

THE “DEAD” SHALL HEAR AND LIVE

Part 1 of 3

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Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer. (Psalms 19:14)

This subject “...***they that hear shall live***” has been rolling over in my mind for a while, and has continued to grow in meaningfulness. As a result of these workings that have been going on within my "inner man," I would like to share with you the following words, albeit somewhat long.

If you will think about it in the light of God’s Word, as we came into this physical world, we were all “still-born.” According to God’s word we were “dead” in our sins, (Eph. 2:1 & Col. 2:13), by which, we inherited from Adam, for “...***as in Adam, all die...***” (1 Cor. 15:22). It was nothing that we had done, but that it was passed upon us. It is, also, God’s will to be so; in order that the “travails” (testings and processes) will cause us to “...***grow up into Him...***” (Ephesians 4:15)

Before going any further, let us read the verse from which the title of this article is taken. I ask you to read it, then re-read it, and ponder the depth of the truth that is contained within it before continuing to read the rest of this article.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and **NOW IS**, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” (John 5:25)

A few years ago the meaning of this verse was revealed to me, when I realized that Jesus said “**NOW IS**,” in this verse. He meant it for those who lived in His time while upon earth as well as it is directed toward us today, nearly 2000 years later. It’s not changed, because the problem that existed then is still with us. Let us, however, observe the operative words in this verse which are “dead,” “hear,” and “live.”

The words “die,” “dead” or “death” got their start way back in the Bible by the time of Genesis 2:17. You know the story, God placed the tree in the midst of the Garden, but God told Adam: ***“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”***

As the story continues, Adam didn’t drop dead. So, from this, we can gain an understanding of God’s meaning of death; as it relates to the spiritual realm. Through Adam’s disobedience, there came a separation or estrangement, as in a distancing of himself from God through a darkened (or veiled) understanding of what and who God really is. Adam no longer had God’s life intimately operating within himself directing his thoughts as it was formerly, but he acquired a misunderstanding of himself, and a perverted understanding of the character of God. After

the fall, Adam realized that he was naked, but all the time that he had previously fellowshiped with God, he was also naked (but was innocent-not being aware as a new-born baby is not aware of its nakedness). What had changed was the perception of himself, because Adam had fallen into a state where his perceptions or self-awareness were driven by his five physical senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, & touch). Thus, we see man's first act of religiosity. Adam's religious attempts were to make himself acceptable in a manner to what he (who now, after the fall, had a limited understanding with wrong imaginations and a sin consciousness) thought were God's expectations. Resulting from this, we see Adam's sewing together of fig leaves to hide his nakedness from God. This first act of Adam's religiosity, brethren, is what mankind has done ever since the fall in the Garden of Eden. Self-works have manifested themselves in various forms of religious worship, creeds, dogma, traditions, and so forth; in an effort to perform religious self-works which are "thought" to please God. These are mankind's methods used in attempts to show or make himself worthy and acceptable before God. Our present condition of "deadness" cannot ever be overcome by self-works, because these are "dead works" and sin (missing the mark) in God's sight, as we shall later see. The Greek word for "sin" in the Bible is "hamartia." It is an archery term as used in the Olympic Games, as an arrow "missing the mark." Can you see that we are "missing the mark" with our self-directed attempts to please God? As Jesus spoke to the self-righteous Pharisees, these words; **"...And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."** (John 5:40)

Can you recognize what happened here with the religious Pharisees? Wrong thoughts, carnal thoughts, worldly thoughts (all guided by the five senses) - It's as simple as that! Can we not see that throughout the New Testament, we are told to renew our minds? Paul writes it this way: **"... And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed** (Greek: metamorphosed = as in a caterpillar changing into a butterfly) **by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.** (Romans 12:2). The word used for "transformed" is the Greek word "metamorphoo" when transliterated into English becomes metamorphosis. This caterpillar can no more wish itself into a butterfly or have a desire to fly, than a cow can jump over the moon. Yet, our progressive transformation into the likeness of Jesus Christ is a sovereign act of revelation (new wine) through and by the Holy Spirit who performs that "transformation" within us (renewing our thoughts) as the Holy Spirit works in concert with the Word of God.

Surely, we aren't messed up in our thoughts that badly? Yes, we are! Again, Paul addresses our wrong thoughts, and how the flesh influences our ways of thinking, and then, the way to "overcome" this wrong thinking when he writes: **"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (which uses our five senses), but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginings, and every high thing that exalts itself against the (true) knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ..."** (2 Cor. 10:3-5) **"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."** (Romans 8:6, 7)

Do you see the conflict here? - It's our wrong thoughts (imagination or speculations), because our imaginations are in conflict with, and opposed to, the true understanding of the knowledge of God. Truth has been veiled (hidden) to us through the fall of Adam. If we don't properly understand the true nature of God, then the "death sentence" (separation from God or ignorance of God; who is our life) is upon us in the same manner it was upon Adam. Additionally, by and through this ignorance, we will worship things other than in the true knowledge of God in the same manner as Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, when He said: **"Ye worship ye know not what..."** (John 4:22). Jesus went on to say that: **"...they that worship Him (God), must worship Him in Spirit and Truth."** (John 4:24)

This conflict cannot be conquered through the works of the flesh by our "turning over a new leaf," but by being in subjection (a yieldedness) which brings us into an obedience to Christ that flushes out these wrong thoughts, and brings us into the true understanding of who God is. Again, it's the "renewing of the mind" needed here to bring about these changes, and it begins to bring us out of the death realm (which is a progressive change happening within us).

At this point I would like to insert a thought about the sovereignty of God. We may think that we have acted on our own to yield unto the will of God, but to think in this manner is the height of arrogance! Let's consider a couple of scriptures: **"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."** (Philippians 2:13) We can't "will it" (desire it) on our own to do God's good pleasure, unless He is already working it through the Holy Spirit, because **"...the carnal mind (the mind of Adam) is enmity against God..."** In another example, let's consider Jonah who initially didn't want to go preach at Nineveh. In the end, however, Jonah "wanted" to go to Nineveh, because God subjected him to a set of circumstances which made it better to obey than to disobey God. This life's journey is the same for us, in that; God is orchestrating our circumstances in order to lose our desire for the things of the world; which results with our seeking Him, and to follow in obedience. Isaiah tells us how God works in us: **"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me..."** (Isaiah 65:1) **"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps."** (Proverbs 16:9)

For over 50 years, I was a "Christian" who was working in my own strength, because it was my "fire insurance policy." At the age of 16, under the preaching of a hell-fire & brimstone evangelist, I sought salvation; not because I necessarily wanted to, or that it was a more desirable lifestyle, but compared to the fiery alternative; it seemed to be the better choice. Little did I know at that time, that it was just the first step in the progression of "renewing the mind" which has helped me to gain a truer understanding of the wonderful ways of our heavenly Father. Truth frees us from that grip of death: **"... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** (John 8:32)

Concerning our erroneous thoughts, and mistaken ideas about God, we can't fix things by our own works, but only through the "renewing of the mind" which is a sovereign operation of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah says it this way: **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."** (Isaiah 55:8,

9) It's interesting how that the subject "thoughts" and "mind" are brought up throughout the Bible, which is the center of our death/sin problem, and that we are to be renewed: ***"That ye put off concerning the former conversation (G391- anastrophe- manner of life, conduct, behavior, deportment) the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind..."*** (Eph. 4:22, 23) ***"And...put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him..."*** (Col. 3:10)

In our "death" state, we can't understand what God is saying to us, because it is veiled; even when familiar words are used. It's like a poem that I saw, that uses words that we know, that sound the same, but used in the wrong way which almost results with gibberish. Similarly, as we read the "literal" Word, we form doctrines and creeds from those "literal" words. Nevertheless, when the Holy Spirit sweetly intercedes and speaks to our inner man, we begin to understand the depth of what is written.

