1 THE SMYRNAEAN CHURCH AGE

Revelation 2:8-11

"And unto the angel of the church of Smyrna write; These things saith the First and the Last, Which was dead, and is alive;

I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

2 INTRODUCTION

In order to refresh your minds I want to point out again how we arrive at finding the names of the messengers to the various ages. God in His sovereign will has seen to it that the history of the New Testament church was not lost, even as He saw to it that the history of Israel would not be lost by placing it in the Bible and corroborating it today from multitudes of scrolls, earthen vessels and other artifacts that archaeologists have discovered and interpreted. We actually have a running commentary of Bible history from the first page up to now. Thus by reading history we can find out what man or men in the various ages were the closest to God's original pattern, the Apostle Paul. The ones that God used to bring His people back to the Word of Truth would be the ones to examine. Then out of those there would be one for every age who would stand out the clearest as the closest in Word pattern and power. That one would be the messenger. The ages also are found by a study of history. One simply needs to read the ages as found in Revelation and it all patterns perfectly with history as INDEED IT MUST. Since the church ages were foretold by God and their very conditions revealed, then of necessity, the history that would follow would be as the Bible sets forth. It is that simple--but then simplicity is the key to the Word. Now with all this I have not simply been a student and a historian, I have sought to be a Spiritual-minded man, and it was only with the definite approval of the Spirit of God that I chose the men I have chosen. This is true as God knows my heart.

3 THE MESSENGER

Using our God given rule of choosing the messenger for each age, we unhesitatingly declare that Irenaeus was exalted by the Lord to that position. He was the disciple of that great saint and warrior of faith, Polycarp. And it is no doubt as he sat at the feet of that great man he learned the Christian graces that flowed from his consecrated life, for Polycarp was one of the truly illustrious saints of all ages when viewed in the light of a blameless life. You will remember from your own reading that Polycarp was martyred. Too old to flee, and too sincere a man to allow another to hide him and then suffer a penalty for doing so, he gave himself up to death. But before he did, he asked for and was granted permission to pray two hours for his

brethren in the Lord, for the governor, for his enemies and his captors. Like the great saints of all ages, and desiring a better resurrection, he stood firm, refusing to deny the Lord, and died with a free conscience. He was placed at the stake (untied at his own request) and the fire was lit. The fire bent away from his body, refusing to touch him. He was then pierced through with a sword. As this was done, water gushed from his side drowning the flames. His spirit was actually seen to depart in the form of a white dove released from his bosom. Yet for all this great testimony, this student of John the Revelator was not militant against the Nicolaitane system, for he himself leaned toward organization, not realizing that the desire for fellowship and what appeared like a good plan to foster the work of God was really a trick of the enemy.

4 With Irenaeus this was not so. He was militant against any form of organization. Also, his life history, wherein he served the Lord, was one of much manifestation in the Holy Spirit; and the Word was taught with unusual clarity and conformity to its original precepts. His churches in France were known to have the gifts of the Spirit among them, for the saints spoke in tongues, prophesied, raised the dead, and healed the sick by the prayer of faith. He saw the danger of any kind of organized brotherhood among the elders, pastors, etc. He stood solidly for a unified, Spirit-filled, gift-manifesting local church. And God honored him for the power of God manifested among the saints.

5 He was also clear on his understanding of the Godhead. And since he was the disciple of Polycarp, who in turn was the disciple of Saint John, we can know for sure he had as perfect teaching as is possible on this subject. In Volume 1, page 412 of the Ante Nicene Fathers we have this statement by him on the Godhead. "All the other expressions, likewise, bring out the title of one, and the same being, the Lord of Power, the Lord, the Father of All, God Almighty, Most High, Creator, Maker, and such like, these are not the names and the titles of a succession of different beings, but of one and the same." He pointed out clearly that these are but titles as is Rose of Sharon, Bright and Morning Star, Fairest of Ten Thousand, etc. Neither is there but ONE God. His Name is Lord Jesus Christ.

6 Thus with his strict adherence to the Word, his wonderful understanding of Scripture, and the attendance of the power of God upon that ministry, he is the right choice for the age. It is altogether unfortunate that the other ages did not have in their messengers such a balance of fruit, power, and leadership in the Holy Spirit and the Word.

7 SMYRNA

The city of Smyrna was a little north of Ephesus at the mouth of the Smyrna Gulf. Because of its very fine harbor it was a commercial center renowned for its exports. It was also distinguished for its schools of rhetoric, philosophy, medicine, sciences, and fine buildings. Many Jews lived there, and they were bitterly opposed to Christianity, even more so than were the Romans. In fact, Polycarp, the first bishop at Smyrna was martyred by the Jews and it is said that the Jews desecrated their holy day (Saturday) to carry the wood that would make his funeral pyre.

8 The word Smyrna means, "bitter," being derived from the word, myrrh. Myrrh was used in embalming the dead. Thus we have a two-fold significance found in the name of this age. It was a bitter age filled with death. The two vines within the framework of the church were drifting further apart with an increased bitterness toward the true vine on the part of the false.

Death was not only the seed of the false vine but even in the true vine there was a creeping paralysis and impotence because they had already drifted from the unadulterated truth of the first few years after Pentecost; and no true believer is any stronger and spiritually healthy and alive than his knowledge of and adherence to the pure Word of God, as seen by multitudes of examples in the Old Testament. Organization was growing apace, confirming and augmenting the death of the membership, for Holy Ghost leadership was deposed and the Word was replaced by creeds, dogmas and man-made ritual.

9 When Israel entered into unlawful alliances with the world, and formed fellowships by marriage, the day finally came when the world took over and Babylon carried away the people of God into captivity. Now when they went into captivity they went in having a priesthood, a temple and the Word. But when they came back they had rabbis, a theological order of Pharisees, a synagogue, and the Talmud. And when Jesus came they were so corrupt that He called them of their father, the devil, and this in spite of the fact they were of Abraham according to the flesh. In this age we see the same thing happening. However, as `all Israel' is not Israel, but a little group were the true Spiritual Israelites, so there would always be a little group of true Christians, the bride of Christ, until He came for His own.

10 In this city there were two famous temples. One was the temple erected to the worship of Zeus, and the other was erected to Cybele. And between these two temples was found the most beautiful road of ancient times, called the Golden Street. To me this depicts a further inroad of paganism that had already started in the first age, but was known to exist only at Rome. The joining of the two temples of a god and goddess is the seed of Maryolatry wherein Mary is called the mother of God and receives honor and titles and powers giving her a co-equality with Jesus Christ. The Golden Street that joins them is a picture of the greed that caused the Nicolaitane organizers to join state and church because they knew the wealth and power it offered them. As the Ephesian Age was but the seed bed for the tragic Pergamean Age that was yet in the future, this Smyrnaean Age was the rain, the sun, and the nourishment that ensured the vile corruption that would confirm the church in idolatry which is spiritual fornication, from which she would never rise. Death was permeating her root to branch and they that partook of her, partook of bitterness and death.
This age lasted from 170 to 312 A.D.

11 THE SALUTATION
Revelation 2:8, "These things saith the First and the Last, Which was dead and is alive." "The First and the Last, Which was dead and is alive." Now these are not the words of a man. A mere man (could he speak from the grave) would say, "I am the first and the last which was alive and is dead." The first thing that happens to a man is that he is born (is alive) and the last thing that happens is that he dies. So this is not a man speaking. This is Deity. Man (Adam) took life and turned it into death. But this MAN (Jesus) took death and turned it into life. Adam took innocence and turned it into guilt. This One took guilt and turned it into righteousness. Adam took a paradise and turned it into a waste howling wilderness; but this One is coming back to turn an earth rocking and reeling with destruction into another Eden. Adam took a life of fellowship and joy with God and turned it into a desert of spiritual darkness that brought forth all sin, moral decay, pain, suffering, delusion, and corruption that wars within the souls of men. But this One, from all the tragic death and degradation that filled mankind, brought forth a life of righteousness and beauty, so that as sin once reigned unto death, even so might men now reign in righteousness by One, Christ Jesus; and not as the offence was, though terrible indeed it was, but now much more is His gift unto eternal life.

12 And here He is, walking in the midst of those whom He has redeemed, even His church. And what were those who were redeemed? Were not many like Paul, murderers and corrupters? Were not many like the dying thief, robbers and men killers? All trophies of His grace. All brought back from the dead. All made ALIVE in Christ Jesus, the Lord.

13 I wonder if you noted the salutation to the first age and then noted the one to this age. Just put them together. "These things saith He that holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks in the midst of the churches. These things saith the First and the Last, Which was dead and is alive." This is one and the same person. And He is letting us know that the church is His. As the seed of the fruit is in the midst of the fruit, so is He, the Royal Seed, in the midst of the church. As the seed alone has life in it, so is He the author of life to the church. His walking signifies His untiring care of it. He is the Chief Shepherd watching over His own. That is His right, for He bought that church with His own blood. That blood is the blood of God. The One Who owns that church is God, very God. He is the `First and the Last.' That title spells eternity. He was dead and is alive. He paid the price so He has sole ownership of the temple of God. He rules it. He is worshipped in it. He resents anyone taking over His Lordship and authority. No doubt the reason He introduces Himself to each age as Deity is to warn and comfort the people. He warns the false vine, and He comforts the true vine. This is the ONE TRUE ALMIGHTY GOD. Hear Him and live.

14 CONDITIONS OF THE AGE
Revelation 2:9, "I know thy works and thy tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."

15 The key to this age is most evidently tribulation. If there was tribulation in the first age, there is now predicted an intensified tribulation throughout the second age. There is no doubt but what the following words of Paul applied to the mass of Christians wherever they were in the world and in every age. Hebrews 10:32-38, "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He That shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

16 The mere association of kindhearted people with the true believer might well bring death in return for their kindness.

