



The Calling of God

By A. Hinchliff

In Revelation 17:14 we read, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." This speaks of the battle that will take place at the end of this age between the Lord and the beast and his followers that are arrayed against Him. The Lord has many followers that are spoken of as being called, and chosen and faithful. This is the last great battle between the forces of evil and the Lord.

Being called, and chosen, and faithful are the three qualifications necessary for sonship.

There are many scriptures that speak of the calling of God. The Greek word that is translated called is "kletos" which means invited. Paul speaks of the Thessalonian church as being called or invited to partake of the glory of His kingdom. I Thessalonians 2:11 "As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."

Eph. 4:1-3 is an exhortation to walk worthy of that calling. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeav

ouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The call of God is unto holiness. I Thessalonians 4:7 "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

Our calling is because we have been "chosen;" chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. II Thessalonians 2:14 "Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." What a hope. We are called to obtain and partake of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. II Thessalonians 2:15 "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

I Peter 5:10 "But the God of all grace, who bath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." We have been called to His eternal glory, or as Philipps translates it, "to His eternal splendour." He warns us that there will be suffering. If not physical suffering we will suffer because we are troubled by the carnal nature. Look unto Him for His strengthening and settling power.

Paul, in I Corinthians 1:2, says, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all

that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:" That is the calling of the church.

Then in I Corinthians 1:9, he says, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. That is a tremendous and extraordinary calling. What a fellowship we are privileged to enter.

To help us understand how privileged we are Paul said this. I Corinthians 1:26 "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

Another word describing those who are called is chosen. When a person responds to God's call the relationship becomes closer and he is chosen. The word chosen is translated from the Greek word "eklektos" which means laid out, chosen or elect. In Matt. 20:16 and in Matt. 22:14 Jesus said that many are called but few are chosen. To be chosen requires a response on our part to the call of God.

Peter says to those who have accepted Christ as their Savior; I Peter 2:9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." His words put the believer in Christ in a special category. I pray that God will help us to appreciate that.

Israel was a chosen nation which is still evidenced today after many thousand years. God spoke to Israel in Exodus 19:5 "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

We find later on that because of Israel's sin and rebellion that God had in mind to destroy the whole nation. Exodus 32:9 "And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation."

This was Moses' great opportunity, but rather than take advantage of it he interceded for the nation of Israel. Exodus 32:11 "And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, for mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."

The following quotation describes the Spiritual state of the nation of Israel

at the time. Psalms 106:19 "They made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. They forgat God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea. Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them."

Concerning the church (the word church means "called out ones") Peter again says, I Fet--r 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, aye built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

Ananias prophesied to Paul how God had chosen him. Acts 22:12 "And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."

John also describes those with the Lord as being faithful. The Greek word translated "faithful" indicates steady, strict and thorough in the performance of duty. Paul writing in 1 Cor. 4:1 & 2 says this. I Corinthians 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

Jesus tells in Matt. 25 of the man who

was planning a long trip. He put his goods in the charge of his servants while he was away. Jesus told of how two of the servants doubled their masters money while he was gone but the third man dug a hole in the ground and buried the money he was responsible for. When the man returned he described the first two as faithful, servants and promised them the privilege of entering the joy of their lord. The third, who buried the money in his charge, was called a wicked and slothful servant. The money was taken from him and given to one of the others. What Jesus said here is very true in Spiritual matters. Vs. 29. "For unto every one that bath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." We are responsible for, and it is very important that we enter into, what God has made real to us by the Holy Spirit or we will lose even what we already have. We must be faithful.

In speaking of his own ministry, Paul says in I Timothy 1:12-14 "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who bath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." It is very important to our spiritual well being that we walk in such a way that God can call us faithful. Lord give us a faithful heart.

Christ is a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. Hebrews 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

I Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful i s he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Christ was faithful in the appointment given Him of His Father. Hebrews 3:1 "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house." We pray that we may be faithful in the appointment given us of our heavenly Father,

especially that given us by the laying on of hands and prophecy.

The elders of the churches must be faithful men as stated in I Tim. 3:1-7. Elders wives must also be faithful women. I Timothy 3:11 "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." In fact all wives are expected of God to be faithful.

Let us hear the exhortation of John

the apostle in Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Praise God.