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." (John 16:13)

Words mean things, but as we, personally, read the below poem with these "wrong" words, we have to convert them within our minds what is the real intent for each word. Otherwise it is gibberish. If someone else would read this poem to us, however, then it would make perfect sense because we can correctly "hear" it. The reader of these words, however, would be struggling with the meanings due to the ongoing translation in their mind with the meaning of the words. Similarly, we need the Holy Spirit to interpret for us the "letter of the Word" into the "spirit of the Word."

Here's a little humor:

**Owed to a Spell Chequer
(Ode to a Spell Checker)**

I halve a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea
It plane lee marques four my revue
Miss steaks aye ken knot sea

Eye ran this poem threw it
Your sure reel glad two no
It's vary polished in it's weigh
My chequer tolled me sew

A chequer is a bless sing
It freeze yew lodes of thyme
It helps me awl stiles two reed
And aides mi when aye rime

To rite with care is quite a feat
Of witch won should be proud
And wee mussed dew the best wee can
Sew flaws are knot aloud

And now bee cause my spelling
is checked with such grate flare
Their are know faults with in my site
Of nun eye am a wear

Each frays comes posed up on my screen
Eye trussed to be a joule
The chequer poured o'er every word
To cheque sum spelling rule

That's why aye brake in two averse
My righting wants too pleas
Sow now ewe sea wye aye dew prays
Such soft wear for pea seas

Note how that Paul writes that God had made them: ***"...able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*"** (2 Cor. 3:6) This "hearing ear" given to us by the Holy Spirit is what we need. Without this, we hear with a carnal-minded ear. ***"But the natural (carnal) man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*** (1 Cor. 2:12 – 14 KJV)

If God's word is heard with a "spiritual ear," then:

"They that (spiritually) hear, shall live." (John 5:25)

In John chapter 2, Jesus had just made the scourge of small cords and had driven the money changers from the temple (hieron = temple building complex). After He had done this, the Jews questioned His authority to do so, and asked for a sign to authenticate His actions. Jesus answered them by saying: ***"Destroy this temple (naos = Holy of Holies), and in three days I will raise it up.*** Then the Jews responded by saying: ***"forty-six years was this temple in building, and you will raise it up in three days? But He spoke of the temple (naos = Holy of Holies) of His body"*** (V19 -21). The true meaning went right past the Jews as Jesus was in the setting of the surrounding temple complex, but at that time, He was really speaking of His body (temple = naos - holy of holies). Therefore, the Jews, naturally (carnally), thought of the temple (hieron = temple building complex). This so impassioned the Jews against Jesus that they referred to this occasion several times during the trial and crucifixion of Jesus: ***"And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days..."*** (Mark 15:29, Matthew 26:61, Matthew 27:40, & Mark 14:58)

Spiritually hear this: our transition from “death” into life, has been purposely obfuscated through God's overall plan; so that ONLY by His sovereign working through the Holy Spirit will we change our wrong thinking through revelations (“rhemas” or “epiphanies”) which make these erroneous thoughts fall away as would scales falling from our eyes (as it did for Paul). We see this principle in Romans 8:20 where we read that; “...**the creation was subjected to frustration** (futility), **not by its own choice, but by the will of the one** (God) **who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay** (death and corruption) **and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.**” (NIV)

Paul understood this, as he prayed for the Ephesians: ***“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation (G602 – apokalypsis - unveiling) in the knowledge of him: (so that) the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what (are) the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints...”*** (Ephesians 1:17, 18) Paul, also speaks of his own experience in becoming an apostle, and of preaching the Gospel, when he wrote: ***“For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but (it was) by the revelation (Greek G-602 - apokalypsis - unveiling) of Jesus Christ...To reveal (Greek G-601 - apokalypsis - unveil) his Son **IN me**, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood...”*** (Galatians 1: 12, 16) Jesus alluded to revelational understanding when He said: ***“...no man putteth new wine (revelation) into old bottles (old way of thinking); else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.*** (Luke 5:37)

As we study the Old Testament, the many requirements as seen in the Law of Moses, demonstrates the futility of working to become righteous, but many of those people “just didn't get it;” – it was the same obstacle for the religious Pharisees in Jesus' time. These religious Jews were so wrapped up in the literal application of the Word of God, that they couldn't recognize the “Word” when He stood in front of them. Therefore, Jesus said to these religious people: ***“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”*** (John 5:39, 40) They were totally trusting in their way of interpreting and their carnal understanding of the literal word (for the letter killeth), although calling themselves children of Abraham. Yet, they didn't realize that man shall not be justified by works, as Abraham learned: ***“For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? “ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (Romans 4:2, 3 NASB) “...by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”*** (Rom 3:20).

We can get another hint in understanding how the futility of self-works can be found in the 3rd chapter of 2nd Corinthians. The reading of the Old Testament in a literal manner confuses our understanding, even until today. Note in the following verses: ***“...their minds were blinded.”*** Again, this shows us that unless there is a ***“renewing of our minds”*** through the Holy Spirit, who is active within us: ***“But their minds were blinded: for until this day remains the same veil untaken away (remaining) in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is***

done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." (v14, 15) Although our minds have been "blinded" or "veiled," which has brought us unto our "spiritual death" or a separated state from God, the following verses show the sovereign actions of the Holy Spirit as we are progressively "changed" (Greek word is metamorphoo = transformed as a caterpillar into a butterfly) into His image. **"But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed (metamorphoo) into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."** (NIV)

By studying these verses in several translations, we can grasp the deeper truth that is contained within them. We can see that we have been blinded by a veil that has been put over our minds, and reading the Old Testament in a literal manner didn't help, because the O.T. was intended to be understood figuratively as Christ lifts that "veil" from our minds. Next, as we turn to the Lord, the veil of "blindness" or ignorance is removed, and we begin the transformation process in an ever-increasing manner into His glorious image or likeness. This is our progressive transformation (metamorphoo) into His likeness, as we move out of the death realm (due to our misunderstanding of the truth) into His life realm which is truth.

Literally interpreting the Old Testament is a point of confusion for us, because many of the O.T. stories are "types," "figures," and "shadows" as we bring them into the New Testament. Paul wrote: **"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come..."** (Col. 2:16,17), and the writer of Hebrews said: **"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect... For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."** (Heb. 10:1).

The verses: **"...ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** (John 8:32). **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"** (John 10:10) begin to have more meaning in this context of our coming from the death (misunderstanding, separation & mistaken identity) realm.

In the preceding verses of 2 Cor. 3, I attempted to demonstrate that our coming out from "death" (separation from, and ignorance toward God) can only be accomplished through the working of the Holy Spirit. We have to be careful, although, not to think that by our own wisdom or power that we were able to bring about this change. We were spiritually dead and figuratively floating face-down in the water, and NO teaching or preaching could make us understand the truth; until God, through His sovereign spirit, SPEAKS LIFE INTO us. There is a story in Matthew 8 where someone wanted to follow Jesus, but asked to give him time to bury his father. In response, Jesus said: **"Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."** (Mat. 8:22). At first glance, this seems to be a bit cruel, but the point was that even those who were living and active in physical bodies were "dead" while they were burying a dead body. God's definition of being "dead" and our definition of being "dead" need to be reconciled.

While Paul was at Athens he referred to how we are alive, this way: **"For IN him we live, and move, and have our being..."** (Acts 17:28) Or in another place he writes: **"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever."** (Romans 11:36).