17 Now the Lord God Almighty says, "I KNOW." There He is walking in the midst of His people. There He is, the Chief Shepherd of the flock. But does He hold back the persecution? Does He stem the tribulation? No, He does not. He simply says, "I KNOW your tribulation--I am not at all unmindful of your suffering." What a stumbling block this is to so many people. Like Israel they wonder if God really loves them. How can God be just and loving if He stands

by and watches His people suffer? That is what they asked in Malachi 1:1-3, "The burden of the Word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet we say, Wherein hast Thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." You see, they could not figure out God's love. They thought that love meant no suffering. They thought that love meant a baby with parental care. But God said that His love was "elective" love. The proof of His love is ELECTION--that no matter what happened, His love was proven truly by the fact they were chosen unto salvation (because God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth). He may commit you to death as He did Paul. He may commit you to suffering as He did Job. That is His prerogative. He is sovereign. But it is all with a purpose. If He did not have a purpose, then He would be the author of frustration and not of peace. His purpose is that after we have suffered awhile we would be made perfect, be established, strengthened and settled. As Job said, "He puts strength in us." (Job 23:6b) You see He, Himself, suffered. He learned obedience by the things that He suffered. He was actually made perfect by the things that He suffered. Hebrews 5:8-9, "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; And being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." In plain language, the very character of Jesus was perfected by suffering. And according to Paul He has left His church a measure of suffering that they, too, by their faith in God while suffering for Him, would come to a place of perfection. Why did He want this? James 1:2-4, "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."

18 Why does He stand by? The reason is in Romans 8:17-18, "And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Unless we suffer with Him we cannot reign with Him. You have to suffer to reign. The reason for this is that character simply is never made without suffering. Character is a VICTORY, not a gift. A man without character can't reign because power apart from character is Satanic. But power with character is fit to rule. And since He wants us to share even His throne on the same basis that He overcame and is set down in His Father's throne, then we have to overcome to sit with Him. And the little temporary suffering we go through now is not worthy to be compared to the tremendous glory that will be revealed in us when He comes. Oh, what treasures are laid up for those who are willing to enter into His kingdom through much tribulation.

19 "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trials that are to try you." That is what Peter said. Is it strange that God wants us to develop a Christ-like character that comes through suffering? No sir. And we all have trials. We are all tried and chastened as sons. Not one but goes through that. The church that is not suffering, and is not being tried, hasn't got it--it isn't of God. Heb. 12:6, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

20 Now this special condition in Smyrna must be applied to every age. There is no age free from it. There is no true believer free from it. This is of God. This is the will of God. It is needful. We need the Lord to teach us the truth that we are to suffer and be Christ-like in doing it. "Love suffereth long and is kind." Matthew 5:11-12, "Blessed are ye, when men shall

revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

21 The cloudy skies and storms of life are no signs of God's disapproval. Neither are bright skies and still waters signs of His love and approval. His approval of any of us is only IN THE BELOVED. His love is elective which He had for us before the foundation of the world. Does He love us? Ah yes. But how shall we know? We shall know because He SAID SO, and manifested that He did love us for He brought us to Himself and gave us of His Spirit, placing us as sons. And how shall I prove my love to Him? By believing what He said, and by conducting myself with joy amidst the trials that He in His wisdom allows to come to pass.

22 "I know thy poverty (but thou are rich)." There it is again. See Him walking up and down in the midst of His Church. Like a father He is looking down upon His family. He is the Head of His household. He is the provider. He is the protector. Yet He looks on at their poverty. Oh, how the untutored believer stumbles at this. How can God bear to look upon His own in a time of need and not just stop it all--just give in and lavish everything material upon them?

23 Here is where you have to believe again in the love, and goodness and wisdom of God. This, too, is needful. Remember He admonished, "Take no thought for the morrow, what ye shall eat or what ye shall put on. Your Father knoweth the things ye have need of. He Who clothes the lily and feeds the sparrow shall do much more for you. These physical things are not the true basic necessities of your life, for a man's life consisteth not of the things he possesses. But rather seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all material necessities will be added unto you." The people of God are not material minded. They are Christ-minded. They do not seek the treasures that are below; they seek those above. It is absolutely true, the majority of Christians are NOT wealthy. Rather they are on the poor side. It was so in Jesus' day. It was true in Paul's day and it should be true today. Oh, it is not too true today for the Laodicean Age is one of vast wealth where often the criterion of spirituality is an abundance of earthly goods. My, how rich the church is in goods. But how poor in Spirit. "Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is NOT meat and drink." It is not material. It is WITHIN us. A rich man is rich in God, not in worldly things.

24 "Oh," cries the Spirit, "I see your poverty. I see your need. You haven't very much, if anything, to boast of. What you did have has been taken from you. You gladly gave up your possessions in exchange for eternal ones. You are laughed at. You are scorned. You don't have material resources to fall back on. But you are rich in spite of it all. Your security lies in Him Who is your shield and exceeding great reward. Your kingdom is yet to come. But it will come. And it will be an everlasting one. Yes, I am mindful of your trials and woes. I know how hard it is to get along. But I will remember all this when I return to claim you as My own, and then I will reward you."

25 Now this is nothing against rich people because God can save a rich man. Some of God's children are rich. But money can be such a snare, not only to those who have it but to those who don't have it. Way back there in the first age, James cried out to those who were putting stock in wealthy people, "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect of persons." The poor there were trying to butter up the rich in order to get help, rather than trusting in God. "Don't do it," says James. "Don't do it. Money isn't everything. Money isn't the

answer." And today it is not the answer either. We have more wealth than we have ever had and yet less is being accomplished Spiritually. It is not with money that God works. He moves by His Spirit. And that moving of the Spirit comes only to a life consecrated to the Word.

26 THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN
Revelation 2:9b. "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."
Here is a verse that will bear considerable thought, not only because it is most peculiar in its contents, but also it is virtually repeated in an age that is over a thousand years later.

27 Revelation 2:9 "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan." To begin with, the word, Jews, does not describe the religion of the Jewish people. It refers only to the people of Judah and has the same precise meaning if I were to say I am Irish born. These people were saying that they were actually Jews, real Jews by birth. They were liars. They were not Jews by birth and they weren't Jews by religion.
If all this is true, what were they? They were a deceived people who were already part of the church. They belonged to the false vine.

28 They were not of the true church, but of the false church because God said "they were the synagogue of Satan." Now the word for synagogue is not the same word we use for church. In the Bible, church means, "the called out ones", or the "summoned ones". The Psalmist said about these elect people, "Blessed is the man whom THOU CHOOSEST, and CAUSEST to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts." Psalms 65:4. But the meaning of synagogue is "assembly or gathering." This can be good or bad, but in this case it is bad, for these are they whose assembling is not of God but of their own selves. Isaiah said of them, "Behold, they shall surely gather together, but NOT BY ME: whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake." Isaiah 54:15. And since these were surely against the true vine, God will one day deal with them in destruction.

29 Now why do we have a people mixed in the framework of the church and calling themselves Jews? The reason is this: Since they were liars they could make any claim they wished. They could say what they wanted as though it were a fact and then stick to it. And in this case they could be lying with a very powerful thought in mind. Was it not so that the early church was almost if not entirely composed of Jews, making them the original members of His body? The twelve apostles were Jews, and the later apostles were either Jews or proselytes. Thus for men to swear they were Jews would give them a pre-eminence and a claim to originality. Tell a lie. Stick to it. Never mind fact or history. Just say it and keep saying it to the people, and soon the people will receive it.

30 Now did you catch something there? Isn't that the same spirit right in the church today? Isn't there a group that claims that they are the original and true church and that salvation is found only in her? Don't they claim that they have the keys of the kingdom which they received from Peter? Don't they claim that Peter was their first pope, and that he resided in Rome when there is ABSOLUTELY NO HISTORICAL FACT FOR IT? And even her most educated and knowing adherents believe her lies. Satan's synagogue! And if Satan be her father, and he the father of lies, then it is not strange that those in his synagogue are liars also.

31 Consider the thought of blasphemy. These of Satan's synagogue were not blaspheming God in this instance (though that goes without saying) but they were blaspheming the true church. Certainly. As Cain persecuted and killed Abel because he (Cain) was of that wicked one, and as the dead formal Judaic followers (Jesus said they were of their father, the devil) tried to destroy the Christians in the first few years of the first age, now this same group (the false vine) is even more strongly attempting to destroy the true believer in the second age. That antichrist spirit is growing.

32 The group that inched its way ever so slowly into the church by its DEEDS (Nicolaitanism) no longer fears exposure but is openly organized in a group of its own assembling and is coming against the true church in undisguised hostility.

33 Now when I say this was an organized antichrist church I am giving you the truth from authenticated history. The first church founded in Rome (we will trace its history in the Pergamean Age) had already turned the truth of God into a lie by introducing a pagan religion with Christian names and meaning. By the second age it was so pagan (though claiming to be the true church) that Polycarp came about 1500 miles at a very old age to plead with them to turn back. They would not do it. They had a solid hierarchy and a solid organization, and a complete departure from the Word. This then, is Satan's synagogue, full of blasphemy, in which were already the seeds of the doctrine of Nicolaitanism, and which would shortly be the actual seat or power of Satanic religion. And this is exactly right for Revelation 2:9b does NOT say these people are OF Satan's synagogue but it says they ARE SATAN'S SYNAGOGUE.

34 This spirit of antichrist is not new. This is not something that just came in the church ages. It has been here all along. To get a clear understanding of how it works, how it goes against God and takes over in the church, look at the Old Testament and see it there. Let us examine this spirit as it was manifested in Israel as she came out of Egypt to be the church in the wilderness.

35 Just as the early church started out under the pure ministry of the Holy Spirit with signs and wonders and manifestations such as prophecy, tongues, and interpretation, wisdom, knowledge and healing, so in the days of Israel when they left Egypt, they were under the leadership of the Spirit of God manifesting in gifts. God was the leader of the people. Actually He was their King. He was a Father-King. He took care of Israel like a man cares for his family. He fed them, fought their battles, smoothed away their difficulties and settled their problems. He just busied Himself over them. They were the only nation to which He was truly God. But one day they got to looking around, and they saw the Philistines and other nations with kings over them. It caught their eyes and they decided that they ought to humanize their leadership, so they wanted a king. Now God was going to humanize the leadership Himself, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they got ahead of Him. Satan knew the plan of God so he put it in the hearts of the people to get ahead of God (the Word).

