



2 Cor. 3:18

Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

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Spiritual Worship

David Clayton



In John chapter 4, the Bible records a very interesting encounter between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. This encounter is interesting for several reasons, and different people draw different lessons from that meeting. However, one of the most important principles which Jesus outlined to the woman is often overlooked. We find it expressed in the following words:

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:23-24)

Notice the emphasis on “true worshippers,” because there are true worshippers and there are false worshippers. The true worshippers worship the father in spirit and in truth, and in fact the father is seeking for those kinds of people to worship him. Jesus goes on to explain

why those who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth. It is because, “God is a spirit.” In other words, those who worship God in the acceptable way are those who understand the true nature of God and worship him on that basis.

PHYSICAL VS SPIRITUAL

The woman had suggested to Jesus that the mountain on which they were standing was a place which was special to God. According to her, that mountain was the place where Israel had worshiped in ancient times, but now the Jews had changed the location and were worshipping in Jerusalem. Her question was, “where is the true place of worship?” She was focused on sacred places, and more to the point, her worship was focused on physical things. This was the way they worshiped in those times.

Now Jesus declared that the time had arrived when those who truly worshiped God would no longer worship in that way. “God is a spirit,” that is the point! We worship in spirit because God is a spirit, so if our worship is focused on physical things, we are really implying that God is physical. We are suggesting that God is a person like ourselves, and the consequence is that we will relate to God as a physical being, with the limitations of the physical.

In former times, during the Old Testament, people were excused for relating to God in this way. Those whom he claimed as his people were spiritual children, their understanding of God

was very limited and they could be forgiven for thinking that God lived in the most holy place of the temple, and that he was confined to a box called the ark of the covenant. They had to focus their worship on Jerusalem and had to bring their sacrifices to a certain place. God adjusted to this kind of thinking because the people were spiritually immature.

One of the problems we face today is that people think of “spiritual,” as simply meaning, “invisible,” but not much more. They believe that God has the same attributes as those things which exist in the physical world, the only difference being that he is invisible.

A PROPER CONCEPT OF GOD

The main point Jesus was making was that we need to consider who God really is. The question is, what kind of concept do we have of him? The kind of concept we have of a person will decide how we relate to that person. We have heard people say, “you need to treat me with more respect!” But we all know that the demand for respect, will not produce respect. It is when a person’s concept of you changes that a person’s attitude towards you will change.

So Jesus is focusing on the concept that

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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Editor:David Clayton

Publishing committee:....Howard Williams

.....Karleen Williams

.....Jennifer Clayton

.....David Clayton

P.O. Box 23, Knockpatrick
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

Phone: (304) 932-4543
Jamaica: (876) 603-0821

email:vidclay@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.restorationministry.com>

we have of God, and he is saying that those who worship God need to understand the nature of God, the kind of being that he really is. This makes it clear that we need to be careful how we think of spiritual things, and not try to be too literal in equating them with physical things. Essentially what Jesus was saying is, "you can't continue to limit God in the way you have been limiting God. In thinking that God dwells in this place or that place, you have been thinking of God as though he's a person like yourself, and consequently you have been dealing with God as though he's little more than an extraordinary human being."

God is looking for a different kind of person to worship him, he is looking for the person who understands and sees him the way he really is. This is a very important truth and it is one of the key things which Jesus came to reveal. But how do we divorce ourselves from

the physical, in terms of the way we worship God? Is there not the need to have places set aside for worship, to dress in a modest way, to show reverence when you come to the place of worship, to display outward forms which show that we acknowledge God's presence? Yes, these things are necessary. However, they are necessary simply for the benefit of people, not for the benefit of God. They show people what our attitude is towards God. Is it necessary to wear clothing for God's benefit? Is he not with us when we are having a bath? Is it not appropriate to pray and worship even when we are naked? The answer is, yes, of course! However, since we live in a physical world where everyone judges by what he can see and hear, as Christians we cater to these things and we demonstrate respect and reverence for God by outward forms. The word of God tells us that whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God. However, we recognize that this is not for God's sake, for God far exceeds anything that is physical, and he cannot be limited by these things.

RUDIMENTS OF THE WORLD

So we understand that while we live in the world, and we still function in the world, our religion is not of this world. In the way we worship God we need to rise above the elements of this world, and learn to worship God in spirit. So there must be a distinction between the things we do as a part of the physical life here on this earth, and the way we relate to God. There has to be a definite and clear difference between both things.

Let us look at what Paul says in Colossians 2:20-23:

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any

honour to the satisfying of the flesh. (Col 2:20-23)

What is the meaning of this word, "rudiments?" *Dictionary.com* defines it in the following way:

- a. the elements or first principles of a subject:
- b. a mere beginning, first slight appearance, or undeveloped or imperfect form of something:

What God gave to the Israelites at Mount Sinai, was the beginning stages of his religion. It was the undeveloped, imperfect form of the salvation which was to appear with the coming of Christ. That rudimentary form consisted of rules, and ordinances, and rituals which dealt with the very basic principles of God's truth. They were of this world because they had to do with practices which all involved physical things of this world. The sacrifices consisted of animals, birds, grains, oil - all from this world. The sanctuary was made of products of this world, the ministry of the priest represented the offering of things of this world, the holy places were of this world. Everything involving that system of worship had to do with this world, and they were simply the beginning things, the rudimentary phase of the true system of worship that God really wanted to give his people.

