

The glorious body of Christ



by

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And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:11-15

Introduction

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void. God said: Let there be light, and there was light and God separated the light from the darkness and had the greater light rule the day and the lesser light rule the night.

Jesus is the light of the world.

He separated the waters above from the waters below with a firmament called heaven. God said, let the waters be gathered together and let the dry land appear.

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He created seed bearing plants for man and grass for the animals. He created the animals and then He created man. He breathed the breath of life into him and told him to rule over the earth and subdue it and to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. Genesis 1

God planted a garden and put man in it. He told him he could eat of all the seed-bearing plants including the tree of life, but not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil or they would die. Genesis 2

The tree of life must not have looked too appetizing because they did not eat of it. In Proverbs 3:13-19, we are told that wisdom and understanding, and are the tree of life. In Proverbs 11:30, we are told that the fruit of righteousness is a tree of life. In Proverbs 13:12, we are told that fulfilled desire is a tree of life. In Proverbs 15:4, we are told that a wholesome tongue is a tree of life. Jesus, the second Adam, did not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He ate of the tree of life and lived.

The fruit on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil must have looked delicious and Eve must have been longing to taste it and then the old sleazy liar came along and encouraged her to eat it. He even caused her to doubt God's intentions and motives and then he gave her added incentive, to disobey God, by telling her it would make her wise like the gods. She yielded to temptation and Adam went right along with her. Genesis 3

Man's main weakness appears to be woman. Remember that she was taken out of him and provided for him. This relates to the church which is derived from Jesus and given to Jesus as His bride. There is a special love for that which cost you a lot and belongs to you exclusively. Thus, Adam loved his wife more than God and therefore fell. Jesus did not submit to his own

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desires and He did not allow Himself to love anyone or anything more than His heavenly Father.

Just as God had promised them, they died spiritually right then and there. The carnal part of man would die as a result of sin. Their spiritual man died as a result of their choice to sin.

Adam and Eve hearkened unto the liar. Why? Because they had a strong carnal desire and he said what their carnal nature wanted to hear. Their choice exalted Satan to the position of god of this world. (This means that he now has a great deal of influence in mankind's life.) Jesus never hearkened to the liar and He never let His carnal nature rule Him.

Adam and Eve's choice not only gave the devil ascendancy in their lives, but it gave their carnal nature ascendancy. They had done what their lower nature, their 'one with the earth' nature, wanted to do, instead of what their spirit man told them was right. They gave selfishness ascendancy. What self wanted became more important than what was right. Selfishness became the order of the day.

This is why Jesus had to be born of a virgin, so He could be born of God (spiritually alive) and also be born of woman to overcome the carnal nature. Jesus walked the walk and talked the talk. He ruled over His earthen vessel. He did everything that Adam and Eve should have done, but did not. That's why we can now choose Him and live, again.

God provided the lamb. (Jesus had to sacrifice Himself in order to redeem mankind.) Everything He did was to counter the mistakes that Adam and Eve and all of mankind has made. He had to believe God under the most trying circumstances. He had to keep God on the throne of His heart and not allow His carnal nature to rule. He had to listen to God and not the liar. He had to

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give up everything in order to get back spiritual life for mankind. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. To be reconciled to God means to be brought back into fellowship with Him. This can only be done by receiving His Spirit and learning to walk in His righteousness.

The only answer for a dying world is Life. The only answer for sickness and disease is healing. The only deliverance from selfishness is death to self, through the cross, and receiving new life in Jesus. The only deliverance from sin is to walk in your new nature, the one that wants to do righteousness and sin no more. (spiritual life) Righteous choices edify life. Selfish choices open the door to evil. (harm) The only armor against the liar is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 13:14

In the Old Testament, Adam and Eve were to tend the natural garden. In the New Testament, Christians are to cultivate the garden in their hearts. Luke 8:11-15 Adam and Eve were to have dominion over the earth. Christians are to take dominion over their lower nature and reign in life through their gift of righteousness. Romans 5:17 Adam loved his wife more than God. Christians must love God with all their heart, soul, mind, just like Jesus did. Matthew 22:37 The parallels go on and on.

God made our bodies out of the earth because He ordained for His children (spiritual man) to have dominion here and God unites all things in Himself. I Corinthians 15:27,28 He made spiritual man in an earthen body. Man was to subdue it, bring it (the earthen vessel) into joyful and wholehearted submission to spiritual rule. Jesus did it! He subdued His earthen vessel. He will reign as ruler here. He took back the kingdom. All those who suffer with Him in denying the flesh or lower nature or earthen vessel will reign with Him. Thus God brings the earth under His rule, not by force, but by love and He makes all things one, by uniting them in Jesus. So the ruler of the

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earth will be one with nature and one with God. Glory to God!

