

Midnight Cry Messenger

FREELY SHARED WITH THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY FOR TRUTH — NOT TO BE SOLD

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Does God Speak to You? Pt. 1

by C. Parker Thomas

(Editor's Note: This article was originally published in the July-August 1979 issue of the Midnight Cry Messenger.)

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 1:1-3.

Many people find it hard to believe that God actually speaks to man today. Among those who believe that he does speak to man today there is much controversy and debate. Many questions are raised as to how, where, when and who God speaks to.

Because of such divergent opinions among them, the often reported claims of many religious people that the Lord speaks and reveals things to them only adds to the confusion.

The fact that there is such a difference of opinion on doctrines and other vital issues is proof positive that many are deceived in their belief that God is speaking to them. No doubt, some source of intel-

ligence is responsible for many of these claims. This is also true of all cults and false doctrines that have come forth in the earth to deceive man.

Since Satan led Eve astray in the Garden he has been lying and deceiving man through many means. Knowing that man is religious by nature he uses this as a chief tool to delude and separate man from God and true righteousness.

I Tim. 4:1 says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

Indeed we would be surprised if we knew how active Satan is in the realm of religion. In fact, we would be shocked if we knew how much religion Satan has actually fathered in the earth.

According to Paul's teaching in II Cor. 11:13-15, Satan's greatest act of deception is in transforming himself (falsely) into an angel (messenger) of light. Satan's ministers do exactly the same thing. Verse 15 says, "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness: whose end shall be according to their works."

By masquerading as angels of light Satan's ministers, clothed in human form, have an entree into all nations and segments of human society. Under the cloak of religion and other forms of ideology he is received with open arms by earth's multitudes. From corrupted and apostate Christianity to communism there is a literal flood of delusion going forth out of the mouth of the dragon. Rev. 12:15-16.

When statements like these are made most professing Christians think you have reference to the Jim Joneses, the Reverend Moons and the Father Divines. They have been taught that they are fundamental, orthodox and sound in the faith. It's always the other fellow that is a heretic.

There are two things that Satan does when he deceives man and leads him into strong delusion. First he discredits any true source of revelation that may be available. This is a subtle work of Satan that the deceived do not recognize. In order to get man to reject the truth he discredits the source or vessel through whom God is giving the truth.

When this has been done the only thing left for the unconverted is the lie or religious deception. Men are headed for religious delusion when they despise the truth. This is becoming a universal condition as we approach the return of Christ. According to Paul in II Thess. 2:1-12, men will be sent strong delusion because they loved not the truth that they might be saved.

This is accomplished through a subtle emphasis on how right their group or religious movement is and how wrong the others are. Some point to their historic faith and honored traditions as proof of their religious soundness.

Others point to their last day revelations or their religious experience as proof of the spiritual reality of their movement. Some of these point to their founder as a great prophet or last day messenger raised up for this special day.

The self-styled fundamentalist takes great pride in the fact that he believes in the book, the blood and the blessed hope. He is fundamental, missionary, premillennial and contending for the faith once

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Editor: Phil Enlow

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Editor's Letter

Dear Saints,

Greetings once again in the wonderful name of Jesus! Spring is again in full bloom here in North Carolina. What will heaven be like!

Recently my attention was drawn to a series of articles by Bro. Thomas from 1979 entitled, "Does God Speak to You?" a series I hadn't read in quite awhile. I feel they are timely and so this issue includes parts one and two of the original three-part series.

Satan's greatest weapon has always been the lie. In the last part of John 8:44, Jesus said of him, "When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." And his lies are carefully crafted to appeal to fallen human nature.

We know that the end of this present age will see unprecedented deception for those who reject the hope of the gospel. 2 Thess. 2:9-12 tells us, "The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness."

