

VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



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A GOOD FRIEND GOT ARRESTED

THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF A TRANSFORMED MIND
"PUTTING THE WILL OF GOD ON DISPLAY"
"Revelation and Understanding"

A good friend of mine got arrested a couple of weeks ago. I had not seen him around and was not aware that he had been arrested, booked and jailed. He now has a criminal record that will haunt him the rest of his life. He's not that good looking but has one of the best personalities that I've ever seen. When I dropped by the airport, he was lying in the grass with his feet in the air smiling. A few minutes later a lady friend of his dropped by and you've never seen such emotion displayed. They carried on like they hadn't seen each other in years. They took out running across the parking lot, jumping like a couple of dogs. I thought to myself, what a much better world this would be if people could care for each other like that. Petey is the airport dog that has won the heart of everyone who has met him but when he strayed from the safety of the airport, they booked him. He spent three days behind bars eating dog food. That had to be a

It has been said by those in the know, "We strive with prophetic revelation, but perish without it." What is the nature of revelation? Is it not to open up new realms of living, of possibility, or faith to people with needs? It is absolutely impossible to have heaven's reality, much less use it in ministry without receiving regular revelation from God. Please understand, the Bible does not say, "My people perish for a lack of miracles, or lack of money, or because of bad relationships, or bad worship leaders, or insufficient wealth, or anything else we could list." But it does say, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." (Hosea 4:6) In Proverbs 29:18, we read it another way, "Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint." A more correct translation would be: "Without a prophetic revelation, the people go unrestrained, walking in circles, having no certain destiny."

The biblical word "vision" doesn't mean "goals." Goals are fine, but this vision is referring to the spirit of revelation coming upon you, giving you a vision of things that are unseen. Let me put it this way, revelation is so essential in our lives that without it we perish. Revelation is not something we can take or leave. It is what Spirit filled Christians live by. Pastor Bill Johnson said it this way, "Without unfolding prophetic revelation that expands your capacity to see life from God's perspective, you will perish." Paul knew of it's importance and told the Ephesians in 1:17b, ". . . give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

If the spiritually powerful Ephesian church needed to be reminded of the importance of revelation knowledge, we certainly need to learn about it. In next month's article, I will discuss how Christians can tune in to God's revelation knowledge. The Word makes it plain that God wants us to know the things that have been freely given to us by Him. May God bless each of you this Christmas season and may your eyes be opened to behold all good things.



Christmas Music

COME ONE, COME ALL!
CHRISTMAS MUSIC AND COMMUNION
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2007
11:00 AM WORSHIP AND COMMUNION
No Sunday School Classes

Let's all join together at 11:00 to celebrate
the holidays in music and worship

Praise The Lord!

FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY CONCLUSION

As we have seen from the previous articles on this subject, the Five-Fold Ministry offices are vital to the church. Jesus gave them to the church for a purpose, not just so

someone could have an elite office or title.

The church of today, in most instances, has reduced the Apostle to an overseas missionary, the Prophet they have tried to eliminate because of the accountability he brings, and the Teacher has been reduced to a Sunday-School teacher. The Evangelist and the Pastor are the only ones most churches recognize, much to their detriment.

This is not to say that Missionaries and Sunday-School teachers are not important. Most people receive more foundation from Sunday-School than they do from their Pastor; in these instances the Pastor is too busy trying to operate in one of the other offices to accomplish his calling, usually he is intent on Evangelism.

Missionaries are usually Apostle-Evangelists, Evangelist-Apostles, or Evangelist, sometimes with a little Prophet and a lot of Teacher mixed in. When Paul traveled on his Missionary journeys to a new location, the first thing he did was to evangelize as he converted local people to Christianity, then he taught them foundational truths, and lastly when there was enough people for a local body, he would set the body in order by establishing a Pastor, elders and deacons and other offices that were appropriate. This is an example of the Evangelist, Teacher and Apostle working in Paul. There was no established church, so one had to be built. If there had been an established church, Paul would have worked in the office of the Apostle to be sure the church was in apostolic order.

The church today desperately needs to see the Five-Fold Ministry in operation; if not positioned within the local church then through traveling ministries, sent by God, coming through the local church.

We have too many self proclaimed Five-Fold Ministries today; no minister should have to tell you what office he is operating in, it should be self evident through his actions and his ministry. God places the gift within the person, Jesus sets the office in the person, and the Holy Ghost confirms the office to the church. The Greek word for these offices is "Doma", a gift that has been made a gift of. God gives a person a Five-Fold Ministry office, and then Jesus takes that person and his gift and makes him and his gift a gift to the church.

