

# ***SPIRITUAL WILDERNESS SURVIVAL PART 1***

*If you are among those few precious ones seriously considering escaping the clutches of organized religion or if you have already left the old institution, I want you to know that you can survive and thrive in spiritual abundance outside of the boundaries of organized religion.*

***This information is rare. Do not take it lightly!***

In comparison, on the other side of the boundaries of organized Christianity the spiritual environment is very much like that of a wilderness. As in a real wilderness, mistakes in this area carry consequences. Therefore, before wandering aimlessly in a dimension that is not familiar, it would be wise to take heed to those who have successfully survived there for many years.

## **THE SON OF A PASTOR**

I grew up in the western United States, the son of a protestant pastor. I was also a member of the clergy in my younger days: a small fish among religious whales. I write from an abundance of experience. I have now been outside the established Christian religion for more than thirty years. I escaped from the belly of Christianity by nothing more than the grace of God. I was not blown out by some strange mishap nor was I stabbed in the back or stomped upon by fellow Christians. But I did see great anomalies in what we, as clergy, were doing and what Jesus did and said to do. I tried talking about it with various pastors, who just blew off what I said, usually muttering some lame excuse as they focused elsewhere. But my focus did not move with theirs so I refused to ignore what I had been given. That was the grace of God.

Nevertheless, at first, I had quite a bit of ambivalence about what I was seeing but the things that I noticed were totally consistent. It was when I met others who confirmed part of what I saw that I gained confidence and great conviction. To make a long story short, I finally had enough and walked away. That was in the early seventies. From there, I had a hand in a couple of outreach house ministries for a few years but eventually settled down to an almost normal life with regular gatherings at my home. This lasted for about a decade. These meetings never developed into full-blown services but were more like sharing/teaching sessions with a multitude of wonderful and horrible scenarios.

The meetings at my house ended when my marriage blew up. That was the side of my life which had no armor and it left me with a "two thousand yard stare" for several years. In recovering, *I made many mistakes* but by God's grace I did recover. That was a few

decades ago. Since then, God has added experience and depth to my understanding. This balance, as I call it, is what I want to share.

## **STRANGE THINGS**

The things that I am going to say will seem strange. I will guarantee that. This is because spiritual things are strange when compared to religious things. I am going to be redundant, saying over and over in different ways the same things. With this approach I hope we will all be able to see the overview of fundamental things in this freedom of the truth. Basically, that's what we will be looking at. If we take heed to what is revealed, we can avoid some very discouraging pitfalls and disappointments. Some of the things that I will present may be hard to receive. *Don't throw the baby out with the bath water!* God has made these balances available for His purpose, not mine and He will add clarity to the understanding as we go. Hold tightly to the Lord. I speak both by the Holy Ghost and from my own experience. I say this that all of us might *choose confidence* rather than fear. Many believers have had such great fear instilled in them by their clergy that they live in cringing fear of being deceived.

I have no church or organization to promote. I never seek money for what I do. This is a work in patience. Gratifications are few, disappointments are many. When I talk to the average Christian about these things, I am often looked down upon or laughed at. At other times, I see fear in their eyes because they think I'm from the Devil, sent to deceive them. This is my reality as far as spiritual endeavors are concerned. So bear with me in the unusual things that you are about to read.

## **ANXIETY**

It is normal for people to experience anxiety when making important changes in their life. If that change involves leaving the comfortable old religion, it will in one form or another create stress. It is normal to have second thoughts after making such a serious decision. Anyone who crosses over, might find themselves struggling with the fear that they might have made the wrong choice. For individuals going through this, don't give in to the spirit of doubt, the brother of fear. The decision to move into "exodus" is a good one. Make up your mind to be steadfast in the Lord and the fears will vanish because he is with you. Often this fear and remorseful feeling is linked to leaving loving people (still in the institution) who simply do not see what God has led you to. Among them, may be the person or persons who led you to the Lord. You love them and they love you, as it should be. Nevertheless, because you love the truth (which is the focal point of loving the Lord), you have an obligation to act upon what you have been shown.

