

Espousal Newsletters

By Jim Golden —

Article Seven — Salvation Belong to the LORD!

In 1992 my family and I lived in Pasadena, California. Howard Street became our location for several months. It is one of the streets bordering The William Carey University-US Center for World Missions. During this time I had the privilege of working for the center for a short time. As is their practice, the staff would gather every morning for prayer, and when Dr. Winter was there, for a time of instruction before the work day began. Dr. Winter is the president of the university, and one of the foremost authorities on New Testament Greek alive today.

One morning as he was speaking he made an astounding statement. "There are no accurate translations of the New Testament in English." When queried as to which one was the closest he said, "none." He went on to cite as the major flaw, the individuality the translators placed on the work of salvation. Over the years his remarks have been the doorway into a deeper understanding of the incredible claims of the Gospel and why there are so many unanswered questions concerning topics like divine healing, miracles, deliverance, and so on. I want to stress that we do not lose our uniqueness, but our independence, when God incorporates us into His Son Jesus. In this short article I hope to begin to expose some of the illusions that have enshrouded the "*American Gospel*", and open a doorway into the reality of God's awesome salvation.

If you are like me you must have some questions concerning the apparent inconsistencies that have plagued your Christian walk. I was challenged by the Holy Spirit as I read some of Jesus' words in John 14. "I tell you the truth, *anyone* who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I go to the Father." The word "anyone" in Greek means "anyone" in English. It is an accurate translation.

When the Holy Spirit questions me concerning the lack of Scriptural reality in my life rationalization becomes an unusable defense. He has a way of backing me into a corner, and getting to the root issues in my life quickly, when I will stand still long enough to hear from Him. HE will not give up on those who desire to see the salvation of God in their lives.

Have you ever noticed how often Jesus answers unasked questions? It is because He sees past the veneer of our lives into the secret places. Many of us would rather live a powerless existence than to ask, and keep on asking, "Lord, why can't I do the things that You did, and even greater things?" The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth and He only deals in the Truth. When we are ready to face the truth He will reveal it. The truth He revealed to me sent me sailing back to Dr. Winter's declaration in Pasadena. David tells us that salvation belongs to the Lord and His blessing is on His people. The Holy Spirit began to impress me with this foundational truth very deeply. He said that salvation doesn't belong to me, I belong to Salvation. I was the one

who was purchased. Some may want to argue semantics at this point, I beg your indulgence for a short while.

Suddenly scriptures I had read for years became alive with new meaning. I realized that Jesus was God's "Secret Place." God's mighty fortress and the "*little shack in Glory Land*" was God Almighty. I began to understand the difference between trying to apply the work of salvation to myself, and leaving "me" behind, and entering into Him.

My life began to swiftly change. Physically, I began to lose weight without changing my eating habits. Life-long lies of the enemy that had sought to cripple, and accuse my family before each other were exposed, and many wonderful deliverances began to take place in our marriage and home. Chronic issues of rejection were fully, immediately, and powerfully dealt with. Lies that had left my children feeling intimidated by me were crushed under the power of God's revealing truth. Truly my heart was turned toward my children and their hearts were turned toward me. I wish space would permit me to go into detail. Perhaps I will make a brochure.

The authority and power of God has increased in me when I participate in the ministry of the Holy Spirit within Christ's Body. There is an openness between me and our Heavenly Father I had only dreamed of in the past. I am becoming an *anyone* Christian.

I would like to share a few Scriptures that have become dear to me. The first is Ephesians 2 verse 10. "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." I have heard it said that "if" is the biggest little word in the English language. Somehow, for the Christian the word "in" rivals "if" in the outworking of our salvation. We are God's workmanship created **IN** Christ Jesus.

I believe it was Michelangelo, the famous sculptor who said that when he looked at a piece of marble he could see the sculpture within it. All that was left for him to do was to remove the excess pieces. In a way, that is what God has done to His animated sculpture we call salvation.

