

VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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PROPHETS OF TODAY

PUTTING THE WILL OF GOD ON DISPLAY "Repentance--The Gateway to Power"

I become somewhat alarmed when I listen to the so-called prophets of today. They always have either a message of doom or prosperity. It is interesting that if you follow their words, they never seem to happen or line up with the Word of God. Recently, a prophet stated on TBN that on a certain date that God was going to remove all the evil from the world and people would turn to God in great numbers. I didn't happen. One man declared that an entire NFL football team would be killed in an airplane crash. It didn't happen. Do you remember a while back when a prophet had figured out when the Lord was going to return to the earth and people were alarmed and ready for a certain date and hour. It didn't happen. God does still speak through His people in the twenty-first century, sometimes to warn of certain events and to make us aware of His promised covenant blessings, but not as some are doing. The Word teaches for us to beware of false prophets who exploit the Word for gain. There are a few people who are called prophets of God that I know and trust. Their words are grounded in love and their hearts are filled with compassion. I guess that I am saying that we are to be very careful when hearing people say, "THUS SAITH THE LORD." Just remember, as a believer, we are capable of hearing from the Spirit of God to receive whatever message God would have for us or for others and on the other hand, remember God does have true prophets for the twenty-first century.

Up to this point in the lesson I have revealed how the renewed mind is represented in a believer's life, but I have not told you how to renew the mind. The "how" is the rest of the story! I will start the process of teaching how to renew the mind by stating that it begins with repentance. In fact, I believe that repentance is the "gateway" for believers to return to their original mission on earth. In support of this, we read what Jesus said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Repentance to most Christians refers to having an altar call where people come forward and weep at the altar and get right with God. This is a legitimate expression of repentance today, but it's not what the word defined means. The word "Re" means to go back, and "Pent" is like a penthouse, the top floor of a building. Repent, then means to go back to God's perspective (heaven's penthouse) on reality. In this biblical repentance, there is a perspective of repentance that brings renewal, a reformation that affects our intellect, our emotions, and every part of our lives. Without repentance, we remain linked into a carnal way of thinking. When the Bible speaks of carnality, it doesn't necessarily mean obvious disgusting sin. Most Christians have no appetite for sin; they don't want to get drunk or sleep around, but because they live without the demonstrated power of the Gospel, many have lost their sense of purpose and gone back to sin.

When the believer has a renewed mind, it is not about whether or not they are going to heaven. It's about how much heaven they want in their lives now. It seems that religion is always trying to determine who is going to heaven, when they should be teaching people how to have as much of heaven as possible in their lives now. Simply put, God wants believers everywhere to see reality from His perspective. To learn how to live life on this earth from His world. It is my firm belief that Jesus is urging us to do an about-face in our approach to reality. Why? Because His kingdom is here now! To say this very simply, if we fail to change the way we think, we will never be able to apprehend the Kingdom power that is available.

Jesus made this very plain in John 3:3, "**...unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" Jesus was not telling us that we as believers would have visions of heaven. I believe He was saying that when our minds are renewed, we will "see" the kingdom displayed and proven as He did in His earthly ministry. This is what Jesus means when He states, "...see the kingdom of God." Why don't we be truthful with ourselves; we have inside of us an unrelenting hunger to watch the Kingdom manifest itself into this earthly realm. Not just to watch His Kingdom manifest into this realm, but to participate by becoming the gateway of God's power. Pastor Bill Johnson related that on a recent Sunday morning when he was walking around greeting people before the meeting, that in the back he met a homeless gentleman who'd come as a guest of someone else. The man had a cast on his arm and was treating it with great care. So, Pastor Bill said, "Hey, what happened to your arm?" He said, "I fell off a 20 foot bridge and shattered my wrist." Pastor Bill said, "How about if we pray for that?" "Okay," he replied. Pastor Bill prayed and then told him, "Now move it around." He moved it and his jaw fell open. He looked in complete astonishment at the lady who brought him because he had been completely

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A WORD

1 John 4:4, “**Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world.**” If God is in me, at least in my spirit, then I have power and authority dwelling within me. If I really believe this, then there is no need for fear. Since God is in me, I have no need to fear sickness or disease. If God is truly within me, then He must give life to my mortal body (Romans 8:11) by His Spirit

Who dwells in me. The Lord is speaking to me tonight about His indwelling Spirit. That, if we really believed Jesus lives within us, we would not be concerned about so many things.

