



The Pattern

By Markus T. Hansen

In the beginning of this present move of the Spirit, God revealed that He was about to begin the process of preparing a people to rule and reign with His Son, Jesus Christ when He returns to this earth. When Christ returns, He will be joined with His bride, the Church, and then His Kingdom will be established here on this earth.

We have learned that even now, the Kingdom of God is being brought into existence by a company of Spirit led people who are living according to the principles outlined in the sermon on the mount, (Matthew 5, 6 & 7) and who are building their lives according to God’s pattern for the Church.

The Greek word for Church is “Ekklesia” meaning “called out ones.” Abraham was the first called out one as recorded in Genesis 12:1. “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee.” Hebrews 11:10 says that Abraham: “looked for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.” In 1948 God called a small company of people out of every religious denomination and organization to walk in a new way, the way of the Holy Spirit. God called us to leave behind the traditions of men and build our lives on the foundation laid by Jesus Christ according to the pattern He was about to reveal. The purpose of this article is to review what this pattern is.

Before delving into what God’s pattern for His Church is, let us look at what it is NOT. The Church of the living God is NOT a building. It is NOT a political organization ruled by man, it is NOT a democratic organization, i.e. rule by the people. It is NOT a top-down organization where one man is in control. It is NOT man’s invention.

Rather, the Church is a theocracy, which means

rule by God. Theocracy was the system of government in which a high priest and elders ruled the commonwealth of Israel until the election of Saul as King. When the Israelites demanded an earthly king so they could be like the neighbouring nations, they forfeited Kingdom rule for the rule of man. This in turn was the beginning of the demise of Israel as a nation.

Jesus made a very interesting statement after the mother of James and John requested if her two sons could be seated on either side of Jesus in His Kingdom. You will find the event recorded in Matthew 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-45. Jesus said it was not possible to grant this request. Then Jesus said: “You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different” (Matthew 20:25-26 NLT). What Jesus is trying to convey to His disciples is that the government of the Kingdom of God is different than rulership in the world. In society today the talented, educated, wealthy, privileged and connected are at the top of society ruling with prestige and power. Lower level officials rule those below them and at the bottom of society, the uneducated, poor, disadvantaged and disabled suffer at the hands of those above them. This is not God’s pattern for His Church nor the structure

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of the Kingdom of God when it will be fully established here on this earth.

Since God's pattern for the church is not man's invention, let us look at what it is.

After many centuries the Jewish people with no land to call their own, rose from the ashes in May 14, 1948 and was again recognized by the world as an independent nation. However, it emerged as a democratic nation ruled by the people, not by God. Providentially and in God's divine foresight spiritual Israel also arose in 1948. God began to restore His Kingdom on this earth with the outpouring of His Holy Spirit in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, God quickened and renewed many truths that had been lost during the dark ages. In addition new revelation began to unfold. The truths about the coming together of the Body of Christ was revealed and how His people would come together out of every denomination, every organization and every sect so that eventually there would only be one Church on the earth. Teachings on the impartation of Spiritual gifts were given so that ministries might spring forth and function in the Body of Christ. Then came teaching on the different levels of authority and rulership in the Church followed by the truths concerning the restoration of Apostles and Prophets, the order of the local Church governed by elders and the order of the home. The Holy Spirit also made it very clear that the Church of the Living God is a living organism, not a human organization.

Fundamental to the teaching about God's pattern for the Church is the fact that the revelation of this pattern did not come from the mind of man. It was not invented by theologians, intellectualists or political scientists. David wrote in Psalms 127:1, "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain." It was the Holy Spirit that revealed the pattern of God's Church even as King David wrote how God had given him the plans for the tabernacle by the Spirit. "Take heed now; for the LORD hath chosen thee to build an house for the sanctuary: be strong, and do it. Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy seat, and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things" (I Chronicles 28: 10-12).

So it was that in the early years of this precious move of the Holy Spirit that God in His sovereignty began to unfold His Pattern for His Church through

prophecy and prophetic teaching.

