

Hearken Diligently

by

Adam Woeger

Essential Requirements Of Christ

First Edition

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Publisher: [Adam Woeger](#)

Today, more than ever, it seems that there are so many distractions, and so many confusing teachings about God, Jesus, and Christianity. What has been taken for granted for hundreds, and thousands, of years is being morphed into a hodgepodge of self reliance, positive thinking and “roll you own religion” philosophy. Tried and true essentials of the Christian Faith have been disregarded, and replaced with all kinds of new thinking and reasoning about ourselves and our relationship with God. Many today deny God, or else describe **a god** that they have created to fit their worldview. In their search for significance, people have lost touch with the True God, and replaced **The Almighty** with a **god** they have created to justify their significance and actions.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;...” Romans 1:16.

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Deceiving The Elect

The Word Of God says that in the last days there will come seducing spirits, false Christs and false prophets that would even deceive God's elect. "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, **to seduce**, if *it were* possible, **even the elect.**" Mark 13:22. "**NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly**, that **in the latter times some shall depart from the faith**, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; **Speaking lies** in hypocrisy; having their **conscience seared** with a hot iron;" 1 Timothy 4:1-2.

Today many Christians, and some churches, are confused about what they really believe. They often embrace deceptive doctrines, that have been polluted by the world, and also by the enemy of our souls. Satan's biggest weapon is deception. He wants the whole world to deny the True God, and instead follow after his evil ways.

"BELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: **And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God:** and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. **Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God;** and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. **He that loveth not knoweth not God;** for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. **Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.** No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. **Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.** And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. **Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.** And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. **God is love;** and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. **We love him, because he first loved us.** If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, **That he who loveth God love his brother also.**" 1 John 4:1-21.

"...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.**" Acts 16:30-31. Belief in Christ, in His Blood, and in What He Has Done is essential.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but **have everlasting life.** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. **He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already,** because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John 3:16-19.

Anything Goes

If it feels good, do it... There is no right or wrong, everything is relative... These phrases unfortunately are all too common today. We are being bombarded with advertisements, movies, and media telling us to feel good, enjoy life, and not be worried about the future. They constantly tell us not to plan for the future, because this life is all that there is. The self absorbed, self pleased lifestyle is contrary to God's plan for us for eternity.

God wants us to spend eternity in fellowship, in right standing, and in perfect relationship with Him. God is very clear in calling our selfish lifestyle out for what it truly is. He desires faithfulness from us to maintain the integrity of our relationship with Him. **Apart from Him we are nothing.** It is by Christ's Righteousness that we may have access to The Father. **We are not to deviate from His Standards, or engage in any sin.**

Hearken Diligently

God is calling all of His True Believers to hearken diligently to His Words, and to not neglect any portion of His Instructions. He wants us to pay attention to every detail of His Nature and His Commands. We can miss out from walking in God's best blessings by the ignorance that we show to God, Jesus Christ, and The Holy Spirit. We need to get to know Him, and walk in His Ways. There are blessings and promises, plus provision and protection, that are associated with hearkening diligently to the Lord our God.

“And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,” Deuteronomy 11:13.

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe *and* to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:” Deuteronomy 28:1.

“And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I *am* the LORD that healeth thee.” Exodus 15:26.

“And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the LORD, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein;” Jeremiah 17:24.

“Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is* not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? **hearken diligently** unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.” Isaiah 55:2-3.

To **hearken** means to hear, listen, and give respectful attention. To do it **diligently** means to have a steady, earnest, and energetic effort, often described as doing it in a painstaking fashion. Therefore, we are to be diligent and careful to properly **listen, heed, hear, and give respectful attention,** through our efforts, to

everything that God says and requires of us. **We are to be like Jesus Christ, transformed into His Image.** We must decrease so that Christ may increase in us. “He must increase, but I *must* decrease.” John 3:30.

We must constantly crucify our flesh and carnal thoughts. We must **constantly renew our mind** and have His Thoughts, which always glorify God The Father. We are to walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. We are to experience joy. **“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace...”** Isaiah 55:12.