One reason we never get anywhere is because of guilt. The Lord said to me, ‘You cannot be healed if you have guilt.’ There are certain things in our lives we will never be able to get a handle on. We cannot of ourselves stop doing certain things. Believe me, I’m a human being, I know. How do we get past the guilt? By changing the way we think, regardless of what we have been told, guilt can have no place in us. Because if it holds us, it will keep us from receiving anything from God. When we are in guilt, we are in a place that is impossible to receive from God!

I believe God understands our weaknesses. The Lord spoke something to me once! That our hearts are not bent on doing evil continually. Since His Word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of our hearts, God knows we are not perfect, that we want more than anything to please Him. Sometimes we just don’t know how!

Our past is just that, it is our past—behind us. Programs from our past will come up in our minds and dictate to us the boundaries we set in life. There are many other things associated with guilt other than past memories, for one thing reoccurring instances, perhaps something we have been doing for most of our lives that makes us feel guilty. A continuous repetitive pattern that seemingly cannot be broken. Things that we try to suppress, and even seem to have control over, though only for a while. But because these things have been there for so long they have deep roots within us, and are not easily conquered. They, therefore, tend to resurface again and again. It must be a complete turning, an act of our will; we make up our minds to do many things or say we’ll do them, most of the time with good intentions, yet we still fail.

I’ll say it again. Do we really believe that God’s Spirit dwells within us? How do we trust Him to guide us and help us? If we really believe He’s with us and in us, I have but one conclusion—He is able to deliver us in all situations. Then I must change my way of thinking, whatever the cost. It is not too great. We have within us a seed of faith, within that seed is the ability to believe God—to believe for the impossible, the miraculous. Within that beginning structure is the ability to understand the mysteries of God. To know God’s heart toward us.

I firmly believe that faith has a voice, and if we could hear that voice speaking to us, we would feel love of such magnitude that we would long for it always. How do we unlock the voice of faith? By changing the way we think. You’ve heard the old saying “old habits die hard.” The reason for this is that we have set patterns in our life, we can’t change them, partly because we like the way we are. Does this mean we actually like feeling guilty? Obviously we must! Man has been trying to impress God with his works for 2000 years. The flesh profits nothing, and again, no good thing dwells in the flesh.

It is the Spirit that give life! Then we have no life apart from God. Most of our life has been spent digging away at a huge mountain with a very small shovel and getting nowhere in the process. We have plenty of Word in us, I don’t believe that’s the problem. But alongside us we also have many distractions. And because of distractions, we tend to feel guilty if we are distracted. Especially a student of God’s Word. Focusing on the Lord and His Word in this day and time can be difficult to say the least. But one thing is for certain, the Lord isn’t going to make me study, He isn’t going to make me do anything. I believe what I am about to say is truth in it’s greatest form. A man can study the Word his whole life and be the most spiritual man alive and still not know God, but only know about Him. God does not want people He has to pull on and corral up like horses. He wants people who are willing from their hearts to come to Him for Who He is and not for what He can do for them. Isaiah 57:15, “**For this is what the High and lofty one says, He who lives forever, whose name is Holy; I live in a high and Holy place, but also with him Who is contrite and lowly in spirit.**” Isaiah 66:2, “**This is the one I esteem; He who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.**” Be happy in all things that you do and be not condemned. Your heart is focused on me, My Spirit will not lead you astray. If a man has a flaw in his character, I will allow a test to prove him and build my character in him. I am not concerned with man’s character. But with my character in man. It begins with complete and utter denial of one’s self and complete and total recognition of me, the Lord. Take the hard way, for the easy way will not build my character. The easy way requires no discipline, and has no lasting effects. Ah, but the hard way builds my character and is rooted deep within and the effects are eternal. Remember, you cannot and will not grow without being proven, for without opposition, there is no growth.

So then, it is God Who will change us. We cannot change ourselves, but only will to do what He wants.

Neal Emfinger, Jr.

REPENTANCE (Cont. from Pg 1)

This is not the end of the story; when the invitation came this man gave his life to Jesus Christ. God’s kindness leads man to repentance! The story that I just related is an everyday example of proving that the Kingdom works on earth. It is not mind over matter, or something spooky and weird. It is going back to God’s perspective of reality and living as if we really believe it. Let me put it this way; God’s perspective of reality is to raise up a delegated group of people who agree with Him, to destroy the works of the devil. The question remains, who will demonstrate and prove the will of God here on earth as it is in heaven. This is the “core” of the Great Commission, and it is your privilege and

JEZEBEL IN THE CHURCH (PART 6)

By now I believe, and hope, you understand Jezebel's mission is to destroy the operation of the spirituals in the church. Very seldom will we see a full manifestation of the Jezebel spirit, usually she is more subtle, she deceives people into believing they are doing what is best for the church.

