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” John 1:4.

“Now in God’s Son I have a part, **Eternal LIFE within my heart,
Translated from the shades of night, Into THE REALM OF GLORIOUS LIGHT.**”

– Ulysses Phillips

We become confusion-free by receiving the light of Christ’s life into our hearts through the precious Holy Spirit, then allowing “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:2) to ever expand the operation of that life within us. The “light of life” in Christ is what dispels our darkness as we allow His Spirit to rule and direct our hearts and minds. “For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.” Psa. 18:28. “For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.” Psa. 36:9.

“My darkness now is passed away, In Jesus all is perfect day;
And peace and comfort ever stay, Since Christ is my perfect light.

“O Jesus, to my heart so sweet, Thy Word’s a light unto my feet;
How holy, happy, and complete, I walk in the precious light.”

– D. S. Warner

The secret to becoming free from all darkness and confusion is found in having a “single eye” toward God. “If therefore thine eye be single,” says Jesus, “**thy whole body shall be full of light.**” Matt. 6:22. “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. **But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit;** for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. ... For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him: **But we have the mind of Christ.**” 1 Cor. 2:9-10, 16. This can be the personal experience of every believer!

“I have learned the wondrous secret Of abiding in the Lord;
I have found the strength and sweetness Of confiding in His Word;
... All my strength I draw from Jesus, By His breath I live and move;
E’en His very mind He gives me, And His faith, and life, and love.”

– A. B. Simpson

While it is true that “**spiritual wickedness**” often rises to “**high places**” (Eph. 6:12), and God’s church and Christianity itself is often cast into a bad light because of impostors, false teachers, and false prophets who misapply and misinterpret God’s Word and who build, organize, and establish their own religious systems in Christ’s name, yet Zion stands undaunted, above all these confusing elements. **No element of confusion, strife, or error has ever entered Zion, nor will it ever.** The living Word and Spirit of God reign and rule in Zion. All who submit themselves to the sovereignty of these two governing agents that Christ has given to His church can enjoy Zion to the fullest, despite all the diverse and confusing religious influences that may

be exerted around them. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me,” says Jesus (John 10:27), and “every one that is of the truth heareth my voice” (John 18:37).

“Zion stands with hills surrounded, Zion, kept by pow’r divine:
All her foes shall be confounded, Though the world in arms combine;
Happy Zion, Happy Zion, What a favored lot is thine!

“Ev’ry human tie may perish; Friend to friend unfaithful prove;
Mothers cease their own to cherish, Heav’n and earth at last remove;
But no changes, but no changes Can attend Jehovah’s love.

“In the furnace God may prove thee, Thence to bring thee forth more bright,
But can never cease to love thee, Thou art precious in His sight:
God is with thee, God is with thee, GOD, THINE EVERLASTING LIGHT.”

– Thomas Kelly

LIVING WATERS FLOW FREELY IN ZION

“**THE LORD is my shepherd**; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: **HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS**. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” Psa. 23:1-3.

“When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the LORD will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.” Isa. 41:17-18.

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. ... Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: **And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**” Isa. 35: 1-2, 5-10.

“Jesus answered and said unto her (the Samaritan woman at the well), Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:13-14.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)” John 7:37-39.

“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.” Rev. 22:17.

“And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy they soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and **thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.**” Isa. 58:11.

“Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, ... and **their soul shall be as a watered garden**; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.” Jer. 31:12.

“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there **the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams**; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us. ... And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” Isa. 33:20-22, 24.

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s. ... He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.” Psa. 103: 2-5, 10-12.

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but **are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.**” 1 Pet. 2:24-25.

This is how the ransomed of the Lord return and come to Zion with these wonderful songs of everlasting joy! All glory to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls!

“O Zion, blessed city Of light and joy and peace,
In thee the saints are singing The songs that ne’er shall cease.

**“O Zion, holy Zion, Whose heart could fail to sing
The splendor of thy beauty, The glories of thy King?”**

“Sweet melodies of Zion Ring out from hearts made free;
O Zion, lovely Zion, We dwell secure in thee.”