But Satan's efforts to deceive are not confined to those who openly reject truth. He is also skilled in presenting himself as an "angel of light." 2 Cor. 11:14. It has never been more important for God's elect remnant to be able to distinguish between God's voice and that of the deceiver. 2 Tim. 3:13 reminds us that, "evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived." Matt. 24:24 says, "For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

It seems that everywhere we look there are those who are quick to say, "God told me this" or "God told me that." In the midst of all the diversity and confusion of our day, somebody is hearing another voice! Of course there are also those who dismiss the possibility of God speaking to anyone apart from what is

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delivered to the saints. With much authority and pride he points to the letter of the word (King James version) as his only rule for faith and practice. He thumps its pages with strong emphasis declaring it is his guide and road map to heaven.

What about all of these claims by the religious multitude? Many of them are zealous, sacrificial, sincere and thoroughly convinced. Many of them believe in good works and live morally clean lives. Is this a criterion or basis for faith?

Not by any stretch of the imagination. Paul said that the Jews had "...a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Rom. 10:2-4.

The outstanding mark of the false prophet, false doctrine and false religion is that something else is at the center of their religious emphasis in place of Christ. It may be a doctrine, an ordinance, an experience, a human personality, their church or organization and, strange as it may seem, even the Bible itself.

However, let me make haste to point out that false doctrines and false prophets are not always responsible for lost religious people. Even where the gospel is preached there are some who have made something else their refuge other than the finished work of Christ. The Corinthian church had heard the gospel preached in its fullness by the apostle Paul, yet he told them to examine themselves,

recorded in the Bible. Too often the result is a rigid adherence to dead and ineffective truth.

But somewhere between dead truth and delusion, God *does* speak to His people. How does He speak? How can we recognize it when He does? These are important questions and I hope you will prayerfully consider what you read.

Once again we are looking forward to our Convention, June 21-24. This year's convention will be held here at the Bible Tabernacle in Southern Pines, North Carolina. I hope you will join us as the Lord leads.

Continue to remember us in all of the outreaches the Lord has given us. We regularly hear from those who listen either to the radio or the TV broadcast and our desire is to have God's word and His alone to share with His people.

Till next time may God's rich blessings be yours.

Your brother in Christ,
Phil Enlow

whether they be in the faith. II Cor. 13:5. To those of Galatia he said, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." Gal. 1:6.

I might add that most of those that heard Jesus Christ turned away from the truth in process of time. John 6:66, 1 John 2:19. In fact it is evident from many scriptures that it is a very small remnant of people that come to saving faith. Isa. 1:9, Matt. 7:13-14, Luke 12:32, 13:23-24, Rom. 11:5.

The real reason men are lost is that they will not receive the truth. For the remnant capable of hearing his voice and following him it is important that we know how God speaks to us. Although there are many lost people who have heard the truth and rejected it, man must still hear the truth if he is to be saved.

Our purpose here is not to prove to the unbelieving that God indeed speaks to mortal man but rather to consider how God speaks to man.

By His Conscience

Along with a higher intelligence, God gave man a conscience which distinguishes him from the beast. When man hardens his heart and violates his conscience long enough, he descends to the level of the beast. Because of his higher intelligence he becomes a diabolical and sinister creature that is actually worse than the beast.

The conscience was given to man to bring him to truth that reveals God and righteousness to him. Although the conscience itself does not give man all the answers he needs concerning God it will lead him to truth that will reveal God to him.

Therefore, man's conscience is a source of light that will lead him out of the darkness if he will humbly listen to it. Man's search for God begins when the Lord speaks to his conscience. The search does not end until he finds Jesus Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life. If man doesn't harden his heart and sear his conscience it will bring him into contact with the glorious gospel (good news) of Jesus Christ who is the image of God. II Cor. 4:3-5.

According to Romans 2:14-16, the Gentiles or heathen (all people other than Jews) had a conscience capable of guiding them even though they were without the law as the Jews knew it. According to verse 15 there was a work of the law written in their hearts through which their conscience would bear witness to them.

This witness either accused or excused them. Since they did not have the law or the gospel, in the strictest sense they cannot be judged by either. However they will be judged by this inward witness of their hearts in the day when God judges the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. This being true, it means that

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God's judgment as Rom. 2:2 says will be according to truth that men have.