At the beginning of the present move of the Spirit three very important principles were revealed that underpin all truths of God's Kingdom. They are:

1. All of God's people are equal in His sight. In the world, those that rule, the wealthy, educated, talented and privileged are at the top and the poor and uneducated are at the bottom of society. It is a top-down or vertical system of recognition. The higher your position, the more important you are. However, God looks at His people as though they are on a horizontal plane. In the Kingdom of God, the educated, wealthy, talented, poor and disabled are ALL equal and important in God's sight. The Apostle Paul in his teaching on the Body of Christ used the human body to emphasize that every part of the body is important to every other part and no part is more important than the other; they just have different responsibilities and roles. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Corinthians 12:27). God does impart different gifts and mantles of responsibilities upon individuals but this does not elevate one above another. When the other ten disciples heard that James and John were looking to be elevated to a higher position than themselves, they were indignant. It will not be so in God's Kingdom. "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another. Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last" (Isaiah 48:11-12). Self promotion does not belong in the Church. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3). Therefore, it is paramount that we do not allow thoughts to arise in our hearts that our position in the Church or our ministry is any more important or special than any other member of the body of Christ.

2. We are not to put titles in front of our names or on what God is doing. We are not to call ourselves "Reverend", "Pastor.....", "Evangelist..." etc. When we put a title in front of our name we elevate ourselves above those around us. "But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ" (Matthew 23:8-10 NKJ). We were instructed to address each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord. As well, the Holy Spirit revealed that we were not to put a name on what Christ

is doing in this present move of the Spirit. Putting a name on what God is doing causes division amongst believers. “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (I Corinthians 1:10). God hates anything that fosters division amongst His believers. If asked where we worship on Sundays, we can say “the Church at {city name}. For example, “the Church at Vancouver.” “I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea” (Romans 16:1). And, “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth” (I Corinthians 1:2). “Global Missions Inc.” is not the Church, it is not the move of the Spirit, it a name chosen to meet Canadian government regulations in order to register as a non-profit society.

3. We are to be servants of all. “But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:27-28 NLT). There is only one Lord and King and that is Jesus Christ. Even Jesus, King of Kings and Lord of Lords said: “For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:35-45). Jesus emphasized this point very clearly when He by example washed the disciples feet. See John 13: 3-5. Notice that it was Jesus that:

- rose from the table,
- took His garments off,
- wrapped the towel around His waist,
- poured water into the basin,
- bent down and washed the disciples feet and
- wiped the disciples feet.

Though Jesus is the Son of God, the High Priest and the Head of the Church, He: “being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:6-7). Therefore, in whatever capacity we may be asked to serve in the Church we must always keep in mind our calling is to serve, not to lord it over others.

FOUR LEVELS of AUTHORITY and RULERSHIP

The pattern of God’s Church incorporates four levels of authority and rulership. The first being in the Heavens, second the Universal Church, third the

Local Church and fourth the Home. Each level of rulership is governed by elders. The word ‘elders’ is not a word invented in 1948 when this move of the Spirit began. The word ‘elders’ is mentioned early in Numbers 11:16. “And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.”

In Exodus 3:16 you can read how Moses sent for the ELDERS to announce the deliverance from Egypt. Also in Leviticus 4:15, it mentions that the ELDERS were to lay their hands on the bullock before it was offered for the sins of the people. Deuteronomy 19:12 mentions that there were ELDERS of cities. We see that ELDERS have been used by God in governing His people for many, many centuries including the New Testament Church and it is the pattern to follow in the Church today.

Notice the word, ‘officers’ in Numbers 11:16 quoted above. What does this infer? According to the dictionary officers are people in authority, “a person holding a position of command or authority, a holder of a public, civil, or ecclesiastical office.” In the Bible, elders were men who were given authority over their subjects.