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.” Romans 13:14. **We must guard our mind and thoughts:** “Neither give place to the devil.” Ephesians 4:27.

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3:27.

In this fast paced, microwave society that we find ourself in today, **we tend to expect** everything to come quickly and easily in life. Many people are losing the desire to spend time and energy in the pursuit of a long term goal. **There is value in hard work.** God did not say that life would be easy or without tribulations, if we have accepted His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior, but He did say that He would provide a way of escape for everyone that diligently seeks after Him. **Pursuit of God through Christ** demonstrates both your faith and your passion. **God will respond to your faith, pursuit, and hunger for Him and His Ways.**

You have no right to anything that you have not pursued. He tells us constantly to seek after His Kingdom and His Righteousness, and all things shall be added unto us. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matthew 6:33. Likewise, Christ tells us to ask, seek, and knock, which demonstrates pursuit and faith. If you do not believe in something or someone, why would you pursue them?

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. 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.” Matthew 7:7-14. *Also* Luke 11:9-13. God wants us to truly believe in Jesus Christ. *See* Mark 11:22-25.

What you possess now is like a picture or image of what you have pursued. If you have nothing, perhaps you have not properly pursued what is right and pleasing to God. If you need love, have you pursued love, by sowing proper seeds of love toward others? Likewise, he who wants friends must show himself friendly.

We are called to go out and preach The Gospel, and not compromise. True evangelism emphasizes a personal relationship with Christ. We are to make disciples of Jesus Christ, for God’s Glory, to advance His Kingdom. We are called to be ambassadors of Christ’s Love to deliver His light and His hope to a lost and dying world.

Pursuit brings many benefits, including the fruit of who and what has been pursued. If you pursue evil things and people, you will likely reap evil, but if you truly pursue God, and godly things and people, you will likely receive a reward of good things. You will reap what you sow (Galatians 6:7-10). True pursuit shows God that you truly care about Him, and not just care about what He can provide for you. He looks at the motives for your pursuit to see if they are pure and genuine, manifested out of your love for Him and desire to serve Him. Do you meditate on The Word Of God daily to show your passion to better know Him? The people in The Bible who had closeness, favor, and intimacy with God were those who truly **believed and had faith in God**. We are to also have and demonstrate a remarkable passion toward the things of God.

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have faith in God**. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, **but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith**. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, **believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them**. And when ye stand praying, **forgive**, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:22-25. Your faith will unlock opportunities.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Galatians 6:7-10. Your passion is revealed through what you focus your time, talents, and energy on. We should have our minds set on God. Our lives, and all our worship, should be entirely focused on Christ.

We are not to get hurried or busy with the cares in this world, but rather we should be **anxious for nothing**. Concentrate on those things that will please God, and live life by your faith in God. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.” Philippians 4:6-8. There is great beauty in not being hurried, so that we focus entirely on Christ. “...but the just shall live by his faith.” Habakkuk 2:4.

Not My Will, But Thine Be Done - The Yielded Will

The most important lesson any true Believer in Christ can learn is to surrender their will to the Will Of God. It is the pinnacle of our faith walk, to discover the blessedness that comes from replacing our own will and our own reasoning with His Will. It takes all the stress away, for we do not have to figure things out in our mind anymore. We simply must rest, having full faith and confidence, knowing that God is our true source.

We must yield our will, like Christ, and say, “...**nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.**” Luke 22:42.

When we yield our will to the Will Of God, we no longer have to struggle to make decisions. All stress and uncertainty will disappear, and we will walk with the childlike faith Jesus talks about in Matthew 18:2-7, and Luke 18:17. This kind of faith demonstrates to God and to Jesus that we totally rely on and believe on Them. We must be yielded vessels, continually filled with the Holy Spirit, and maintain our relationship with Christ.

The Ways Of God Are To Be Sought And Desired

It is not enough to learn about the acts of God, the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Learning about Biblical places, people, and events will delight the flesh, and potentially draw crowds, but will not suffice to draw us into the **deeper spiritual relationship** that God desires for us to have with Him. Many churches and Bible colleges teach only about the acts of God and acts of Christ, giving us only history and facts to learn.