Leaving the religious establishment is an act of obedience to the Spirit of Truth and is truly an act of "original faith." The following scripture is one facet of that faith in action

through exodus. Exodus means: to exit, to go out of. *"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying come out of her my people, that ye be not PARTAKERS of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."*- Revelation 18:4. Everyone not familiar with this passage of scripture should read the 17th and 18th chapters of the book of Revelation. These chapters of the Revelation shows, in metaphoric form, the commercial state of all the worlds Christian institutions as a wealthy harlot. It also labels her as the MOTHER of harlots. The mother (the Roman church) and her daughters (the Protestants) and those who claim to be independent of both but do the same things. The true nature in these institutions is very subtle. Hidden deep within religious establishments is an ungodly spiritual reality. Converts passed through this religious machinery, are processed, packaged, labeled and warehoused. The people then become a commodity... *for the benefit of the clergy...* for life! This process is so subtle and normal appearing that many of the clergy have no clue as to what they do.

Anyone coming out of the religious system is beginning a journey. Oppositions often arise, as the pastor and his posse pursues the escapee, intending to entangle them once again. There are heroics in this act of faith and an act of faith is exactly what it is. It is a wonder to me that anyone ever escapes. Nevertheless, this transition can be very painful. The people who love you in the old establishment will mourn your exodus. They may even be persistent in trying to discourage you, believing you to be totally deceived; this includes relatives, friends and spouses.

## **BALANCES**

Everyone who partakes of this spiritual baptism must seek new spiritual balances. Exodus is a baptism; a death to the old and a renewal of spiritual life. A rule of spiritual growth is that there are many baptisms. Baptism is a refining process. Any Believer that is refined by the truth changes. New ways of thinking and navigating (balances) are essential for us as *true worshipers*. There is danger if we retain the old religious balances. The reference points there are religious, and they will negatively affect the influence of the Holy Spirit upon direction and focus.

## **TRADITIONAL WORSHIP & TRUE WORSHIPERS**

True worshipers focus on things unseen (the things of faith) and not on things of the world. The world is the system of mankind and it's deceitful protocol, which demands conformity. Here is a balance that we all must understand: most believers are institutional worshipers, few are true worshipers. This is not a comparison of "righteousness in different groups. This comparison is aimed at comprehension and focus. Religious worshipers look at their worship predicament daily and yet, have no idea that what they see is not the approved article. *Religion is man's endeavors to reach God in his own way.* The tower of Babel is an allegory representing man's efforts in

religion, intending to reach God by their own designs. The clergy and "their children" have been taught to focus on things that can be touched and seen, starting with the lavish place of worship and it goes down from there.

Institutional religion is like mud. Those up to their knees in religion ( though they have been washed in the blood of Jesus (by faith), are still muddy! Any sincere Christian up to their knees in that religious goo is not completely clean. Spiritual death can and does occur in the mud. Nevertheless, everyone in the mud is not unsaved. They may be under grace because they simply don't know the truth about where they are or what they are doing. However, no believer is true, as in level, square or complete until they remove themselves from the religious pollution that is in every single Christian religious institution on the planet. This is a true and honest measurement. Salvation in its true sense is figurative; it is a course which we *MUST finish* if we are to be saved. This includes obedience to those things revealed to be true.

The fact that Jesus talked about "TRUE" worshipers indicates that there is a worship that does not measure up to that mark and it has to do with places of worship just as Jesus laid it out. The place of worship that Jesus chose is in the heart, not the street corner cathedral. On the other hand, true worshipers are ordinary people who have separated themselves from the religious world by what they understand and where their focus is. Here's what Jesus had to say about worship and worshipers: *"But the hour cometh , and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* - John 4:23 & 24. Just before he made that wonderful statement he said, worship was neither at one physical place or another and that was the whole point; it's on the inside not the outside! Traditional worshipers believe that they comply with this passage. However, their focus betrays what they think of themselves. Their focus is upon the things of the earth... no matter what they say. The focus measures the quality of the worship every time!

True worship is like a garment. It is put on rather than something we do at a particular place. It is a state of being, twenty four/seven, even when we're not thinking about it. This is the worship (as you can see above) that Jesus himself authorized. It is a finished spiritual product on a foundation of faith. Truth is the "true" in true worship, as in level, square and complete. Traditional worship carries a different range of applications. At its best, it is an immature effort at worship; at it's worst, it is an abomination. This is one of the reasons we have left the bondage of religion, as the children of Israel left Egypt to worship the Lord in the wilderness. Once they were out of Egypt, they were *free to worship* God without the ungodly influence of the Egyptians. *Following the lead of that illustration, it becomes clear that forsaking religious bondage is the beginning of true*

worship.