What is the purpose of the Five-Fold Ministry? Ephesians 4:12 tells us the Five-Fold Ministry is for the equipping of the saints (you and I) so that we, the saints, will be prepared for the work of service, which is to build up the body of Christ. We, the saints, are to be prepared to do the work of the ministry; it does not lie solely on the Five-Fold Ministry.

Anyone that complains that the Pastor is not visiting the sick and bringing the lost to salvation needs to pay close attention to this verse. It is as much the saint's responsibility to do these things as it is the Pastor's, or any of the Five-Fold Ministry.

The Five-Fold Ministry was given to the Church; yes, they are to serve outside of the Church, just as the saints are to serve outside the Church. The Five-Fold Ministries primary mission is within the Church of Jesus Christ, to build the body in unity and faith until the body of Christ reaches perfection. I have not seen a body that operates in perfection; therefore, I have to suggest that the Five-Fold Ministry has not fulfilled its mission and is still needed to accomplish the mission Jesus set forth.

Their mission:

Apostle: To set in order that which is lacking, wanting and coming behind in the body of Christ; i.e., to locate and set the gifts in the body of Christ in order.

Prophet: To set thine house in order, whether the Church or an individual.

Evangelist: To set relationships in order; whether our relationship with Christ, with the Church or with each other.

Teacher: To set the Word of God in order.

Pastor: Maintains the order, God's order; this order may have been set by one or all of the other Five-Fold Ministries.

It is my prayer that you be able to recognize each of the Five-Fold Ministries as they operate within the Church by the Spirit of God that resides within you; that you do not have to depend on someone to point them out to you.

May you be blessed with the blessing of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob because of the blood of Abraham that flows through your body and based on your faith in God's covenant promises to Abraham.

Your Servant, Ray Jennings

"THE CHILD TO BE BORN WILL BE HOLY; HE WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF GOD" LUKE 1:35

DEAR CHURCH

I want to take this time to say “Merry Christmas.” What a wonderful time of the year, our Lord’s birthday. It is a time of giving and receiving. The greatest gift ever given, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, was given because of the love of our heavenly Father. When we RECEIVE that LOVE into our hearts, it

becomes ours, we possess it. We can then give that love to others (my Father told me a long time ago, you can not give what you do not have!) This love is “Agape”, unconditional love. It can not be earned or deserved. Praise God! He gave it freely to us and wants us to give it freely to others.

For most of my life, I thought I had to do all the right things and make all the right choices in order for God to love me. When I messed up, I felt so condemned. These are things the devil desires for us to think because he can keep us defeated with ourselves on our mind. The greatest revelation of my life was, “It’s not about me.” Jesus came and gave His life for us. We are to be like Him. He was not self-centered and we should not be either. He went about doing good for others, trusting His Father to take care of His every need. He wants us to walk that same path.

Satan was all about himself. He wanted to be greater than God and look what it got him, cast out. He tries desperately to make us look at things the way he sees them, in the natural realm. He wants us to love people for what they do and who they are instead of thru the eyes of God with His love which is unconditional. God’s love is Spiritual. It does not judge and condemn but loves and lifts up. To the degree we walk in God’s love for ourselves, knowing truly it has nothing to do with us but all to do with Him, is the degree we will be able to share that love with others.

Church, this is the season of giving and receiving. Receive, possess, that unconditional love and give it to all that you come in contact with. For that love is able to cover a multitude of sins and change the world. Let His Light shine for it is He Who is the Light of th World. Glory! I pray that you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Happy New Year.

Much love to you, Your Sister Bess Graham

THE STORY OF SILENT NIGHT

Father Joseph Hohr sat at the old organ. His fingers stretched over the keys, forming the notes of a chord. He took a deep breath, and pressed down. Nothing. He lifted his fingers and tried again. Silence echoed through the church.

Father Joseph shook his head. It was no use. The pipes were rusted, the bellows mildewed. The organ had been wheezing and growing quieter for months, and Father Joseph had been hoping it would hold together until the organ builder arrived to repair it in the spring. But now, on December 23, 1818, the organ had finally given out. St. Nicholas Church would have no music for Christmas. Father Joseph sighed. Maybe a brisk walk would make him feel better. He pulled on his overcoat and stepped out into the night. His white breath puffed out before him. Moonlight sparkled off the snow crusted trees and houses in the village of Oberndorf. Father Joseph crunched through the snowy streets to the edge of the little Austrian town and climbed the path leading up the mountain.

From high above Oberndorf, Father Joseph watched the Salzach River ripple past St. Nicholas Church. In the spring, when melting snow flowed down the mountains and the river swelled in its banks, water lapped at the foundation of the church. It was moisture from the flooding river that had caused the organ to mildew and rust.

Father Joseph looked out over the Austrian Alps. Stars shone above in the still and silent night. Silent night? Father Joseph stopped. Of course! “Silent Night!” He had written a poem a few years before, when he had first become a priest, and he had given it that very simple title—“Silent Night.”