The Power of Words

By F.T. Paterson

Words have a tremendous power to build up or tear down; can be full of deadly poison or wonderful blessing. **James 3:8-12** "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh." How can we who are inhabited by the Holy Spirit and adopted into the family of God bring forth both bitterness and blessings? From our innermost being should flow a mighty river of blessing. **John 7:38** "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." What is the source of the bitter or sweet water that proceeds from our mouth? I don't believe I need to elaborate on the source of the stream that issues forth from our mouth. Bitterness comes from the author of bitterness which is the enemy of our soul. Blessings issue forth from our Heavenly Father. I believe very strongly that we have the ability to reject bringing forth negative words which tear down and instead to bring forth blessing with our words. If we would not utter destructive words that tear down, but rather speak words that edify and build up, how much better it would be. Not only would we bring blessing to the body of Christ but would be blessed ourselves. **Ps 34:12-13** "Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil

and your lips from speaking lies." (NIV)

The fast chosen of the Lord is to break the yoke and set the captive free. Words that tear down can in themselves be a yoke of bondage to those they are directed at and can hinder answers to prayer. **Isa. 58:9** "Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. **If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity**"; I am convinced that if we do as Jesus told us we can turn bitterness to a blessing for ourselves and the person who has the bitterness against us. Matt 5:44 "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you"; If we pray for those who hold bitterness against us the situation will begin to change: not only for the person who holds the bitterness against us but our attitude toward that person will change. It is hard to be at odds with someone you are praying for.

The time to deal with hurts that others bring against us is before they become so deeply ingrained that they consume us. Every evil concept comes first as a thought looking for a place to inhabit. If we reject the thought it will have no place to abide and will just fade away; if we keep on thinking about the problem it will begin to take over our thought-life and in the end will become so great an issue that we have no control over it. If we keep on entertaining slights and hurts they will progress from thought to word and from word to actions which have the power to affect another person's reputation and life. **Eccl 11:10** "Therefore remove sor

row from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." As the scripture tells us, remove sorrow from our hearts. I am convinced that this is possible; it is not easy but with the help of the Holy Spirit I believe it is possible. A 'porcupine quill is a good example of this. The quill is constructed in such a manner that it will not come out because there are barbs that hold it in and they cause the quill to keep moving inward. If you pull them out when they first go in it is much easier to remove than if you wait until they have progressed inward. It is then a major operation to remove them and if you do not remove them they will keep on getting deeper until they are completely inside the body. They could even reach a major organ and cause death. I remember as a child that our dogs would get a blast of quills in their mouths and how painful it was to remove them. At that time I was told that the quills must be taken out because they could keep on going in until they reached the brain. Matt 5:25 "**Agree with thine adversary quickly**, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison." Bitterness and hurts of all kind are easier to deal with if we do not let them get a foot-hold in our lives.

Evil Speaking

When you talk against someone it may seem just words, but they are poisonous and have the power of destruction not only to the other person but to yourself and to the whole body. Gossip and talking against someone are not just words, the bible calls it evil speaking. **1 Cor 15:33** "Be not de-

ceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Eph 4:29-32 "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Speaking against someone is a very serious matter. It is not just words but a verbal sword of assassination. Ps55:20-21 "This friend of mine betrayed me--I who was at peace with him. He broke his promises. His words were oily smooth, but in his heart was war. His words were sweet, but underneath were daggers." (TLB) **Matt 5:22** "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty { enough to go } into the fiery hell." (NAU) **Prov 6:16-19** "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A **false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.**"

Criticism

Criticism is insidious in as much as often there will be no defense against it, because generally it is not directed personally but against someone else. Rumours then circulate without the maligned person even being aware of it. Friends and neighbors seem distant, seemingly without any reason. The criticism does not even have to be true, but if an innuendo is made at least some people will believe it: Misinformation is used by self interest groups to state their point of view. If it is said enough times people will believe and accept it as a true fact. Some might ask, is there no constructive criticism? Yes, certainly there is, but in order for it to be constructive the person being criticized must be the only one spoken to about the matter. A good example of constructive criticism is concerning church discipline. **Matt 18:15-17** "Moreover

if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that **in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.** And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." A charge should not be accepted unless there are two or three witnesses. We are first to go by ourselves and talk to our brother; if it is true and the brother repents, that should be the end of it. If it is true and he will not repent then two or three should go to him and talk person to person. I have noticed that when this happens that there are two sides to the story and when you hear the explanation from the person you can understand the reason for him doing what he did, and you may be able to settle the matter with godly counsel. There may be times when you are criticized person to person. Even if the charge is true you may feel it is unfair, but the onus is on you to listen and change your ways. If the charge is untrue and the person who makes the accusation will not believe it, all we can do is to ask God for grace to help us.