If you want a good relationship with someone, you must really get to know them. If all you know about them are their past actions and accomplishments, then you know only a small portion of who they really are. **It is the same with God.** He wants you to not only know His Acts, but also **to know His Ways and His Nature.**

Some people are so consumed trying to memorize all of God's Laws that they miss the point. The Bible is designed so that we may learn about **God's Nature and Ways**. Once people truly know His Ways, they will have no reason to violate His Laws. It is essential to learn the **ways of God**, including the **ways of Christ** and the **ways of His Holy Spirit**. Moses asked God, to show him **His Ways**. See Exodus 33:13, Psalm 103:7. We must **not fight** against the ways of God. We must learn God's Ways and cooperate with The Holy Spirit.

What You Do Not Know, Or Believe, The Enemy Steals

The Holy Spirit has been sent to teach us and reveal God's Ways to us. We will either accept and act on them, or reject them. Whenever God's Ways, His Nature, and His Truth are rejected, **a door of unbelief is opened**. The enemy will come in and steal whatever truth has been presented to us, if we are not careful to **believe it**.

Learn this important principle: **What you do not understand, believe, or acknowledge, the enemy steals.**

“When **any one heareth the word of the kingdom**, and **understandeth it not**, then cometh the wicked *one*, and **catcheth away that which was sown in his heart**. This is he which **received seed by the way side**.” Matthew 13:19. To thwart this, we must continually maintain **an abiding faith, trust, and acknowledgment of Christ's Ways at all times**: “**Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.**” Proverbs 3:5-6.

It is our individual responsibility to protect the precious seed of truth that is sown into our mind and our life, and to believe it, to acknowledge it as God's Truth, and to ask for the Holy Spirit's help in understanding and maintaining each seed of God's Truth we receive, whether from God's Word, from teaching, or otherwise.

We must **give no place to the devil**. See Ephesians 4:27. Too many Christians are giving the devil a foothold in their life, by having a lack of knowledge, a lack of understanding, or a lack of **believing in Christ's Ways and in Christ's Promises**. We need to be led by the Spirit of God. We need to understand God's Ways by the Holy Spirit and the Word Of God. If you do not understand God's Ways, Satan will steal it. **What you do not understand, believe, or acknowledge, the enemy steals**. The flesh tries to get you to agree with the ways of the world, and neglect spending the necessary time and effort to discover the wonderful possibilities that God has planned for you. We must seek after God's Kingdom (Matthew 6:33) and yield to the things of the Spirit.

Guard and continually renew your mind with God's Word and His Truth. Speak faith. Give no place to doubt. Always glorify, **believe**, and acknowledge Him. **We need a complete faith!** Have faith in every area of God.

We Must Listen To And Act On Each Opportunity To Have Faith In God

In Romans 10:17, we learn that **faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word Of God.** “**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.**” Psalm 119:105. **God is speaking faith building words to us in His Word.** Since **Jesus is the Word Made Flesh** (*see* John 1:1-14), Jesus is also **speaking faith** to us in The Bible. **Faith is not learned or understood by human reasoning.** In fact, our own reasoning is an enemy to having a true faith in God. We must renew our minds constantly with “faith words,” as recorded in The Bible, as a pattern and example for us to grab hold of, to build our faith. **We must have faith in God.**

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have faith in God.**” Mark 11:22. Faith is invisible and is not seen or understood by us, “**NOW faith is the substance of things hoped for**, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders **obtained a good report. Through faith** we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” Hebrews 11:1-3.

Christians are given a measure of faith. “...God hath dealt to every man **the measure of faith.**” Romans 12:3. We are to **use, act upon, and build up** our most holy faith in God, and in Jesus Christ, just like athletes must use and keep their muscles in tone. If we neglect Christ’s words, we are stunting our faith growth, and leave ourselves open to attack by the enemy. Faith will extinguish all of the enemy’s darts! “**Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.**” Ephesians 6:16.

We must stay built-up in a continual, abiding faith and love toward God and toward Jesus Christ. “**But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.**” Jude 1:20-21.

God’s greatest desire is to be fully believed in by us. Christians must be in agreement with God, and fully believe He Is Who He Says He Is. “**But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**” Hebrews 11:6.