## ORIGINAL FAITH

True worship is founded upon what I call "original faith. We first see it's manifestation in Abel, one of the sons of Adam and Eve. God saw Abel's offering as "true" because his focus, through faith, was in the right place. On the other hand, Cain (representing the religious attitude) because of envy, killed his brother, as his offering was not accepted by the Lord. Next we can focus on Enoch, a few generations after Cain and Able. Here's where the power stroke of *original faith* begins to pump. Enoch had no Bible, no temple, no religious clergy. Nevertheless, Enoch bonded to God through his faith. God was so pleased with Enoch's faith that He removed Enoch from the earth to be with Him; that is the end result of original faith. Original faith is the foundation of true worship. Original faith is designed by the Lord and is not a copy of the traditional design. It's the design that the Lord wants believers to stick with. This originality makes the true worshiper peculiar when compared to the religious masses. This is due to a mind that has a different focus. *In the Bible, true worshipers with their original faith always go against the grain of the quasi godly.* This started with Abel, progressing all the way through the record to the righteous characters in the book of the Revelation. *God seeks such "original faith" in today's believers!* Another way of looking at original faith is receiving an insight of the truth and acting upon it, in spite of and even in opposition to the nay-sayers.

## THE QUESTION

Is it wrong to worship in the traditional way? For the true worshiper, worshiping in the traditional way would be a denial of the understanding that God has given to them. On the other hand, the sincere but *ignorant* believer (still in the institution) may be simply bogged down in it. So the answer is yes... once the truth has been revealed to the believer!

How the worshiper thinks about and understands worship shapes the focus and the faith of that worshiper. Therefore, to perform we must first understand and then *act* upon what we see. Action starts with getting out of the influence of the religious focus and the unspiritual dimensions of traditional faith. Being free from that bondage, spiritual endeavors in the truth becomes worship; this includes: sacrifices, godly desires, attitudes, prayers, expressions, belief, understandings, labors of love, etc. *True worship is the sum of who we are by faith and is everything that we do in that faith.*

True worship does not degenerate into ritual worship, controlled by a worship director. Neither are we motivated us to travel to a particular building to worship; there is no tangible, institutional structure that supports the true worshiper... only faith! We are the

temple of worship!

Again, the first act of true worship would be to get out of that institutional fellowship! After that, the work would be purging away the "religious baggage": the stuff we learned while we were institutionalized. From there, we learn to maintain our purity and our illumination as we journey to true spiritual maturity. This sounds wonderful when we say it real fast; the reality is, this is no walk in the park. It is not easy in the wilderness. Many will be tempted to return to the warm comfort of their old bondage, where the experience was an easy one. If we have chosen the pain and frustration of true worship, it is because we love the Lord and are willing to suffer on behalf of the truth.

## **FELLOWSHIP**

It is a mistake to look at people still in the institutions and attempt to judge their spiritual balance or maturity by their good works and the quality of their love. Spiritual balance and good works is nowhere near the same thing. Wonderful people they may be but that does not mean that they are not blind and still in the bondage of religion. Don't be drawn into this warm, fuzzy pit when seeking spiritual fellowship. We must fellowship with those of like spiritual mind if we are to be free. If this is not available, ask the Lord for guidance and patiently seek it out. Use the guidelines that are contained in this article as a guide. Patience is a must, as there are not a lot of well balanced groups. Sadly, not all those outside of organized religion are what they think they are. And there are cults and abstract religions and those purely under the influence of darkness, pretending to be of the light. I don't call this experience "the wilderness" for nothing! Nevertheless, the Lord is with those who venture by faith. We must all cling to this mind set; without it survival will be out of reach. As for cults, Jesus and those who received Him, were referred to as a cult. It is not a bad thing for a true worshiper to be *numbered* among the transgressors.