Complaining

Discouragement is often the catalyst that brings on complaining and even though we are aware that it does no good to complain, it gives us a venue to vent our discouragement. This sets up a cycle that is never satisfied; we complain because we are discouraged and then are discouraged because we complain. Not only is complaining brought on by discouragement, but discouragement brings a lot of other friends with it; fear, depression, disappointment, sickness and drawing back from fellowship, none of which is of any help at all. **Num 21:2-5** "And Israel vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah. And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because

of the way. And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread." After the mighty deliverance that Israel enjoyed they were still discouraged because of the journey that still lay before them. I am sure the road through the desert was not an easy way but God supplied every need that they had. They had forgotten the hard labour and meager rations back in Egypt and focused on the present hardships. They forgot that back in Egypt they were slaves. While the road may have been hard they were free because God had delivered them from slavery. May God help us to learn things could be worse! The result of discouragement was that they began to complain; they talked against Moses and against God, even despising the manna that was supplied to them every morning. Discouragement looks for someone to blame and will make unreasonable statements. I once read a plaque which said "Frustration is having no one to blame but yourself." At a time of discouragement fellowship is of utmost importance, because the Spirit of God working through another member of the body can lift us out of discouragement by the power of the words of encouragement.

We have talked about the power of words spoken against others and their negative effects; yet there is a power greater than all the evil, poisonous words. It is time to turn our attention toward overcoming the power of those negative words.

Forgiveness

When we have something against someone or they have something against us, how do we overcome this? Forgiveness is the key that will open the door of restoration between saints. **Matt 6:12** "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." **Matt 6:14-15** "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Mark 11:24-26 "Therefore I say unto you, **What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.** And when ye stand praying, **forgive, if ye have ought against any:** that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your

trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." These scriptures are very plain in that God expects us to forgive. We often quote, "Whatsoever things ye desire when ye pray believe and ye shall have them." Yet following in the next verse it tells us that when we pray we should forgive so that God can forgive us. It must mean therefore that we must forgive so that He can forgive the un-forgiveness that is in our heart. The scripture tells us how many times we are to forgive **Luke 17:4** "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." **Matt 18:21-22** "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." In other words there is no limit. Is any trespass too great to forgive? No; for if God forgave us when we were sinners, and His enemies, surely we have an obligation to forgive these who wrong us. **Matt 18:35** "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." **Col 3:13** "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." I would like to quote some select passages from the article "Three words that heal" written in the July 1995 issue of the Readers Digest. "I forgive you, could be the most powerful thing you'll ever do. To forgive doesn't mean to give in; it means to let go. Once you forgive you are no longer emotionally handcuffed to the person who hurt you." A quote from Robin Casarjian author of Forgiveness: "A Bold Choice for a Peaceful Heart" who managed to forgive the man who raped her. "It doesn't matter whether someone deserves forgiveness; you deserve to be free." It doesn't mean you're wrong because you forgive someone, it simply means you are letting go of the bondage and hurt that un-forgiveness brings. Not only are we to forgive those who we have something against, but also those who hold a grudge against us. **Matt 5:23-24** "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave

there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer the gift." Differences sometimes come between saints because we turn our search light on the lives of others. This is wrong, as we do not have the right to judge another. The only time we have the right to judge is when another Christian sins, and then only to restore them, not reject or condemn them. **Gal 6:1** "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such as one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." **Matt 7:1-5** "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in throe own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of throe eye; and, behold, a beam is in throe own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of throe own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." The only one we have the right to judge is ourselves. When we partake of the communion we are to examine ourselves. **1 Cor 11:28** "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." When we say or do things against someone, we are not discerning the Lord's body and are eating and drinking unworthily. This will cause disunity and will affect the measure of health in the body. **1 Cor 11:29** "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." The parable of the good Samaritan is a wonderful example of forgiveness, **Luke 10:30-35**, The Samaritans and the Jews were bitter enemies. I have read that they even cursed each other in their prayers. The man set upon by thieves was a Jew and as he lay wounded by the side of the road he was passed by a Levite, and a Jewish priest. Neither one helped him. A Samaritan, who was his enemy, came upon him and bound up his wounds and took him to an inn to be cared for. Even though they were enemies the Samaritan had enough forgiveness in his heart