Now Paul says, "*you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world.*" In other words these things have no effect on you, you do not respond to them. This is what it means to be dead to something; a dead person does not respond to anything. So Paul asks the question, "why then are you subject to ordinances, as though you are living in the world?" Notice that he takes it for granted that we understand that we do not live nor function in this world. He gives us specific examples of what he's talking about, "touch not, taste not, handle not." He is obviously referring to the many instructions in the law which forbade eating certain foods, and touching certain things at certain times. He says that these are all things which perish after they are used. In other words these things are not eternal, these things

are not spiritual, so how can they affect us who live in the spiritual realms, whose worship is spiritual? Jesus said the same thing when he stated that, nothing which goes into a man's body can defile him (Mark 7:15). He was expressing the same principle.

Of course we understand that Jesus is not addressing the issue of what is good for health. He is speaking of how we worship God, he is speaking of how these things affect us in terms of our religion. He is not saying that it is okay for us to take poison, to smoke cigarettes, to drink alcohol, or even to eat any kind of animal that exists! Again we see he is making a distinction between how we function as physical persons, and how we worship God. So the point is if we make the things that we eat and drink a matter of religion, then our religion is not in spirit and in truth. However we balance this by saying, that we still acknowledge that our bodies are physical, and we do what is necessary to keep them in the best possible health. Whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

But Paul is saying that as far as our religion is concerned what we touch, taste, and handle cannot affect us, so why are we still subject to these religious rituals as though we are still involved in this physical, earth-based religion? It should be clearly understood that for us Christians, the entire structure of our religion has to be taken out of the principles which govern religion and life in this world.

KINGDOM THEOLOGY

The idea that we still are involved in the old, earth-based, physical religion, is the kind of misunderstanding which makes many Christians today believe that physical Israel is still specially favored by God. This is the kind of thinking which leads to what is called, "Kingdom Theology," the belief that we are to establish the kingdom of God here on earth, through human endeavor and political means. It is this kind of misunderstanding which leads many Christians to support the nation of Is-

rael, regardless of what they do. They believe that the statement in the Old Testament still stands, where God said that he would bless whoever blesses Israel, and they apply this to physical Palestine and the physical Jews. This demonstrates a dreadful misunderstanding of the Scriptures, and illustrates why it is so important to understand the principle of worshipping in spirit and truth.

This is one of the greatest hindrances that we have in our Christian walk. Our religion is earthbound, and severely hampered because there is too much of physical worship involved. Jesus said that the servant does not understand what his master is doing, but he says that he does not call us servants, he calls us friends. His friends understand his purposes and live and worship in harmony with those principles.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

So in our relationship to the things of God, we must emphasize and experience spiritual worship, we must experience truth, or reality, not the illustrations of truth. Let us see how this affects us in a very practical way.

If God were to speak to us in an audible voice or if we were to visibly see his form, it would be easy to keep our attention on him throughout the day. Prayer would be effortless and our minds would never drift to other topics while we were talking to him. But the truth is, we find ourselves distracted a thousand times during the day. We are far more aware of the physical than the spiritual, because God does not show himself to our physical eyes, not do we hear his voice audibly as Moses and others did.

The faculties of seeing and hearing are things which relate to our physical senses, to the senses of the flesh. Unfortunately this is where we are accustomed to functioning, we know very little about the spiritual realm and in our relationship to God, this is how we try to interact with him. But Jesus made it clear that God has introduced another way, a better way, the way of spirit, which is the way of truth. Those who

worship God must worship in spirit and in truth!

So is it possible that God is speaking constantly in the spiritual realm, and we simply are not hearing because we don't know how to listen, we don't know how to function in that realm? .

From this perspective the words of Paul seem to take on greater meaning:

walk in the spirit and you shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16)

If we live in the spirit let us also walk in the spirit. (Gal. 5:25).

HIS LIVING PRESENCE

The truth is, if I simply obey because of a sense of duty I am basically operating on my own. It is the same as being under the law, doing what needs to be done simply because the rules say so. It is very difficult to live the Christian life in this way, in fact the apostle Paul tells us that it is impossible to live the Christian life if we operate by this method. If we live by the law, we will always fail. It makes a great difference when we're walking with the Lord. When the Lord is with me and I hear his voice, I recognize that he is not only with me, but dwelling in me, obedience becomes an easy, pleasurable beautiful thing. I am not responding to a set of impersonal rules, I am hearing from him personally and responding to him, my Lord, my Friend, my Brother.

God understands our need for his presence and this is why, throughout the Bible, God's emphasis has been on the living reality of his presence. He demonstrated his presence in Old Testament times in a physical building, in a particular apartment, and from time to time there were visible outward manifestations which revealed that he was with Israel. In Exodus 25:8 he told Moses,

let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. (Ex. 25:8)

Paul translates this in the New Testament and he says, "God has said I will dwell in them and walk in them." (2 Cor. 6:16). He emphasizes that our bodies are the temples of the living God. God could not make it any more plain,

that he and his son literally live in his people. In the new covenant he has given us the thing that we need most of all.

As Jesus was about to return to heaven, his final promise to his disciples was, *“lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:20).”* He assured them, *“I will give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever.”* But most thrilling of all is his statement, *“he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you (John 14:17).”*

THE MAIN POINT

The main point is this; to worship God in spirit and in truth means to be aware of God's spiritual nature, it means to recognize that since God is spirit, we do not need to go to particular places to find his presence, but that as spirit, he is always with us, at all times and in all places. We are never alone. As a consequence of this understanding we realize that Jesus himself is always literally present with us. Service for God is an experience which is full of joy and excitement because actually, it is not service **for** God, it is service **with** God.