Because man has been created in the image of God, we have an inner sense telling us that something is missing within us, and it can't be satisfied outside of fellowshiping with God, our Father. In the 1600's, Blaise Pascal said it this way: **"There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man."** The Psalmist wrote: **"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men."** (Psalms 90:3). In this verse, we can see that in God's predetermined plan of the ages, man has been turned to destruction, death, vanity, futility, frustration. God also, takes responsibility to draw us back from this condition when He determines that our processing (travail - exercising) has been satisfactorily completed. Then He calls: **"Return, ye children of men."** In fact, it is impossible to do it on our own, or in our time, because Jesus said: **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him...."** (John 6:44).

Job, also, seemed to have an understanding of this. Although Job may have been referring to a physical death, he, also, realized there was more involved than the physical death of his body, and simply being laid in a grave, when he said: **"If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."** (Job 14:14, 15) Job realized that he had no power to change his circumstances, but he also, recognized his precious position in God, for he said: **"...thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."** Does God have a desire for the works of His hands? Yes, most assuredly: **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus..."** (Ephesians 2:10).

Nevertheless, with man having this desire to seek the unknown by and through his own ignorant ways (without the renewing of the mind); it has caused all kinds of religions and soulish mysticism to spring up in error. Jesus said it this way: **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life..."** (John 5:40). In our stubbornness, and death to the true understanding; it hinders our return to God, because we want to do it "our way." God, in Christ, understood our ignorance of the truth, and as Christ was dying on the cross, he said: **"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."** (Luke 23:34) Can you grasp this truth? We're ignorant! We don't know (reality) in the way that we should! We get a glimpse of the futility of these self-willed "dead works" through the words of Jesus where it is written in Matthew 7:21; **"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."**

According to Jesus, doing the will of the Father is what matters in a knowledgeable manner (renewing of the mind). Furthermore, He cites some examples that appear to be "good" efforts, but they don't measure up, for He says (I'm paraphrasing):

Lord, Lord did we not prophesy in Jesus' name?

Lord, Lord did we not cast out devils in Jesus' name?

Lord, Lord have we not done many mighty works in Jesus' name?

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mat. 7:23)

Think about that! They used the right form - or so it seems. They used the right name – "Jesus," but Jesus accused them of working "iniquity." The modern translations say "lawlessness." The Greek word for "iniquity" is "onomia." Not only does it include the English words of "iniquity" and "lawlessness", but it includes "autonomy", and lastly "self-will." This is characterized in the writings of Isaiah of the one who is in rebellion to God, and who pronounces that series of "I will's":

**"For thou hast said in thine heart,
I WILL ascend into heaven,
I WILL exalt my throne above the stars of God:
I WILL sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
I WILL ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I WILL be like the most High." (Isaiah 14:13, 14)**

Do you still think that you can correct your wrong thoughts through self-discipline and good works? Doing things "our way" will result with Jesus saying: **"Depart from me ye workers of iniquity (self-will) - I never knew you."** (Matthew 7:23) Here, Jesus said **"I never 'knew' you."** The word "knew" is the Greek word "ginosko." It means more than to know of, or to know about, but it's an intimate, experiential knowing or intimate fellowship as a man "knows" his wife. Perhaps, this is why Paul passionately wrote: **"That I may know** ("ginosko." = experientially know) **Him..."** in Philippians 3:10.

The Psalmist tells us: **"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."** (Psa. 127:1) It's useless to work through our own endeavors, as we are subjected to this vanity and futility, but we are: **"...subjected in HOPE..."** (Romans 8:20). Furthermore, the writer of Proverbs tells us: **"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."** (Prov. 16:25) Think about that! So close, yet so far!

What has been difficult for us to understand, without relying upon the teaching of the Holy Spirit, is that we, in our religious, but carnal understanding; have been operating or partaking from the "GOOD" side of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. This **"mystery of iniquity"** is what has trapped us in the doing of prophesying, casting out devils, and many mighty works in Jesus' name (supposedly "good works"), because these seem to be the right and "GOOD" things to do, but they are not the Father's will as noted above in Matthew 7:21. Confusion (Babylon or babble) results as we partake and operate on the "GOOD" side of the tree of knowledge as we are trapped by **"...exalting our imaginations against the (true) knowledge of God"** (2 Cor. 3:18). Des Walter writes about it this way:

This is the condition into which mankind was plunged when Adam ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. We have all embraced the "serpent's lie," believing that if I can gain enough knowledge about the Bible, I will be able to discern between good and evil, and so as I choose the good and shun the evil I will be spiritual and therefore be like God.

Today many Bible Schools are overflowing, and theological colleges are full of people seeking knowledge. However any knowledge that does not have its origin in God and therefore available to us by the Holy Spirit, has the "serpent's" stamp upon it, and it will continue to minister death.

We have the tree of the knowledge of "GOOD" and evil in our Adamic heritage. As John the Baptist recognized Jesus when He came to the Jordan River, he told the people to "repent" (metanoeo = change one's mind for the better) for thinking that they had Abraham as their father (religious doctrines and rituals), because they thought their literal adherence to scripture were their "GOOD" works. For now, with the coming of Jesus and His ministry, the; **"...axe is laid to the root of the trees..."** (Mat. 3:10) of their wrong thinking, which was founded in the Tree of Knowledge of "GOOD" and evil.

Yes, for us: **"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death..."** (Prov. 16:25), but the writer of Proverbs admonishes us to: **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding** (our common sense). **In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."** (Proverbs 3:5, 6) This will be the most difficult task in our life's journey to abandon self, and those "GOOD" works of what seems to us to be "common sense." We have been taught (programmed) through Mystery Babylon's system of organized religion to be self-reliant and to read scripture in a literal manner. God's faithfulness teaches us that: **A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.** (Prov. 16:9).

Have not the preachers been taught in seminary, and have we not been taught from the pulpit this methodology: - **"WHEN THE PLAIN SENSE OF SCRIPTURE MAKES COMMON SENSE, SEEK NO OTHER SENSE; THEREFORE, TAKE EVERY WORD AT ITS PRIMARY, ORDINARY, USUAL, LITERAL MEANING...?"** (This is known as the "Golden Rule" of interpretation - Articles from Biblical Research Monthly, 1947, 1949 by David L. Cooper Th.M, Ph.D, Litt.D).

Again, we consider John 5:25, the text verse of this article:

"...NOW IS, when the DEAD shall hear the voice of the Son of God..."

God foretold Adam of the consequences if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of "GOOD" and evil; that he would die (be spiritually separated, and have a false or "veiled" understanding of the spiritual realm) in Genesis 2:17. God also, certainly controlled the circumstances, and took full responsibility for the ensuing "fallen" state of mankind - in which we find ourselves even today. Again, Paul reveals the situation to us when he wrote: **"...as in Adam, all die** (be spiritually separated from God)..." (1 Cor. 15:22). This death that we have been experiencing has been assigned to all mankind. Through Adam's disobedience, he "died" from his innocence, and from the true knowledge and understanding of God. This resulted with Adam's, and our "darkness," (or veiled reality), and the associated spiritual death, or spiritual separation from God. Since we are the fleshly off-spring of Adam, we share this same death. In another place, Paul tells us that we were already dead, where he writes: **"Even when we were DEAD in sins,** (we're already dead) **He hath quickened us** (made us alive) **together**

with Christ..." (Ephesians 2:5). Please notice that this is in the past tense. We were already dead, because Adam in his fallen state was already spiritually dead; due to his wrong thoughts and misunderstanding of the truth as it is in God. **"For to be carnally (naturally) minded is DEATH; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal (natural) mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."** (Romans 8:6, 7)