36 When they approached Samuel and asked for a king, Samuel was so dismayed that his heart almost failed him. God had been leading His people through this consecrated, Scripture-vindicated prophet and he felt that he had been rejected. He gathered the people and pleaded with them not to turn away from the God Who had carried them like children, and prospered them and blessed them. But they persisted. They said to Samuel. "You have never been

wrong in your leading. You have never been dishonest in your financial dealings. You have done your best to keep us in line with the Word of the Lord. We appreciate the miracles, wisdom, provision and protection of God. We believe in it. We like it. And furthermore we don't want to be without it. It's just that we want a king to lead us to battle. Now of course when we go out to battle it is still our intention to have the priests go ahead with Judah following, and we will blow the trumpets and shout and sing. We don't intend to stop any of that. BUT WE WANT A KING WHO IS ONE OF US TO LEAD US."
And God said to Samuel. "See, they have not rejected you, but they have rejected ME from ruling over them."

37 How tragic that was. Little did they realize that when they were asking God to let them be like the rest of the world they were rejecting Him, because God had ordained that His people act different from the world. They are not of the world and they don't look like the world and they don't act like the world. They are crucified unto the world and the world is crucified unto them. II Corinthians 6:17-18, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

38 You see the one difference between Israel and the rest of the nations was God. Put God to one side and Israel was like any other nation. When Samson cut off his hair he was like any other man. Put the leadership of the Holy Ghost aside and the church is NOTHING BUT THE WORLD WITH GOD'S NAME ATTACHED TO IT. The world and the church are all of the same lump, just like Jacob and Esau were of the same parents, but the Spirit of God makes the difference.

39 It doesn't matter if you call yourself a Christian. Anyone can do that. The point is whether or not you have the Spirit of God in you, for without that Spirit you are reprobate; you are none of His. Amen.

40 Not too long ago I asked a lady if she were a Christian. She said to me, "I will have you know, sir, that I burn a candle every night." What in the world has that got to do with it? I'm a Methodist, I'm a Baptist, I'm a Pentecostal. That hasn't a thing to do with it. It is the Holy Ghost or perish.

41 Well, starting way back there in the first church the people got to thinking and reasoning how to improve on God. The deeds of the Nicolaitanes began showing themselves. Then a group formed. They drifted away from the pattern of the Word. All it takes is just one word changed and that little leaven then leavens the whole lump. He that offends in one point of the law is guilty of all. Eve just changed one word. That will do it.

42 And when that Satan-centered group was formed, it began to hate and to fight the true believers, insisting that they (the aliens) were the church of God.

43 Notice how organization breeds hatred. It destroys fellowship. It makes bitterness. That is what myrrh means. This is what Smyrna was full of. Bitterness. A root of bitterness defiles many. So more and more defilement was coming in. Every age would feel its scars.

44 The Smyrnaean church had drifted far from the original. It had become a hybrid. It had hybridized itself the way Eve did. You know that a hybrid is what comes of two species mixing. The result is no longer pure like the original. It is mongrel. Well, when Eve allowed the beast to mingle his seed with hers she produced a creature called Cain that wasn't pure human. He was of the WICKED ONE. Notice how different he was from Abel. Notice how different he was from Seth. He hated God and would not obey the Word and persecuted and killed the righteous. He set himself up above the Word of God.

45 The church, too, has departed from what she originally was. She is a hybrid. That is, the church nominal is a hybrid. People say, "I am a Baptist." It wasn't so in the beginning. "I am Methodist." It wasn't so in the beginning. Instead of the straight Word of God, instead of the Spirit-filled men in the church who were led by Spirit-given revelation, there are now creeds, and by-laws, and the educated guesses of educated men. Learning has taken the place of revelation. Reason has replaced faith. Program has replaced spontaneous praise in the Holy Ghost. It wasn't so from the beginning. The whole specie has changed. It has become a hybrid church.

46 Now then, when the church becomes hybridized, will it produce pure Christians? It can't. The life or seed that brings Christians to birth is not in them. Like brings forth like. The Baptists bring forth more Baptists and they act like Baptists. Methodists bring forth Methodists and they act like Methodists. Not one is known by the power of God nor can they be for it's not there. They are known by their ceremonial worship of God and their creeds and dogmas.

47 Talk about a hybrid. Do you know the most famous hybrid in the world? It has been with us for ages. It is the mule. It is a cross between a donkey and a horse. He is a funny kind of an animal. He can't reproduce himself. He has no life that can do that. Yet talk about work. He can outwork the horse or the donkey. But watch his nature. He is stubborn and you can never trust him. He is a perfect picture of hybrid religion. A cross between truth and darkness, for the horse is a type of the true believer and the ass a picture of the unrighteous one. Mix them and you have a sterile, formal religion. It hasn't the seed of life. It is dead. It can talk about truth but it can't produce it. It doesn't have God in its midst, yet it gathers together and talks about God, and all the while systematically denies the power. They will deny the Word in the very Name of the Lord. And there is never any hope for them. Do you realize that no organized religion ever had a revival? Never! Once they organized they died. They can't ever come back. No sir. I can show you that in type. In Exodus 13:13, "And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck; and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem." See, the ass can be redeemed. Every miserable sinner can be redeemed by the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ, or in rejecting Christ be rejected himself. But you don't redeem the mule. There is no redemption for him. There is no blood for him. There can't be because the mule takes refuge in the church while the ass takes refuge in the blood. The mule has "no seed" in him that can be quickened, but the ass has seed.

48 Why, just a few weeks ago I read an editorial. Yes, it was an editorial by an unsaved businessman; not by a Christian. He said that he was amazed at the churches. He could not understand them. They had seminaries filled with professors who taught the Word of God in order to destroy it. Now then this man could not figure that out. He was appalled by it. He said that he could understand the atheist or communist, or free thinker or someone else doing that.

But when the church itself destroyed the Word of God it was tantamount to premeditated murder. THERE IS YOUR HYBRID RELIGION. WAKE UP AMERICA BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

49 When the church gets away from the Word it will believe anything. It is like Eve. When Cain was born she said, "I've gotten a man from the Lord." Now do you realize that she really meant that? She thought that she had a man from the Lord. You see, once she had been deceived by taking the word of Satan instead of the Word of God she then thought that whatever she said was right. If she said that she had a man from God, then she had a man from God. But God has set laws in His universe. A good seed can only bring forth good fruit and the evil seed can bring forth only evil fruit. Now each seed, though different, will utilize the same earth, nourishment, moisture, and sunshine, but it will bring forth after its own kind. Notice the history of the Cain line. Notice the history of the Seth line. Only one difference between them--the original seed. Nothing else.

50 If you look at this statement of Eve real close you will notice that she had more of an understanding than most realize. She did not attribute the son to Satan for that would have made him equal with God. Only God could create the egg in the womb of Mary. Satan couldn't do that. Eve knew that. Satan can only pervert. So he beguiled her with the wrong seed. It was the serpent's seed that brought forth Cain. It was Adam's seed that brought forth Abel and Seth. Those seeds went through exactly the same process, but the children were different for they were from different seeds.

51 She believed that Cain was from God. She accepted the devil's lie as the truth of God. That is exactly what we have now. Churches set themselves up as fountains of truth but the truth is not in them; yet their begotten children swear by them and will even kill to uphold their error.

52 If you think that is an exaggeration, read all of II Timothy chapter 3 and the first five verses of the fourth chapter. II Timothy 4:1-5 "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."

53 When the church allowed herself to move away from the original, like Adam and Eve, death set in.
There is no strength in her. She has become a monstrosity. The minute the church moved toward form and ceremony, and toward priesthood by organizing the ministers into a group that decided leadership apart from the Holy Spirit and His Word, that very moment death entered and she started to get sick, and as she got sick she changed to a powerless group of people whose only weapon was argument. She could produce nothing in the Spirit, for her hopes were built on program and not on faith in His Word. They sowed program so they reaped program. They sowed perversion so they reaped perverted children.

54 You tamper with God and you reap exactly what you injected. Man ought to learn that

from nature. He has tampered with nature. He has injected his own ideas into nature and rearranged the molecules, etc., and now he is reaping a whirlwind. Just look how they have bred the chicken. It is so highly bred that it is a laying machine that lays itself out. It is no good for food and is soft and poor eating. They inject substances into the meat we eat and because of that the human body is changing so that women are getting narrower in the hips and broader of shoulder and men are getting just the opposite. Now if you fool with nature and get a monstrosity and a backfire, what will happen if you change the truth into a lie? The answer is, you will breed an antichrist, godless system of religion that is so perverted it will not look like or produce what the original did. The only answer that God has for a situation like that is the lake of fire.

55 That poor Smyrnaean Age was dying. When it died, it never came back. No age ever comes back. No revival ever comes back. It can't have the life of God in it by natural generation. It takes a regeneration from above. This last age started with the fires of a Pentecostal revival and they organized it right back. Instead of taking the Word they took their own ideas and did just what every age has done--substituted the manual for the Word. Just you step outside that manual and see what happens. You are out, brother. And they will persecute you and blame it on God. And how they love their organization. No wonder. They are second generation Pentecostals and since God doesn't have grandchildren they are just children of their fathers, known by their creeds and form of worship. They can talk about what used to be, but they can't produce it. Once they had the lightning but about all that is left is the thunder. But let them talk to you about the glories of their movement. They will say, "Yes sir, I want you to know that this is a move that no man started. It came spontaneously. The Spirit fell all over the world. Yes sir, we got what they had at Pentecost. This was not of men but of God." THEN WHY DIDN'T THEY KEEP IT THAT WAY? IF GOD STARTED IT HOW COME GOD COULDN'T KEEP IT AND FINISH IT? If God didn't write a handbook of creeds and formulas and dogmas to start it, then what right did they have to do that? God poured out His Spirit upon Baptists, Methodists, Nazarenes, Adventists, Presbyterians, Brethren, Church of God (several so named) etc. All these brethren were brought up on different doctrines, by-laws, church manuals etc. God swept it all to one side; He destroyed their dispensational theories and restored the gifts of the Spirit, proving He is the same yesterday and today and forever. But did those Pentecostals learn their lesson about organization? No sir. They organized right back and have written their own textbooks, by-laws and church manual, fellowship book, etc. with one idea in mind, which is to prove that they now have all the truth, know all the answers, and are therefore, the elite of God who know the way and can show it unto others as God's appointed guides. But they haven't got it. They have hybridized themselves like the very groups they came out of. If they want to be in the bride they are going to have to come out exactly as did their forefathers.