to overcome his bitterness. Both Jesus and Stephen forgave as they were dying at the hands of cruel men. **Luke 23:34** "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots." **Acts 7:59-60** "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." It is the carnal nature that gets hurt and refuses to forgive. It is the Spirit of God that is able to give us the grace to forgive. If we keep going over and over the hurt it will become ingrained in us until it is very hard to overcome. One thing I know, there is no help in dwelling on the problem. Only as we are able to forget are we able to get on with our lives. The Apostle Paul found this to be true in his life. **Phil 3:13-14** "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Paul could have wallowed in bitterness over the events of his life, but he chose rather to forget than keep remembering. **2 Cor 11:24-27** "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in they city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." God help us to overcome the bitterness of the past and press on the blessing of forgiveness. When someone comes to us to ask forgiveness, we are to accept it and let them know that they are forgiven; not just say "That's OK" or some other non-committal statement.

Words of blessing Apologies

When someone apologizes we owe them our forgiveness, and it is important to verbalize our response so there is no doubt that they understand we do forgive them. "I forgive you, "is a pow

erful statement because it leaves no doubt in a person's mind as to what it means. Of course if we say it, we should be sincere or it will do more damage than if we say nothing. Let our acceptance of an apology be both in word and in action, for we can say we forgive and yet demonstrate by our manner that there is no forgiveness. The word of apology will be a blessing to the one who apologizes and to the one who accepts the apology.

Thank You

"Thank you" or "Thanks" is a simple statement that most of us have been taught to say from childhood, yet it is easy to forget as we grow older. When someone does something for us it makes that person feel good when we acknowledge it with a word of thanks. This is especially true when there is an apology. It lets that person know that we appreciate their apology. Thank you, puts a closure to the situation. This might be somewhat off the subject but it has to do with thanks. When we minister in word or music and people appreciate it they will congratulate us. This might cause us to wonder how to answer them because we feel it would be lifting us up in pride if we agree with them. If someone has been blessed by what we did, especially in the Spirit, I do not believe it is pride if we thank them for the compliment. Our acknowledging the compliment should not make us feel in any way superior or that we are extra talented; only that we blessed the person. A simple thank you removes your embarrassment and acknowledges your appreciation of the compliment.

Encouragement

To be appreciated is a basic human need. It is one reason we find it a joy to do something for someone who appreciates what we do for them. I well remember when I was first beginning to minister how much I appreciated those who encouraged me. It was not always saying how good it was, but there was also exhortation on how I could be more effective, and guiding me when I got off the track. It was not a scolding, but was done in love. As I look back now I realize just how much I appreciate those words of encouragement. Sometimes the carnal nature will try to upset us when this happens and we may smart a bit, but if we will take heed it will mature us.

Prov 22:6 "Train up a child in the

way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." God has given us, as parents, an awesome responsibility when it comes to raising children. We are to nurture and teach them the things of God. This is not always done with the rod of correction, but of course, that is needful at times also. To encourage a child will bear more fruit than to ridicule and downgrade them. To constantly remind them of their mistakes, criticize and condemn them, will not bear good fruit either. **Eph 6:4** "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." To a large extent our children learn as much, or more, by observing our manner of life; demonstration is a great teacher.

Children learn what they live

If a child lives with criticism he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility he learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement he learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise he learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness he learns justice.

If a child lives with security he learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval he learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship he learns to find love in the world.

Author unknown.

I know that these words are good for children but would it not be wonderful if this was the way it was in our workplace, in our relations with one another, between husband and wife and as members of the body of Christ.

To live above the saints we love, Oh!

That will be glory,

To live below with saints we know, now that's a different story.