Truth Speaks To Us... We Need To Act In Faith To God’s Word [Truth]

Truth speaks to us through God’s Word, The Holy Spirit, and ministers who preach and teach God’s Word. We need to act in faith to what is revealed and shared with us. Jesus wants us to **hear and do** His sayings. We need to build upon The Rock, which is Christ, and have a “house” of faith in Him that can not be shaken. Why do you call Jesus Lord, Lord and **do not** the things which He says. Too many people are not doing what Jesus Christ has told them to do in His Word. They will ignore His Instructions, and instead follow the world. When truth speaks to you, you must do it, and not respond in the flesh. Not doing Christ’s Words causes ruin. You walk by faith when you **do what** The Word [Truth] says. Act in faith without trying to reason things out. Faith has no natural understanding. We can’t figure it out. It is Supernatural! In life, practice walking in faith.

“**And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.**” Luke 6:46-49.

Be a doer of The Word. “**But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.** For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. **But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.** If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, **this man’s religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.**” James 1:22-27.

Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. We cooperate with Christ when **we do what He says**. “**WHEREFORE** seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:1-2.

You will either agree with God’s Word, by acting on it, or you will reject it. You agree in faith when you embrace His Truth, **believe it**, and act upon it. You reject it when you fail to believe or properly act upon it.

Walk out in faith what God is saying to do in His Word. The Word invites and gives us the opportunity to believe and have faith in God. Jesus is calling us to have a complete faith in Him, and not only a partial faith, where we believe Him in only some areas. He is looking for complete fidelity from us, complete faith.

Here is a powerful example of **Truth speaking to us**. We need to be a doer of what God is saying to us here: **Love your enemies, Do good and lend, hoping nothing in return, Show mercy to others, Judge not, Condemn not, Forgive, and also Give to others.** For with whatever measure you do each of these things, it shall be returned back to you. **We must do good to others, and truly love them, as Christ commanded us.**

“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” Luke 6:35-38. Watch out for critical spirits.

We need to appreciate God, for He is our biggest supporter. He wants us to fully trust Him, and to walk in faith in every area. He seeks those with a **pure and contrite heart**, who desire to walk **humbly** before Him.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. **Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation**; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit. *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” “The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: **a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.**” Psalm 51:10-13,17.

“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, **with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.**” Isaiah 57:15.

Our Faith Will Be Tested

It is one thing to say we have faith in God, but it is another to **prove it**. Tests will come our way to show to God, the devil, and the world, that we are faithful to God, and that we will not compromise our faith in Him. Scripture is full of examples of men and women of God being tested in their faith. In the end, each one who successfully overcame temptations and tests was recognized for their faith in God. *See Hebrews Chapter 11.*

God is looking for someone that He can trust to be in covenant relationship with Him for all eternity, who will truly love and desire Him. Will you show yourself to be trustworthy by demonstrating faith in Him?

God allows us to be tested, to demonstrate if we will have faith in Him or not. He wants to see if we will believe in Him. Abraham passed the test, “...**for now I know that thou fearest God...**” Genesis 22:12. May we all pass the testing of our Lord, **and be found faithful** in our belief, trust, and confidence in Him. Life will test who we have decided to believe. We should spend our time and money, as in Matthew 6:19-21:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

“*The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*” Psalm 34:17-18.

“**Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:** And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, **and lead me in the way everlasting.**” Psalm 139:23-24.

We can do nothing ourselves. **When we partner with God**, all things are possible. “And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: **for with God all things are possible.**” Mark 10:27.

“And Jesus answering saith unto them, **Have faith in God.** For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, **but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.** Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, **believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.** And when ye stand praying, **forgive**, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11:22-25. Discern opportunities for your faith.

“**Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.**” Mark 9:23.

“...And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall **search for me with all your heart...**” Jeremiah 29:12-14.

“**Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him,** because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, **That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.**” 1 John 3:21-23. We must not harden our hearts to God or any man.

God is saying to you: If you want a relationship with Me, you will pursue Me. God's Ways are Supernatural!