Never go back to the religious system for fellowship; it is better to be alone with the Lord. This goes for those "home fellowships" with hard ties to some institution. These home groups are just diversions for those who feel that something is missing in the "Super Dome." *If it is practical*, the newly escaped should avoid those that are religious. It is a time of transition and contact with those of contrary opinions can be negative for obvious reasons. In seeking fellowship be alert for those with an overbearing religious presence. Pay attention to everything and do not be naive about anything. If "grandma," all of a sudden, has big teeth and claws... don't be a fool! Run!!!

## **SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT**

When we assemble for fellowship we do not set up a rigid routine. The gathering is not a service, and there should be no particular order to it. And speaking of "no particular

order," we do not attempt to name the gathering or what we are doing. There is good reason for this. Even the name Christian has developed it's negative connotations. I suspect that it originated from outside the assembly, being a logical identification tag. If I am right or wrong on that assumption, it does not matter; the name has long since then been polluted by religion. We don't need a name. If the Lord recognizes us, that is what is important! This is one thing that shows the focus of the true worshiper in a different realm than that of the religious worshipers. Christians put a lot of love and undue effort into their church buildings and the things relevant to it's preservation. These poor souls bring shame to the body of Christ, as they worship the beauty of their buildings. True worshipers see themselves as the individual bricks of the temple of God (so to speak) without a natural structure being a part of the process. In coming together, we present ourselves before the Lord collectively, for nourishment, admonishment and fellowship. This often turns out to be a spiritual feast, sometimes not. Only two people of the same focus gathering under "His" authority constitutes an assembly (a church). - Matthew 18:20. We trust this scripture. Those who have the right focus have no problem with small numbers.

Taking that into consideration, do not make the mistake of being indifferent concerning meetings; this is where the framework of true worship is strengthened. The Holy Ghost, bearing the magnificence of the Most High God will (in these gatherings) minister to us what we need. In meetings we do not attempt to perform services. If the Holy Spirit does not move upon us in some particular way we let the "nothing" take its course and we simply enjoy the fellowship. In season, the Holy Ghost will accomplish what is to be done. There will be a flow of inspired spiritual information coming from different individuals. This act of giving and receiving the functional application of the truth concerning the Lords body and blood. In Christianity this is called communion and it is a traditional ritual started by Jesus. Rituals are symbols that represent the unseen or the intangible. The problem with traditional symbols is with the passing of time people become indifferent to the substance of the symbol because they cannot see a spiritual substance. Therefore, the representation becomes their reality, much like a child sucking a pacifier. Spiritual substance is intangible and requires an active faith and a spiritual focus to participate in its unseen reality. This type of faith is not normal human behavior. It is usually acquired at the instruction of others and then exercise is applied, like body building. It is not especially difficult but it will always require diligence.

## **....SURVIVAL PART 2**

### **BODY & BLOOD OF JESUS**

*Communion (as it is called ) is an "act" of faith in which two things take place: giving and receiving. Most love to receive the wine, bread, wafers or whatever they use and are satisfied that they have received the body and blood of the Lord. Standing alone, in and*

*of itself this is not a bad thing. After all, Jesus gave us the first illustration of this spiritual substance. But as I have been laboring to show, there is a spiritual application. Jesus said, that his words are Spirit and life. - John 6:63. We must always remember to allow for "Spirit" and "life" concerning His words and illustrations! All life has dimension, it must grow from infancy to maturity. Jesus intends that we should grow beyond the illustrations.*

If we will receive this understanding, it will provide an opportunity to take the illustration to its functional substance. Like following a shadow to the substance that created it. That substance is the word of God which is broken (when we come together) into small pieces and absorbed into our understanding. It is like the manna that came down from heaven to nourish the Israelites in the "wilderness." It is by individuals sharing what God has revealed that we place the word of God into each other's understanding and our *perception* of the world and life itself is *altered* by that process. This sharing of the body and the blood of Jesus is open to the assembly for all who will to participate, as the Holy Spirit provides. To broaden this concept a little wider, also consider that study is a part of this scenario. How will we have anything to share if we do not meditate on the things of the Spirit and study the scriptures; this is a priestly mannerism and a trait of our royal family.