56 They are like all the rest. The revival is over. They are trying to live a name and are dead. They took organization, all the while talking about the Spirit of God. They talk about the evidence of the Holy Spirit. But they forget that the devil can talk in tongues, too. The utter confusion of Babel is in their midst and they call it the Spirit of God. Once again we see man telling God, instead of God telling man.

57 Now you might desire to scold me right here for what I have said. All right. They call themselves Pentecostal and Full Gospel. Let them prove it. At Pentecost the fire came in a cloud and separated over each of them like a tongue, and fell on each one. Where is the fire? They spoke in tongues at Pentecost and the people who listened understood. Where is that?

The whole multitude of believers acted like one family. Pentecostals are as badly divided as any group in history. No man durst join himself to the early church but only God added. They have as many goats among them as any. They claim to be full Gospel but they can't prove it. Their churches are as empty of power as any of them. If they are full Gospel then we had better admit the Bible made a mistake when it describes the full Gospel men at Pentecost. They sing, "There's been a great change in me." They are right. But the change has not been for the better. It is time to get back to God. They have a name that they live but are dead. Tongues isn't the evidence of revival. It is the evidence of death. Tongues proclaimed the evidence that the ceremonial religion of the Jews was over, that a new era had begun. Tongues today is ringing down the curtain on the Gentile church ages and the Gospel is going back to the Jews. People are talking about tongues heralding in a great Spiritual move. They have missed the boat. The truth is that it is writing the finish to all of man's ideas, programs and kingdoms, and the kingdom of God is being ushered in. Wake up people of God. Wake up.

58 If you don't think this is true, just listen to this. All over the world in both Pentecostal and fundamental groups they are organizing the businessmen. They have invaded the pulpit without a call from God. They have styled themselves the fishers of men and the founders of a move of God, and they say the gifted ministry of Ephesians 4:10-13 that God gave the church has failed, so they are taking over. Here we are right in the midst of the fulfillment of prophecy, called the gainsayings of Korah, and they don't even know that they have fulfilled it. They are blindly going on preaching experience for truth. May God have pity on them. May their eyes be opened before it is too late. Oh, listen to me. When did the prestige of money, social leadership, business ability, or sheer mental prowess ever qualify a man for spiritual leadership, or give any weight to the Word of God? And when in any way materiality or human values begin to show as the media by which God works instead of the Holy Spirit ALONE, then we are fighting against God, not for Him.

59 Now I want this on record right here. I am not speaking against elders in the church. No sir. And that elder can be as poor as any man was ever poor, or be the richest man in the world as long as he is an elder in heart and deed. I would not hesitate to ordain any man that has the real Spiritual qualifications as an elder or deacon regardless of his finances or social position. But when you see a social or financial structure come into the church that divides the folks in any way--that is not of God. It is another sign of the time in this physically rich, but Spiritually impoverished Laodicean Age in which we are now living.

60 "I know thy poverty." Did you notice that their poverty is linked up with the synagogue of Satan in that same verse? Yes, it is the rich powerful organization that has the wealth and always pushes out the little people that serve God. When the Spirit of God moves in the hearts of men, who is it that leaves the buildings and property? The little flock always loses out to the big organization. And where do the people then go? They worship in homes, old store buildings, and basements, just as they did when they went to the catacombs. These people were poor in this world's goods. Certainly. But they were rich in Spirit.

61 "I know their blasphemy." Now it isn't the thought here that these liars are blaspheming God, though that goes without saying. But they are blaspheming the true church. It is always thus. The Jews of Jerusalem blasphemed the church at the beginning. The Gentile polytheists did likewise. If anyone is going to be evil-spoken of, it will always be the true seed. In Nero's day the Christians were blamed for every calamity--even for the burning of Rome. In

communist countries the little flock is always the first to be exterminated though actually insignificant in size. Though the Christians are fine loyal people, who do only good, they will always be persecuted to the end that they might be physically destroyed.

62 The reason this is so, is because they are a rebuke to the godless. Like a sore thumb they stand out before the wicked. And though the righteous intend no harm to the wicked but want to do only good, invariably they find they are embroiled as was John the Baptist with Herod. For John did not want to harm either Herod or his wife but to save them from the wrath of God. This was not only thoroughly misunderstood and absolutely withstood, but John was put to death because of it. And for all the good the people of God do, they are still put to public shame and to death. Surely there must be some sinister force behind a people who would be so void of conscience that they would return evil to those who did them good. Yes, there is such a force. It is Satan. The answer lies in the next verse.

63 TEN YEARS OF TRIBULATION
Revelation 2:10 "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

64 Every time the Lord uses those words, "Fear not," there is an engagement at hand which will involve great danger and suffering and deprivation. Now He does not say in a blunt, curt manner, "Tribulation is coming." That would frighten one. But like a mother who is about to turn out the light says gently to her child lest he be frightened, "Now don't be afraid, for the light will go out and it will be dark. But remember that I am here with you." So He says, "Don't be afraid of man or what he can do to you. I am with you, and My grace is sufficient for you. When you pass through the waters, they will not overflow you. Not even in death are you defeated. You are more than conquerors."

65 The great apostle, Paul, knew from experience the reality of those words and he wrote in Romans 8:35-59, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him That loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." No, we are not to fear. His love casts out all fear.

66 Now notice what He says, "the devil will cast some of you into prison that you may be tried." The Jews were doing that right then. The pagan priests were doing that right then. The governors who tried to curry favor with the public because the people liked the arena, hurled the Christians by the thousands to their death, destroying them by lions and gladiators. What has the devil to do with this? Why blame him? Ah, yes, but it is the devil's hatred behind it all. He is behind it all for he hates God. What God has set His heart on, Satan is bound to try to destroy. But watch. Here is some illumination. If Satan is behind the Jews who are hailing the Christians into court, then the Jews are not of God's religion but the devil's. Their gathering is also of the synagogue of Satan. And if the Roman Catholic Church killed the multitudes of believers in the Dark Ages, yes and in all ages, then they are of the devil and belong to Satan, also.

67 And if you think this shocking, just wait until the prophecy of Revelation 13 is fulfilled. It is strikingly true that the United States of America is in that chapter. The very number thirteen is a symbol of this nation. It started with thirteen colonies. Its flag has thirteen stars and thirteen stripes. And there is her destiny in the thirteenth chapter. In this image that is mentioned in this chapter will be found all the wickedness of the beast that was before it. As the beast rose at the Nicene Council, so the image will come out of the World Council of Churches with all ungodly and Satanic power to vent the anger of the devil upon the true vine of God. It will be a repeat performance of all diabolical cunning and cruelty.

68 Those who fight the humble of God and scoff and destroy--let them do it. And do it they will. And all in the Name of God and religion. But they lie. They are not of God. They are of their father, the devil. They, by their deeds against ANY people, expose themselves for what they are. Let them organize and repudiate the little flock. They but further reveal to all that they are of the devil. They are the false vine--the vine that murders. Their hatred proves who they are. The Nicolaitane antichrist church is who they are.

69 "They shall be cast into prison." Yes, they are hailed into court and falsely accused and tried and imprisoned. And of course it is all done in the name of religion and decency and outraged innocency. All done for a good cause. That makes me think of the Supreme Court's ruling on prayer and Bible reading in the schools. Who is behind it? Satan is. It is just another angry outburst against God.

70 "Thou shalt have tribulation ten days." Here is a prophecy. And with it is a means of determining the life span of the Smyrnaean Age. Diocletian, the cruelest of all emperors, launched a terror campaign against the saints of God, that except for the mercy of God would have wiped out all believers. It was the bloodiest in history and lasted ten years (the ten days of Revelation 2:10b) from 302 to 312.

71 "Be thou faithful unto death." He does not say be faithful until death, but unto death. You may have to seal your testimony with your blood. Thousands, yea millions, have died during all the ages. They died in the faith. Like Antipas, the faithful martyr, they held not their lives dear unto death. Often we think that it would be almost impossible to be a martyr. But dare to recall that the faith we daily use to triumph in Christ Jesus is the same faith that upholds the Polycarps and all martyrs. The supreme faith will give supreme grace for the supreme hour. Blessed be God forever!

72 "And I will give thee a crown of life." Since not even a cup of cold water given in the Name of the Lord fails to receive a reward, how great shall be the reward to him who gives his life as a martyr for the Name of the Lord Jesus. Perhaps we can get a small idea if we compare this crown with the crown won in a race. In I Corinthians 9:24, Paul says, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain." A crown given to the winner of the Olympic race was a garland of olive branches. But the crown spoken of here in the Revelation, given to a martyr, is the crown of royalty. Jesus calls it the crown of life. The one crown is for those who have striven; the other is for those who have given. Both crowns are incorruptible. They will not perish. The winners of the worldly race of life will soon lose the joy of the plaudits of the world. Their glory will fail. But those who give their lives for God, either by daily striving or shedding their blood as the

crowning sacrifice of their lives will be given the crown of life.