The plural form of the word elder is mentioned 177 times in the Bible and in the singular form only 20 times. When used in the singular form it is a writer referring to himself, about a fellow elder or about the qualifications of an elder. In the context of authority in the Church, it is always plural. The “s” on the end of the word elder, indicates plurality, more than one.

There is a reason for plurality in eldership in the Church. It is to prevent judgments being made based on the biases of an individual elder. Down through history there have been thousands of recorded cases of every imaginable kind of abuse to individuals because one man has had absolute power. Lord Acton in 1887 wrote the following: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” How true this statement is. History tells us that it is dangerous to have one man in charge and to be allowed to make all decisions. It will never be so in the Church. There is only one chief in the Church and that is Jesus Christ. There is only one chief elder and that is Jesus Christ. In God’s Church there is no chief apostle, no chief traveling or local elder, no chief deacon, no chief prophet, no chief teacher, no chief evangelist, no chief singer, etc!

Let us now turn our attention to the four levels of rulership in God’s Church.

1. THE HEAVENS

“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6-7 NKJV).

The government of the Church rests on the shoulders of Jesus. He is the one that is setting the Church in order. He is establishing and bringing increase to His rulership here on this earth. The whole weight of the Church rests on the shoulders of Christ. Glory Alleluia.

Jesus is the High Priest, the “LORD” and head of the Church. About Jesus, Paul writes: “And He is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell” (Colossians 1:18). Christ is also the chief corner stone of His Church. “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:19-20). Being Christ is the head and chief corner stone of the Church, all dominion and power belongs to Him. “To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (Jude 1:25). Since Jesus Christ is supreme and holds ultimate authority over the Church we are ALL subject unto Him.

2. THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

Though Jesus is the head of the Church, He has given the responsibility of establishing, governing and guiding the Universal Church on this earth to His Apostles. The Greek word for apostle means, “one sent out.” Early in Christ’s ministry He selected twelve men from His disciples (followers) and named them apostles. “Afterward Jesus went up on a mountain and called out the ones he wanted to go

with him. And they came to him. Then he appointed twelve of them and called them his apostles. They were to accompany him, and he would send them out to preach” (Mark 3:13-14). As previously mentioned, for centuries God has governed his people through elders. Peter, one of the twelve Apostles wrote: “The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed” (I Peter 5:1). The twelve Apostles that Jesus choose were “elders sent out.” In this day we refer to those who God has laid the mantle of responsibility of overseeing the universal Church as ‘traveling elders.’ Being ‘sent out’ means that their responsibility goes to local assemblies of believers and beyond to the universal Church.

It is the traveling elders who lay the foundation, govern, receive revelation and ordain new elders and deacons. The Apostle Paul wrote: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon” (I Corinthians 3:10), and “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:19-20). Traveling elders have many other responsibilities as shepherds over the universal Church. They receive and teach revelation, keep revelation pure, admonish, encourage, judge and when necessary apply discipline.

Traveling elders are also responsible for the economy of the Church. A percentage of the tithes collected at the local Church level is forwarded for the administration of the universal Church. It is used to help the needy in areas where there is no local Church, for traveling and living expenses of the traveling elders and deacons and other administrative costs. This pattern of collecting and administrating the tithes was the pattern for the economy of the nation of Israel before Saul was appointed king. And, it will be the pattern by which the Kingdom of God will administer its economy when it is fully established here on this earth.

Traveling deacons are men indicated by God and ordained by the traveling elders to help in God’s work over the universal Church. The Greek word for deacons is ‘diakonos’, meaning one who helps. In this context, the word ‘deacons’ refers to disciples of Christ who are called to serve with the elders of the universal church in a variety of ways; for reference see Act 6:1-7, Acts 16:1-5 and Philippians 1:1. Traveling deacons are subject to the traveling elders and

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often are asked to oversee a particular area.

There are also ‘helpers’ to the traveling elders who are often working men as well as elders in a local Church. From time to time they are asked to help minister beyond their local assembly when requested by the traveling elders.