Let's navigate through the scriptures and see what the glorious body of Christ does.

After Adam and Eve made the wrong choice, God made a covering for them out of animal hide. He was making a statement: man's bad choice exposed him to evil and blood was going to be shed, because of it. Genesis 3:21

When God said to Adam: Rule over the earth and subdue it (Genesis 1:28), He intended for Adam to rule over and subdue his carnal (flesh, meat) part and bring it into unhesitating submission to spiritual man. He made this to come to pass in the work that Jesus has accomplished. He gave the rule of earth to spiritual man not carnal man. (Jesus and His bride)

God had to drive Adam and Eve out of the garden of Eden, lest they eat of the tree of life and live forever in a corrupted state. Genesis 3:24

Next, we have Cain, who offered a sacrifice to God, just in case he would be in trouble if he didn't. He gave half-heartedly. Able gave his best. God was pleased with Able's sacrifice because his right attitude and choice had him covered. Genesis 4:3-5 But God said to Cain, sin is crouching at your door and it desires to have you. You must rule over it. Genesis 4:7 Cain did not rule over it, because he did not desire to. Jesus gives believers the desire to rule over sin in their lives.

Genesis 6:5 tells us that in that length of time wickedness had gotten completely out of hand and God had to deal with it. God designed an ark to protect His people from the flood of wickedness. God has provided an ark today for those who choose to obey Him and not partake of wickedness. That ark is Jesus.

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Believers are to hide and abide in Him.

The rainbow is a symbol of God's promise that the whole earth would never be flooded, again. Jesus is the one who fixed things so that the whole earth will never have to be flooded, again. He is the resurrection and that resurrection includes the earth. Romans 8:19-22 He will always have His remnant who will carry out His will and lift up a standard against the flood. Isaiah 59:19

It states in Hebrews 11:7, that Noah believed God and prepared an ark to the saving of his house. Today, mankind is again in a precarious position where evil is running rampant. You would do well to believe the Bible and prepare your ark to the saving of your house.

Genesis 11:6,7 Babylon had a plan to rule the world without God. The people were one in purpose and language. Because they were of one mind, the Bible says they would be capable of accomplishing their every evil imagination. Now do you see why God wants His people united, of one purpose and one mind. The body of Christ can do all things through Him. John 17:20-23 God stopped their intent by confusing their language. Jesus gave believers a common language. They have died to self and they live to serve Him. (His body on the earth) Just as the human body parts work together, each part doing what it was created to do, to meet the needs and desires of the body, so the body of Christ works for Him. This is their unity. Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 5:17-21, Galatians 5:16-25

God called Abraham out of the land of the Chaldeans to sojourn in a strange country. God promised him great blessings and a child in union with his wife. Genesis 12:1-3,12:7,15:4

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God calls the Christians to come out of this vain conversation of the fathers and sojourn in the land of Biblical promises. God promises them great blessings and promised they would produce many children. But the promise is based upon their coming out from among them and living the God kind of life. I Peter 1:14-21, II Corinthians 6:17,18-7:1, Hebrews 11:13-15

Years pass and the promised child did not manifest. Abraham begins to think that he had misunderstood and he takes matters into his own hand and produces a bastard.

The church has done the same thing and produced illegitimate children who do not endure discipline and correction. Hebrews 12:6-8

If the church wants the promised outcome, she is going to have to wait patiently, enduring God's discipline and chastisement, not taking matters into her own hand, but waiting for the Holy Spirit, just like Abraham did.

God gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision. He would bless him and his seed, if he would abide in the covenant and cut off the foreskin. Genesis 17:9-11

That same covenant is for Christians. Philippians 3:3 tells us that the circumcision are those who worship God in spirit and rejoice in Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. That is, they aren't to do what the Jews had done; have a zeal for the Lord, but not according to knowledge. Romans 10:2,3 They thought they could earn their salvation. They thought they could be righteous in themselves. But God has made His point: righteousness is by His Spirit.

The heirs of the covenant go into hard bondage in Egypt. God manifest His power and got them out.

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The Church has done the same thing. Many are in hard bondage in spiritual Egypt. With great power, through Jesus, God delivered them from the flesh rule and many go right back into bondage to it.