73 All too little time is spent on laboring for the eternal rewards of God. The recompence of God is too lightly esteemed. If we believe in the reality of the resurrection of the body, and an eternal kingdom of substance, then we ought to lay up in heaven those good treasures that are available to the faithful saints.

74 THE REWARD FOR OVERCOMING
Revelation 2:11, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."
Now, once again the Spirit is talking to all the ages. This message is to comfort us today even as it has comforted our brethren of all the other ages. And He says to us that the second death will not hurt us.

75 We all know that the second death is the lake of fire. Revelation 20:14, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." Of course that means all those who were therein, were cast into the lake of fire. Now then, I want to bring out something here for you. It no doubt will cause people to comment on my strange doctrine. But I stand here on the authority of the Word of God and deny that the unbeliever goes to an eternal hell and burns there eternally. In the first place, hell, or the lake of fire, or whatever you want to call it is not eternal. How can it be if it had a beginning? In Matthew 25:41, it says that "everlasting fire was prepared for the devil and his angels." Now if it was prepared, then it wasn't without a beginning. If it had a beginning then it can't be eternal. Of course you might stumble over the idea of the word 'everlasting.' But that word means "from the ages to the ages" and has different meanings attached to it. In I Samuel 3:13-14, God told Samuel that He was going to judge the house of Eli forever, and that they would offer no more sacrifices "forever" as His priests. And in II Kings 2:27, Solomon thrust out the last descendants of Eli from the priesthood. That was four generations or so later. Now you can see that "everlasting" does not compare with what is "eternal", or that which had no beginning or end. Here in this case the word everlasting means "to the vanishing point." That is what happened. They vanished.

76 Look at the word, "destruction" over in II Thessalonians 1:9, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction." In the Greek, "destruction" positively means annihilation. And the word, "destruction", does NOT mean destroying. Now "destroying" means something going on and on in decay. So what can everlasting annihilation mean? It doesn't mean to keep on annihilating, or that would make the word "destroying", instead of "destruction". It means to destroy to the ending point. End it.

77 You might wonder now, when you can use that word, "eternal", and not use it the way we have been taught. That is easy. When it applies to God it means to be without beginning or end, and ever enduring and never ceasing. And when you talk of eternal life you have that in mind which is the life of God. "This is the record, that God has given us eternal life, and that life is in the Son. He that hath the Son hath life." Now then, only sons of God have life eternal, the kind that never had a beginning, but always was. That is right. You have something in you right now that is eternal--without beginning or end. It is the Spirit of God. It is a part of God Himself. It is the life of God.

78 Now if a sinner is going to go to hell and then suffer the same as you are going to

heaven and enjoy heaven, then he has the same kind of life you have already.

79 Well, then there might be those who say eternal life signifies the welfare of the children of God. It is their welfare and enjoyment that is at stake. On the other hand the sinner goes to his punishment, so that we can reduce the second death to a matter of punishment and place. Eternal life means heaven, and eternal punishment means hell. You would be surprised at the men who have been exalted as theologians that believed that. But do you know what that does? It makes eternal life a matter of geography instead of a Person. Eternal life is God,--the Lord Jesus Christ. How anyone could believe such a thing, that eternal life is a matter of place, is more than I know. It makes me stagger to think of it.

80 No sir. There is only one kind of eternal life. God has it. If we have God, we have eternal life in and through Him.

81 So you see, that word eternal, or everlasting, can be applied in various ways, but when it applies to God, He being what He is, it has one meaning. It is the duration of God. You can't apply it like that to any other thing. God alone is eternal, and because He lives, we live with Him.

82 Now don't let anyone say that I don't believe in a lake of fire and in punishment. I do. I don't know how long it will last, but it will eventually be removed. In Revelation 21:8, it says that those sinners mentioned will have their part in the lake of fire. But the true interpretation of the word is not `part' but it is 'time.' See, there you have it.

83 So the wicked shall be cast into hell (Hades or the grave) and hell into the lake of fire. Separated from God. What a terrible thing that will be.

84 But with the righteous it shall not be so. They don't have to fear. They have been redeemed by God. They are in His bosom. They are the overcomers. And who is he that overcometh? He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ.

85 Why will this overcomer, this believer escape, and go into realms of eternal life and bliss? Because Jesus paid a price to ransom us from sin. He filled the gap of separation, and we who were afar off are now made nigh by the blood.

86 And they will never come into condemnation. They will never be in that lake of fire. They can never be lost for He will lose none of them. Not one of the redeemed will be anywhere except where Jesus is.

87 Do you know why that is? I will illustrate it for you. I have a little boy, Joseph. He is a part of me, no matter what happens. If I were a rich man, the worst I could do would be to disinherit him, but there is nothing that I can ever do to deny him. I can't because he is a part of me. Here, let's take a blood test. Let's match his blood with mine. It'll prove that Joseph is my son. He is mine.
It's the blood test that shows whether you belong to God or not.

88 I can't help thinking of the time that I used to ride herd on purebred Herefords out in

Colorado. We used to have to bring in those cattle for government inspection if we wanted them to feed on government range. But they would not allow one single animal that did not have the blood tag on the ear. The tag signified that it was purebred. The rangers that looked them over did not once look at the brand. They just looked at the tag to see that the blood was the right blood. Hallelujah. If it's the right blood, it's got to be right.

89 You know God looked down and declared, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. It is separated from Me. It can't approach unto Me." We know that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. That meant that all died, all were separated, and one day a time would come when even that bit of life would be snuffed out and it would be all over. But God in love, took an animal and took its life in the place of the sinner's life.

90 In the Old Testament the sinner brought a lamb. He placed his hand on the lamb while the priest cut the lamb's throat. He felt the bleeding and heard the bleating. He felt the body stiffen in death. He saw the smoke of the sprinkled blood ascend to God. He knew that the lamb had taken his place. He knew that the lamb's life had been forfeited for his. But the life of that lamb was animal life and it could not come back upon the sinner making him clean. So he left with the same desire to sin. He would go out with sin in his mind, and come back and offer a sacrifice for the same thing a year later.

91 But in the New Testament it is not so. Our dying Lamb is the Son of God Who gave His blood a ransom for many. By faith we walk up and place our hands upon that Lamb--we see Him with the bloody wounds, the lacerated back, the cruel thorns tearing His brow--we feel His pain and hear Him cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" And what happened? The life that left that broken blood cell came back upon the repentant one. The life that was in Him came back upon us. We go back with no more desire to sin, and we now possess a hatred for the works and lusts of the flesh.

92 Look at us. What is our life? Just one little cell that came from our father. The female does not have the hemoglobin. She produces the egg; she is the incubator. But the blood comes from the male. That is why the woman takes the man's name. The children take his name. The mother is the incubator for the children she bears him.

93 That is what happened for our redemption. The Holy Ghost came upon Mary and she bore a Son and called Him, Jesus. The great Creator came down and became a sacrifice for our sin. His blood was the blood of God. That is exactly what it was. That blood of God was shed and the Spirit left Him as He died in agony. Then the SAME LIFE (SPIRIT) came back to in-dwell the repentant sinner and set him free. That sinner did not come back year after year, sacrifice after sacrifice, for there was no need. By ONE sacrifice, once and for all he has been set free from the dominion of sin, and has received the life of Christ whereby he reigns in victory over sin, the world, the flesh and the devil.

94 God did it. He did it all. He cried out to the world cursed in sin, "I will give you a sign. A virgin shall be with child. A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son. That will be your sign. It will be an everlasting sign. What she brings forth will be Emmanuel, God with us."

95 God came down in a blood cell, not through a man, but by the Holy Ghost, and in that virgin womb a tabernacle for the purpose of death was built. The Seed of the woman came in

order that He be bruised to bring us our salvation. When the Holy Ghost came upon Mary, He created within her womb the cell that would multiply and become the body of our Lord. That cell was created. It was the Beginning of the Creation of God. That is Who Jesus is. And that Holy One was filled with Holy blood, even the blood of God. That tabernacle came to birth. He grew to be a man. He went to Jordan and there that Sacrifice was washed of John in the river called Jordan. When that Acceptable Sacrifice rose out of the water, God came and in-dwelt Him, filling Him with the Spirit without measure. And when He died and shed His blood, the perfect life of God was liberated to come back upon the sinner who would accept the Christ as his Saviour.

96 Oh, how striking it is. Jehovah, born crying over a manure pile. Jehovah born in a manger of straw. There is your everlasting sign to the proud and puffed up, pseudo-intellectuals that have evolved their own theology and denied the truth of God. Jehovah God, a crying baby in a stinking barn. Then we think we have a right to be proud, holding up our noses, criticizing and acting as though we were somebody. Here's your real sign. This is the right one. Jehovah, playing as a boy. Jehovah working in a carpenter's shop. Jehovah washing the feet of fishermen.

97 "I will give you a sign," said God. "Not the sign of a white collared priesthood. Not the sign of wealth and power. There's nothing in this sign that you will want, or think suitable. But it is an everlasting sign. It is the greatest sign of all." Jehovah standing in the courtyard bruised and bleeding with thorns on His brow and spit on His face, mocked and set at naught. Jehovah, despised and rejected, hanging naked upon the cross, while the hypocrites jeered and dared Him to come down off the cross. Jehovah dying. Jehovah praying and nothing happening. Then Jehovah died. That is the sign for all men now. There isn't another like it. It is the great one.

98 Then darkness came upon the earth. They put Him in a tomb. There He lay those three days and nights until an earthquake shattered the gloom of night and He came forth. Jehovah came forth. Jehovah ascended on high. Then Jehovah returned to in-dwell His church. Jehovah came back with a mighty rushing wind and flames of fire. Jehovah came back to walk in the midst of His church and empower His people. Once more Jehovah came, and this time to stay in His people. And again Jehovah heals the sick, raises the dead and manifests Himself by the Spirit. Jehovah came back, speaking in tongues, and giving the answer back in interpretation.

99 Jehovah came down and He raised the prostitute to sin no more. He came down to the drunkard with fly blows on his face as he lay unconscious in the gutter. Yes, Jehovah came to manifest in flesh and manifest through flesh. Jehovah came--God in us, the hope of glory.