We may argue about the issue of righteousness by faith versus righteousness by works, but essentially what makes the difference is this particular question; am I doing this **with** God or am I doing this **for** God? The truth is that even if I have the help of Christ, even if I have the power of Christ it is going to be a very difficult thing to do the works of Christ if He is not personally with me. In fact, according to Jesus himself, it will be impossible. It is he who said, *“without me ye can do nothing (John 15:5).”* We need the help of Christ, the strength of Christ, but most importantly of all, we need Christ himself.

Those who live with a sense of his presence are always the strongest, the most successful and victorious in the conflict against sin. But it's not just the life of Christ in me, but Christ **himself** with me and in me. That is what makes the great difference.

COMMUNICATION

There is one other important reality which we recognize when we understand the truth of the literal presence of the Lord, and it is the reality that he is always speaking with us, always communicating. We often do not hear what he is saying, but nevertheless, he is always communicating.

What would be the point of having a Comforter living with me forever, one who promises to live in me, one who promises to manifest himself to me, if he does not communicate with me? Those promises would be just empty words and in reality, I would not really have a Comforter. Yet Jesus promised that the presence of the Comforter would be even better than his own presence in the flesh.

Many of us have experienced the reality that we feel much closer to the Lord in times of prayer. As we talk to him, it seems that we can almost physically



touch him. In such moments it is easy to abide in him and the difficulties of life do not seem so overwhelming. The problem is that many times, as soon as we leave the place of prayer the sense of his presence departs. We go back to “normal” life and the struggle to believe and to abide returns. Why is this so? The problem is that we have not learned to communicate with the Lord in “spirit and in truth.”

Our lives revolve around the things

which are physical. We receive information by what we see and hear - through our five senses. This is how we interact with reality and this is how it has been from the moment we were born. What would be the consequence if the Lord were to speak with us in an audible voice or if he were to appear to us? Immediately our entire outlook would change. After the fright had worn off, we would be instantly attentive to hear what he had to say, to see how he would direct us and it is certain that we would be very careful to do what he tells us to do. The truth is, most of us would like Jesus to communicate with us in this tangible, physical way, but this is not going to happen except under very unusual circumstances.

Jesus already told us, *“the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship in spirit and in truth.”*

God is looking for those worshipers who will come to him on the basis of the truth about himself, not those who try to bring God down to their level of the physical! I realize that this applies also in the area of prayer and communion. Will God come down to the level of the physical in his communication with me? Do I need to hear an audible voice in order for God to communicate with me? Will he return to the system which he declares is past? The answer is no. True spiritual worship means to relate to God in keeping with the truth about who he is. He is always with us and he does not interact with us in the physical realm, but in the spiritual.

So our need is to learn to discern his voice as he speaks. It is not that he is not speaking, that is impossible. We ask God for guidance and direction all the time, we ask him questions, yet it seems that there is no answer! Is that reasonable? Why should a Father who loves me and wants to be with me, keep silent and unresponsive when I try to get information and guidance from him? Does that make sense? Why does it seem that I am more anxious to learn his will than he is to reveal that will to me?

The answer to these questions is that

God and Jesus are always speaking to us, all the time. They are speaking of their love, they are instructing us, comforting us, giving us what we need, but the issue is that we are not hearing! And why don't we hear? It is because we have not learned how to worship God in spirit and in truth! We are still focused on the physical, seeking God's interaction through the five senses, when that is not his method. Our great need is to learn to communicate in the spiritual realm. We need to learn to hear his voice when he speaks to our spirits from within.

This is why many times those who are seeking to know God's will have to deliberately shut themselves off from the physical distractions of the world for a time. They stop eating, stop meeting people, stop working. They isolate themselves in a quiet place for a while and seek to hear the Lord's counsel. It is not that he was not always speaking

to them, but it is that they could not hear. The physical distractions blind them and make them deaf to the spiritual world and so they cannot hear when the Lord speaks. The time spent alone with God does not cause him to speak more loudly, but it enables us to tune in to the spiritual senses and to hear the Lord's voice more distinctly.

We all need to be trained to hear when the Lord speaks. We have all seen those children who do not hear when their parents speak to them. Their parents may call to them, even shout at them, but the voice has no effect. It is just as if the wind is blowing. They have learned that they do not need to pay attention to that voice and so their minds have tuned it out. This is what has happened to us with respect to the voice of God. A lifetime of ignoring it has made us deaf to it and we cannot recognize when he speaks, we cannot distinguish the difference between his voice and

the voice of our own imagination. Over and over I have had people come to me with this question; "how do I know whether it is God talking with me or simply my own thoughts directing me and telling me what to do?"

My counsel is this: If we begin to face each day and each moment with the expectation that God will direct us, we will begin listening for his counsel. We should begin by first submitting to him in the things which we already know to be his will, but as we train ourselves to focus on him and on his presence, we will begin to hear what he is saying more clearly. We will begin to hear his messages of love, his directions even in things which are not necessarily of a moral nature. We will feel the presence of a friend who sticks closer than a brother and our lives will become simply the extension of his own life.



How I Discovered The Good News

For the first 29 years of my life as a Christian, I was completely focused on the law, always trying to improve by my behavior, always trying to be a better person, but it was all in relation to the law, because the center of my moral world was the law. It was what I had learned and it was what I believed. The law dictated the state of my relationship to God.

One morning eleven years ago, I was in my kitchen praying. It was dark, before daylight and I was crying before God again. I said, "O Lord, when will I ever become what I should be? When will I ever be able to live in perfect victory? When will I change?"

It was then, in the darkness that the Lord spoke to my mind. I heard him say, "you don't need to change. You will never change, you will never be better, what you need is to enter into another life, one that is already perfect! You need to become another person!"