God brought Israel out of Egypt with great power and took them across the Red Sea and into the wilderness, heading for the promise land. Those who were depending on their own ability in the Red Sea, drowned. Exodus 15

He brought Christians out of spiritual Egypt and across the sea of overwhelming odds and into the wilderness, heading for the land of promise that Jesus had already attained for them. But many end up in the wilderness the rest of their lives. Those who depend upon their own ability drown in the sea of overwhelming odds.

When the Israelites turned back to Egypt in their hearts, they brought much trouble and death on themselves. If they would trust God, He would lead them into the promise land.

Same with Christians, if they turn back to their old life, they will have much trouble and death. Romans 8:6 If they trust in God He will lead them into the land of milk and honey, the land of answered prayer, the land of 'all promises are 'yes' in Jesus. II Corinthians 1:20

You see; Jesus fulfilled the covenant. God said, throughout to Old Testament, if you will do this, I will do that. Jesus did it. He did every one of those stipulations and therefore, He obtained the promise land. All those who abide in Him will attain it, too.

God gave the Israelites the principles by which to live. They had the laws of life, but the law is spiritual and they were carnal.

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They chose to worship the golden calf. Exodus 32

Christians have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness. II Peter 1:3 It states in Romans 8:3-10; for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Now the golden calf is something that appears precious, is man made, and is actually worthless for giving life. Many Christians have become caught up in worshipping other things, to their detriment.

God gave Israel the spiritual laws of well-being and the pattern of worship. That pattern of worship is a physical manifestation of spiritual worship. The inevitable result of not obeying God's instructions is to experience a curse.

Galatians 3:13,14 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

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God provided, not only a way for Israel to keep the law, (Stiff punishments for not obeying it can be very persuasive in keeping the flesh under control.) He also provided a grace system in the offerings and sacrifices. But it was not enough. God's people needed to have His Spirit within themselves. John 3:3, Isaiah 32:15-20 They needed to have the perfected example and fore-runner. (Jesus) They needed to be free from a sin consciousness. Hebrews 10:2 And they needed a written covenant and instruction book that relates all the tests and all the answers. (The Old and New Testaments) It's here now. What are we waiting for?

Jonah declares in 2:8: They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. All truth starts with Jesus. That's why John says in I John 4:1-6 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. The body of Christ has learned that it is vanity to trust in anything or anyone else, other than Jesus for their every need. He has come and made all things right.

Job, in all his trouble, cried out for a mediator, one to stand between God and man making the connection. Job 9:33-35, 17:3 Jesus is that one. Job cries out for a representative who has 'been there and done that'. 10:4,5 Again, Jesus is that High Priest. Hebrews 5:1,2

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In Job 14:10, Job reveals another dilemma of mankind which we touched on before. If a man dies, shall he live, again? He was wasting away. He felt that life was too short to be spent in misery. Jesus is the answer. John 3:16

In Job 25:5, Bildad declares: How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman? Jesus is the answer. Romans 4:25, 5:1 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

In Job 28:12,13, Job cries out for wisdom. I Corinthians 1:30 says, Jesus is our wisdom.

In Ecclesiastes, Solomon is tormented with the thought that the same fate overtakes fools and wise men. 2:16 Let's look at some of Solomon's conclusions and see what a tremendous deliverance Jesus makes.

Chapter 1, Solomon feels that life is meaningless, since a person works so hard just to die in the end. Since there's a time for everything, why should we struggle so hard? But Jesus changed all that. If you're laying up your treasures in heaven, they do not disappear. Our work is not for vanity.

He says there's a time to be born and time to die. But for believers it's a time to be 'born again' and never die. He says there's a time to plant and a time to uproot. For believers the uprooting is the first step, then planting good seed, then harvest-time. And the harvest is eternal. He says, there's a time to kill and a time to heal. For believers it's a time to kill bad habits, attitudes and old ways of life and it's a time to receive healing of every malady or sore spot. Solomon talks of a time to tear down and time to build. For believers it's

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time to tear down every idol and every thought and vain imagination that exalts itself against the Lord and a time to build the Lord's house. He talks of a time to weep and a time to laugh. For believers it's a time to weep with those who weep, in the family of God, and to laugh (rejoice) with those who laugh. He talks of a time to scatter and time to gather. Believers scatter the seeds of the Word and gather precious stones for God's building. He says a time to refrain and a time to embrace. Believers refrain from temptation and embrace the truth. This elaboration is to show the value of the eternal as opposed to the temporal. If all is temporal, it is meaningless. But for those with eternal life, all is meaningful.

Then Solomon says, everything is beautiful in it's own time. Ecclesiastes 3:11 Believers grow more and more beautiful on the inside unto eternal glory. They do not bloom just for a time, they are eternal.