The more truth men have the more responsible they are. God's severest judgment will come upon those who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Rom. 1:18. According to this verse in the New Testament from 26 Translations by Zondervan, God's most severe judgment will be upon religious people who by their pride, rebellion, falsehood and general wickedness have stifled and suppressed the truth of God.

These no doubt are the workers of iniquity Jesus spoke of in 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."

From the context of scripture it will be noted that these were religious people who actually called Jesus "Lord." They were very actively engaged in religious works, prophesying (preaching), casting out devils, and doing many other wonderful works.

But the Lord called them workers of iniquity. They had deceived their own hearts and thought they were doing a good work. Instead of bringing deliverance to men they were deceiving them as they were deceived and bringing them into captivity and strong delusion.

It is men like these whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron. I Tim. 4:1-2. This is why Paul said, "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)" Heb. 3:7-11

By The Creation

Although God does not reveal himself to man apart from his conscience, the creation itself is a voice in the earth speaking to man before his conscience is seared. Many of these scientific theories that discredit the biblical account of creation are often the result of a seared conscience. Psalm 19:1-3 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard."

With the God-given intelligence that man has he considers the creation when he observes it. As he observes the visible creation his intelligence informs him that this great creation was made by some power that is not manifest. He knows there has to be a creator or supreme being. Rom. 1:19-20.

Although this is not saving faith it is the beginning of faith that can lead us to saving faith through the word of God. Working with our conscience it can serve as a light or voice to lead us to the light of the gospel that reveals Christ to us. Heb. 11:3 says, "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."

By The Prophets

Before the coming of the Son of God into the world God spoke unto the fathers in divers manners by the prophets. Although there were prophetic gifts given to men such as kings, judges and ordinary people the major prophet was uniquely God's mouthpiece in the earth.

No doubt the lesser prophetic gifts were types of ministries comparable to elders in the local assembly during the church dispensation. The major prophet of the Old Testament and the apostle in the New Testament are foundation ministries whose responsibility is to God himself. Eph. 2:20, I Cor. 3:10.

Although the local church and the individual Christian is responsible to judge those claiming to be apostles or prophets (I John 4:1-4), the gift of a foundational ministry will make room for itself. Pro. 18:16. However, as we come over into the New Testament and the church dispensation the office of the major prophet ceases with the office of the apostle taking its place.

John the Baptist was the last of the major prophets. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Luke 16:16.

Some may take exception to this but it is evident that the New Testament prophet was, for the most part, a preacher or forthteller of the gospel. No doubt vocal ministries such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were called prophets at times.

However, there was a prophetic gift that enabled some to foretell the future as in the case of Agabus the prophet. Acts 11:27-28, 21:10-11. It is evident this man, though a genuine prophet in this sense, had a limited ministry. He is only mentioned twice and is nowhere looked upon as a leader or prominent figure in the early church.

By virtue of the need of the office the apostle was the most gifted. In the order of ministry given to the church by the Lord Jesus Christ when he ascended up on high, the

apostle is first. Eph. 4:11. In fact, the apostle is said to be first in the church by Paul in I Cor. 12:28. Beyond doubt, Paul's ministry was a type of the complete ministry of Christ as set forth in Eph. 4:11. This ministry was manifest in the life of the apostles in varying degrees.

Old Testament

The prophets of the Old Testament were men chosen by God and anointed for this purpose. Although their talents and abilities varied, they were God's servants and were responsible to deliver his message to the people.

This was often done in the face of opposition and danger to their lives. In fact, many suffered persecution, imprisonment and even death for their faithfulness in delivering God's message.

Sometimes their message was of a general nature to the people and at other times it was to individuals such as commanders of armies, kings and ordinary people. Their message was often one of warning and severe rebuke. At other times their message was encouraging or instructive.

Although God permitted some of them to seal their testimony with their blood he honored and esteemed these men very highly for their work's sake. They were truly his mouthpieces or representatives in the earth. His method was to contact and inform these men before divine intervention on the earth's scene. Before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah the Lord said, "...Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" Gen. 18:17.