He sees us all **IN** the Rock of Christ, and the excess pieces He removes are our old natures, with all the associated disorders of soul and body. He does His work like no other master craftsman that has ever lived. God does not use a hammer and a chisel but an old rugged cross to cut away the useless and vile "extra pieces" of our lives that conceals His masterpiece. He will not allow anything dead or defiled into His "*Salvation Sanctuary*". It is through our death that Jesus is able to bring us from the kingdom of darkness into His glorious Kingdom. God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. Sickness has no place in Him and all demonic activity is utterly destroyed in this Tabernacle.

I believe this current move of the Holy Spirit will bring *American Christianity* from the outer courts into the very being of Jesus Christ. One Sunday as we were preparing to share the Lord's table the Holy Spirit moved me to prophecy. The prophetic word proclaimed that this table was a declaration of God's salvation, and that we should not seek healing, but incorporation into

the Healer. We should not seek deliverance, but desire to be one with the Deliverer. Being part of the Savior was preferable to seeking salvation.

I have often wondered why some people get healed and *lose* their healing. I believe that it is because they have been persuaded by the enemy to settle for second best. What I mean is, we have been taught to see salvation, healing, deliverance, ministry, and many more things within Christendom as commodities that WE may purchase with our faith. The deception goes on to credit or discredit success or failure to our faith or lack thereof. I have seen many saints dismayed and all but destroyed by such doctrine. The real truth of the matter is that we have not allowed the Holy Spirit to graft us into the tree of life. We have been content to stand in the garden and eat of the fruit of *its* branches. When you consider that our Lord taught us we were to be the branches, we have stopped short of the reality of His Salvation.

"Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. **NO** branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do **nothing**."

These words will probe deeply into the heart of the one seeking to know the truth, no matter what it is. Is it possible that many have not remained in Him? Is it possible that we have been sold a "bill of goods" by the master imitator of Christ? Only you are qualified to answer these questions for yourself.

The earmarks of those who have truly become one with Christ are simple and undeniable. They are like Jesus! They have signs and wonders following after them as they preach His glorious Gospel. Their teaching and preaching are not in mere words of men's wisdom, but come forth in a demonstration of the Spirit's power. They are clothed in forgiveness, and humility. The love of God courses through them like a mighty river of restoration. Their goal in life is to seek and save the lost and to destroy the works of the devil. They have come to realize that they have no ministry of their own to protect, but are privileged to serve the Holy Spirit in His ministry. They are unified in the Body that belongs to Christ, and would give their lives to preserve and protect that Holy union. These people have been given ears to hear the loving and redemptive language of God. They have beheld the goodness and severity of God, fully displayed on Calvary's hill, and in holy fear they fight to honor and preserve the price that was paid to make us all one in Jesus.

Because they not only hear, but understand and speak the language of God, they have learned to shut up the voice of the Accuser of the Brethren, and declare instead the salvation of God over those who have been sidetracked from the way. When they pray for other churches in their region they do not secretly say in their hearts, "Father pour out your Spirit and blessing on all the churches in this region except this one or that one." They know that it is the goodness of the Lord that leads to repentance, not their judgments.

It is time that we all began to join our hearts and our hands together again. It is time for healing to flow into the Body of Christ. It is time to believe that His Blood will never lose its power to wash sin away. It is time to form a prayer summit that will unite all the churches together, and together bring down the

forces of darkness that have held the glorious Bride of Christ captive with the chains of her own insecurities and deceptions.

If we truly believed the word of God's salvation we would have no other choice but to acknowledge the unity that is in the person of Jesus Christ. I believe that is why Scripture is replete with the centrality and supremacy of Jesus. When the Holy Spirit inspired the verse, "there is only Christ and He is everything," the heart of God's salvation was revealed.

When I look back over my 33 years as a Christian, arrogance and selfishness thrived throughout most of my walk. I was not wholly to blame. It was partly because of the individualistic Gospel I received. What Gospel have you preached, and put your trust in? Have you entered into Jesus or are you still trying to get God to bless your ministry? Do you see yourself as somehow separate from others in the Body of Christ, or do you long for the Church of the city to be revealed? I pray that you ask God to search you. The hour of His return is close at hand!