100 Yes, Jesus came and shed His blood and set the captive free. He came and redeemed His lost sheep. He gave them eternal life and they shall never perish. He won't lose one of them, but raise them up at the last day.
Hallelujah, the second death cannot hurt them. It has no power over them. For they are the Lamb's and they follow Him wherever He goes.

101 THE HOLY SPIRIT IN EVERY AGE
Revelation 2:11, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

There is not one church age where this verse is not mentioned. Every single age has the same admonition to the people of every age. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith." But it is absolutely impossible for all men to hear what the Spirit says to the different ages. I Corinthians 2:6-16, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to naught; but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory: But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned. But he that is Spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." Matthew 13:13-16, "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." John 8:42-44, "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God: neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? even because ye cannot hear My Word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." It is most evident from these Scriptures that no man of himself can hear God. That ability has to be given him of God. Matthew 16:17, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Which is in heaven." Putting these verses together we see that there is only one group of people, and that a very special group of people who are able to hear what the Spirit says in each age. It is one special group that receives the revelation for each age. That group is of God, because the group that cannot hear is not of God. (John 8:42-44.) The group that can and does hear what the Spirit is saying and receives the revelation thereof is that group described in I Corinthians 2:6-16. They are the ones who have the Spirit of God. They are the ones that are born of God. They are baptized into the body of the Lord Jesus Christ by His Spirit. They are baptized with the Holy Ghost.

102 To further bring out what we have just said, and to also use a Scripture that should be borne in mind as we talk about who it is that is baptized with the Holy Ghost, see what Jesus says in John 6:45, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall All be taught of God." But turn to Isaiah 54:13 whence this is taken and it reads, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The ALL of God are the CHILDREN of God. Thus it is that the evidence of being a true child of God, (he whom the Spirit has come upon and in-dwells) is again set forth as one taught the Word by the Holy Ghost.

103 Now you can begin to see why tongues is not the evidence of being baptized with the Holy Ghost. It doesn't say in any age that "he that hath a tongue let him say what the Spirit is saying." That puts tongues, interpretation thereof, and prophecy, etc. aside as an evidence. The evidence is HEARING what the Spirit says. The Spirit is talking. Yes, the Spirit is teaching. That is exactly what Jesus said He would do when He came. John 14:26, "He will teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." And that is just what happened. That is how the Gospels were written. These men had recalled to their minds by the Holy Ghost the very Words that Jesus spake. That is why the Gospels are accurate. They are perfect. But the Spirit did not only bring all things to their minds but He taught them further on the truth they already had. That is how Paul received his revelations. He said concerning it, "But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it (of man) but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Galatians 1:11-12. He was taught by the Holy Ghost.

104 One day when Jesus was upon earth, a certain important man came to visit Him. This man said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher sent from God." But you will notice that Jesus cut him short. He turned to Nicodemus and the words He spoke may well be paraphrased thusly, "I am NOT a teacher. I am the Sacrificial Lamb for sin. I am making possible the New Birth by My Spirit. But there is a coming One Who is the Teacher. He is the Holy Spirit." When Jesus was upon the earth He came as the Lamb, and as the Prophet. But when He came back upon the church by His Spirit He became the Teacher.

105 And to every age we hear the same truth. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." But only a Spirit-filled man can hear the revelation for that age. None other can. No sir. They cannot because that is exactly what Paul said in I Corinthians 2:6-16.

106 Now this ought to make you rejoice. There is a most peculiar doctrine in the air that is causing much misunderstanding and hard feelings. For when the Pentecostals say you MUST speak in tongues or you haven't been baptized with the Holy Ghost, they are either denying that great men like Knox, Moody, Taylor, Goforth and others did not receive the Holy Ghost, or saying that they all secretly spoke in tongues and were not aware of what was going on. Now that is not true. No sir. That is gross error. Tongues are not the evidence of being Spirit-filled. It is simply one of the nine manifestations mentioned in I Corinthians 12. There is no Scripture that says you receive the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues or that you receive the Holy Spirit by speaking in tongues. But it does say that "After they were all filled with the Holy Ghost they spake in tongues," and later on it says that they prophesied.

107 Today amongst many folks it is taken for granted that all who claim to receive the Holy Ghost by speaking in tongues speak in a genuine Spiritual tongue. But this is not so for many people speak in a known tongue but under the influence of a wrong spirit. Now let's say we are in a meeting and people are all speaking in tongues. How can you know which tongue is from the Spirit and which is from the devil? I have been amongst the heathen where their wizards drank blood out of a skull, spoke in tongues and interpreted and prophesied. They can even write in tongues. Now if tongues is THE evidence of receiving the Holy Ghost, then every tongue would have to be of God. But it has been admitted by tongues evidence people

that there are false and true tongues for God has the genuine and Satan has the false. So my question is, "Who knows what is real? Who understood the language to know what was spoken? Who has the gift of discernment to know?" Now when we get those answers we will have something to go on, but until then, we have to wonder about the source of the tongues. You can see right now that if you back up a tongues evidence and don't know what is being said, you have to finally come to the place where all tongues have to be of God. That would lead us then to believe that the devil cannot speak in tongues. That is not so; no, not for a minute. Any true missionary on a foreign field knows only too well that devils speak in other tongues, the same as I know it by experience.

108 Pentecostal theologians admit that they have no Scripture setting forth that people speak with tongues when baptized by the Holy Ghost. They admit that they infer it from the experiences set forth in the Book of Acts wherein three out of five times the people spoke with tongues. And they also say without any Scripture that there are two kinds of tongues. One is the tongue you speak in while receiving the Holy Ghost and it is the `evidence', while later on if you believe, you can receive the gift of tongues whereby you may speak often. However, they say, once having spoken in tongues as the evidence of receiving, you may never speak again. Once more we are anxious to know where this is found in the Word. If it isn't there, then God hath not spoken it and woe unto him who would add to that Word. But there is something in the Word about this very subject that they ignore completely. I Corinthians 13. It mentions tongues of men and angels. These would be known and unknown tongues. Modern Pentecostals say that they can receive the Holy Ghost speaking in unknown or angelic tongues. They have the cart before the horse, for in Acts 2 the people spoke in a perfect dialect which even unbelievers heard and understood.

109 Now when God is silent we had better be silent. But where He has spoken we had better speak, too, and say what He has already said. He told us the evidence, or what would happen after being baptized with the Holy Ghost was that we would have the Teacher come and teach all truth. But that Teacher was an INSIDE teacher, not an outside teacher. If the Spirit wasn't inside, you wouldn't hear the truth and receive it by revelation if you heard it every moment of the day. That was the sign of the indwelling Spirit in the days of Paul. Those who were filled with the Holy Ghost heard the Word, received it and lived by it. Those who did not have the Spirit heard it only as carnal men, put a wrong interpretation on it and went into sin.

110 In every age, (and every age is the age of the Holy Ghost for the true believer)--I say, in every age the evidence was the same. Those who had the Spirit, the Teacher, heard the Word, and that Spirit in them took the Word and taught it (revealed it) to them; and they were of the group that heard the messenger and his message and took it and lived it.

111 I know it is a great temptation to refer back to the day of Pentecost and also to the day when the Holy Ghost fell in the house of Cornelius and then set those two identical experiences as the evidence of the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. But on each occasion the tongues were understood by the listeners. This is a far cry from the modern babel of confusion of Pentecostal meetings. And if this were not enough to persuade us to leave off such reasoning, what will we do when we are confronted with the fact that people who have never spoken in tongues have some of the other eight manifestations in their lives, such as word of wisdom, the discerning of spirits, a word of knowledge, faith, healing and even miracles? And this observation is even more interesting in the light that tongues is the least of the nine gifts;

so when we see people who do not, nor ever have spoken in tongues, use greater gifts than those who do speak in tongues, we must discount such a doctrine even more completely than before.

112 So you can see now, that we can not afford to say what the Bible has not said. When Scripture teaches us that the work of the Holy Spirit, and the manifestation of that Blessed Person is to bring the truth of each age to the true seed of that age, then we know that the Spirit has to be abiding in the person or he cannot receive the truth for that time. Amen. That is exactly correct. And if these ages bring out anything, they surely bring and bear out this truth.

113 Now before we leave this subject I want to make myself very clear on what the Baptism with the Holy Ghost is according to the Word. It is not according to me, and it is not according to you. It has to be according to "Thus saith the Lord," or we are falsely led. Amen.

114 To begin with you will notice that in my meetings when I have finished preaching an evangelistic service, or some teaching message, I cast the net and invite a response from the people. I ask them to come forward and receive the Holy Spirit. My Pentecostal friends, upon hearing me say this believe that I am inviting people to come forward to be baptized with the Holy Ghost because they are already born again. So when I invite those who are Spirit-filled to come and deal with those who have answered the invitation to receive the Spirit, these dear ones surge forward and deal with the people in such manner as to encourage them to yield to God and believe to speak in tongues. This has caused a great deal of confusion and I want to tell you exactly what I mean. I mean for the sinner to come forward and be born again, which is to be baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Ghost which is exactly what took place at Pentecost when the church was launched. In other words, to be born of the Spirit is to be truly baptized with the Holy Ghost. It is one and the same.