3. THE LOCAL CHURCH

The third level of authority and responsibility rests upon elders and deacons of a local Church.

The Apostle Paul wrote about establishing elders in every city in Acts 14:10-23 and 20:17. Also in Titus 1:5 he wrote: “for this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city.”

Local elders are shepherds to a local assembly of believers. “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (I Peter 5:2-3 NIV). A good shepherd leads his flock, he does not drive them. Other responsibilities include teaching apostles doctrine, encouraging, protecting, judging and when necessary applying discipline. An elder never judges a situation on his own, he is part of the “elder-ship.” All situations must be carefully reviewed by all the elders and a consensus reached before a judgment is made or steps of disciple are exercised.

Elders are also responsible for the local Church economy. Though deacons often collect the tithes, they may also be asked to keep books of accounting. However, it is the elders who are responsible and accountable before God for the administration of the tithes.

Local elders and deacons do not receive a salary from the Church. They are working men until they retire from their chosen career. Deacons are to be in submission to the local elders. It is vitally important that deacons work with the elders in every regard.

The qualifications of elders and deacons can be found in the following scriptures:

- I Timothy 3:1-7, I Peter 5:1-3, Titus 1:6-9

The qualifications of elders wives can be found in I Timothy 3:11. Though women do not hold an office in the Church, they carry a very important supportive role alongside their husbands. “Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him” (Genesis 2:18 NLT).

Local elders and deacons of the local churches all come under the authority of the traveling elders and deacons. The jurisdiction of local elders does not extend beyond the local Church.

4. THE HOME

The fourth level of authority and rulership is the home. In the home, the father and mother parallel the roles of the elder and deacon of the Church and as such, the home is a micro-church emulating the way the Church operates in many ways. Daily family devotions strengthen the family bond and build Christian character into a child. Also it is a time set aside to prepare children for a greater responsibility of participating in the local Church meeting as they mature. Parents are charged by God to bring up their children in the ways of the Lord. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). Parents are to care for, protect, teach, direct and admonish their children. When a child is disobedient, his/her actions need to be judged by the parents and discipline applied if necessary. But bear in mind what Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:4 NIV: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” and Colossians 3:21, “Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.”

The home is the building block of the Church and subsequently it is vitally important that the home be set in order. There must be unity in the home otherwise there will not be unity in the Church. The wife is to be in submission to her husband and the husband is to love his wife like Christ loved the Church and was willing to give His life for the Church (Ephesians 5: 22-33). Children are to be obedient to their parents just as each member of the body of

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Christ is expected to obey those set in authority over them (Ephesians 6:1-3). This is God's pattern for the home! When children become adults they most often model themselves after the way their parents conducted themselves. If parents demonstrate love towards each other, if the wife respects and honours her husband as her head, if daily family devotions is the norm and attending the local Church is a priority, then when children become adults they will follow the same pattern. Do not be fooled into thinking children do not see what is going on in the home. Children watch every move parents make and they are very sensitive to the spirit of the home!

When a young person leaves home they come under the headship of the local elders and deacons of their local Church. However they are still required to honour and respect their parents. "Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:2-3).

Tithing is not an option, it is a commandment of the Lord and must be practiced by every member of the Body of Christ. A man who does not tithe is robbing God and cannot expect God's blessing upon his life or his family. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:8-10). We should never say we can't afford to tithe, we should always have the attitude that we can't afford not to tithe. That is right, tithing is as spiritual as prophesying in the local meeting.

HOW ARE ELDERS AND DEACONS INDICATED?

Elders, deacons and helpers are indicated by the Holy Spirit and ordained by the traveling elders. They are not elected by the people. The Bible says, "a gift maketh room for him" (Proverbs 18:16). It is the gifts of God operating in a man's life and his WALK that indicates that a man is qualified to hold an office. To be an elder or a deacon is not a human aspiration, it is a spiritual calling. It is a divine appointment and carries with it great responsibility.