It was at that moment, in the darkness that my mind was enlightened. In that moment I understood why Jesus is the second Adam. I realized that the life of the first Adam is the life which is mine by birth and I realized that this life cannot change and will never change. The only destiny for such a life is death. I, like many others, had been trying all my life to change this life by obedience to the law, but it did not work. This Adamic person, is the person that the law was designed for, because without the law, such a person would have nothing to restrain his naturally evil nature. But the problem is that while the law restrained the carnal nature, it could not change it and it only frustrated me.

I saw that the issue was not how I behaved or whether or not I kept the law perfectly, the issue was which life I possessed! It was not about behavior, it was about life! Did I possess the life of the first Adam, or the life of the last Adam?

Now I saw that God had provided another life for me. His son had been sent to earth to be another Adam, to create another human life which I could obtain, as surely as I had obtained the life of the first Adam by birth. This new life was to be had as a GIFT, simply by being born again. I saw that it was never about my obedience or my law-keeping. It was not about the law, it was about the LIFE! The answer to my problems was not to keep the law, but to obtain the LIFE.

That was a wonderful revelation. It changed my perspective forever. I went back to the word of God and read with enlightened eyes and everything was wonderfully changed. It was amazing how the gospel came to life and all my confusion fled away. This has been the foundation of my teaching for the past eleven years. Many amazing truths have come out of this beautiful understanding of the gospel.

In Search of Evidence



Most of those who hold to the common doctrines of their church, do it because it is what they have learned from others. They have studied the writings of their forefathers, they have examined books, literature, listened to sermons, and so they have come to their conclusions. This is not to say that they don't read the Bible, they do, but their minds have been directed in a certain way by their church, and that is the only angle from which they view the Bible.

In the case of Adventists it is even worse, because we not only have the teachings of early Adventists, but we also have what most believe to be an infallible authority. The writings of Ellen White are regarded as absolute truth in every respect and so, Adventists have this aura of infallibility which makes them extremely confident that they cannot possibly be wrong.

It was when I began to make an effort to accept what the Bible says, and to ignore my previous learning, that I began to see things that I had not seen before. My revised thoughts about the identity of the beast began when I was studying Revelation 19. Before that I had studied Revelation 17 for many years, and I could not find a way to fit all the pieces together. I was puzzled by the seven heads, "five have fallen, one is the other is not yet come," but also by the beast itself which "was and is not, yet is," and which would ascend from the bottomless pit. This

was mysterious language which I could not understand. I read the different interpretations but there were always bits and pieces which did not fit.

I finally decided to just take the Scriptures without any bias or preconceived ideas (as I had done when studying the issue of the Trinity), and it was then that things started to pop up which I had previously missed. At one point, in reading Revelation 19 (in the last three verses), I saw that the beast was alive at the very end fighting against Christ at his return.

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. (Rev 19:19-20)

While reading this passage, I recalled that in Revelation 17 it says that the kings of the earth, represented by the 10 horns on the head of the beast, would hate the woman Babylon, would attack her, strip her naked and burn her with fire.

And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. (Rev 17:16)

The fulfillment of this prophecy is seen in Revelation chapter 18, and it is clear that this happens before the return of Christ. So I was puzzled as I read Revelation 19. I had been taught that the beast in Revelation 13 represents the Papacy (the Roman Catholic Church/State system), but that in Revelation 17, the political part was represented as the beast, while the religious part of the same Catholic Church, was

represented as the woman riding the beast. If the woman was stripped naked and burned with fire, how could the beast still remain alive and healthy? The beast is thrown alive into the lake of fire at the return of Jesus, while the woman is burnt with fire, her flesh is eaten and she is stripped naked, *before* the return of Jesus.

This made me realize that although the woman is presently riding the beast, the beast and the woman are two separate and distinct entities who will one day become enemies. The 10 horns on the head of the beast are evidently connected to the beast in some way, they are a part of the beast. They are sub-kingdoms within the Empire of the beast, and the prophecy says that they will give their power and their strength to the beast, so obviously they are in very close union with the beast. It is these horns that will hate the whore, make her naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. It is not possible that they should do this work if the beast and the woman are two aspects of the same power. How could the horns be a part of the beast and turn around and destroy a part of themselves? This scenario makes no sense.

This is what led me to the conclusion that the beast is not the Papacy. This of course made me realize that I might also need to reexamine my understanding of what the mark of the beast is. I realized that if I was wrong about the identity of the beast, then of course I was quite likely also wrong about the mark of the beast.

A GODLESS, SECULAR POWER

Another thing that I had come to recognize was that the beast of Revelation 17 appeared to be opposed to God and to all religion. There are two things which brought me to this conclusion: first of all, there is the fact that the beast makes war against Christ and against his people, so obviously the beast is against true religion. But also,

the beast, through the 10 horns will attack the woman, Babylon, so it is evident that ultimately the beast will also make war against false religion. It seems clear to me then, that the beast itself will not be a religious entity, although some have suggested that it may be involved with pagan religion, and that is a possibility.

THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

However the fact that the beast arises from the bottomless pit is another factor that needs to be considered. Originally the beast arises from the sea, but it seems to disappear for a while and “is not.” At the end it reappears and this time it arises from “the bottomless pit. This phrase, “the bottomless pit,” appears in Revelation in about four places. Some have interpreted the phrase to signify the physical condition of the earth as a broken down desolate place, but that does not make sense if we interpret it that way in this case. The beast represents a kingdom, an empire. It is not to emerge from a deserted, desolate place on earth. It seems evident that it is more focused on a spiritual description, so that it is more a spiritual bottomless pit than a physical bottomless pit. It is not saying that the beast arises in a place which is physically broken down and desolate, it is speaking of a spiritual state.