Therefore, there is a necessary spiritual; **"...hearing of the voice of the Son of God"** through the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, which is needed to move us out of this dead state of futility and vain thinking for: **"...the marvelous thing is this, that we now receive not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God himself, so that we can actually understand something of God's generosity towards us. It is these things that we talk about, not using the expressions of the human intellect but those which the Holy Spirit teaches us, explaining things to those who are spiritual. But the unspiritual (natural-carnal) man simply cannot accept the matters which the Spirit deals with—they just don't make sense to him—for after all, you must be spiritual to see (understand) spiritual things. The spiritual man, on the other hand, has an insight into the meaning of everything, though his insight may baffle the man of the world."** (1 Cor. 2:12 – 16 JB Phillips). To affirm this, we read in John's epistle these words: **"...therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."** (1 John 3:1)

Before we get to the next operative word, "hear," let us consider the cause of this state of death that mankind is experiencing. Romans 8:20, 21 give us a hint, and let's look at several translations to get the full flavor of what is being communicated to us:

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him (God) who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption (death) into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (KJV)

"For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him (God) who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption (death) into the freedom of the glory of the children of God." (NASB)

"For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one (God) who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay (death) and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God." (NIV)

"The world of creation cannot as yet see reality, NOT BECAUSE IT CHOOSES TO BE BLIND, but because in God's purpose it has been so limited—yet it has been given hope. And the hope is that in the end, the whole of creation will be rescued from the tyranny of change and decay (death), and have its share in that magnificent liberty which can only belong to the children of God!" (JB Phillips).

You see, beloved, there is a greater purpose that is being worked within us, so that we can become "overcomers," and to receive/inherit those things that are written to us throughout the book of Revelation which pertain to the "overcomers." We have been subjected to futility, vanity, frustration, or the lacking of understanding of reality, ever since that fall in the Garden of Eden. We have been subjected to these through the sovereignty and omniscience of God, so that we, through the power of the Holy Spirit, alone, can come up over that which has overcome us during these last 6000 years; which is a spiritual death, or an ignorance of the true knowledge of God.

Read the above verses again, allowing the Holy Spirit to convey the deep truth contained within them. This death called in these verses as "**the bondage of corruption**," "**slavery to corruption**," "**bondage to decay**", and "**tyranny of change and decay**," have been by God's design; because we've been subjected to these things in hope of becoming "**overcomers**" who will "**inherit all things**."

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Revelation 21:7). Hallelu-YAH!

These are but the processings of God for our development and to gain an understanding of who we really are: - THE SONS OF GOD! Also, not mere "children" of God, but mature sons (Greek = huios = mature sons). It's for those who have gone through the experiences of maturation as if: "**...under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.**" (Gal. 4:2) Because of this, the section of Romans chapter 8, it is written: "**For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.**" (NASB) or as JB Phillips writes it: "**The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own.**"

Earlier in this same chapter of Romans 8, Paul gives us another glimpse of the "big picture" and the reason for our suffering when he wrote: "**For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be REVEALED IN US.**" (Romans 8:18) Hold on to this thought: "**...the glory which shall be REVEALED IN US,**" because I will attempt to weave into this message that "glory" which: "**... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.**" (1 Cor. 2:9). Paul, however, doesn't stop with that thought, but he continues on to write: "**But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit...**" in verse 10. This shows the necessity of the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit being done in our behalf: "**But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit...**"

Isn't the working of the Holy Spirit wonderful? This is why He is called our "Comforter" which is taken from the Greek word "Parakletos."

Parakletos: summoned, called to one's side, especially called to one's aid; one who pleads another's cause with one, an intercessor; in the widest sense, a helper, succourer, aider, assistant of the Holy Spirit destined to take the place of the physical Christ with the apostles (after his ascension to the Father), to lead them to a deeper

knowledge of the gospel truth, and give them divine strength needed to enable them to undergo trials and persecutions on behalf of the divine kingdom

The word Parakletos is used in these verses:

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, (Parakletos) that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and SHALL BE IN YOU." (John 14:16, 17)

"But the Comforter (Parakletos), which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26)

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate (Parakletos) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous..." (1 John 2:1)

Beloved, if you haven't understood yet what I'm attempting to bring forth; I'm trying to say that while you (we) were still in Adam's inherited "death" state, it was the cause of our wrong understandings and perceptions of God. This is due to our wrong thoughts and imaginations (un-renewed minds) which had not been brought into the captivity and subjection of the true knowledge of God. These are, now, being pulled down by nothing other than by revelation through the sovereign operation of the Holy Spirit. (2 Cor. 10:5)

"For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons (G5207-huios = mature sons) of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption (G-5206 – mature son placement) as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him..." (Romans 8:14-17 NASB)

Think about it! Can you grasp the depth of truth that is here? Does the Holy Spirit testify within you that you are a son (child) of God? These verses are getting personal with us, because it tells us that the spirit within us is crying out "Abba." When my kids were growing up, I was the only person in the world that they could call "daddy." This is what "Abba" means. Because of our positional relationship with our Heavenly Father, the spirit within us calls out "Daddy" - "Abba." - ***"...for we are also His off-spring..."*** (Acts 17:28, 29). Glory to God!

Thus, we were spiritually dead and Paul states it this way: ***"Even when we were dead in sins, (He) hath quickened us (made us alive) together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places (realm) in Christ Jesus..."*** Also, we read: ***"...YOU WERE ALSO RAISED UP WITH HIM through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."*** (Col. 2:12) The reality of this wonderful truth is just beginning to catch up to our understanding. For nearly 2000 years, Jesus has made it a "done-deal," and a "finished work," but we've not appropriated this wonderful truth; due to the "veil" that has been cast over our minds. This "duality" is our

being children of God, from before the foundation of the world - but we haven't understood it to be that way. When Jesus said **"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,"** that day; He was not only forgiving those who had taken a part in His crucifixion, but all of mankind was forgiven, and He was identifying with and dying in the flesh to that death state as us.

We were born dead (walking dead – if you please), and are being (or better yet, have already been) raised up together with Christ as the Holy Spirit raises us up: **"...until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ."** (Ephesians 4:13) Note that it says **"...the knowledge of the Son of God."** It's interesting that the word "knowledge" is here, because it was mentioned in a previously noted verse: **"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 EXALTS ITSELF AGAINST THE (true) KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ..."** (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

Our former "death" state was due to our ignorance, or a lack of understanding the true knowledge of who God really is, because we exalted our own thoughts over the truth of who we really are in Him. This is what "religion" has done to us, in which it has caused its own shameful 1000 years known as the "dark ages" (~500 AD to ~1500 AD). But that is changing, and what a wonderful change is being wrought within us!

THE DEAD SHALL HEAR AND LIVE

Part 2 of 3

Now we want to consider the second operative word in the text verse which is "hear." Let's look at this text verse again, and ponder the great import of its meaning:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and NOW IS, when the **dead shall HEAR the voice of the Son of God: and they that HEAR shall LIVE." (John 5:25)**

Who are those that HEAR? **"My sheep HEAR my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."** (John 10:27, 28) These are not physical ears that pick up physical vibrations, but "internal spiritual ears" that can hear the Spirit! Not everyone has them – yet!

Before we go on with this discussion, let's look at the flip-side of "hearing:"

"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. (John 10: 25, 26)

“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? EVEN BECAUSE YE CANNOT HEAR MY WORD... And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God HEARS God's words: ye therefore HEAR them not, because ye are not of God.” (John 8:42-47)

There is a "hearing," then there is a **"HEARING."** One case of "HEARING" begins NOW, in the present, as stated in John 5:25, but then there is a "forced hearing" in John 5:28, for those who have physically died, and are in the graves. If you can spiritually receive this: it is related to a first and a second resurrection (Greek = anastasis): ***"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."*** (Rev. 20:6)

It is so sad that while we ALL at one time were in the confines of mystery Babylon, and were taught the errors of her way through the five senses (sight, smell, touch, taste, hearing); we couldn't comprehend the truth as it is in Jesus. Recently, I read an old saying that I was taught while still in Babylon, which goes this way:

"Born twice, die once; born once, die twice."