Kingdom Builders

Jesus says to seek His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all things shall be added unto us (Matthew 6:33). Unfortunately, many people have been busy building their own kingdoms here on earth, desiring the praise and adulation of men and women, surrounding themselves with people, money, and material possessions.

There is only One who is Famous and to be Revered, and that is God (The Father, The Son, The Holy Spirit). Anything else is of the evil one, the devil, who is the father of lies, and was consumed by pride, thinking that he knew how to run things better than God. Many people, including many pastors, evangelists and ministers, have been deceived into believing that they were something special, worthy of adoration, fame, and riches, for who they were, and for the power and control that they wielded. I know of so many cases of good men and women of God who were used mightily, but then got themselves ensnared in greed, sexual sins, financial misconduct, pride, and all manner of sins. **They left their first love and have exchanged the truth for a lie.**

“Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent... He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” Revelation 2:4-7.

Many of today’s churches are actively compromising The Gospel in order to gain more money and members. Churches often put growth and financial matters ahead of the actual work of the ministry. In fact, I recently spoke with a pastor of a large 1,000+ member church, and he admitted that he spent most of his time acting as CEO of a corporation, busy handling administrative tasks. He had very little time to seek God, to preach, and to prepare himself for spiritual service to God. When pastors become so busy and consumed taking care of church business matters and politics, they are doing themselves and their congregations a great disservice.

Pastors are charged by Jesus Christ to **“feed His sheep.”** See John 21:15-17. When the shepherd (pastor) of a flock of people (sheep) neglects their pastoral spiritual duties, they are opening the door for the enemy to do great damage to the people, and to potentially scatter, confuse, and destroy people’s faith and hope in God.

God never intended for **the church** to mean **the building**. The building is where the church, God’s called out ones, gather and assemble to meet, but we as Christians, **are the church**, the Body Of Christ. When people say that they “are going to church,” what they really should be saying is that they “are going to the meeting place where fellow Believers in Christ (called out ones) are assembling together.” If there are no Christians present, then the church would not be present in that particular place. A church building must not define us. The church is a made up of many members, designed to work together, to be interdependent on each another.

Lovers Of Self, Favoring People, Judging and Condemning Others

We are commanded to be impartial, to demonstrate love to all people, and not to judge others. James 2:1-9. We should not favor certain people over other people. **Who are we to condemn or judge others?** Too many people **think too highly** of themselves, and are deceived into believing that the world revolves around them! We must continually be careful not to gossip, slander, judge, condemn, or mistreat people, or to exhibit pride. Jesus has called us to go after the unlovely and undesirable, and invite them to The Lamb’s Wedding Supper.

Sounding The Alarm

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?” Hebrews 2:3-4.

“Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk *therein*. Also I set watchmen over you, *saying*, Harken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, We will not hearken. Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.” Jeremiah 6:16-19.

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous *man* doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous *man*, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.” Ezekiel 3:17-21.

“Son of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man of their coasts, and set him for their watchman: If when he seeth the sword come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the people; Then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet, and taketh not warning; if the sword come, and take him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his blood shall be upon him. But he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take *any* person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand. So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.” Ezekiel 33:2-7.

We, as Christians, are called to be watchmen on the wall, sounding the alarm when the enemy, danger, evil, and falsehood come near the camp. Many people **have missed out on their opportunity to sound the alarm and blow the trumpet to warn others** of the impending doom and destruction that will soon come upon them.

When was the last time you heard or saw a church, ministry, or group of Believers in Jesus Christ, attempting to warn people that they need **to repent of their sins**, or risk being eternally separated from God? Why do so few people, who profess their faith in Jesus Christ, actively practice their faith, by acting to sound the alarm?

The day that we are living in is evil. The world is becoming increasingly hateful, wicked, and sinful. **Jesus Christ** is the only true hope there is for men and women today! See my *Gospel* writing for more information.