– C. W. Naylor

**“Jesus, thou a fountain art, Springing up within my heart;
Fount of joy and happiness, Source of everlasting bliss.**

“Precious rest I’ve found in Thee, Rest from care and trouble free;
While eternal ages roll, Nothing can disturb my soul.

“Savior, thou dost shine within, Since my heart is free from sin;
Holy pleasures now abide, And my soul is satisfied.

“Jesus, tune my heart to sing All the glory Thou dost bring;
While Thy name and throne endure, Ev’ry good to me is sure.

**“Lord, my life, the truth, the way, In my heart the light of day;
Thou my hope and portion be, Jesus, all in all to me.**

“All is joy, all is peace, With my Jesus in my breast;
All my soul can wish I find, Oh, my Lord, in Thee combined.”

– D. S. Warner

This experience is not unique to such songwriters as D. S. Warner, but it has been, and becomes yet today, THE EXPERIENCE OF ALL who join themselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant and thus find their way home to Zion, where the living waters freely flow.

“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.” Psa. 46:4-5.

Every person in whose breast Jesus lives, through His indwelling Spirit, is a tabernacle of the most High. All these tabernacles, collectively, make up the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:22-24). No wonder this spiritual New Jerusalem of the New Testament is a city where no darkness ever falls! Because God lives there, and in Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). John said, “the Lamb is the light thereof” (Rev. 21:23). “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” Rev. 22:1. This is that same water of life which he invites ALL, in verse 17 of this same chapter, to come and partake of freely.

While sitting on a log beside the Ohio River, his Bible open and meditating on these wonderful truths, about 130 years ago the Spirit of God inspired the songwriter, D. S. Warner, with the following words:

“I’ll sing of a river divine, Its waters from trouble release,
More precious than ‘honey and wine,’ That river, sweet river is peace.

“It reaches from Heaven to earth, It issues from under the throne;
Great peace! oh, Thy infinite worth! Sweet peace in my Jesus alone.

“Oh, wonderful life-giving flood, Thy waters so crystal and pure,
Make glad all the ‘City of God,’ Forever Thy blessings endure.

“O Jesus! the tempest of sin Is hushed into heavenly rest;
Since tasting the pure living stream That flows from Thy crucified breast.

“My moments as angels appear All gliding so gently along,
Each dropping a blessing so rare, Enraptures my soul with a song.

**“Oh, this river of peace, blessed river of peace, makes me perfect and whole,
ever perfect and whole;
And its blessings increase, ever joyful increase, Flowing deep in my happy soul.”**

The prophet Isaiah, foreseeing the blessedness and glory of the Gospel Day, prophesied concerning Zion: “For thus saith the LORD, Behold, **I will extend peace to her like a river**, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream” Isa. 66:12. This is the happy state of every soul who comes to Zion, that spiritual state where the spirit of man becomes one with the Spirit of the living God. Here is where you’ll find “the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1 Tim. 3:15. It’s a place where the living waters of the Holy Spirit are flowing in abundance. There are no stagnant pools in Zion!

RIVER OF ZION

“In thy clear, transparent glow, Peaceful, cleansing river,
In thy sparkling beauty flow O’er my heart forever.

“There is music in thy wave, Calmest, purest river;
In thy waters let me bathe Ever and forever.

“In thy bosom’s crystal sea, Gentle, tranquil river,
Let my spirit’s image be Mirrored there forever.

“There behold life’s fragrant tree Blooming by the river;
‘Neath its shade my walk shall be Ever and forever.

“By thy shore, oh, let me be, Soul-refining river;
Ever let me drink of thee, Thirst no more forever.”

– C. E. Orr



ZION, OUR SPIRITUAL HOME, IS DISCOVERED IN A LIFE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH THE SON OF GOD

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” Col. 1:12-13.