The primary word here is "deceived." A truth we should all understand is that a person that is deceived does not know they are deceived. There are many good people that are being deceived by the Jezebel spirit. They believe they are doing exactly what God wants them to; when in reality they are being used to cause division in the Church.

Jezebel will expose itself by its words. If what a person says about someone puts down, condemns or criticizes a person for their spiritual walk, there is a strong probability that the words were spoken by someone deceived by the Jezebel spirit. Our words are to lift up and edify others, not condemn and tear down.

The Jezebel spirit does not always work from within a prayer meeting, intercessory group, or Bible study; although this is her primary mode of operation, many times she will set on the sidelines and ridicule those groups or the group leader. Many times Jezebel will speak out about a meeting because the meeting is not conducted the way she "thinks" it should be conducted. A good way to determine if something is "not of God" is to see if it lasts. Prayer meetings that are not of God will eventually dry up and phase out; the same is true of Bible studies (or anything else conducted in relation to the church), when left to their own devices they will go away if they are not inspired by God.

As we have stated before, the Jezebel spirit is unconcerned about the person she is using. For instance, when she uses someone to speak out about a leader of a group and the group is of God, then the person speaking is "touching God's anointed." King David made it clear that we are not to touch God's anointed, even when they are wrong. David would not harm King Saul, even after the prophet had anointed David to be king because he knew that evil would befall him for doing so. Psalm 35 gives us a vivid picture of David's belief in this area; he believed that when God is on our side, evil words spoken against us will return to the one that spoke them, just as he believed that good would be returned. In the New Testament, Luke 6:38 tells us that with the same measure we measure out it will be measured back to us. This applies to evil as well as to good. In Psalm 73, David is crying out to God about how he is being mistreated; then in verse 17, he goes into the Temple and he sees (in the spirit) their end, he sees that all they have said and done against him is to be visited on them.

We should be very careful when talking about others, especially those in leadership positions; they are God's servants, and Jesus asked the question who are we to judge another's servant. When we are talking about someone else, we could be opening an entry way for the enemy to work against us. A good measure of someone that is critical of another's work is to look at what is going on in the critical person's life, are they operating in God's peace, prosperity and health or is their life in disarray.

It would be very easy to say that everyone that does not agree with "our way" is operating in some form of the Jezebel spirit. We are all allowed to have our opinion, we are not allowed to criticize or condemn. We are not on a witch hunt, we are to be knowledgeable of her tactics so as not to be deceived by her.