## **ENTERTAINERS!**

Of itself, music and singing in a spiritual setting is not wrong. Nevertheless, we do not assemble to be entertained or to be entertainers. The focus in religious settings allows a high potential for ritualistic entertainment. We see this in most church *services*. However, worship does not equal service. Service is what you do to your car! The religious service validates the clergy. In the heart... worship affirms and strengthens all that pertains to holiness. Holiness is a separation from the unclean and in this context, it is a separation from the protocol of humanity. However, a great deal of the things that go on in everyday life, are neither right nor wrong, they simply exist as functions of living. But when the world tries to impose upon the holy, it is important for us to know what is holy and what is not acceptable. This is a matter of balance; the understanding of which is a function of experience.

Gospel music (in its full spectrum) is an abomination! Entertainers should be ashamed of themselves for perfecting yet another way of making merchandise of Jesus! There is nothing wrong with being an entertainer in the natural environment but let us keep the mannerisms of the world in the world! The spirit of celebrity is upon gospel entertainers, as it is upon many of the clergy. *This is not the spirit of holiness but a spirit of the world!* They think that because this type of music inspires the *religious* and attracts new converts, it is doing the work of the Lord. But actually, they are filling the pews of the

institutions with those who are attracted to the entertainment and religious hyperbole, glamor and glitz. This is shameful!

What I'm trying to communicate here is the great contrast between true worship and the dilemma that has become Christianity. Few Christians have a clue. If Christianity practiced true worship, it's numbers would be lower by millions. Most people will not abide the plain brown paper bag of holiness. Why should they, when they can enjoy the super-deluxe, singing cheese burger at the "Holy Ritz?"

### **THE CURIOUS**

This should not be taken lightly, there is wisdom here! Be careful who you bring to the assembly. These meetings are not traditional church gatherings, and should not be open to the general public. From years of experience, I can say that we can avoid a great deal of trauma by using this guideline. The earth is crawling with spiritual weirdos, Bible know-it-alls and curious religious explorers. These people are either a waste of time or packaged damage waiting to explode. Let the curious meet an elder or elders before they are encouraged to attend. This is a subtle interview so do not make a big deal out of it. Never just show up with a curious person in tow!

### **THE NATURE OF MEN & WOMEN**

In a spiritual setting we must be conscious of the fact that human instinct... is human instinct. If a human being is healthy, he or she will also be sexually sensitive. This does not necessarily mean that we are all lusting for one another. But why present the temptation? This sensitivity is God's creation and there is no magic switch to turn it off. Of course, God expects us to control ourselves. For that reason, we must be considerate of how we dress when we come together for spiritual matters with mixed company. Especially, for the sake of the unmarried. There is no need to go overboard with this; just cover it up and don't show it off! We are focusing on spiritual things and the Lord should not have to compete with our sexuality for attention. Nevertheless, we should exercise balance on this and not turn it into petty righteousness by going to extremes with our wardrobe.

### **THE OLD GUARD**

Sometimes those who were leaders in the old religious order try to assume the leadership role immediately after leaving the old establishment. Far too many seem to think that a few minor changes is all that will be necessary; they do not realize that they have a great deal of religious baggage yet to be thrown away. This practice can turn into a serious train wreck, with both serious and subtle spiritual consequences for those following. Sadly, this happens all too easily.

The Holy Ghost does teach and lead us. But first things first! If the religious orientation is not purged completely, there will always be a hose leading back to a religious pool and the fearless leader will be sucking on that hose for inspiration and guidance. That inspiration and guidance will overshadow what the Holy Ghost will be trying to reveal and the end results will be negative in the eyes of the Lord. This is why it is wise to be *served for a season* by an experienced and proven wilderness survivor. We do not go from Egypt to the Promised Land in one swoop. That's why I call this wilderness survival! Also, a season... is a season: it does not make any elder a Pope overlord for the rest of *your* life. True spiritual growth moves towards a parity of sorts but not a democracy! We do not belong to ourselves but to the Lord.

The spiritual wilderness is a totally different environment. Therefore, wisdom says, act like city people who find themselves in the jungle. Follow the guide that God has provided for this season and be careful not to be belligerent in this unfamiliar landscape. Do not be anxious to start doing things! In fact, don't do anything for a season. Just pay attention! This will give you time to go to war with your old, religious self. Will you lean upon that which is no longer relevant or will you throw it down and follow the Holy Ghost in freedom? The old knowledge and its alignment is dangerous and will bring elements of bondage into places that it does not belong. Martin Luther is a good example. He made his exodus from the corrupt Roman establishment but brought with him religious baggage that eventually seduced him and his followers back into the same bondage. Let us not make the same mistake!