In Ecclesiastes 2:14, Solomon knows that God's work is forever. And that's the point; believers work toward the eternal and in doing so they are precious stones in God's building which will last forever.

In 3:19, he says man has no preeminence over the beasts. Actually, Jesus stated that we are worth far more than the creatures, but those who are 'born again' of the Spirit of God do have preeminence and shall have dominion after they have dominion over their carnal nature.

Solomon cries out for a comforter in 4:9,10. Jesus told us the comforter has come.

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Believers are delivered from laboring so that their neighbor will envy them. They labor so they can have something to give to help others, thereby laying up treasures in heaven where there is no vanity.

In 6:7, Solomon says, all the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled. Jesus said not to labor for meat that perishes, but for eternal food. John 6:27

Solomon observed that human appetites are never satisfied. That's the way of the carnal nature, but believers have been delivered from endlessly feeding cravings that cannot be satisfied. The spiritual man has great satisfaction in serving Jesus.

In 6:12, he asks, who knows what is good for man in this life? Jesus is the answer. He knows and teaches the believer what is good.

In 7:20, Solomon says no man is righteous. Now we have Jesus; the One who is righteous.

Look what he says in 8:8: there is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death: and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it. Jesus did and Jesus delivers.

Then for the devil's grand finale, his biggest punch line: Ecclesiastes 8:18 Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun. But Paul says in I Corinthians 15:32 that if Jesus did not rise from the dead, we might as well eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die. Jesus

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rose from the dead and there is a better way.

Jesus is the deliverance that Solomon cried out for.

In the books of the prophets, God reveals what mankind's problems are and what the answer is. Let's look.

Isaiah 1:3-6 The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. The answer is in chapter 2:2-5

And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

He's come! John 16:13 Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He

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shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come.

Ephesians 3:14-19 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Hebrews 3:5,6 And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a Son over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.

Matthew 11:29,30 Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.

John 8:31,32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.

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Luke 3:4,5 Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. (When? When the way is prepared for the Lord and the paths are straight.)

Isaiah 2:17,18 And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols He shall utterly abolish.

John 15:1-8 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.

Isaiah 26:18 We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

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The answer to that dilemma is: In that day God alone shall be exalted and Jesus is the true vine.

The books of the prophets are full of God's pleading with man to trust and follow Him only. Why? Because man is carnal, sold under sin. Romans 8:7.8 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (The carnal mind can only think temporal, it cannot think eternal. It is in bondage to the fear of death.) Hebrews 2:14,15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.) Before Jesus gave believers eternal life, life had to be today. But now, a believer can learn to think eternal and give up his life today for a better tomorrow.

Romans 8:1-16 tells us how to think and live eternal. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me (us) free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the

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flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye *have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

It is almost impossible to be content with today when this is all you have. But when you have been promised a glorious future after you suffer awhile and you have eternal life because Jesus lives and He dwells in you, you can set your affections on things above. Colossians 3:2 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. Jesus brought deliverance. Believers don't have to make it work, today. They can wait for and expect the Lord to work on our behalf.

Today, their job is to be an instrument of peace and righteousness. Romans 6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

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Today, you are called to work for the Lord. Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Our enemy is not flesh and blood. Our enemy must be defeated with spiritual weapons. II Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

To be spiritually minded is to be Bible minded. The Bible is the believers' war manual as well and offers them the full armour of God. Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all

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saints;

The spiritual man follows the Shepherd. As it says in Philippians 3:3, they have no confidence in the flesh. They follow Jesus. He did it. He overcame. He fulfilled the law. He is the second Adam who did it right. He made all the right choices. He is incorruptible and immortal. Jesus is the only one who can do it in you. And just like Jesus, when the enemy tells you to grab at life, you say, “get behind me, satan”. This is how Jesus delivers believers from following the wrong shepherd or the wrong voice.

Eternal values (laying up your treasures in heaven) motivate a person to love and not hate, to give, not take, to help, not harm, to bless, not curse. These are the things that promote life. Eternal values cause believers to act like God, their Father. We are redeemed, we give life because we have life.

To receive salvation, one must desire it and believe that there is no way unto God, but by Jesus.

Believers have God’s laws in their heart. Hebrews 8:10.

Believers serve in newness of spirit. Romans 7:6

They have seen that they were lost and dying. They have heard that Jesus gives true life. They have turned away from their way to serve the living God. They become one spirit with Jesus, saying, “Abba Father”. They no longer despise God’s word (Jeremiah 23:16,17 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was

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unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O LORD God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of Thy hand: for Thou hast filled me with indignation.)