This description of a bottomless pit, suggests a state of utter hopelessness. What would be the consequence if someone fell into a bottomless pit? How much chance of recovery would there be? Absolutely none. So this bottomless pit indicates a condition where there is no spiritual hope. This suggests a condition on earth where most of the planet has turned against God, and utterly rejected him, and where the predominant belief is that of atheism.

SODOMY AND ATHEISM

Some time after I began to see all this, I was on the Internet having discussions with different people concerning the homosexual issue, and how it is developing in the world. I was involved in discussing this on several chat forums. After a while I began to notice that there

was a pattern in all of these discussions. It seemed to me that the people who were most vocal and almost rabidly supportive of homosexuality, and who were most furiously opposed to any objection to it, were people who were atheists. It was not long before I thought of the passage in Romans chapter 1, where the apostle Paul speaks about men rejecting God. He speaks about people who know God, who have all the evidence for God's existence, but who willfully reject this evidence. The apostle Paul says very clearly that a consequence of this kind of attitude is that men and women turn to homosexual behavior. The men leave the natural use of the woman and burn in their lust one towards another and likewise the women become lesbians.

Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. (Rom 1:21)

For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; (Rom 1:26-28)

At this point, I began to see a connection between the rising tide of atheism in the world, and the rapid rise of homosexuality. According to Paul there is a connection between them both. But if the beast is primarily a godless atheistic power, then the mark of this beast, the predominant practice which arises from his very existence, would be the universal practice and acceptance of homosexual behavior. This seemed logical to me.

The next thing that happened was that I was reading through the third Angel's

message carefully, and I was startled to discover that there is in the third Angel's message, a very clear reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. If it is not a clear reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, then it is a most remarkable coincidence, but when it comes to the word of God I don't believe in coincidence. The third angel warns that those who worship the beast and receive his mark will receive the same punishment as did the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. They will,

1. Be tormented with fire and brimstone
2. In the presence of the holy angels
3. In the presence of the Lamb
4. The smoke of their torment will rise up

This description is taken from the story of Sodom's destruction. All of these characteristics were recorded as taking place at the time of Sodom's overthrow. (See Genesis chapter 19).

So now, I began to do deliberate research to see if there was supportive evidence for what I was seeing. A few other things began to appear. I noticed that there were only two times in history that God himself intervened to deliberately destroy an entire civilization. The first time was during the flood of Noah, and the second time was when he destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Everybody knows what happened in Sodom, but not very much is known about the conditions which existed on the earth just before the flood. What I found very interesting is that Jewish writings suggest that in the days of Noah, before the flood, men were getting married to men - writing marriage contracts!

“The generation of the Flood was not blotted out of the world until they had begun writing nuptial hymns for marriages between males or between man and beast.” (Genesis Rabbah 26:5:4)

These are the thirty commandments which the sons of Noah took upon themselves but they observe three

of them, namely, (i) they do not draw up a kethubah [marriage contract] document for males, (ii) they do not weigh flesh of the [human] dead in the market, and (iii) they respect the Torah. (Babylonian Talmud, Chullin 92a-b)

This is the only time in history that such a thing is mentioned, apart from in our modern age! This was a startling piece of information, but it fit in perfectly with what I had been discovering. In other words, the only two times in history that God had ever seen fit to personally intervene to destroy human civilizations, the outstanding mark of those civilizations had been the rampant practice of homosexuality. In fact, the Jewish writings suggest that there was even same-sex marriage just before the flood.

Many little things began to add up, and the bits and pieces began to come together to form a more complete picture. One other thing which I would mention is a reference in Revelation 11 where it says that the beast from the bottomless pit - the same beast of Revelation 17, will make war against God's two witnesses, and will kill them in the streets of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. Here, in addition to Sodom we also find reference to Egypt. Sodom of course, is a clear reference to sodomy and rampant immorality, but what does Egypt signify?

When we think of Egypt in a biblical sense, the thing that comes quickly and most readily to our minds, is the enslavement of Israel, but in particular the attitude of Egypt to the God of Israel at the time of the Exodus. Egypt defied the God of heaven, in fact Pharaoh stated very clearly, "who is the Lord God that I should obey his voice? I do not know the Lord, neither will I obey him." So it seems very clear to me that what the Bible is focusing on is a condition on earth where there is brazen defiance of God's authority, and where homosexual behavior is rampant. This is what is implied by the words, "Sodom and Egypt."

I am aware that many of us interpret

this passage in Revelation 11 as referring to the French Revolution. However, again, when I take off the glasses of traditional teaching and simply take the Bible, I conclude that this interpretation is not the primary meaning of the prophecy in Revelation 11. The beast is one entity, it has one identity. God is not trying to confuse us. The beast here is identified as "the beast from the bottomless pit." It is the same beast that we find in Revelation 17 arising from the bottomless pit. Yes, if we look at it this way, it will give us a different understanding of Revelation 11 than our pioneers had, and it will place the prophecy in a different time-frame, but if that needs to be done, that is what we should do. It is sad if we cling to traditional ideas, simply because they were always believed this way. Those who went before us studied the prophecies, but they were not the infallible voice of God, and we have the guidance of the holy spirit just as they did. We have the duty to study just as they did and to arrive at a different conclusion than they did, if we find loopholes in their understanding.

This was the train of thought which led me to my present position. I have continued to say that my ideas are not set in concrete. I am not foolish enough to believe that I am infallible, but I believe that the sequence of my thought processes was reasonable and logical, and solidly based on what the Scriptures reveal. I believe there is very good reason for coming to the conclusions that I have come to.