While I'm thinking about it, quite a few churches are establishing "home ministries" in order to *quench* the need for dissatisfied members to look elsewhere. It's a deception and a snare. Don't be fooled by those who have ties connecting them to traditional churches.

### **ENLIGHTENMENT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The basic records of the New Testament are the foundation of the followers of Jesus. It is not rocket science. Nevertheless, it has been complicated because of human points of view. Humans have great difficulty seeing eye to eye. Doctrines are like opinions... ever faction has one. Differences in teaching follow letter and logic. That is, the letter of the Bible and the logic of religious minds. There are even conflicts among those who have made the exodus. However, some of the differences are due to differing maturity levels and in many cases the residual influence of religious baggage. It is good to study the scriptures but it is the Holy Ghost that gives the scriptures life, not the other way around! *The letter with a religious spirit is deadly.*

There is no learning institution teaching the working of the Holy Ghost; this must be

obtained by wrestling with the Spirit, in the Spirit. Remember Jacob? There is no other way! Jesus promised that the Holy Ghost would lead us into all truth. Nevertheless, understanding does not just fall out of the sky. We have to seek it out. It is by focusing the understanding on spiritual things that we will be able to move towards a mature balance concerning the things of God. Walk with those who walk in the Spirit of freedom outside of the walls of the religious city and in due season all will fall into place. Those who are coming into spiritual focus will be changing and in the process, throwing away religious traditions and useless carnal notions. Growth causes change, no one grows without it. If nothing has changed... no one has grown. Those who do not grow spiritually are not following the Spirit. To mature, we must be willing to become different than we have been!

The contemplation of change is often a fearful thought. IT IS NORMAL to be uncomfortable with the unknown. Press forward but do not be afraid of the metamorphosis of maturity; this is the will of the Lord for those who will CHOOSE faith and not fear.

### **CHRISTIAN PHARISEES**

Don't make a public show of holiness. Prayer and spiritual endeavors are not for public display! Jesus talked of praying in the closet and not on the street corner like the Pharisees. This goes for saying "blessings" at restaurants or in public places. The act of praying in public is religious theater and is not a testimony.

Even among ourselves, group prayer, in those "hand holding circles," often gets out of balance. This happens when competition arises in the prayer circle for a more gracious sounding prayer than the last person praying. This is a bad balance. *The success of group prayer is in the agreement*, not in how loud, long or pious the words are. Matthew 18:19. And we certainly don't have to "one up" one another to get results. It is much more important to pray in private than for other people to hear or see us pray.

### **MANNERISMS OF THE RELIGIOUS**

We must not be like the religious! *True worship is a blood and guts kind of faith*: when it has been pure that's what it has always been! Our mission is to maintain that purity, without all the normal religious comforts and conveniences of humanity in our assemblies. This may be inconvenient at times and at other times painful. This is not suffering for the sake of appearing holy but for the sake of depriving the oxygen (so to speak) that allows the religious flame to burn. To the religious we seem to be doing little of nothing but God is watching as we maintain this genuine kind of faith.

We have become great improvisers; we meet in houses, restaurants, parks, under

bridges, in the woods, on the net, over the phone or with whatever other devices we can imagine to communicate or fellowship. We do this for the sake of simplicity and separation from religious endeavors and goals that have proven to be spiritually disastrous. Few will be beating the door down to participate in this reality; in the sight picture of the religious, the beauty that we focus on is totally invisible.

### **THE APPEAL OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLD**

The religious world appeals to many through the natural senses. Things that inspire religious pride are ungodly but so are many other innocent appearing endeavors within the walls of religion. Pageantry takes away from the spiritual principle of faith; that is, the actions being on the inside (the heart) not the outside. We must, in these times, walk by faith not by sight. Our focus must be on the things of the Spirit, not eye candy. This starts with the beautiful buildings, lavishly furnished, the beautifully robed choir, the orchestra and finally, a real smooth pastor, who is preferably a Doctor of Divinity. These things appeal to the natural senses and create a sense of religious euphoria and in many... religious pride. Traditional things do not appear evil but for the purpose they serve, they are evil. Sugar is not evil of itself but if it is poured into an automobiles gas tank, it ruins the engine! This is because the sugar is where it is not supposed to be; the institutional glitz, glitter and tradition is parallel to the sugar in the gas tank. The activity and beauty of godliness should be in the heart, unseen! If you can receive it, who we are and what we are is hidden in Christ; the heart is the hiding place. These dots do not connect in the understanding of the religious masses or anyone else for that matter. The religious do not see it and the damned do not care! This is precisely why Jesus said there would be few saved.