I Timothy 3:1 reads as follows: "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop (elder), he desireth a good work." If you are living and walking by the Spirit and you minister faithfully according to the gifts and ministries prophesied over you, you may have a witness in your heart about someday

servicing the Lord in the capacity of a deacon or an elder. This is not a bad thing, it is a good thing. Jesus said: "Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.' Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field" (Matthew 9:37-38). God needs good workmen in the house of God. However, we do not volunteer to be an elder or deacon! You do not need to go to bible college or have a degree in theology to qualify to be an elder or a deacon. Consider the twelve Apostles that Jesus choose; not one was a Scribe, a Pharisee, a Sadducee, nor from the upper echelons of the Jewish ruling class. They were working men, some fishermen, one even a tax collector. God has a way of preparing a man for an office in the Church. If you have a shepherd's heart be patient and wait God's appointment. It is your gifts and faithfulness that will make room for you if it is God's intention that you are to carry an office in the Church.

SUMMARY

At the beginning of this article the second paragraph reads as follows: "The Kingdom of God is being brought into existence by a company of Spirit led people who are living according to the principles outlined in the sermon on the mount, (Matthew 5, 6 & 7) and who are building their lives according to God's pattern for the Church." If that is the case and I believe it is so with all my heart, then we are enjoying the one thing the whole world is seeking and that is PEACE!

Deep within the inner recesses of the heart of every mother and father is the desire for peace. Peace for themselves, peace with their children and peace with their neighbour. As God's pattern for the Church is being established here on this earth, eventually the day will come when the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. Then every problem and trouble of mankind will be eliminated and peace will reign. Glory to God!

The process has begun Saints of God; even in this very hour God is establishing His Kingdom in the hearts and lives of His people. "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). If the Kingdom of God is in you, then it is in your family and if it is in your family, it is in the local Church. If the Kingdom of God is in the Local Church it is in the Universal Church. And, someday it will cover the whole earth. Glory to God, Hallelujah! What a wonderful day we live in. What a glorious hour. Just to think that we are participating in building the Kingdom of God that will someday cover the whole earth "as the water cover the sea" (Isaiah 11: 9).

A question often asked is, "What about all those

Christians that attend denominational Churches?" Do not be concerned. Jesus said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). Jesus is the one who is going to bring them all into His Church; our responsibility is to walk in the light that He has shown us.

It is incumbent upon each of us to build our lives according to the pattern that He has revealed in this hour. If we do, then prophecies written in the Bible will come to pass.

"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.

And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Daniel 7:14, 18 & 27). "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it" (Micah 4:2-4).

Put on the Whole Armour of God

By Bernard James

Paul did not only write to the church at Ephesus but to all of the faithful in Jesus Christ our Lord. It doesn't matter how long ago he wrote this letter, it is for us today, to see, hear, take hold, and obey. It is not about Paul or any of the apostles, but this is about the Lord Jesus Christ fighting the battle for us.

We were given instructions, and we must comply. If we do not, we will suffer the consequences. When we are in the army, we have to follow the order of the commanding officer. When we are deployed to a station, how can we say we are not going? I was told to comply and then complain. But when God gives us a command, who do we complain to? Saints, we need not complain but comply and follow the instructions given.

The word of God teaches us how to clothe ourselves as Christian soldiers. We do not have to go out there to shop for army uniforms as soldiers of the cross because we are not talking about dressing outwardly, but inwardly. "Put on the whole armour of God" (Eph.6:11).

In Ephesians 6: 10-20, we learn to dress up spiritually, not in part, but with the whole armour. God does not want us to be influenced by the things of this world but to be safe in his protective care. And for us to be safe, we must be disciplined. We have been asked to put on the whole armour, not part, because he wants us to be protected, not physically only, but spiritually as well. Whatever we do, it should be by the Spirit of God. The war that is raging right now for us as believers is spiritual, and that is part of the reason we are asked to put on the whole armour of

God. And this we know, that we are not dressing up with someone else's armour, but the armour of God.