Nothing could be farther from the truth. We ALL must die twice. The first death was our common death in Adam: ***"...as in Adam, all die..."*** (1 Cor. 15:22). That death was our death or alienation to our true understanding of and our being in God. The first death has already happened to everyone who is the offspring of Adam. Likewise, the second death, is one in which we ALL must participate. The second death must also happen to us ALL, which is: the death to self, or the death of "death." The "second death" is NOT when we physically die (Keep in mind God's words are spiritual, even though we attempt to make them have a physical application.). We will either die during this present physical life to our self-will, through which we will: ***"NOW hear the voice of the Son of God and live..."***, or we will die to self-will in the "Lake of Fire" which is, also, the "second death." ***"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."*** (Rev. 20:14)

Please note that in Revelation 2:11, a "hearing" ear results with becoming a "called-out overcomer," in which, the second death will not cause "hurt." Spiritually HEARING brings us into the life of Jesus Christ – NOW - and out of the death of Adam. Operating through self-will is why Jesus said to those: ***"Depart from me ye workers of iniquity (self-will) - I never knew you."*** (Mat. 7:23) Also, this is the ***"mystery of iniquity"*** that Paul wrote about.

"He that hath an ear, let him HEAR what the Spirit saith unto the churches (ekklesia = called out); He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." (Rev. 2:11)

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." (Rev 20:14)

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8)

I don't think that I came to the understanding of this until my mother died in June 2010. I was asked by the family to speak at her funeral, and I researched my Bible references on the subject of death and life as one ordinarily would do in such a circumstance. As I went through the references on this subject of death and life, my attention was directed to John chapter 5:25 which says:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, AND NOW IS, when the (spiritually) dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

As I continued reading in this chapter, I read verses 28 & 29, which said:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (Greek G2920 = krisis = crisis = judgment = turning point)."

At this point, it's difficult to express what a flood of understanding that came to me of God's "big picture!" What I discovered was that verse 25 was not about people that were already physically dead, as it is in verse 28. What made me understand this is that Jesus said: ***"NOW IS, when the* (spiritually) ***dead shall hear..."*** I was reading this scripture, and at that time in June 2010, it was the **"NOW IS"** for me, and I wasn't yet physically dead. It was about a people who were already spiritually dead to God - ***"as in Adam all die."*** (1 Cor. 15:22)**

Take comfort, beloved, we're not the only ones who have suffered this ignorance to the truth as it is revealed in God through the Holy Spirit. Let's go back to Jesus' time, when news was sent to Him about the death of His friend Lazarus (John chapter 11).

"Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when He heard that he (Lazarus) was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was." (Verses 5 - 6)

After a two day delay, Jesus decides to go to Bethany, for the sake of His friend Lazarus, but the disciples give reason not to do so because the Jews there were seeking to stone Him. After a discussion and explanation with His disciples, Jesus says:

"Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep." The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep. So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him." (Verses 11 - 15)

Jesus used the term "sleep" for physical death then, He has to explain that Lazarus is physically dead. He initiated this "Show-N-Tell" exercise in order to display the power of God over how we are programmed to think what is the finality of death: to His disciples, to Martha, and to the remainder of mourners. It's interesting what we call sleep, and what God calls sleep, and what we call death and what God calls death. Remember when Jesus raised the maiden from death, but it is written: ***"And when Jesus came into the ruler's house...He***

said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. (Mat. 9:23a, 24). This demonstrates the reason that we need to have our thinking "... **transformed** (metamorphosed) **by the renewing of your minds...**" (Romans 12:2).

Understanding God's word, awakens us, and raises us from the death realm, as Paul writes: **"But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you."** (Ephesians 5:13, 14). Also, **"Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.** (Romans 13:11).

Were these words directed to bodies in the cemetery? NO! It was written to professing Christians in the Church at Ephesus and Rome. Can we not see that in God's sight; death is not so much concerned with the fleshly body, but having and being aware of God's life within us?

Let us continue with the story of Jesus approaching the village of Bethany:

"So when Jesus came, He found that he (Lazarus) had already been in the tomb four days." (v17)

It's interesting that Lazarus was already dead for 4 days. At that time, it "figuratively" represented the 4000 years of man's death sentence from the day of Adam to the time of Jesus. Peter tells us that: **"...one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."** (2 Peter 3:8). Not only that, but Jesus wanted to be sure that Lazarus was "stinky" dead, that He may demonstrate the power of God over what would usually be considered an irreversible condition.

"Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house. Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. "Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." (vv 20 - 22)

At this point, Martha didn't have a clue what Jesus would do. Her mind was based on the traditionalist's thought that if Jesus would have gotten there before Lazarus died, then he could have been healed, but she wasn't looking for a resurrection in the NOW!

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." (V 24 - 25)

Note that Martha agreed with Jesus that Lazarus would rise again, but she was fixated in the traditions of the fathers, only having a limited faith that Lazarus would be raised from the dead at the last day. She was thinking that Jesus could have only prevented Lazarus from dying, but she did not believe Jesus could raise Lazarus up - **NOW!** She didn't realize that Jesus had power over death in the "here-and-now." It's the same way today with organized religion, and the "deadness" that is/was in each of us. I did some searches of sermons by those in

organized religion on John 5:25 - 29, and those writers did not/could not distinguish the difference of the two resurrections.

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" (v 25 - 26)

Jesus is saying here that "life" is more than the physical state of the body.

She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world." When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you." (v 27 -28)

After Jesus tells Martha that He **IS** the resurrection **NOW**, she changes the subject! She had drawn an imaginary limitation within her mind against the power of Jesus to give life to whomsoever He willed in the present tense. After Martha demonstrates her limited faith, she, then, goes to tell her sister, Mary, that Jesus is calling for her - that's not what Jesus said to Martha!

"Jesus wept." (John 11:35) "Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!" (John 11:36)

Think about it; Jesus didn't weep because Lazarus had died, because Jesus knew, full-well, that He would raise Lazarus from the dead; but it was because the people "just didn't get it!" - Jesus is the resurrection truth - NOW!

Sadly, in our life-long indoctrinations within mystery Babylon, we are no more perceptive than Martha; who was steeped in man's traditions. Many of us, as we live our lives, are happy at being just "saved" through faith in Jesus Christ. If our objective is to "slide through by greasy grace," we'll never come to the deeper understanding of what; **"...God has prepared for those that LOVE Him."** (1 Cor. 2:9). Martha just "didn't get it" when Jesus revealed the truth of resurrection life to her. Only by the sovereign operation of the Holy Spirit, can we be raised out of this "death state" of Adam that we are in, and be made alive in Christ through a spiritual "hearing" ear.

In the clamor of life, there are many voices that are attempting to get our attention, and for us to follow after them. It's analogous to radio, TV, and cell phone electronic RF frequencies. We can't see them or hear these electronic waveforms with our natural ears, but they are always present, nevertheless. If you can remember the old analog radios when turning the knob; one station would fade out as another would come more clearly into our hearing as the radio's tuner aligned with the station's frequency being broadcast. So it is with us in the; **"hearing of the voice of the Son of God."** If these RF waves could become visible to our natural sight, we could see they are always present, surrounding us everywhere, coming from every direction! Yet, we ordinarily can't hear or see them, until we use the right device whether it is radio, TV or cell phone. If you listen to a tuned radio, only one station can be received at a

time, or if you receive a cell phone call, only that specific call is heard among the millions that are simultaneously going on. Thus, our receiver and tuner is the Holy Spirit. Throughout our natural life, He (the Holy Spirit) has sovereignly been tuning us and turning us to that specific message to: "...**hear the voice of the Son of God and live...**" This "tuning" by the Holy Spirit causes us to: "**Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.**" (Psalms 37:4) Our "desires" are no longer the things of this world; but a desiring for His fullness within us.