Your Brother in Christ, Ray Jennings

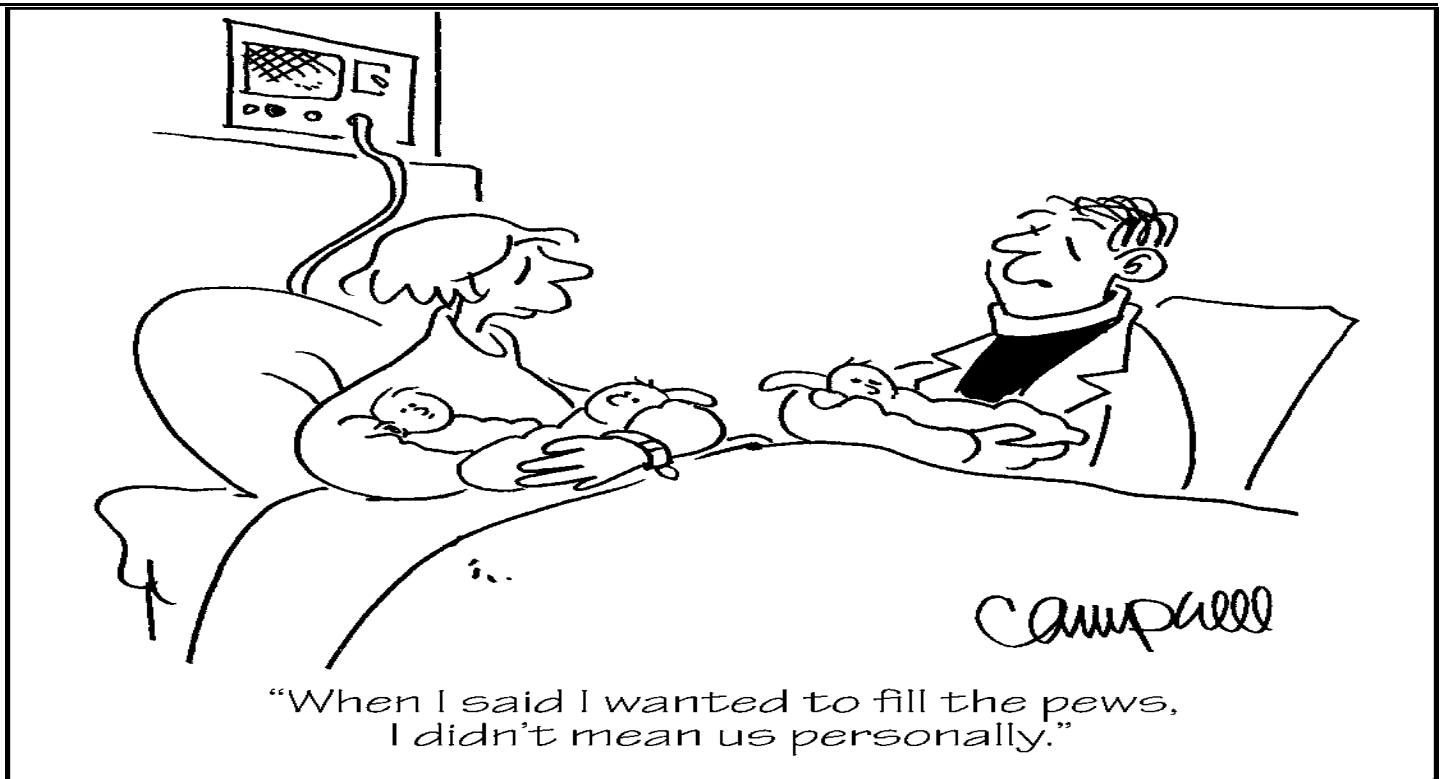
DEAR CHURCH, Greetings from Africa. We have been on the road for the last few weeks. We left Durbin on the 21st of January and returned on the 10th of February. We drove 4,350 miles in South Africa. We have had an awesome time seeing some of the most beautiful country our Father has made and ministering to a dry and thirsty people. The Lord has poured fresh water into a well that had run dry. He showed us a people that was crying out for water and He blessed them with living water from on high. We have had some wonderful services. The Spirit of God was so strong. He blessed His children with His love.

In Kimberly, we were scheduled to speak for two nights. We were standing in the front of our hotel waiting on the Pastor to pick us up to go to the church. A young man walked over to me and said hello. He recognized us because he had been in the services in Soweto. He had a colleague with him. They were there on business. They heard us say we were having a service that night and wanted to go with us. They followed us to the church. He had to go home the next day, but she was staying until Friday. She went to all of the services with us. The next morning at the restaurant, the waitress heard us talking and knew we were Christians. She began to talk to us and wanted to talk to the Pastor to find directions to the church so she could come to the service. She also came the second night. They did not want us to leave. We prayed and God said stay. We had a third night service. Oh, my was it good. Both ladies attended the third service.

Pastor Job had people give testimonies of things that had happened to them due to the service. One lady came up to testify. She had been in the prayer line the night before. I had given my testimony and she had come to me to pray for her. She and her son had AIDS. She said I had blessed her with my testimony and given her hope. I ministered to her. I prayed for her and told her to know that our Lord had already done it all on the cross and all you have to do is receive it and believe it. She went home that night and her son had a high fever. She said she was so encouraged by what she had received in the service, she went in and laid hands on her son and he was healed. He had gone to school that day. I began to cry as she testified. My prayer had been answered. I had prayed and asked my Father to let us impart His love to His children in such a way that they would receive all He had for them and take it out to others. I was so thankful. Glory!

Our God is so awesome! He wants us to have all that He died to give us. All we have to do is believe and receive. We must believe the Word. It is life unto us. Just get a fresh drink of living water every day. It is there for the taking.

I am eternally grateful that my Lord went to hell for me and I don't have to go. Over here it is very hot and humid. It is like torture sometimes. I was thinking of how hot this is and it is nothing compared to hell. This has only been a few weeks and hell is for eternity if you go there. Thank you Lord for what you did for us. If you don't know for sure if you're saved, then make it right. Meet Jesus. Ask Him into your heart. I assure you, you do not want to go to hell. It's too hot and there is no air conditioning there either. I love you so much and I sure do miss you. Keep on praying for us. We are taking that living water into this land. Much Love, Your Missionary, Bess Graham



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"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me."
John 14:1 NRSV