115 Now I realize that it is going to be confusing for a moment here, as most people know that I was ordained a Baptist preacher and I have steadfastly declared that the Baptists have missed it for saying you receive the Holy Ghost WHEN you believe, for that is not so. You receive Him "SINCE you believed." Acts 19:2-6. "He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance saying unto the people, that they should believe on Him Which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them: and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." There it is. Paul asked, "Have you received SINCE, NOT WHEN you believed." And there is a great difference there, for it is AFTER we believe that we receive. Ephesians 1:13 is an exact word repeat of what happened in Ephesus according to Acts 19, "In Whom ye also trusted, AFTER that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also AFTER that ye believed (not when ye believed), ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Now here is my point. Too many of our modernists and even our fundamentalists (so-called) believe unto salvation at a certain specific time which in many cases is called "making a decision," and that has been called receiving Christ or being born again. Now to receive Christ is to receive His Spirit. To receive His Spirit is to be born again. To receive His Spirit is to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Amen. These folks believe. That is wonderful. But they stop there. You receive the Holy Ghost

AFTER you believe. It has always been that way and always will be. The very first word of direction to the people was by Peter at Pentecost and he said, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

116 These directions came as a direct answer from Peter relative to what had actually happened at Pentecost. What came to pass was that God according to Joel was pouring out the promised Holy Spirit upon all flesh. He was not poured out before that time or given before that time. This was it. But THIS was to come from now on by repenting, being baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and then God was duty bound to fill the ones who came. Peter, or any of the apostles never said, "Ye must be born again, and then filled with the Spirit."

117 That this is the pattern of experience relative to receiving the Holy Spirit, note carefully the very next time that the Spirit fell upon a people. Acts 8:5-17, "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man, called Simon, which before-time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also; and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet He was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. According to verse 12, THEY BELIEVED THE WORD. They were then baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. But according to verse 16, in spite of all that, they had STILL NOT RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT. It was only AFTER believing and being baptized correctly that they received the Holy Ghost. That is the exact pattern as set forth by Peter in Acts 2:38-39.

118 Another Scripture that casts wondrous light on this is found in Galatians 3:13-14, "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that (in order that) we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Now by no means can it be said that the "blessing of Abraham" is the rebirth, and that the "promise of the Spirit" is the Baptism with the Holy Ghost as two separate events. For the Scripture reads thus: "Jesus died on the cross, and by means of that death and resurrection, the blessing of Abraham came on the Gentiles, leaving the Jews. This transpired in order that the Spirit might become available to the Gentiles."

119 To understand what I have just said is to clear up why students have never ever found Paul saying at any time, "Be born again and THEN be Spirit-filled." They have inferred it is

there, and they have put their own meanings to make it say it, BUT SCRIPTURE DOES NOT SAY THAT. Jesus never said it either. Look at John 7:37-39, and read it now with understanding. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the SPIRIT, Which they that believe on Him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given: because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" Now it says here distinctly and emphatically that the believer upon drinking by coming unto Jesus in faith would have rivers of living waters pouring out of him. And it places this experience at Pentecost. Now keeping this thought in mind we read John 4: 10 & 14, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This same living water is mentioned, but this time it is not called a river; it is called an artesian well. There is where the people make their mistake. Because it is called a well and a river, they think that in one place it is eternal life given by the Spirit and in the next place where it is called a river (implying a great dynamism) it has to be the Spirit now given as an enduement of power. Not so. It is one and the same. It is the Spirit that gives life and power, and that came at Pentecost.

120 What is it that caused this misunderstanding? The answer is, "EXPERIENCE". We have gone by experience and not the Word. Away with experience as your measuring line. There is only one plumb line, only one rod, and that is the WORD. Now watch carefully and get this. Peter said, "Repent and be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Paul said, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost SINCE ye believed?" This is the whole of our problem right here. People repent of their sins, they get baptized in water, BUT THEY DON'T GO ON AND RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST. YOU BELIEVE UNTO RECEIVING THE SPIRIT. Believing on Jesus is the step in the right direction which is toward the Holy Ghost. But the people stop there. They go as far as water and then stop. They believe, and then stop. The Bible does not say that you receive WHEN you believe. It is, "Have you received the Holy Ghost SINCE you believed?" The exact and literal translation is: "Did ye, having previously believed, receive the Holy Ghost?" The people believe and then stop. You don't receive the Holy Ghost when you believe UNTO Him, having repented. You go on and receive the Holy Ghost. Do you see it? That is what is wrong with our fundamentalists. They have no power for they stop short of Pentecost.

121 They are like the children of Israel who came out of Egypt and stopped short of the Promised Land. Now those children of Israel left Egypt about two million strong. They all journeyed together, all saw the same miracles of God, all partook of the same manna and water from the smitten rock, all followed the same cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night but ONLY TWO reached the Promised Land. ONLY TWO WERE TRUE OR REAL BELIEVERS. That is correct because the Word tells us that the rest died because of unbelief; and because of unbelief they could not enter in (Hebrews 3:19). Then since that is so, and only TWO ENTERED, then the rest were not true believers. What made the difference? Two stayed with the Word. When the hearts of the ten spies failed at Kadesh Barnea, Joshua and Caleb did not stagger for they believed the Word and said, "We are more than able to take the land." They knew they could because God had said, "I have given you the land." After all those Israelites saw of the power and goodness and deliverance of God they did not enter into rest, which is a type of the Holy Ghost. So you can see right now that very few will ever

believe all the way to receiving the Spirit of God.

122 All right, we have come this far. Now I want to go further, and when I do I know I am going to cause some emotions to rise. But that is something I am not responsible for. I am responsible to God and His Word and the people God has sent me to. I have to be faithful in all He gives me to say.

123 In John 6:37 & 44 it says, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to me; and him that cometh to Me I shall in no wise cast out. No man can come to Me except the Father draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." John 1:12-13, "But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD." Ephesians 1:4-5, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him. In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." Now without getting too involved in the subject of the sovereignty of God (for that would take a book in itself) let me point out here that according to these verses, Jesus Christ is choosing His own bride just the same as men choose their brides today. The bride today does not simply decide she is going to take a certain man for a husband. No sir. It is the groom who decides and chooses a certain woman for his bride. (John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you.") Now according to the Word of God, the bride was chosen before the foundation of the world. This choosing of the bride was purposed in Himself. Ephesians 1:9. And in Romans 9:11 it says "That the purpose of God according to election might stand." You can't read it any other way. The heart purpose, the eternal purpose of God was to take a bride of His OWN choosing, and that purpose was in Himself, and being eternal was decreed before the foundation of the world.

124 Watch carefully now and see this. Before there was ever a speck of star dust; before God was God (God is an object of adoration and no one was there to worship Him, so He was at that time only potentially God.) and He was known only as eternal Spirit, the bride was already in His mind. Yes, she was. She was existing in His thoughts. And what about those thoughts of God? They are eternal, are they not?

125 The eternal thoughts of God! Let me ask you, "Are the thoughts of God eternal?" If you can see this, you will see many things. God is unchangeable in both essence and behavior. We have studied that and proven that already. God is infinite in His abilities so therefore He as God must be omniscient. If He is omniscient, then He is not now learning, nor is He taking counsel even with Himself, nor is He at any time adding to His knowledge. If He can add to His knowledge, then He is not omniscient. The best we could say is that sometime He will be. But that is not Scriptural. He IS omniscient. He has never had a new thought about anything because all His thoughts He has always had and always will have, and knows the end from the beginning because He is God. THUS THE THOUGHTS OF GOD ARE ETERNAL. THEY ARE REAL. They are not simply like a man with a blueprint he has drawn up and which one day will be translated into substance and form, but they are already real and eternal, and part of God.

126 See how this works. God always had His thoughts for Adam. Adam, as His thoughts, was yet unexpressed. Psalms 139:15-16 will give you a little idea of this, "My substance was

not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book were all my members written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." That, as I said, was not written about Adam but it gives you the idea and knowledge that the thought was there in His mind, and that thought was eternal and had to be expressed. So when Adam was formed of the dust of the earth and his spiritual being created by God, then Adam became God's thought expressed, and those eternal thoughts were now manifested.

127 Down through the centuries we could go. We find a Moses, a Jeremiah, a John the Baptist, and each one of these were God's eternal thought expressed in its season. Then we come to Jesus the LOGOS. He was the perfect and complete THOUGHT expressed and He became known as the Word. That is what He IS, and forever WILL BE.

128 Now it says that "He hath chosen us IN HIM (Jesus) before the foundation of the world." That means that we were right there WITH Him in the mind and thoughts of God before the foundation of the world. That gives an ETERNAL quality to the elect. You can't get away from that.

129 Let me inject a thought in here. Even our natural birth is based upon election. The female ovaries produce many, many eggs. But why is it that at a certain time a certain egg comes down and not another one? And then amongst the male sperm, for no known reason a certain germ attaches itself to the egg while others that could have just as easily attached themselves, or had a better opportunity to do so did not do so and perished. There is an intelligence behind all this, otherwise what determines whether the baby is a boy or girl, blond or brunette, light or dark type of eyes, etc. With these thoughts in mind think about Joshua and Caleb. Did not Jesus say in John 6:49 "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead?" Those parents that died were necessary as the forefathers of the people to whom Jesus was speaking. They perished, yet they were in the election of God naturally as Joshua and Caleb were Spiritually.

130 But to go on. These elect were not only the eternal thoughts of God which were to be expressed in flesh in their due season, but these same elect are called by another name. Romans 4:16. "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all." Romans 9:7-13, "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only this; but when Rebekah had also conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him That calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Galatians 3:16, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Galatians 3:29, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." According to Romans 4:16 we find that God has given a Sure Promise to ALL of Abraham's seed, and Paul puts himself and all believers under that designation because he says "Abraham who is the father of us ALL." Then he goes on to not only narrow down his definition, but rather to finalize it for in Galatians 3 he identified the

SEED (singular) with Jesus, and counted "the seed children" as children of promise, and promise as having to do with "election", or "the choosing of God". And that is exactly what we have been saying. These who are of the Royal Seed are the elect of God; are the predestinated, fore-known of God, and were in the mind of God and His thoughts. In very plain language the True Bride of Christ was in the mind of God eternally, though not expressed until each came forth in the designated, decreed season. As each member came forth it became EXPRESSED and took its place in the body. Thus this bride is the literal SPOKEN WORD SEED BRIDE. And though she is feminine in designation she is also called the "body of Christ". It is very apparent that she ought to be called that for she was predestinated in Him, came from the same source, was eternal with Him, and is now manifesting God in a many membered body whereas once God was manifested in ONE MEMBER, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

131 Now then, here we are coming to a conclusion. As the eternal Logos (God) was manifest in the Son, and in Jesus dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and that Eternal One was the Father manifest in flesh, and thereby gained the title of Son, even so we, eternal in His thoughts in our turn became the many membered Spoken Word Seed, manifest in flesh, and those eternal thoughts now manifest in flesh are the sons of God, even as we are so called. WE DID NOT BECOME SEED BY THE REBIRTH, WE WERE SEED AND THEREFORE WERE REBORN FOR ONLY THE ELECT CAN BE REBORN. Because we WERE SEED is the reason we could be quickened. In NON-SEED there is nothing to quicken.