This selective hearing and receiving is for the elect (the called and chosen), and it is a progressive ability developing within us. John the Baptist understood it when he said: "**He must increase, but I must decrease...**" (John 3:30), which is our death to self, as we progressively "**...grow up INTO Him in all things.**" (Eph. 4:15)

Selective hearing and receiving can be seen throughout Matthew chapter 13. We are pointed to it as Jesus spoke to the multitudes only in parables, but after which, He concluded a parable, He "hinted" that a deep truth had just been revealed by saying: "**Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**" (v9) But when he was alone with the disciples, they came to Him, and they asked: "**Why speakest thou unto them in parables?**" (v10), and He said: "**Because IT IS GIVEN UNTO YOU TO KNOW** (to have a hearing ear for) **the MYSTERIES of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**" (v11) "**But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.**" (v16). "**All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.**" (v 34,35) Mysteries! Secrets! Hmmm, we're being told something to those who are given; "**...ears to hear...**"

Let's keep in mind that these disciples had already been called by Jesus as He already had said to them: "**...follow me...**" When He called, they dropped their fishing nets, and tools of their trade, to heed both that inner call, and the audible call as Jesus passed by. Although the disciples' behavior was not always "saintly," they did recognize, somehow, that there was a higher calling, and an exclusivity in what Jesus said: "**You didn't choose me. I chose you.**" (John 15:16)

Going back to Matthew 13, as we read verses 34, and 35, it seems to be a cruel statement to exclude the masses from knowing the depths of truth, as we use the thinking of the un-renewed mind; which we received in our Adam-natured lives while still in Babylon (organized religion). If we can understand the big picture, however, we realize the application of: "**For as in Adam ALL die, even so in Christ shall ALL be made alive. But every man in his own order...**" (1 Cor. 15:22, 23). Thus, we see this "ordering" as a "time for everything" as the writer of Ecclesiastes writes, and he summarizes by writing: "**To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time...**" (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 10, 11). For the present time of our "travail," we are being "**exercised**" as we: "**...press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of**

God in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:14). **"...in order that I may attain to the resurrection** (exanastasis = rising up out from the dead or first resurrection) **from the dead."** (Phil. 3:11).

This is the only place that the Greek word "exanastasis" is used in the entire New Testament.

Paul understood something here that's not normally understood, and he was "pressing" to be found worthy of it. Let's consider this, and do the same. It's not about a salvation (as wonderful as our salvation is), because it was completed at Calvary for **ALL**. It's about a higher calling, to be a "first-fruits," who are the "overcomers," the "called and chosen:"

"These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." (Rev. 14:14)

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Rev. 21:7) Think about that! Overcomers are SONS of God!

Did you realize that we have been commanded to **HEAR**? When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, our Father spoke from the cloud and said: **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; HEAR YE HIM."** (Mat. 17:5).

Jesus was given the authority by the Father to speak, and we're told to listen. Using today's vernacular as it would be with a sports team or a special operations team, the leader may start the instructions or command by saying; "Listen-up fellas..." What he is doing is conditioning or preparing the hearers to listen carefully, and in detail, to what will be said; because what is to follow is very important. It's beautiful how the Holy Spirit does the same with us and for us. As I had noted earlier at the time of my mother's funeral, the Lord gave to me John 5:25, and I came to a wonderful understanding of the first resurrection. A while back I was reading in Mark chapter 4. Jesus had just told about the lighting of a candle, so that thoughts and concepts can be brought to light, which are meant to increase our understanding; then He spoke these words: **"If any man have (spiritual) ears to hear, let him hear."** (v23). It caught my attention, and I began to read in a "deeper" manner to discover what may be the nuggets of truth that were embedded in these words. In the next verses Jesus said: **"Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given. For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. "** (v24, 25)

The "inner man" was telling me that there was something to be learned here, but I couldn't comprehend the fullness of it in the KJV, so I turned to other translations, which helped a little. But when I went to the NLT, the meaning jumped out! Consider these words: **"Then he added, "Pay close attention to what you (spiritually) hear. The closer you listen, the more understanding you will be given—and you will receive even more. To those who listen (carefully) to my teaching, more understanding will be given. But for those who are not listening (carefully), even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.""**

In His way, He was saying; "Listen-up guys." It supports John 5:25;

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and NOW IS, when the dead shall HEAR the voice of the Son of God: and they that HEAR shall live.”

“Because it is given unto YOU to know (or to have a spiritual hearing ear for) the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to THEM it is not given...” (Mat. 13:11). This should very strongly speak to our hearts. Our "spiritual ears" should be caused to “perk up” when a scripture is preceded or followed by a form of: ***“...he that hath ears, let him hear...”*** This admonition is given to ALL seven churches (ekklesia = the called out ones) in Revelation chapters 2 & 3, and by Jesus throughout the Gospels. As such, Jesus spoke of the "mysteries" of the kingdom of God as He did in the previously noted Mathew chapter 13 example. Paul, also, frequently wrote of the "mysteries" that had been revealed to him. It would do us a great good to perform a Bible word search on the subject of "mysteries" and a "hearing ear," and to study what is being taught in the context in which it is found.

The "bottom line" or summary of having a "hearing ear" is that; if we do "HEAR," we will be drawn to Jesus and His deeper truth.

On the other hand, ***“...for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them”*** (Mark 4:25 NLT), and they will have to wait their time at the second resurrection, or as it says: ***“...every man in his own order...”*** (1 Cor. 15:23)

A spiritual "hearing ear" for the “first-fruits” is absolutely needed in the "NOW" so that they that hear shall LIVE in the first resurrection which, for them, is NOW and onward. Our minds have been so calloused to the hearing of truth, because our thinking and predispositions have been programmed into us from our experiences in organized religion. If we compare this to children, who seem to be very open to learning new things, then we can understand why Jesus said: ***“Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”*** (Mark 10:15). Interesting! - and very blunt, may I add! As we have become older, and more "indoctrinated," (or programmed to think by organized religion) have we become more resistive to the truth? Are we more familiar and comfortable with man's contrivances which have twisted what scripture is spiritually telling us?

On the other hand, not all is lost, but in time; **ALL** will be saved, according to God's wonderful plan, but ***“...every man in his own order...”***

Here's another poem for our consideration that has been written by Corrie ten Boom. She was a prisoner in a German concentration camp, because her Christian family chose to protect, and hide Jews during World War 2. Her life attested to the miracles of God who brought her forth alive out from the concentration camp to be a witness to the world:

Life is But a Weaving

My life is but a weaving
Between my God and me.
I cannot choose the colors

He weaveth steadily.
Oft' times He weaveth sorrow;
And I in foolish pride
Forget He sees the upper
And I the underside.
Not 'til the loom is silent
And the shuttles cease to fly
Will God unroll the canvas
And reveal the reason why.
The dark threads are as needful
In the weaver's skillful hand
As the threads of gold and silver
In the pattern He has planned
He knows, He loves, He cares;
Nothing this truth can dim.
**He gives the very best to those
Who leave the work to Him.**

The Athenians called Paul a "babbling" when he presented the truth to them, and as he attempted to explain that their "religiosity" was what was driving them to seek strange "gods" (through their partaking from the "GOOD" side of the Tree of Knowledge). From his introductory words, Paul leveraged this thought so that he could present to them, Jesus, for whom they ignorantly sought. Paul said: ***"Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects (and so is most of Christendom still today). For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you."*** (Acts 17:22, 23).