When we have been thus translated and enter a spiritual walk with Jesus, we begin to encounter others who are walking on the same road. All of them walk in the same Spirit (Rom 8:1-4; Gal. 5:16-25) and they all drink of the same Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13) – the same river of life. This makes us all “partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” and “fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Eph. 2:19). We don’t receive our full inheritance all in one day, but we become entitled to it! As another song says, “We find it IN JESUS, our title is sure.” And there is a lot of ground to be gained and vast territory to be explored IN JESUS! It is an ever-enlarging inheritance!

“How sweet is my walk with Jesus! What blessings He breathes on me!
We walk in the golden morning – And oh! How my soul is free! –
And onward together journey, As swiftly the moments fly;
I sing of His love at evening, As twilight illumines the sky.

“How sweet is my walk with Jesus! His whispers of peace I hear;
His banner of love is o’er us, and angels are hov’ring near.
I walk in the light with Jesus, He shines in the narrow way;
The shadows of sin are vanished, I walk in the light of day.

**“How sweet is my walk with Jesus! I love all the way He trod;
Embraced in His sweet communion, I’ll walk with the Son of God.
I turn from the paths of pleasure, And closer to Jesus press;
I’ll walk with my dear Redeemer, In His perfect holiness.**

“Oh, sweet is my walk with Jesus! How gently He smiles on me!
Yet, nearer, my Lord so precious, Oh, help me to walk with Thee.”

– D. S. Warner

WALKING WITH THE LORD IN PERPETUAL COVENANT

Notice that the covenant mentioned in Jeremiah 50:5 – the one that joins us to the Lord and brings us to Zion – is “**A PERPETUAL COVENANT.**” That means it is **continual, or ongoing.** We must maintain a progressive, continual, and ongoing walk with Jesus to stay within this covenant relationship. John said, “if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another” (1 John. 1:7). We must keep pace with the light as Jesus shines it upon our pathway, otherwise, we’ll lose fellowship with Him and others who are walking with Him in His light. Jesus said, “Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John 12:35-36). This requires maintaining an up-to-date walk with Jesus, who IS our light (John 8:12).

Not all children of light receive the same degree of light at the same time. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Prov. 4:18. Some are more advanced in their walk with Jesus than others are. This need not hinder fellowship. As long as every child of God remains in a covenant relationship with their Lord and continues to walk in all the light as He reveals it to them, fellowship will be spontaneous. All who love the truth come to the light that their “deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God” (John 3:21).

But sadly, there are many who make a start to walk the narrow path with Jesus but get sidetracked somewhere along the way. They break their covenant relationship with the Lord. They fail to stay close by His side and advance in light as the Holy Spirit reveals it to them through His Word. Thus, they end up in darkness, not knowing where they are going. They wander off into some by-path, yet they suppose they are still on the road to Heaven. That is one of the saddest conditions a soul can get into! Jesus said, “Take heed therefore that the light [understanding] which is in thee be not darkness.” Luke 11:35. “If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” Matt. 6:23b. Never forget, “There is a way **which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.**” Prov. 14:12.

If we deviate from a perpetual covenant relationship with the Lord, we will find ourselves walking in the light of our own fire and the sparks we kindle in our own minds (Isa. 50:11). Rather than trusting in the Lord with all our heart, and leaning not to our own understanding, as the Bible teaches us in Proverbs 3:5, we begin reasoning out what seems right according to human logic. Our adversary, the devil, is always right there, ready to present to our minds what seems to be logical and true. But let us never forget that **human reasoning was the thing that overthrew Eve in the Garden of Eden and started humanity down the wrong road.**

What shall we conclude then? “Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? **Let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.**” Isa. 50:10.

“High Heav’n, that heard the solemn vow,
That vow renewed shall daily hear,
Till in life’s latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear.”

– Philip Doddridge

“I can hear my Savior calling, ‘Take thy cross and follow, follow me.’

“I’ll go with Him through the waters, ...

“I’ll go with Him through the garden, ...

“I’ll go with Him to dark Calv’ry, ...