132 Hold this carefully in mind. Now take the next step. Redeem means to buy back. It restores to the original owner. God, by His death, the shed blood BOUGHT BACK HIS OWN. He bought back the Spoken Word Seed Bride. "My sheep hear My voice (Word) and they follow Me." You always were a sheep. You never were a pig or a dog turned into a sheep. That is impossible for every kind of life produces the same kind and there is no change in specie. As we were in the thoughts of God and then expressed in flesh, there had to come a day when we would hear His voice (the Word), and hearing that voice become aware of our Father calling us, and recognize that we are the sons of God. We heard His voice and we cried out as did the prodigal son, "Save me, Oh, my Father. I am returning to Thee."

133 A son of God can go a long time before he recognizes that he is a son. In fact a lot of true Christians are like the story of the baby eagle that was hatched out under a hen. You know that the eagle is a type of the true believer. Well, a farmer took an egg from an eagle's nest and he placed it under a hen. In due time all the eggs under the hen hatched out. The baby chicks got along fine with the mother hen but that little eagle could not figure out the clucking and scratching for food in the manure pile. He managed to make a living but he was pretty confused about it all. But one day, from way up in the air the mother eagle that had laid the egg spied that little eagle on the ground. She swooped down with tremendous speed and screamed at the top of her voice for him to fly up to meet her. He had never heard an eagle cry, but when he heard that first scream something in him stirred and he longed to launch out toward it. But he was afraid to try. Again that mother screamed for him to arise in the wind and follow her. He screamed back that he was afraid. Once more she called out, screaming that he try. Beating his wings he hurled himself into the air, and answering the cry of his mother, he soared off into the blue skies. You see he always was an eagle. He acted like a chicken for a little while but he could not be satisfied. But when he heard the call of the great eagle he came to his own place. And once a true son of God hears the cry of the Spirit by the Word, he

too, will realize who he is and run to the Great Prophet Eagle and be with Him forever seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

134 NOW COMES OUR TRIUMPHAL CAPSTONE on the Baptism with the Holy Ghost. Galatians 4:4-7, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." There it is. Jesus Christ came forth, died upon the cross, and accomplished Redemption (restoring to original owner by means of purchase, or paying the price) and thereby PLACED US AS SONS. He did not make us sons, for we were already His sons, but He placed us as sons; for as long as we were in the world, in the flesh, we could not be recognized as His sons. We were held captive by the devil. But we were sons, nonetheless. And hear this: AND BECAUSE YE ARE SONS, GOD HATH SENT FORTH THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON INTO YOUR HEARTS WHEREBY YOU CRY, FATHER, FATHER." Upon whom did the Spirit fall at Pentecost? Sons. At Corinth? Upon Sons while they HEARD THE WORD.

135 What is the Baptism with the Holy Ghost? It is the Spirit Baptizing you into the body of Christ. It is the new birth. It is the Spirit of God coming in and filling you after you have repented, (having heard His Word) and been baptized in water as an answer of a good conscience toward God.

136 What we have just set forth would be much easier for all to understand if all believed the doctrine of the oneness of the Godhead. For there are not three persons in that Godhead but ONE. Thus we are NOT born again by the Spirit of Life of Jesus coming in, and then subsequent to that the Holy Spirit coming in to give us power. If that were true, why are we dishonoring the Father by not giving Him a part in our complete salvation, for if salvation is of the Lord and there are three Lords, then HE (Father) must have something to do, too. But surely it can be seen that Jesus made this very clear that it was He and He alone Who is God and it is He and He alone Who is coming into the believer. John 14:16 says that the Father will send another Comforter. But verse 17 says that He (Jesus) dwelleth with them and should be IN them later. In verse 18 He says He will come to them. In verse 23 in speaking to the disciples He said, "We (Father and Son) will come unto him." Thus it is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost all coming in at the one time for IT IS ONE PERSON comprising the Godhead. That advent took place at Pentecost. There aren't two comings of the Spirit, just one. The trouble is that people don't know the real truth, and they simply believe in Jesus for remission of sin but never go on to receive the Spirit.

137 Before I close this subject, I know there is a question in your minds. You will want to know if I believe in the doctrine of pre-existence. I don't believe in that Mormon doctrine of the pre-existence of souls any more than I believe in reincarnation or the transmigration of souls. Be careful here and see this. It is not the person that comes predestinated eternally from God, IT IS THE WORD, OR SEED. That is it. Way back there, too far back for the human mind to grasp, the Eternal God with eternal thoughts, thought and decreed, "JACOB HAVE I LOVED, BUT ESAU HAVE I HATED, (Romans 9:13) AND NEITHER WAS BORN, AND NEITHER HAD DONE GOOD OR EVIL." See, it was the THOUGHT, and then that thought became expressed, and God bought back Jacob, because Jacob alone was SEED. Jacob, alone had the seed; that is why he had respect to the birthright and covenant of God. If you are true

seed, you will hear that Word; the Spirit will baptize you into the body of Christ, filling you and empowering you, and you will receive the Word for your day and age. See how clear the true evidence becomes when the Word is revealed to you? Again, note, Jesus was the Royal Seed. He lived in a human body. When the Spirit called to Him (the Word-Manifested Thought), He went to Jordan and was there baptized in water. Upon obeying the Word, the Holy Spirit came upon Him and the voice said, "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him." The voice did not say, "This has become My Son," Jesus WAS the Son. The Holy Ghost positioned Him as that Son before them all. Then having been filled thus (and the same pattern holds at Pentecost and ever after), He went in demonstrated power, receiving the full revelation of God and from God, for that day.

138 Now we have been constantly saying that the true evidence of being baptized with the Holy Ghost is for the believer to receive the Word for the age in which he lives. Let me show you most clearly.

139 The Seven Ages as set forth in Revelation Chapters 2 & 3 take in the whole span of the Fullness of the Gentiles, or the whole time in which God is dealing with the Gentiles unto salvation. In every single age, bar none, it says the very same thing in opening and closing the message to each age. "Unto the messenger of (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea) write; These things saith He, etc., etc. "... He that hath an ear, let him (singular) hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." Notice here that Jesus (by the Spirit) in EVERY age addresses Himself to ONLY ONE person relative to the Word for that age. Only ONE messenger for each age receives what the Spirit has to say to that age, and that ONE MESSENGER is the messenger to the true church. He speaks for God by revelation to the "churches", both true and false. The message is then broadcast to all. But though it is broadcast for all who come within range of the message, that message is received individually by only a certain qualified group in a certain way. Each individual of that group is one who has the ability to hear what the Spirit is saying by way of the messenger. Those who hear are not getting their own private revelation, nor is a group getting their collective revelation, BUT EACH PERSON IS HEARING AND RECEIVING WHAT THE MESSENGER HAS ALREADY RECEIVED FROM GOD.
156-1 SMYRAEAN.CHURCH.AGE - CHURCH.AGE.BOOK.CPT.4
Now think it not strange that this is the case, for Paul set this pattern under the hand of God. Paul alone had the full revelation for his day as evidenced by his confrontation of the other apostles who admitted that Paul was the Prophet-Messenger to the Gentiles for that day. And also note by actual illustration in the Word, that when Paul desired to go to Asia, God forbade him, for the sheep (His children) were in Macedonia and they (the Macedonians) would hear what the Spirit had to say through Paul, while the people in Asia would not.

140 In every age we have exactly the same pattern. That is why the light comes through some God-given messenger in a certain area, and then from that messenger there spreads the light through the ministry of others who have been faithfully taught. But of course all those who go out don't always learn how necessary it is to speak ONLY what the messenger has spoken. (Remember, Paul warned the people to say only what he said, I Corinthians 14:37, "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD. What? came the Word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?") They add here, or take away there, and soon the message is no longer pure, and the revival dies down. How careful we must be to hear ONE voice, for the Spirit has but one voice which is the voice of God. Paul warned them to say

what he said, even as Peter did likewise. He warned them that EVEN HE (PAUL) could not change one word of what he had given by revelation. Oh, how important it is to hear the voice of God by way of His messengers, and then say what has been given them to say to the churches.

141 I hope you are beginning to see it now. Perhaps you can understand now why I don't hold with the fundamentalists and the Pentecostals. I have to hold to the Word the way the Lord revealed it. Now I did not cover it all. That would take a separate book, but by the help of the Lord we will get many sermons and tapes and messages on all of these points to help you to understand and dovetail all Scripture.

142 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches of each age." In every age it was the same cry. Hear what the Spirit says. If you are a Christian, you will get back to what the Spirit is teaching, that is, the Word of this age. Every messenger to every age will preach that Word. Every fresh and true revival will be because men have gotten back to the Word for their age. The cry of every age is the rebuke, "You have left the Word of God. Repent, and come back to the Word." From the first book in the Bible (Genesis) to the last book (Revelation) there is only one reason for God's displeasure--leaving the Word; and there is only one remedy to regain His favor--back to the Word.

143 In the Ephesian Age, and in this age, and in every age we contemplate we will see that this is true. And in the last age which is our age, we will find the blackout of the Word, the complete apostasy ending in the great tribulation.
If you are true seed, if you are truly baptized with the Holy Ghost you will esteem His Word above your necessary meat, and yearn to live by EVERY Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.
This is my earnest prayer for all of us; may we hear what the Spirit is bringing from the Word for us today.