Yes, our lives have been very religious, even as the Athenians' were, but we, likewise, worshipped in ignorance, but now we are told to "repent" (metanoeo) or take a new way of thinking, by ***"the renewing of your minds."***

THE DEAD SHALL HEAR AND LIVE

Part 3 of 3

Now we want to consider the third operative word in the text verse which is **"LIVE."**

Let's look at this text verse again, and ponder the great import of its meaning:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and NOW IS, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE." (John 5:25).

This is not a suggestion, but a command to live. It is similar to the actions taken by God at the creation of the heavens and earth.

And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light: and there was light. (Gen. 1:2-3).

“All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” (John 1:3-5).

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” (Hebrews 11:3).

Here, we can see through the creation that it was the moving of God’s spirit joined to the speaking of the Word that caused the heavens and earth to come into existence. So it is, also, ***the combination of Spirit AND Word that gives us life.***

Many years ago, my wife and I visited some friends who attend a very charismatic Pentecostal church with the usual ear-piercing music and such. During that visit, we attended some services with them. Due to the many intervening years, I don’t recall specifically what the sermon was about, but the text was from Titus 1:2 which says: ***“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began...”*** In this message, the preacher extolled the goodness and faithfulness of God, of which, God would not lie to us about such important matters of salvation, redemption, and blessings to be rich. Later, I remember remarking to my wife, that I didn’t think that the preacher had a grasp of the deeper message here, because whatever God says (as in the creation); must come into being, and in compliance with His nature. That is the real reason that God cannot lie, because whatever God says, it must come into being by the inherent power of speaking His Word!

“...I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure...” (Isaiah 46:9-10).

Our father Abraham had a grasp on this truth through faith, for it is written: ***“...he believed, even God, who quickeneth (makes alive) the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.”*** (Romans 4:17).

This “thread” of God making alive is throughout scripture. As previously noted, ***“And you hath he quickened (made alive), who were dead in trespasses and sins...”*** (Eph. 2:1). So we were dead in trespasses and sins (the first death, the death of Adam), but we were made “alive” (the first resurrection) by faith in Jesus Christ. Again, Paul addresses the cause as he writes: ***You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins.*** (Col. 2:13)

As we come to faith in Jesus Christ, we are revived, or made alive, from the death state which was a result of us being lowered into the death state of Adam: ***“For since by man came death... For as in Adam ALL die...”*** Also, ***“...by man came also the resurrection of the dead...even so in Christ shall ALL be made alive.”*** (1 Cor. 15:21, 22).

There is scriptural evidence that we existed as spirit beings in the long-ago misty past; for the book of Job alludes to it when God was putting His plan together, and asked Job where was he: ***“When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”*** (Job 38:7). We were purposefully lowered from that wonderful spiritual state to this present earthly state of futility and vanity to be tried and tested: ***“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be EXERCISED in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time...”*** (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 10, 11). Being **“exercised”** seems to be the plan for this present age of this earthly existence. Not only did the writer of Ecclesiastes refer to what man has to experience in his **“exercising,”** but the writer of Hebrews refers to it, and expands it, as we progress from the “milk” of the word to the “meat:” ***“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses EXERCISED to discern both good and evil.”*** (Hebrews 5:14). Again here: ***“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are EXERCISED thereby.”*** (Hebrews 12:11) Do you see the continuity in these verses as to why **“EXERCISING”** is needed? It’s to ***“...discern both good and evil...”*** and to ***“...yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness.”***

These “discernings” and “yielding to righteousness” are to be the outcomes of our ***“...growing up INTO Him in all things...”*** (Ephesians 4:15) which is why: ***“...we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are THE CALLED according to his purpose. For whom he did FOREKNOW, he also did PREDESTINATE to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren*** (that means us!!!).” (Romans 8:29, 30). Paul, again, refers to this thread of our pre-existence by writing: ***“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children (G-5206 - huiotesia - son placement - mature sons) by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...”*** (Ephesians 1:4, 5). This is why the Psalmist wrote: ***“Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations...Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men.”*** (Psalms 90:1, 3) Do you see it? - Our processing in this life’s journey; we are being RETURNED to our original state in Jesus Christ!

By reading these scriptures, it doesn’t appear that we are humans having a “spiritual experience”, but that we really are “spiritual beings having a human experience.” As such, it explains how that we were alive in God as spirit beings at some distant past, then lowered from that innocence into this fallen world (death state and subjected to ignorance) to become “overcomers” by the power of God in these physical bodies; over the obstacles (travails and exercises) placed upon us. Therefore, in our progression back into the spiritual, we have to learn through the natural: ***“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam (Jesus) was made a quickening (life giving) spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”*** (1 Cor. 15: 45 – 49).

In other words, the experiences and what we learn in this mortal world are our “road-signs” back to God.

Let us visit our text once again: “...and **they that hear shall LIVE.**” (John 5:25)

Those that “hear” shall “live” because Jesus said: **“For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth (makes alive) them; even so the Son quickeneth (makes alive) whom he will...For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself...”** (John 5:21, 26). There seems to be a qualifier in Jesus’ statement **“...the Son quickeneth (makes alive) whom he will...”** which seems to hint at a choosing or election at God’s sovereign discretion. It is further enforced by this verse: **“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”** (John 6:44).

Also, as we become aware of the **“voice of the Son of God,”** we realize that: **“...man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word from the mouth of God.”** (Mat 4:4 & Luke 4:4)

We, in effect, are being “consumed by His glory” (or being **“...swallowed up of life...”** (2 Cor. 5:4)), as we progress through our “travails” as we are **“EXERCISED”** out of our former state of death and rebellion, and into the fullness and likeness of Jesus Christ. This was the same progression that Jesus went through (in our behalf) by coming into this world through the womb of Mary (Mary = bitterness and/or rebellion). Also, Jesus did no miracles in His first 30 years, but only after he was baptized in the Jordan River (symbolic river of death). Upon His rising out of the river of death, He was pronounced to be the Son of God by a voice from heaven saying: **“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”** (Mat. 3:17) (This is, also, the Jewish rite of “adoption” (G-5206 - huiiothesia - son placement - mature sons) or the coming of age (30 years old) announced by a young Jewish man’s father to the city elders giving him full authority to conduct the family’s business.) As Jesus came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, which was His anointing. The writer John confirms that Jesus performed no miracles until after His anointing when writing about the wedding feast in Cana: **“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.”** (John 2:11). Until then, Jesus had no “voice” and no power of life, no authority; to impart until the anointing (Greek = Christos = anointed one) of the Holy Spirit at the River Jordan. Please remember that in the creation, it took the Word of God combined with the Spirit’s moving to bring it into being (Gen. 1: 2, 3).

In contrast: what Jesus is and who we are; we can see that His baptism was marked by the dove descending on Him, but our receiving of the Holy Spirit is marked by fire. Jesus, who knew no sin (He was born of the flesh, but not of Adam), did not need the purging of fire as we do, because we are the descendants of Adam. Fire in the Greek is “pyr” and is the root for “pure” or “purification” which we all need. This is why Peter wrote: **“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.** (1 Peter 4:12, 13).

"So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin (death) and alive to God through Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:11).

In Paul's analogy from 1 Cor. 15 where he writes; **"...And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly"** is the process that God is working in us; to take us from the natural into the spiritual. He has established the things of nature, or natural law, so that we can understand Him: **"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse..."** (Romans 1:20). Please note in the next verse Paul writes: **"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."** (Rom 1:21). Here we see, again, the words "vain" and "imaginations" associated with "darkness" or death.