“I’ll go with Him to the judgment, ...

“I will follow Him to glory, ...

“Where He leads me I will follow, I’ll go with Him, WITH HIM ALL THE WAY.”

– E. W. Blandly

BY-PATHS DISRUPT THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT AND LEAD US AWAY FROM “HOME”

Why? Because *other spirits are associated with every by-path*. To be safe, we must maintain our walk with Jesus in the strait and narrow way by *remaining completely united with Him in spirit our whole life’s journey through*. Our walk with Him *begins in the Spirit* and it must *end in the Spirit*. The Lord’s way never changes. The road to Heaven has not changed at all in the last 2000 years! Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” John 14:6. Consider these two verses of song:

“Keep me near Thee, precious Savior, Many snares are by the way;
‘Neath Thy balmy wings protect me, Draw me nearer Thee each day.”

– W. H. Henry

“The narrow way is now so plain, I’m hid away with Jesus;
That fools shall never err therein [Isa. 35:8], I’m hid away with Jesus.”

– John F. Starcher

Apostle Paul warns us, “For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but **God that giveth the increase**. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For **we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building**. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. **But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.**” 1 Cor. 3:4-11.

“**Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever**. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines, For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.” Heb. 13:8-9.

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; **Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling**; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, **One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ**. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. ... And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; **Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive**; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is

the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Eph. 4:1-8, 11-16.

To me, this is one of the most beautiful passages in the New Testament regarding the church that Jesus built and continues to build yet today! His church still operates within these parameters. **It is a place of being connected to and growing up into Christ in all things. Whatever is foreign to Christ, His Spirit, and His ways is foreign to His church.**

Paul wrote to the Galatians concerning those who were seducing them into by-paths, “They zealously affect you, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that ye might affect them.” Gal. 4:17.

Seducers always have a selfish and personal agenda. Apostle John wrote, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. ... **Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.** And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. **These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.** But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: **but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.**” 1 John 2:19, 24-27.

This “anointing” that teaches us of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, is **THE HOLY SPIRIT – “THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH”** (John 16:13). **In order to stay on the right path and at home in Zion, “the general assembly and church of the firstborn,” we must have the abiding presence of the Spirit of truth within us.** We need, not only to be initially “born again,” or “born of the Spirit,” but we need to go on and so consecrate and set ourselves apart to God that we **receive the fullness of His Spirit – the anointing!** The man Christ Jesus was Himself conceived of the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, but before entering His earthly ministry, the same Spirit that brought about His virgin birth descended from Heaven “in a bodily shape, like a dove” (Luke 3:22), “and it abode upon him” (John 1:32). Thus, He was able to proclaim, **“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me** to preach the gospel to the poor ...” (Luke 4:18). If the Son of God, who was conceived and born of the Holy Spirit, needed later to be specially anointed of the same Holy Spirit, how much more do we who become sons of God by spiritual rebirth? And He has given us this promise: “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. “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” Luke 11:9.



“Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” Acts 19:2

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A FAITHFUL TEACHER AND LEADER

“And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but **tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**” Luke 24:49. “But ye shall receive **power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:** and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even **the Spirit of truth;** whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. ... These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But **the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things,** and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:16, 17, 25, 26.

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit **when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:** for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. **HE SHALL GLORIFY ME:** for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” John 16:12-14.

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, **when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:** (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) **Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.**” Acts 8:14-17.

“And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightiest receive thy sight, **and be filled with the Holy Ghost.**” Acts 9:17.

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, **the Holy Ghost said,** Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ... So they, **being sent forth by the Holy Ghost,** departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. ... And **the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.**” Acts 13:2, 4, 52.

“Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and **were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,** After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: **but the Spirit suffered them not.**” Acts 16:6-7.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Rom. 8:14.

The way we continue to walk with Jesus and avoid being allured into by-paths is simply to be filled with the Spirit, then continue to live and walk in the Spirit. (See Gal. 5:16, 25.) “... The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” Gal. 5:22-23. “For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.” Eph. 5:9.

BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

“The secret of having power to always obey the Lord and keep His judgments and do them, lies in the possession of the Holy Spirit. If it were possible to have a pure heart without the indwelling of the Spirit of God, it would not be possible to keep pure amidst the sin and corruption of this world. The possession of this divine personage in the heart of a believer in Christ makes such a one proof against sin and the wiles of Satan. The power of the divine Christ within insures our making a successful fight of faith. Paul was constantly praying that God would grant to the saints, according to His riches in glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man (Eph. 3:16). He exhorted them to be always filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Dear saints of God, are you filled with the Spirit?”

“Again, to be filled with the Spirit is a safeguard against false doctrine, compromise, or fanaticism. It is because there is a lack of being full of the Spirit of God that people fall a prey to spirits and doctrines that are foreign to the Spirit of God. There never was a soul deceived by a false doctrine while he was careful to keep filled with the Holy Spirit. A soul thus full of God is safe from deception, for when the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him (Isaiah 59:19).

“If we keep filled with the Spirit, we shall have no difficulty in keeping clear of division. The early church was a unit as a result of the fulness of the Spirit. See Acts 4:32. Be filled with the Spirit.”

– J. C. Blaney, *The Gospel Trumpet*, August 18, 1910.

HOW DOES GOD ORGANIZE HIS CHURCH?

“The word ‘organization,’ is defined by Webster, as the ‘act of organizing,’ a ‘structure.’ Now that the church, the body of Christ, is an organization, an organized body, is evident to any reader of the New Testament. The only question remaining to be settled is, who is the Organizer? The word organize, is defined by ‘to furnish with organs,’ ‘to arrange in parts,’ ‘to form in due order.’

“Now He that furnishes the Church with organs, and arranges the parts, or members, in due order, is He that organizes. **That is, God Himself through the Holy Spirit.** ‘Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (i.e., bishops according to the Greek), to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood.’ Acts 20:28.

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’ Eph. 4: 11-13.

“Here we see that God gave all the gifts and offices in the church; fully equipping the same, unto a perfect man, namely a perfect organic body. In 1 Cor. 12:8-10, the various gifts of

the church are spoken of, and then verse 11 adds, ‘But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will.’ **God, by the Spirit, furnishes the organs.** That is one definition of organizing. But who sets the members into the body, and organizes them in harmonious relation to each other, and each one to the whole? Answer, **God, by the Spirit.**

“‘For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. ... But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him. ... For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked.’ 1 Cor. 12:13, 18, 24.

“These words, with the above quotations, cover all that is contained in our English word ‘organize,’ and **it is all ascribed to God through the Spirit.** It is nevertheless true that the Acts and Epistles talk of men ordaining elders and deacons by the laying on of hands. This does not conflict with the above Scriptures. God ordains by choosing, and qualifying, and men ordain such as God has ordained, by way of recognizing and dedicating to the work whereunto the Spirit has appointed them.

“**We have utterly renounced all human organizing, constructing, and tinkering.** We preach the Word, and **God gives the increase.** The church only ‘increases with the increase of God,’ in any given place. We constantly affirm that ‘ye are complete in Him,’ – Christ (Col. 2:10). **We have no authority, believe and teach no authority but that given by the truth and the Holy Spirit.** ... **The church is wholly operated by God Himself,** for ‘it is the same God which worketh all in all’ – 1 Cor. 12:6. Praise God!

“God has called us, first to repentance, then to perfect holiness, and that is unto freedom and liberty from every power of men and devils, so that **each child of God walks in perfect freedom** – goes and labors where and when the Lord sends. And yet, as God works all in all, and He ‘is not the author of confusion,’ all saints move and work in perfect and sweet harmony.