Who We Are, What We Have (In Christ)

The devil constantly tries to steal from us “Who We Are In Christ.” If we forget, or overlook, Who We Are In Christ, then we open the door for doubt and many attacks to come against us. **We need to always speak and affirm what The Word says about us, confessing daily, from this day forward, Who We Are In Christ.**

We need to always **identify with Christ**, and forget not all His Benefits. Just as we are to **identify with His Sufferings**, we also need to identify with His Resurrection. God has provided so much for us through Christ, we just need to avail ourselves of as much of it as possible. The Word Of God is full of so many promises in Jesus Christ, just waiting to be discovered and identified with! There is much power in The Name Of Jesus. **We are one body. We need to be in agreement in prayer, to see God’s Mighty Power.** See Romans 12:5. We are warring against strongholds, which are **mindsets**, that have taken hold to control our thoughts, which control our actions, and express what we believe. “For though we walk in the flesh, **we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)** **Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;**” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

Many people identify with bitterness, poverty, or sickness, but we should **instead identify with good things** in Christ. We need to identify properly with The Word. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” Galatians 6:7-9. We will have a due season to reap, if we faint not.

We are to have a sound mind, free from being controlled by things that do not line up with the Word Of God. “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7. We need to **speak The Word daily**, so that we can **identify** with Christ, without trying to **reason things out**.

The Holy Spirit reveals to us Who We Are In Christ, so that we may know Christ and walk in faith as true followers of Christ. “*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.*” John 14:17. **The Holy Spirit is in us, to help us know who we are, and what we have, in Jesus Christ.** The Holy Spirit operates from The Kingdom, and reveals Jesus, and all Truth to us. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. The devil, and the things of this world, should not rule us. **We need to say who we are in Christ.** “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, **and hath nothing in me.**” John 14:30.

“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 14:26.

We need to **remind ourselves**, and the devil, **that we are justified by Christ, and we are in right standing** with Him. “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is **in Christ Jesus:**” Romans 3:24. We need to not let anyone condemn us. The world condemns us, but not the Spirit. “*THERE is* therefore now **no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath **made me free** from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:1-2.

Spiritual Promotion

I know of many people who have gone off, quit their jobs, and said they were called into full-time ministry. Unfortunately many of them soon became disillusioned and shipwrecked, because they chose to follow after their own desires to be spiritually promoted, rather than waiting to be truly led by The Lord in ministry.

I see this so often today. Many people are in a hurry, and are not willing to wait for God's Perfect Timing. God does not rush, nor does He promote people quickly without them first being proven. People will often try to reason and figure things out, in an attempt to speed things up, to try and help God out. These people tend to be swayed by various doctrines, and often change what they believe their calling or assignment is.

As I mentioned in the *Our Faith Will Be Tested* section, we go through things and are tested for a reason. Discover the powerful teachings found in James 1:2-8, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that **the trying of your faith worketh patience**. But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. **If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God**, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For **he that wavereth** is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. **For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord**. A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways."

We must first **be faithful to God in little things**, before we can be expected to be promoted to the next level of stewardship and trust. "**He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much**: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16:10. God will test you to see if you are faithful in the little things first, before He will give you the bigger things. Many people who fail in ministry desire to run a large, powerful church or worldwide ministry, to show people how special, blessed, and anointed they are. You can easily spot them, as they will draw attention to themselves, rather than having a walk of humility before God.

If you constantly hear talk about money and how you can be blessed, watch out! Jesus sent out His Disciples without any material things. When He later asked them if they lacked anything, they said that they lacked nothing. When you are truly sent by God to do His Work, there will always be the necessary opportunities, power, and provision to accomplish the work. "And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing." Luke 22:35. Have faith in the power of Jesus.

Here are some of the keys to proper spiritual promotion: God gives us assignments according to our growth. We must prove ourselves faithful over little things. We must not despise small beginnings. A little seed can grow into a great tree, which bears much good fruit. We must be faithful concerning our handling of money. The way we handle money shows how we can be trusted to handle spiritual things. We must prove ourselves faithful handling other people's things. How can we be trusted by God with His Things if we are not able to be faithful with things that belong to others? We must realize that our faithfulness is always being tested. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Faithfulness ultimately receives recognition from God.

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matthew 25:21.

God promotes those who have proven themselves faithful. You are to be **rooted and established in Christ**, identifying with Him in every area (Ephesians 3:17, Colossians 2:6-10), **always asking Jesus to help you**.