THE MARK AND THE SEAL

It is popularly believed that the seal of God is the observance of the seventh day Sabbath, however, Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:30, that it is the Holy Spirit of God that seals us unto the day of redemption. So we know that ultimately, the seal of God is the Holy Spirit. This is not to deny that there may be some outward behavior which will serve as an identification to demonstrate that a person has the seal of God. However, it is important to understand that the seal itself is primarily the Holy Spirit,

and when a person is sealed, it means that the spirit of God has been united with his spirit. This is what places the father's name or character, in our foreheads.

In the same way, or in a similar way, the receiving of the mark of the beast is really a condition where a person is cut off from the spirit God. It has to do with someone who has totally rejected God and his way. However, just as with the seal of God there may be some outward behavior which indicates that a person has completely rejected God. This outward behavior will in effect be the mark of the beast. So the question really is, what will be the outward mark which would indicate that a person has received the seal of the living God, and what will be the outward mark which would indicate that a person has received the mark of the beast? Even before considering this question it is helpful, and even necessary to remember that what we are looking for is the underlying characteristic of either possessing the very character of God, or possessing a character which is in total rebellion against God.

Acceptance of the practice of sodomy, either by indulging in it or by defending and promoting it, is one simple way in which a person may indicate that he has little regard for God's wisdom, for God's word or for God's authority. God's abhorrence of sodomy is something which is clearly and unmistakably taught in the Bible. In fact most religions, and particularly those which are of the abrahamic faith are strongly opposed to it. In societies and countries which were influenced by these religions, sodomy was always abhorred and declared unlawful for many centuries. It is only in recent times, with the rise of the evolutionary theory and the influence of atheism dominating universities and centers of education, that sodomy has become widely accepted, to the point where it is now regarded as a normal part of society, where those who object to it are regarded as bigots, narrow-minded and poorly adjusted people.

But now, with the arrival of homosexual marriage, things are developing along startling lines. Now it seems that churches and other religious groups which are involved in marrying people are facing a serious threat. Christians have already been prosecuted, fined and publicly castigated because they refused to cooperate with gay marriages. In one very prominent case a Christian marriage officer in the United States, was arrested and locked up for five days because she refused to authorize gay marriage. Some Christian denominations have already bowed to the pressure and have opened their arms to practicing homosexuals, under the misguided thinking that because God loves homosexuals, he accepts them just the way they are. This of course, results in greater pressure being applied to those churches that have not capitulated. Some professing Christians have undertaken to manipulate and twist and to distort those scriptural passages which speak against homosexuality to try to make them say something completely different. There is no question that this particular abomination, in many ways fits the biblical conditions surrounding the mark of the beast.

Sodomy is one of those behaviors that everyone knows is contrary to the will of God. In order to accept it as normal, a person first of all has to either reject God, or convince himself that God does not know what he's talking about. This in fact is what has happened to today's society, modern science has become the God of the present age. The ridiculous claim that people are born homosexuals, has caught the imagination of the gullible masses and what has little basis in scientific research has come to be accepted as infallible truth. No person can honestly claim that he believes that sodomy is something acceptable to God. This is why before a person can promote this abomination, he first of all has to come to the place where he has rejected God and God's counsel. In effect, this is the state a person is in when he receives the mark of the beast. This train of thought is what led me to wonder whether or not the laws pro-

moting and defending sodomy which are being widely and rapidly passed, do not have a lot to do with the mark of the beast.

But the question remains, what then is the outward sign that a person has received the seal of the living God? At first, it seems evident that the receiving of the seal of God must be accompanied by an outward practice just as the Mark of the Beast is. However, upon closer examination we discover something significant: The Mark of the Beast may be received in either the forehead, or the hand. In other words, it may be something which a person believes in, but does not necessarily practice, and it may be something which a person practices, but does not necessarily believe in. However, in the case of the seal of God, it is received exclusively in the forehead, it cannot be received in the hand!

This suggests that this seal is not affiliated with one particular type of behavior, but rather that it consists of a mind, a nature, a character which is formed in the very image of God. Therefore those who are sealed are said to have the Father's name written in their foreheads (Rev. 14:1). Of course, if a person has the mind of Christ he will behave like Christ, but not just in one particular way, but in his entire lifestyle. Such a person will be recognized as having the seal of God because he will not support the mark of the beast by his lifestyle or by his words, even at the risk of losing his job, his business, his friends, his status and ultimately, even his life. By default, if a person will not conform to the behavior demanded by the imposing of the mark of the beast, he will automatically be seen to have the seal of God.

Every day it becomes more and more evident that the vast majority of those who observe the Seventh Day Sabbath know very little of what it means to be Christians. I always believed that the observance of the Seventh Day Sabbath was the outward sign of the seal of God, but the more I understand, the more of a challenge this presents. Do we have

the seal of God simply because we keep the Sabbath? Are we better off than the hundreds of thousands of other sincere Christians who love and serve the Lord, even though they do not keep the Sabbath? Does the outward observance of one commandment really make one group of Christians more favored than others, even though we all possess the spirit of Christ?

This kind of thinking has caused Sabbath keepers to become very comfortable while they live in a state where they are described as, "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked." The misguided belief that keeping the Sabbath makes them distinctly the special people of God has not helped them and as a result, the same spirit which dominated the thinking of the Jews at the time when Jesus was crucified, is alive and well in many of us.

Don't misunderstand me, I am very much an observer of the Seventh day Sabbath. I believe that God blessed this day and set it apart from the beginning and that he never removed this blessing. However, what I am questioning is whether or not the final crisis to come to the world will really revolve around which day a person worships. I find that when I take the Bible and the Bible only, the evidences for such a thing are not quite as convincing as many seem to think, and the arrows point in another direction.