Speaking in tongues

1 Cor 14:2-4 "For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself;

but he that prophesieth edifieth the church." Speaking in tongues should be an normal part of our Christian life. Although we do not understand the words we are speaking in the Spirit to God, we are building ourselves up. These words, though they are incomprehensible to us, have great power in our Christian lives. **Rom 8:26** "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: **but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us** with groanings which cannot be uttered." I cannot stress too much the avenue of praying in tongues; it is a direct prayer link to the Father. It is available to every blood-washed Christian as a part of our spiritual inheritance. Act 2:3839 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." If you have not been filled with the Holy Spirit and are not able to speak in tongues let me make you aware it is a glorious experience that you are able to enter into. **Luke 11:13** "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The carnal mind will come up with many arguments as to why the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for today, but do not accept them. There are countless Christians today who have been filled with the Spirit and many more who are seeking to be filled. Praise God, they also will be filled, for this wonderful promise is available to all the Lord our God shall call.

Jesus Name

John 14:14 "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." There is power in the name of Jesus and the scriptures tell us that we have authority to use the name of Jesus. **Mark 16:17** "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;" How ever the name of Jesus is not a panacea to be used indiscriminately without reverence or proper understanding of the power of that name. Matt 7:21-23 "Not every one 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. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied **in thy name?** and in thy **name** have cast out devils? and in thy **name done many wonderful** works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." To be led by the Spirit is to do the will of the Father, to use the name of Jesus in any other way is not doing the will of the Father. Doing the will of the Father will not glorify us, but will lift up and glorify the Father. John 15:7-8 "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." It is as we abide in Christ that we are able to do the works of Christ and because we abide in Him it is not our will or our works. **John 14: 13-14** "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." **John 14:12** "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." This is a precious promise and one might think that if we do the same works, and even greater, it would be **our** works; but it is possible only because we are abiding in the vine. **John 15:4-5** "Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." One can shout and declare **Jesus' name** but unless we are asking from a surrendered, Spirit-filled life, I am afraid that we will not see the full blessing and power of His precious name. Thank God for the many times we have seen the hand of God move as we have declared that wonderful name. As we see the many needs among us, and in the world, we become more aware of the tremendous need in the church to enter into the full authority of the **Name of Jesus**.

The Lord bless you

There are instances in the word of God where blessing was bestowed from

one person to another. The following scripture is often used as a benediction and is what God told Moses to have Aaron bless the people. **Num 6:23-27** "Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." It is quite common among Christians to say 'God bless you' without really thinking what it means. We do have the right to bless one another and when we do let us realize that the person blessed is really blessed. It is the Christ within the person who is blessing, and the one receiving the blessing who is blessed of God. When Jesus sent His disciples out to the countryside He empowered them to leave their peace on those who accepted them and take it from those who did not receive them. **Luke 10:56** "And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again." Some of the synonyms for bless are; to bestow upon someone honour, favour and grace. So we are actually bestowing the favour of God upon those to whom we say "God bless you." Prov 10:22 "The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

Love

Love abides when all else has failed **1 Cor 13:13** "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.

But the greatest of these is love." (NIV) The essential nature of God is love. **1 Jn 4:16** "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." The fruit of the Spirit is love Gal 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." As we partake of the divine nature we partake of the love of God, and as we walk in that love the love of God is shed abroad in our heart. **Rom 5:5** "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is

given unto us." All these scriptures point to the fact that we can enter into and walk in the experience of love. It is important for us to realize that we cannot capture the love of God and keep it to ourselves. Love is meant to be shared with others. We are to love the unlovable, to minister to those which society rejects. This was the basis of Jesus' ministry. **Luke 4:18** "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised," Love is a word of Spiritual power. As with the word of Spiritual blessing we can impart to those with whom we come in contact with a measure of God's love. Love has many levels and shades of meaning from Agape love, God's love, to Phileo which can be translated as tender affection or the relationship between family and friends, to Eros or erotic affection between people. In the Spirit, as we mature we will enter into the experience of Agape love. Some are able to display a measure of God's love which is very genuine, while others, even though they say the same words, do not come across with the same sincerity.

Men malign the church today because of the lack of the experience of God's word in Christians. This is because of the example shown to the world. **2 Cor 3:2-3** "ye are our epistle written in our hearts, know **and read of all men:** Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." The power of the word of God will only be displayed to the world by the church's example, not just by what she says. **Eph 3:10** "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God," Too often what the world sees is disunity and hypocrisy. Only as our lives measure up to what the word of God declares will we be able to overcome this perception and become the light of the world. O Lord, I pray as the Psalmist: **Ps 19:14** "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."