The Power Of The Holy Spirit

Salvation is the most important thing, but as Christians, we should **not stop** with the **New Birth Experience**, through having trust and faith in Jesus **Christ**, but we should go further in our Christian walk to discover the fullness of power that is available to us through **The Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit was sent to comfort us, to teach us, and magnify Jesus Christ in our lives. To accept Christ, but to not take advantage of His Wonderful Gift, who is the Person of The Holy Spirit, is a serious mistake. The people who choose to miss out on being blessed, directed, and instructed by the Wonderful Third Person Of The Godhead are denying an opportunity.

The Power Of The Holy Spirit is necessary. Jesus did not do miracles until after The Holy Spirit came upon Him. At age 30, Jesus **began His miracle working ministry after The Holy Spirit came upon Him** when He was baptized, “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, **the heavens were opened** unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved **Son**, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16-17.

Before Jesus departed, He told His Disciples to tarry in Jerusalem and wait for the power of The Holy Spirit. “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. After He was Resurrected, Jesus came to His Disciples, told them He was sending them out, breathed on them, and said, “...Receive ye the Holy Ghost:” John 20:22. “**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 when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with **one accord** in one place. **And suddenly** there came a **sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind**, and it **filled all the house** where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.**” Acts 2:1-4. “**For these are not drunken, as ye suppose**, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And **it shall come to pass in the last days**, saith God, **I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy**, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: **And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:** And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.**” Acts 2:15-21.

“AND Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil...” Luke 4:1-2. **We need to not only receive God’s Salvation** through Jesus Christ, but **also to receive** The Holy Spirit, Whom Jesus said would be made available to all Believers. “**He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**” John 16:14-15.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you **another Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever; *Even* the Spirit of truth; ... for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. **I will not leave you comfortless...**” “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 14:16-18, 26.

Apart From You I Am Nothing

We must never forget our true relationship with The Lord: **Jesus Christ is The Vine, we are the branches. Without Him we can do nothing.** Too many people today have let sin, reasoning, and selfish desires come between their right standing with The Lord. **He is our source for every good thing.** See **John Chapter 15.**

“I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” John 5:5. We will fail if we attempt to do things apart from Jesus Christ.

“For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.” Acts 17:28. Just as we can not live or breath without the right amount of Oxygen being supplied to our body’s cells, our relationship and proper standing with Christ are broken **when we stop acknowledging Jesus as our source. We must never stop being led by The Holy Spirit.** “...having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost...” Acts 2:33. “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians 3:14.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.” James 1:17-18. **In all ways we must acknowledge Him.**

When we exhibit disbelief and distrust in God or in Jesus Christ, we are denying the Power and Authority that belong to Them, and are showing disrespect for Who They Are. Jesus said that, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 10:32-33.

Spiritual Wisdom Is Spiritual Understanding

We must always have **heart faith**, not head faith, **being found in Jesus Christ, and led by The Holy Spirit.** “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings** in heavenly *places* **in Christ:**” Ephesians 1:3. **We are to identify with, and be found in, Christ.** “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Create an atmosphere for faith in the Power of Jesus Christ. **Have a walk of commitment,** trusting in Christ no matter what you see or feel. Trust Him without leaning on your own wisdom, reasoning, or understanding. Empty yourself of self, but instead be filled with The Holy Spirit. Give God His Rightful Place in your body. “Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” Matthew 5:8. We need to believe, be committed, trust, and “...Have faith in God.” (Mark 11:22) by completely abandoning ourselves into God’s perfect loving care.

Let No Flesh Glory, But Let The Lord be Glorified in ALL THINGS! “That no flesh should glory in his presence...He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 1:29-31. See also Jeremiah 9:23-24. “Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” Matthew 5:6.

Be a faithful steward, doing what God has called you to do. God will test your faithfulness and examine your character. “...Moreover **it is required** in stewards, **that a man be found faithful.**” 1 Corinthians 4:1-2. **Share the hope of Christ** with as many as will listen. “...and he that winneth souls *is* wise.” Proverbs 11:30.