Believers know God's words are Spirit and they are life. John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Let's continue through the Bible and see what else Jesus has done for us. In Ezekiel 34:2-6 God says: Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, My flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

Jesus tells us in John 10:14 that He is the good Shepherd. He feeds, ministers to, strengthens, heals, binds up and finds the lost sheep. And so does His body, the believers. He does not break their legs. Their legs only get broke when they do not follow the Shepherd and

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therefore He can't protect them.

Let's see what God tells Joel when he cries out about the conditions in the land. The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men. Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God. Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD, alas for the day! for the day of the LORD is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come. Is not the meat cut off before our eyes, yea, joy and gladness from the house of our God? The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered. how do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. O LORD, to thee will I cry: for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field. The beasts of the field cry also unto thee: for the rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.

Again, Jesus is the answer. He said in John 15 that if believers would abide in Him, they would bear good fruit. But the way to obtain this restoration for the church is to call a solemn assembly. Joel 2:12-19 Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will

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return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. (Drop everything and assemble together and cry out to God) Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, spare Thy people, O LORD, and give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Then will the LORD be jealous for His land, and pity His people. Yea, the LORD will answer and say unto His people, Behold, I will send you corn, and wine, and oil, and ye shall be satisfied therewith: and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen.

Jesus told us in John 15:7-11; If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

This joy comes from believing I Kings 8:28 Yet have Thou respect unto the prayer of Thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day: That Thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which Thou hast said, My name shall be there: that Thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which Thy servant shall make toward this

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place. And hearken Thou to the supplication of Thy servant, and of Thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place: and when Thou hearest, forgive. If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: Then hear Thou in heaven, and do, and judge Thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. When Thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and shall turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto Thee in this house: Then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which Thou gavest unto their fathers. When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against Thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess Thy name, and turn from their sin, when Thou afflictest them: Then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy servants, and of Thy people Israel, that Thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon Thy land, which Thou hast given to Thy people for an inheritance. If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all Thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: Then hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose

heart thou knowest; (for Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men;) *That they may fear Thee all the days that they live in the land which Thou gavest unto our fathers.* (For Believers, the land God gave them is the promise land, that Jesus acquired by fulfilling the law.) Moreover *concerning a stranger*, that is not of Thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for Thy name's sake; (For they shall hear of Thy great name, and of Thy strong hand, and of Thy stretched out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house; hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to Thee for: that all people of the earth may know Thy name, to fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel; and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by Thy name. *(Solomon represented Jesus in this prayer. Jesus built the true worship place. The true tabernacle is the saints builded together.)* If Thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever Thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which Thou hast chosen, and toward the house that I have built for Thy name: Then hear Thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. If they sin against Thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and Thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto Thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; and *so return unto Thee with all their heart, and with all their soul*, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto Thee toward their land, which Thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which Thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for Thy name: Then hear Thou their prayer and

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their supplication in heaven Thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, and forgive Thy people that have sinned against Thee and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against Thee, and *give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them*: For they be Thy people, and Thine inheritance, which Thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron: . . .

Joy comes from *knowing* you have the most kind, gentle, loving God, even the heavenly Father and that He will meet your needs and take good care of you.

And joy comes from *knowing* that God has made a way for you to have a wonderful hereafter and that you won't have to suffer for your sins eternally. Joy comes from bearing good fruit. Joy comes from knowing Jesus. He is awesome. He is perfect and He has done and is doing and will do a perfect work.

The glorious body of Christ takes no thought for the morrow. They seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness and know that all the things they need are added to them. They enter in at the straight gate, *knowing* that God has exacted it of them because it's His kingdom that He's giving them and in His kingdom, He is King. If He doesn't rule, it's not His kingdom.

They understand that just as in an earthly household, if the children do not obey the parents, then the parents cannot do much to teach, protect, help or bless them. Their hands are, so to speak, tied. That is exactly God's position. John 8:29, 15:10 Jesus received full benefit of the Father/child relationship because He always obeyed His Father.

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Moving on to Joel 3:9,10,it says to beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears and goes on the talk about the assembling of the nations for war. This has to do with the United Nations. Above their main door, it is written, we shall beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. They got that from Isaiah 2:4. It was telling us that when Jesus is in control we can lay down our weapons and have peace. The United Nations does not allow the real Jesus into their sessions. Their way to peace is the opposite of His. Yet they dare to put God's plan over their door. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Jesus is the prince of peace. There will never be true peace until Jesus is in control of the world's happenings.