– D. S. Warner

Excerpted from *The Gospel Trumpet*, Feb. 15, 1887

THE RULING AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY GHOST IN THE CHURCH OF GOD

“The Apostolic church fully recognized the personal presence and authority of the Holy Ghost. He was fully accepted as their teacher and guide. They fully embraced the words of Jesus: ‘when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth,’ yea, ‘teach you all things,’ even the ‘deep things’ of God. Hence, we hear Peter saying unto Ananias: ‘Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?’ (Acts 5:3.) The presence of the Divine Spirit was to them a certainty.

“In Acts 13:2 we read, ‘As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them.’ Here the authority of the Holy Ghost is recognized. **Thus we see that the early church needed no man-made**

system. Being filled with the Holy Ghost they fully accepted Him as their Teacher and Guide. But in the process of time the [professed] church lost her primitive power; the presence of the Holy Ghost seemed less real. The necessity of a teacher and guide was felt; hence the absence of the Holy Ghost necessitated the substitution of another teacher and guide, a ‘dead ecclesiasticism,’ called the Holy Catholic Church (?) with the prerogative of the Divine Spirit. Thus the priesthood was exalted and invested with power to forgive sins; and the Pope made the ‘visible head of the church,’ or the vicar of Jesus Christ upon earth. The church felt the need of an ‘Infallible Teacher;’ the loss of the Divine Paraclete necessitated a substitution – hence **the system must supply the lack. Thus the dogma of infallibility was conceived, ending in the exaltation of the Pope of Rome above all that is called God, or that is worshiped – the “Man of Sin” sitting in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God.**

“Thus we see that **any man-made system of ecclesiasticism must necessarily be lifeless and powerless, just in proportion as it fails to recognize the personal presence and authority of the Holy Ghost and sets up its own order and authority.** Indeed, the modern church [so-called] has so far lost sight of the veritable presence and authority of the personal Holy Ghost, that everything seems reduced to ‘system’ – yea, an endless treadmill of works. The form of religion takes the place of vital godliness, and the people seem to have forgotten that there is any Holy Ghost.

“Perhaps we may learn a lesson from Rome – why did the Romish hierarchy persecute Reformers? Simply because they had substituted a wire bound ecclesiasticism (a man-made system) for the presence and authority of the personal Holy Ghost, a lifeless system – yea, a dead ecclesiasticism was thought to be the one Holy Catholic Church. It was not allowed that any could be loyal to God unless loyal to the system – in their devotion to churchism they lose sight of the personal Holy Ghost and exalt the system.

“**We must get back to Apostolic ground; the presence and power of the Holy Ghost must mark (or make manifest) the church.** Nevertheless, the blinding power of churchism will deceive nominal professors just as effectually as it did in the Roman church. It is eternally true that the natural man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. The great Sanhedrin judged it right that Jesus Christ the Lord of glory, judged to be a vile deceiver, should be crucified between two thieves. The Romish Church considered it right to burn heretics, and in all ages the mystic Babylon of Revelation has persecuted the true saints of God. Thus it will be till the time of the end.”

D. W. M’Laughlin,
Published in *The Gospel Trumpet*, March 1, 1881 (slightly abridged)

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Cor. 2:14.

Since the church of God is spiritual organization, a spiritual house, a spiritual city, a spiritual priesthood, a spiritual kingdom, a spiritual nation under a spiritual government, a spiritual body animated by the Spirit of God, etc., natural men, who tend to only understand things according to the flesh, often fail to discern it. Nevertheless, **the church IS a visible body composed of real people** who have presented their bodies as living sacrifices to God (Rom. 12:1-2) and thereby have received the renewing of their minds, as “that good, and acceptable,

and perfect will of God” is revealed to them by the personal anointing of the Holy Spirit within their inner man. To understand what and where the church of God is, one must become intimately acquainted with the Comforter, the Leader, Organizer, and Administrator of Christ’s body! The Holy Spirit will direct you and give you spiritual discernment as to who your fellow-members in Christ are.

Apostle Paul said, **“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”** 2 Cor. 5:16.