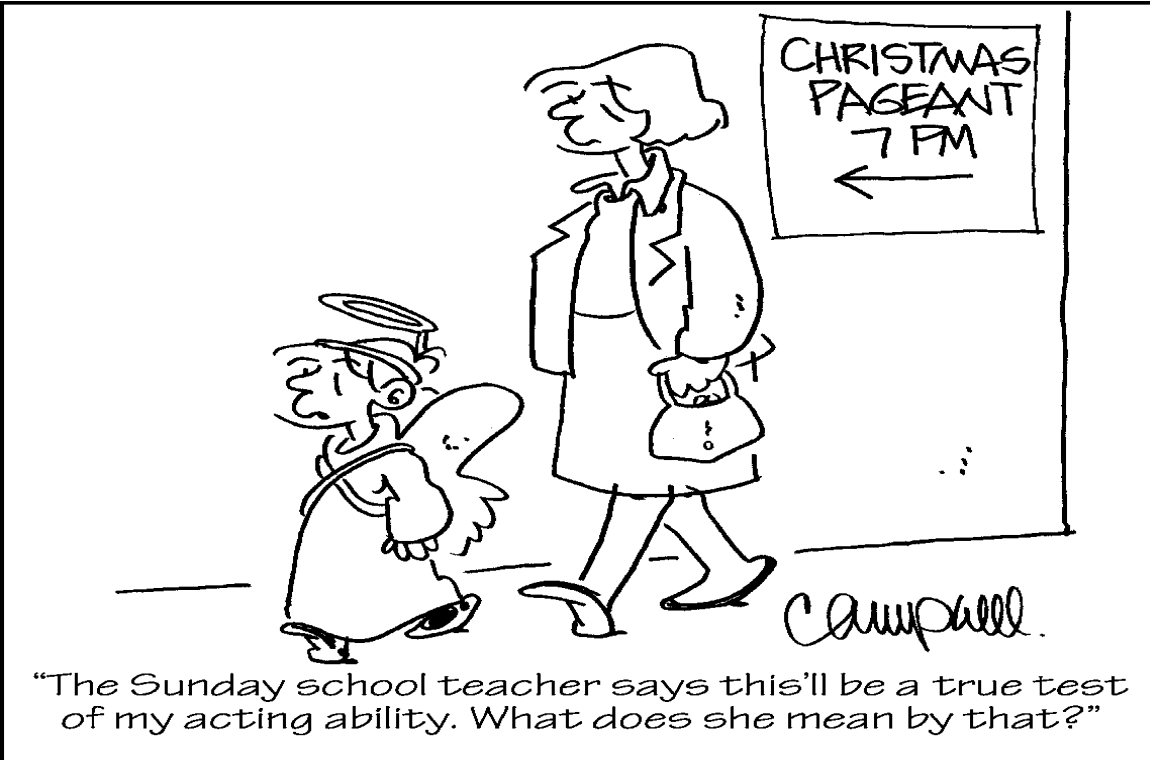
Father Joseph scrambled down the mountain. Suddenly he knew how to bring music to the church. The next morning, Father Joseph set out on another walk. This time he carried his poem. And this time he knew exactly where he was going—to see his friend Franz Gruber, the organist for St. Nicholas, who lived in the next village. Franz Gruber was surprised to see the priest so far from home on Christmas Eve, and even more surprised when Father Joseph handed him the poem.

That night Father Joseph and Franz Gruber stood at the altar of St. Nicholas Church. Father Joseph held his guitar. He could see members of the congregation giving each other puzzled looks. They had never heard a guitar played in church before, and certainly not during midnight mass on Christmas Eve, the holiest night of the year.

Father Joseph picked out a few notes on the guitar, and he and Franz Gruber began to sing. Their two voices rang out, joined by the church choir on the chorus. Franz Gruber’s melody matched the simplicity and honesty of Father Joseph’s words.

When the last notes faded into the night, the congregation remained still for a moment, then began to clap their hands. Applause filled the church. The villagers of Oberndorf loved the song! Father Joseph’s plan to bring music to St. Nicholas Church has worked.

A few months later, the organ builder arrived in Oberndorf and found the words and music to “Silent Night” lying on the organ. The song enchanted him, and when he left, he took a copy with him. The organ builder gave the song to two families of traveling singers who lived near his home. The singers performed “Silent Night” in concerts all over Europe, and soon the song spread throughout the world. Today, cathedral choirs and carolers from New York to New Zealand sing the simple song that was first played in a mountain church in Austria on Christmas Eve nearly 200 years ago.



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994 Willie Hill Road
Gilbert, La. 71336