When we came to faith in Jesus Christ, we began to realize that His spirit was resident, and was to enable the process of our awakening unto His life (Greek = G-2222 - zoe - life eternal, life of God). Several places throughout the New Testament, there are references to the seed of Christ. This is analogous to the seed of an earthly father uniting with the egg of the mother (conception), which starts a process of the growth in the dark womb. Many in Christendom confuse this with being "born-again," but it's not. The seed of life has been given, but some necessary growth (usually 9 months) is needed for the child (new life) to be survivable outside of the womb. Jesus told Nicodemus that being "born again" (actually "born from above" G509 – anōthen - from above, from a higher place, from God) was necessary to "see" or "comprehend" the kingdom of God. Jesus said: **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."** (John 3:6). But I think it is confused with the previous verse which says: **"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."** The "spirit" here is already understood as spirit, but the confusion is with the word "water."

Paul defines the "water" as being the word: **"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word..."** (Ephesians 5:26)

Peter, however, brings some more understanding by saying the born-again experience is by "the word of God."

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Peter 1:23)

James tells us that we are begotten (born) with the Word: **"Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."** (Jas. 1:18)

So we have here the incorruptible seed of Christ (spirit) being combined with the "Word" to bring about a new birth (a new realization). John writes it in his epistle this way: **"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."** (1 John 3:9).

Thus as in the text verse: **"... they that hear (the word) shall LIVE."** (John 5:25).

“So then faith cometh by HEARING, and HEARING by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17).

Those "elect" who have been "called and chosen" sense an inner call, a whispering if you please, to come out of superficial Christianity known as organized religion which seems to be so pervasive in today's religious world, and I think that it is a fulfillment of Revelation 18:4 where it says: **“Come out of her my people, and be not partakers of her sins.”** I struggled many years with this verse, but it says: **“my people,”** and apparently “we” (God's people) have been or currently are in the wrong place! This call to “come out” when presented to us by the Holy Spirit typifies the wrongly interpreted word used for the “church.” The word interpreted for “church” is “ekklesia” (ek = out & klesia = called). It's been there all the time in His word, but it's been blurred by the translation into English, and by its use by organized religion as "church" or "assembly". Furthermore, the true ekklesia is populated by His “saints” which is the Greek word “hagios” (G-40: implies "set apart" and therefore "different, distinguished, distinct" – i.e. "other," because of being special to the Lord), and we are to operate and behave as His “set apart” ones. Therefore, the “hearing ear” is a “spiritual ear;” that is attuned to what; the **“spirit saith.”** Again, the word “church” is much like a “pot luck” description to include any and all who “think” of themselves as Christians, but the messages in Revelation are directed to the **“called out” “set-apart”** ones, which are those who sense God's working in their lives to walk that deeper life in Him. **“Deep calleth unto deep”** (Psalms 42:7).

When hearing; as our Father is actively working within us, we will be like Paul who expressed that innermost desire which was put there only by the Holy Spirit: **“That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection (NOW).”** (Philippians 3:10). So often, we express this desire, but we don't follow on with the remainder of that verse which indicates to us about the abandonment to “self-will” which must be done: **“...and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death.”** This is the “second death” as related to the true believer while still in this physical life. Therefore, it is written: **“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches (ekklesia = called out); He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death (death to self).”** (Rev. 2:11).

For me, it has been a revelation, in a similar manner as Paul attempted to express in 1 Cor. Chapter 2 when he wrote in verses 6 & 7 these words: **“Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world...But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory...”** What a word: **“Glory.”** How many times have we been in a worship service and sang the hymn: *Oh, That will be Glory for Me?* And with that singing; we thought of flitting around on wings, in white night-gowns, playing golden harps, and with nothing meaningful to do for all of eternity.

“Oh, that will be glory for me,
Glory for me, glory for me,
When by His grace I shall look on His face,
That will be glory, be glory for me.”

But they were just words on a page at the time!!

Ahh! A mystery! We all love a mystery! Even Paul, who had many mysteries revealed to him, wrote with excitement: ***“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed...”***

A mystery is something that has been there all the time, but needs to be revealed or seen for what it really is!

Thus, it was for me, when I was reading in John chapter 5 in preparation of mother's funeral. After reading verses 28 & 29, I paused, and my first thought was: he's saying the same thing twice, but only differently. Then, the Spirit said: *“Read verse 25 again. Does it mention “grave” as did verse 28? What about the words “NOW IS,” - it's not mentioned in verse 28 or 29.”*

The “first resurrection” is a spiritual one, only. We ordinarily don't understand this unless it is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit, because we, naturally, are operating out of a carnal mind. In life's “travails,” however, we are currently being **“EXERCISED”** or ***“...transformed*** (metamorphoo) ***by the renewing of our mind.”*** (Rom 12:2) ***“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned... For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”*** (1 Cor. 2:14, 16).

Throughout this article, I've attempted to compare and contrast the words that involve our mind, thinking, imaginations, etc., and how these need to be renewed in order for us to be conformed **INTO** the image of Jesus Christ. If not corrected, wrong or incorrect thoughts become idols. ***“Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”*** (1 John 5:21).

The word “repentance” is another misunderstood word. We think of “repentance” having to be accompanied with great wailing, tears, and deep remorse, when the Greek word is “metanoeo” which means “to change one's mind for the better.” Jesus used this word when he came out of the wilderness of temptation and said: ***“Repent*** (metanoeo): ***for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*** (Mark 4:17). Hmm! Were they expected to fall on their faces, wail, and cry bitter tears of remorse at this message that the kingdom of God was nearby? No! Jesus was preaching the “Good News.” They were being told to think differently about the things that they had been taught. It is a Romans 12:2 type experience of a ***“...transformation*** (metamorphoo) ***by renewing your minds.”***

Can we really trust Him to complete His work in us? When we think that we've got it figured out, having put forth our plans, and mapped everything out for our lives; He, then, says to our inner man: ***Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding*** (our carnal common sense). ***In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*** (Proverbs 3:5, 6)

Beloved, this “working” in us, by the Holy Spirit and in conjunction with the Word, is now bringing us into **LIFE!** It is now very active within us so that: ***“... 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 **fullness of Christ**... so that we: "...may grow up **into** him in all things, which is the head, even Christ...if indeed you have **heard** Him and have been taught in Him, just **as truth is in Jesus**, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of **deceit**, and that you be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the **truth**. (Ephesians 4: 13 – 25).*

I leave you with this poem from the late Ray Prinzing, which is found in his article; *"Iniquity Shall Have an End."*

How marvelous the plan of God,
The appointment of His days,
Iniquity shall have an end,
Triumphant are all His ways.

Lawless shall bow to His working,
Perverseness shall have to cease,
With all the vessels of evil
Re-made as vessels of peace.

And those of "I never knew you,"
Because of iniquity,
Are born again as His children,
Out-working of love's mystery.

The wicked shall run no further,
Nor force their way past His plan,
For He who sits in the Heavens
Still orders the steps of man.

Adam's fall was planned in wise counsel,
And limited are evil's times,
With "afterwards" yet unfolding
When righteousness reigns sublime.

So let Him thrice overturn it,
And things shall not stay the same,
He comes, whose ruling is holy,
All earth shall yet praise His name!

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, THEY ARE SPIRIT, AND THEY ARE LIFE." (John 6:63)

BELIEVE IT!!

*At birth my parents chose my name;
When I, at that time, was born a "Ken,"
But when I learned the truth in Jesus Christ;
I was truly.... "born-again."*

Hallelu-YAH

May you be greatly blessed!

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