Now, in this Holy Spirit dispensation, **just as we only know Jesus and have fellowship with Him by our connection with Him through the Holy Spirit, so we also only know His body, the church, and connect and have fellowship with it through the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit is the life-sap that flows from Christ, the true vine, into every branch that abides in Him. And as surely as a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, so every branch in Christ bears only good fruit. By their fruits you shall know them. (Again, I refer you to Gal. 5:22-23, 1 Cor. 13:4-8, and Jas 3:17-18 as a gauge by which to judge the fruit.) Whatever is foreign to this is not part of the “heavenly Jerusalem, ... the general assembly and church of the firstborn” that we read about in Hebrews 12:22-23.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS COMPETENT!

“I can say that I am wonderfully free in the Lord. ... I am being wonderfully taught by the Spirit of God, which leads us into all truth, but never contrary to it. I was talking the other day with my uncle about God’s church, as it is in the Bible. He said that it might be so if Christ were here in person to govern it. Why, said I, is it possible, Uncle, that you have been so long a Christian, and yet know so little about the Comforter that Christ sent to take the place of His personal presence? Could Christ, if here in the flesh do more than ‘lead us into all truth’ and teach us all things, what we should do and say? But all this is just what the Lord promised that the Spirit should do for us. Now if He is not capable of organizing, and governing the church, and Christ was capable, then it was not expedient for us that Christ went away and sent the Comforter in His stead.

“But glory to God, the Holy Spirit, I find, is able to organize me into the body of Christ, keep me from all sin, and so govern me as to bring my whole life into harmony with God, and all others that are under His reign.

“It is the work of the Holy Spirit to unite the saints, but that of the devil, carnality, and human works to divide them into different sect names and interests. **Glory to Jesus, for the Comforter, who fully represents the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and is more than the personal presence of Christ could be.”**

– A. C. McCurdy, Churubusco, Indiana

– Letter published in *The Gospel Trumpet*, August 1, 1883

This is a 140-year-old testimony but this Comforter, the Holy Spirit, the Administrative Officer of the New Testament church, is still as competent now as He was back then or ever has

been since the day of Pentecost! Christ's system of governing and operating His church has not changed! It's not difficult or complicated either! All we have to do is just simply surrender ourselves completely into the hands of the Comforter, saying from the heart:

**“Spirit holy, Spirit holy, all my being now possess;
Lead me, rule me, work within me, through my life Thy will express.”**

**“Take my will and make it Thine; It shall be no longer mine;
TAKE MYSELF, AND I WILL BE EVER, ONLY, ALL FOR THEE.”**

The Holy Spirit then takes what we give Him permission to possess and use as His own building material and begins fitly framing us right into God's own holy temple (Eph. 2:18-22). When shaped and molded by this great Master builder, we fit perfectly in God's building, and have no question about where He has placed us! Think about the words of the following poem:

“Utterly abandoned to the Holy Ghost!
Seeking all His fullness at whatever cost;
Cutting all the shorelines, launching in the deep
Of His mighty power – strong to save and keep.

“Utterly abandoned to the Holy Ghost!
Oh! The sinking, sinking, **until self is lost!**
Until the emptied vessel lies broken at His feet;
Waiting till His filling shall make the work complete.

“Utterly abandoned! No will of my own;
For time and for eternity, His, and His alone;
All my plans and purposes lost in His sweet will,
Having nothing, yet in Him all things possessing still.

“Lo! He comes and fills me, Holy Spirit sweet!
I, in Him, am satisfied! I, in Him complete!
And the light within my soul shall nevermore grow dim
While I keep my covenant – abandoned unto Him!”

-- Author Unknown

Dear reader, if you'll simply do as this poem states, I promise you, you'll discover the church of God! The Holy Ghost, the Administrator of God's husbandry, God's building (1 Cor. 3:9), will see to that. **THE CHURCH IS GOD'S BUSINESS, NOT MAN'S.** It exists wherever people die to themselves, and Christ becomes all and in all.

– Harlan Sorrell, August – December, 2023

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