God's armour is tailor-made for us, so we do not have to worry if it will fit, or if we will be able to wear it. We must just put it on. Praise the Lord. One of the reasons we have been asked to put on God's armour is to be able to STAND. I love this because He has planted our feet on higher ground. That is where He has placed us, where we will not be tossed to and fro and carried about, but will stay in his presence day by day, till his likeness is seen in us. Glory to God! Saints, God has not given us the spirit of fear,(2 Tim.1:7), nor has He called us to run away from our enemies, but to stand and fight, not on our own but with the power of God in the name of Jesus Christ. The word of God tells us to stand. We must stand where we are and face the battle in the Name of Jesus Christ. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). He is the one to run, not us. We must not let him intimidate us and cause us to lose our ground. He must run from us. Amen. We put on the armour so that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. When he comes with his big loud voice, this must not frighten us, because we are armed. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift a standard against him" (Isa.59:19). Glory! We have to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We have to depend on the Lord, let Him take control, and he will fight the battle for us. You see, we wrestle not against flesh and blood. We are not fighting physi-

cally here but rather fighting against principalities, powers, the rulers of darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. We cannot make it on our own. We cannot fight that war for ourselves. That's why we have to let the spirit of the Lord go before us. When we put on the whole armour of God, we are able to combat these forces. We must understand, however, we cannot fight against these forces on our own. We must do so with the power of God, in the name of Jesus, in His name, the Name that is above every name, that wonderful and glorious Name. As we read further down (vs. 14-18), we see what the armour of God is comprised of. We are not talking about a heavy metal suit with a big shield and a big spear in our hands, but rather having Jesus Christ as our truth, the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, and always in prayer. Then we will overcome by the Spirit of God because he is more than able to take the victory. One of the twenty rules of wisdom says, "As a child of God, prayer is kind of like calling home every day." And that is so true. We must never forget to call on our God. Some of us only remember Him when things are not going right. When there are no air pockets, He is nowhere in our minds. Nevertheless, He is always there for us because His ways are not our ways.

We cannot stop praying. We face a dangerous foe, a spiritual enemy,

who seeks our downfall and destruction. Thank God, Jesus Christ has provided us with protection and has prepared us for spiritual battle. We have to be ready. Paul tells us that these pieces of spiritual equipment such as the helmet, breastplate, shield, sword, belt, and shoes, are only effective if we put them on and use them, even if they might feel uncomfortable. God wants us to arm ourselves. We have to show forth His faithfulness in His word, in prayer and in witness. Let us stand fast in the liberty, dear ones, where Christ has made us free. Christ alone has paid that debt for us, so we owe it all to Him. The battle is not ours but the Lord's. Let us put on our gear and be ready for attack, for we do not know when it will come. However, when it comes we will be ready. The song writer wrote, "Put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, Lift up your voice and sing: - Praise and adore Him, bow down before Him, Oh, magnify the Lord" (pg. 116 of Songs we Love). He is worthy to be praised.

What is the garment of praise? Think of Gal. 5:22 & 23 and Phil. 4:8. These are the qualities we have to possess, the garments God wants us to wear, for when heaviness comes we do not have to run to put them on because we are already clothed. As believers, we have to be wearing these garments all the time. Whenever we are depressed, burdened, or heavy hearted, we find it

difficult to sing and rejoice. It is hard to make melodies in our hearts unto the Lord. Jesus tells us to cast our care and burden upon Him, for he cares for us. He wants us to rejoice and to be glad in Him always. Oh, what a privilege we have! When we are relieved from the spirit of heaviness, then we can sing, and sing, and sing, then we can dance and shout to the Lord.

Let us encourage those who are burdened to put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, so they can lift their voices and sing unto the Lord in order to receive the victory in Jesus' Name. Praise ye the Lord.

God Bless us all.

CALLED HOME

Floyd Nasheim, Elder

Rosetown, SK

July 22, 2011

Josephine Francis

Dominica, W.I.

June 20, 2011

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