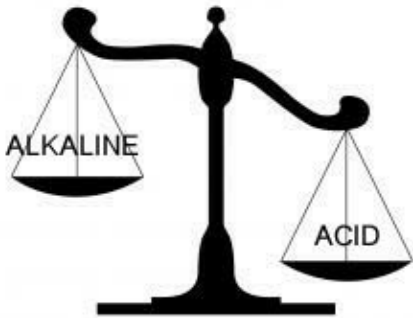
I know that we are at the end, and developing events will soon prove whether I am a false prophet, or an honest Bible student. I trust it will be the latter, but in the meantime, I feel that it is my duty to let you know what I have been finding, even if the result is that there is a storm of outrage and opposition, and I lose more friends.

May the God of truth help us to embrace what is written in the word of truth and nothing else.



Alkalize your pH

Lenworth Frankson



Many health professionals believe that the pH balance in our bodies is very important. Some go further to clearly state that it is a matter of life and death. It is important, if not critical, for us to know the scientific and medical facts regarding how the human body functions, what affects its health and what we can do to keep it healthy. Knowledge is always increasing. What was believed and accepted as true fifty or a hundred years ago is not necessarily true and factual today. I know for some this is hard to accept and it is an arguable topic but it is essential that we expand, open up and educate our minds in grasping and accepting scientific and medical facts, evidences and results which don't expose our bodies to health risks and don't conflict with the word of God.

What is meant by pH? PH is a figure expressing the acidity or alkalinity of a solution on a numerical scale on which 7 is neutral. PH stands for power of hydrogen, which is a measurement of the hydrogen ion concentration in the body. The total pH scale ranges from 1 to 14, with 7 considered being neutral. A pH less than 7 is said to be acidic and solutions with a pH greater than 7 are basic or alkaline. So the pH level is a measure of your acid/alkaline balance in the body. Ideally in a healthy body, the pH of the blood should be about 7.385.

Dr. F. Batmanghelidj, author of *Water for Health, for Healing, for Life*, explains that "from 7 to 14 on the pH scale is the alkaline range; 7 is less

alkaline than 14. On the pH scale 7, is neutral, meaning optimum. Thus, pH of 7.4 of the interior of the cell denotes its natural, slightly alkaline state. This state promotes health because it is the state that best suits the enzymes that function inside the cell: They achieve optimum efficiency at this pH. Adequate flow of water in and out of the cell keeps the cell interior in its health-maintaining alkaline state."

It is at the cellular level that our bodies live and die. The billions of cells in our bodies must maintain alkalinity, in order to function and stay alive. Having a proper pH balance in our bodies is crucial for our defense against diseases. Disease easily grows in an acidic body, which makes a condition favorable for the growth of bacteria, yeast, fungus, mold, viruses, and any other unwanted organisms. It appears that cancer has the tendency to strike those with an over-acidic body. An acidic body is a sickness magnet. What we eat and drink will impact where our body's pH level falls. Balance is everything!

An acidic state causes a lack of oxygenation at the cellular level. When the pH level falls below 7.4, there is less than the maximum oxygen in the blood. Blood carries the maximum oxygen at pH 7.4 (alkaline). Without proper oxygenation, unfriendly bacteria, mold, and viruses will prosper.

When the human body is in an acidic state, it will try to shield itself from the damaging effects by storing the acid in fat cells. The body tries to prevent the acid from damaging tissues. When the acid level is high in the body, calcium is also depleted. The body may make fat cells in order to store unwanted acid for its own protection. This process may save your vital organs from severe damage. By returning to a balanced pH level, you may lose unwanted fat cells.

If the body is too acidic, one could start

to experience feelings of imbalance including gas, constipation, bloating, acne, heartburn, acid reflux, indigestion, mild headaches, gastritis, candida and frequent flus. Advanced symptoms of over-acidity include Crohn's disease and possible cancer.

If a person's diet is largely composed of acid-forming foods like meats, fish, cheeses, breads, white flour foods, greasy dishes, chocolate, coffee, wine, beer and cigarettes etc., it is very likely they will have an over-acidic body.

Eating a low-acid diet can help prevent and fight off diseases by keeping inflammation inside the body, away. It is important to understand that our lungs, kidneys and other buffering systems, regulate the blood's pH. The pH level in urine is also affected by what we eat but the lungs and kidneys regulate the pH of the blood.

ROLE OF THE LUNGS

The body uses the lungs to control blood pH, which involves the release of carbon dioxide from the lungs into the blood. Carbon dioxide, which is mildly acidic, is a waste product of the processing of oxygen. As such, cells constantly produce carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is excreted into the blood, which takes it to the lungs, where it is exhaled. As carbon dioxide accumulates in the blood, the pH of the blood decreases therefore the acidity increases. Also our brain regulates the amount of carbon dioxide that is exhaled by controlling the speed and depth of breathing. The amount of carbon dioxide exhaled increases as breathing becomes faster and deeper. Consequently the pH of the blood increases. By adjusting the speed and depth of breathing, the brain and lungs are able to regulate the blood pH minute by minute.

ROLE OF THE KIDNEYS

The kidneys are able to affect blood

pH by excreting excess acids or bases. The kidneys have some ability to alter the amount of acid or base that is excreted, but because the kidneys make these adjustments more slowly than the lungs do, this compensation generally takes several days.

BUFFER SYSTEMS

A third mechanism for controlling blood pH involves the use of buffer systems, which guard against sudden shifts in acidity and alkalinity. The pH buffer systems are combinations of the body's own naturally occurring weak acids and weak bases. The pH buffer systems work chemically to minimize changes by adjusting the proportion of acid and base.