I do not say that all the religious people will all be cast into the lake of fire. Those religious people who are sincere but bound by the process of the institution, may be set free through the fire of judgment, sent to purify the believers. Unfortunately, even the sincere Christians are so hardwired into their religious state of mind that trial by fire is the only thing ordained to save some of them. They certainly can't be reasoned with. If you do not believe that... try it. The fire is a metaphor for judgment poured upon the religious and their worldliness. A lot can be said about this but for now, if you are still in the bondage of religion, get out while you can or you will go through the fire with the rest of the religious. There is a lot to be said on this subject but rest assured that God intends to remove everything and everyone that offends from His house.

### **HAVE NO OTHER GODS!**

Spiritual balance puts the worshiper in the proper frame of mind and all things surrounding us in their proper place. The Most High ("who is in heaven") must also be the most high in our hearts. *Realize that this life and everything in it is totally temporary!*

*All that we possess, including relationships with our spouses, children, parents, grandparents, friends and relatives will come to an empty end.* If we will focus on this from time to time and let it sink in, it becomes a sobering agent. And this is absolutely what we need for shaping our attitude and awareness.

It is human nature to love the things that we can see and touch, like our spouses and our parents, children and loved ones. Do not love them more than the Lord. They have their *TEMPORARY* place in our lives but be careful not to put them above the Lord. This scenario usually comes about in doing the will of the loved one and not the Lord. In the long run this will not work for good but for evil. Nevertheless, love your loved ones more than yourself but with righteous balance. Do your duty towards them; die defending them, if you must! Our natural relationships will always have an end but our relationship with the Lord will continue forever. We all know this on some level but we must bring this to our everyday consciousness and with it will come a new focus and strengthening of resolve in the Lord. What's on the outside is temporary... what's on the inside is eternal. I have said these things simply to bring about some orientation in this fast moving and cluttered life of ours. All that we do in life is mostly vanity. Very little is spiritual. Spiritual things are the golden nuggets of our natural life. Those nuggets are the only things that we will carry with us when we move to the other side. Over time, everything else that we have done in our lives will be as if we were never here. Think about that.

These nuggets are the things we do from the inside out: our worship! Remember, that includes our spiritually balanced attitude, praying one for another, desire towards the Lord, spiritual endeavors by faith, etcetera. Never let the natural life and its relationships supercede our spiritual reality.

How many times have we heard that when we pass on, that grandma and grandpa and mom and dad and friends and relatives will all meet us at the pearly gates? That could be true on some level but they will not be who they were and neither will we be who we were nor will we relate with one another as we did in our natural lives. Our thinking must move to a higher level and once there, even if we cannot get our little minds completely around the reality of spiritual things, at least we will not have the traditional pictures flashing across our minds. For example: no, it's not actual golden streets and mansions, we don't sit around on clouds and play harps; even the pearly gates are representations. Those are metaphors describing spiritual things that are completely foreign to our world and must be spiritually discerned. They are illustrations of the spiritual, which, if not for these pictures we would be completely in the dark. For example: on the New Jerusalem, the gates are described as pearls. One of Jesus' parables was about the Pearl Of Great Price. The New Jerusalem pearls are entrances

to the city. In Jesus' parable, the man *sold all that he had* and bought the a pearl because he realized its value. Getting rid of our religious valuables allows entrance to the city and within the city is all the wealth of the Lord. That's just one level of understanding. The pearly gates and most everything else has many different levels of meaning.

At this point, we can see that the realm of the Spirit of God is endless. There is much elbow room to move around in and wonderful discoveries in the Lord to be realized. I pray that these words will be a help to whoever can receive them and that they will be blessed as they step on these stones and progress onward in the grace of our beloved.

**By Jaytee Bee**