Food is considered acidic or alkaline depending on its pH value so foods below seven are considered more acidic and foods above seven considered more alkaline. Alkaline foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and root vegetables are broken down into short chain fatty acids that contain certain nutrients, which nourish and promote good bacteria in our intestines. These good bacteria help to decrease inflammation throughout our bodies. Processed foods, high protein foods and supplements, sodas, sweetened beverages along with refined sugar, flour and too much saturated animal fat can create an acidic environment in our gut. High alkaline foods are good, not because they change the pH of the blood but because they promote good bacteria in the gut. The general recommendation to maintain a healthy pH is to eat eighty percent alkaline-forming foods and twenty percent acid-forming foods.

However, it is important take note of the fact that a food's acid or alkaline forming tendency in the body has nothing to do with the actual pH of the food itself. A food may itself be acidic, but it's effect on the body may be to create an alkaline environment. For example lemons and un-distilled Raw (unpasteurized) Organic Apple Cider Vinegar are very acidic, however the end products they produce after digestion and assimilation are very alkaline so, lemons

and raw organic Apple Cider Vinegar are alkaline forming in the body. Raw Apple Cider Vinegar is the only vinegar that is alkaline-forming to the body. All other vinegars (white, balsamic, red wine, etc.) are acid forming. Meat will test alkaline before digestion, but it leaves a very acidic residue in the body so, like nearly all animal products, meat is very acid forming.

ALKALINE FORMING FOODS

There is no perfect diet in this present system that we live in, but perhaps the diet that is best for longevity and staving off disease is an alkaline diet. Diets consisting of highly alkaline foods like fresh vegetables, fruits and unprocessed plant-based sources of protein, for example, result in a more alkaline urine pH level, which helps protect healthy cells and balance essential mineral levels. An alkaline diet has been shown to help prevent plaque formation in blood vessels, stop calcium from accumulating in urine, prevent kidney stones, build stronger bones, reduce muscle wasting or spasm, among other things.

Let us remember that the pH of a food before you eat it is less important than what it turns into once it's inside your body. Too much acid tends to be a common problem because of the high rates at which people eat animal protein, sugar, and processed grains, as well as the higher rates of prescription drug use.

In Genesis chapter one we clearly see that the simple diet God gave to humanity was an alkaline diet:

And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food" (Genesis 1:29 NKJV).

It seems obvious that God was instituting, at creation, the diet that is best for us. We know that the human body has degenerated and become less efficient in digesting wholesome foods due to intemperance, ignorance and sinful practices. Some of us have inherited digestive weaknesses and ailments due to abuse and unhealthy practices from our ancestors in the past. However,

there are some things we can do to stimulate and promote health, one being to partake of an alkaline diet. The alkaline diet is a healthy alternative. Eating more fruits and vegetables, along with curbing our taste for refined carbohydrate, sugars, and if possible eliminating dairy intake, may help balance pH levels within the body. A balanced pH levels may easily reduce daily issues and may even lower the possibility of certain long-term health risks.



Faith is Everything

If any spiritual benefit may be credited to human ability, even if it be simply, the ability to seek God more earnestly than others, then in that area, one may find grounds for giving oneself credit and self-praise. There will be justification for the belief that God's benefits are rewards for human ability and effort. Or else, one must accept predestination – that one is specially enabled to make these moves which others are unable to make.

If some can make these moves, while others can't because they don't have the same psychological make-up, the necessary will, the necessary drive, then, those who can do those things are to be credited, so there is a basis for condemning those who don't do these things and for approving those who do.

If all glory goes to God and to His Son, it means that any ability which we possess must be simply the gifts of God, given equally to all men, but accessed only by faith. So the only real input of a person is faith. Also we see that faith can enable a person to do anything which any other person has done.

Faith is not something in which a person can boast; it is simply the consequence of what he sees.



Campmeeting 2017

By the time you receive this newsletter it will be almost time for our annual campmeeting. The meetings will begin on the evening of Thursday, April 13, and will end at midday on Monday, April 17. Once again, it promises to be a special occasion and we encourage everyone to make special efforts to attend - especially those who live in Jamaica. We will have speakers from Romania, Hungary, Germany and also the USA, in addition to the usual ones from Jamaica.

Progress on the building of our campsite at Spice Grove, in Manchester, has been going well. Last year we had the meetings in the small room which is to be our dining area. This year we will be having them in the main meeting hall, or the chapel, which did not exist this time last year. It will not be completely

finished by the time we have campmeeting, but we already have the walls up and the roof on, and it will be good enough for us to be able to have the meetings there in April.

Our accommodations continue to be limited, but we have also constructed two dormitories at the rear of the chapel. These are also not completed, but they already have four walls and a roof. One of these dorms will be assigned to single females and the other to single males. Unfortunately we don't have separate facilities for couples, or families, so married people who cannot sleep separate from your spouse will have to take your own tents as always. We also will not be able to provide beds, mattresses or bedding materials so please make arrangements for those things yourself. Meal arrangements will be similar to

last year. Campers are asked to contribute \$1200.00 (US \$10.00). Lunch will be provided on Friday, Sabbath and Sunday. Campers will be responsible for their own breakfast and supper.

For directions as to how to get to the campsite, please contact us directly by email, or by phone.

emails:

vidclay@gmail.com
howiewillie@gmail.com

phone :

+1 (304) 932-4543 (outside Jamaica).
(876) 361-8555; 603-0821 (Jamaica)



Open Face

*Restoration Ministries
P.O. Box 23, Knockpatrick
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.
ph. (304) 932-4543
Jamaica: (876) 603-0821*