Amos 3:7 says, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

To despise and reject God's prophets meant to despise and reject him. To honor and receive God's prophets meant to honor and receive him. When the children of Israel rejected the theocratic rule of God through the prophet Samuel and desired a king like the other nations, the Lord said, "...Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." I Sam. 8:7.

This was the burden of the Spirit in Christ when he said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Matt. 23:37-39.

From this and other scriptures it is evident that the Lord completely identified himself with his ministry. Matt. 10:40-41. Despise the servant of the Lord and you cut yourself off

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from God. Men will never see the Lord (by revelation) until they say, "...Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Rom. 10:13-15 says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

"And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

How shall they preach except they be sent? Only those sent of God can preach his Word. His command to the world concerning them is, "Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm." Psalm 105:15.

When men get hungry enough for God they will say, "...How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Rom. 10:15.

Divers Manners

Divers simply means various or many. In the beginning there were no inspired scriptures that the prophets could read and interpret as the will of God. They were dependent upon the Lord to reveal himself to them. For this God used whatever means was expedient or necessary to get the attention of his prophet. For example, the Lord appeared to Moses in a burning bush. Ex. 3:1-12. Then he spoke to Moses out of the burning bush. Whether the voice was audible or not we can't say. At least Moses heard it as though it were audible.

In order to convince the children of Israel that God indeed had sent Moses to them with his word, the Lord turned Moses' shepherd's rod into a serpent when cast upon the ground. Ex. 4:1-5.

Doubtless, extenuating circumstances here made it necessary for God to approach Moses in such a manner. There was also a reason he turned his shepherd's staff into a serpent as a sign. After forty years in the wilderness living the life of a lonely shepherd, having been a prince in Egypt, mighty in word and deed (Acts 7:22) it took these unusual manifestations to convince Moses and the children of Israel.

To many of the prophets the Lord simply spoke to them audibly or otherwise and they were able to recognize it as from God. Gen. 12:1-3, I Kings 19:9-12, Isa. 6:8-13, Jer. 1:4-10, Ezek. 1:3, Hosea 1:1, Joel 1:1, and Jonah 1:1-2.

No doubt the individual prophets had their own particular sensitivity that enabled them to recognize the voice of the Lord. Their call, responsibility and personal involvement were also factors in helping them recognize his voice.

In most cases they were God-conscious and God-fearing individuals. Many times they were involved or doing something that made wisdom from above expedient. The call of God to these men had nothing to do with their personal desire or training for such a work. God in his own sovereign wisdom called them according to his wisdom and purpose. Rom. 8:28, 11:29.

It is also true that some of them resisted the call of God and tried to avoid it. Notable examples of this are Moses and Jonah. Ex. 4:1, 10-18, Jonah 1:1-3. Moses' excuse was that he was a poor speaker and the people wouldn't believe that the Lord had indeed appeared to him.

In view of Moses' rearing as an Egyptian prince, mighty in word and deed, it seems from this that the forty years in the wilderness was necessary to strip him of his learning, his self confidence and self will. If it took forty years to unlearn Moses, how long do you think it would take for the average, modern preacher?

Jonah tried to flee from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and took a ship going to Tarshish. Jonah 1:3. He learned the hard way that there is no escape from the presence of the Lord. Psa. 139:7-12, Pro. 15:3, Heb. 4:13. No doubt many of the storms of

life, like Jonah's experience, are the result of man's rebellion in trying to avoid God's purpose for his life. Jonah 1:4-7.

Contrary to the attitude of Moses and Jonah, I find many aspiring prophets or preachers today eager and ready to move into their supposed ministry. Some, like Moses when he first went out to his brethren, are premature in their ambitious desire to do something for God. Moses wasn't ready, Israel wasn't ready, neither was Egypt ready for the exodus from Egypt. Acts 7:22-30.

I'm afraid most of today's preachers are like the prophets that sat at Jezebel's table who ate her bread and preached her word. They are simply part of a religious system and have no vision, no anointing and no desire for anything better. I Kings 18:19. Fact is most of them are intimidated and afraid of everything outside their own religious camp. Heb. 13:13.

In addition to simply speaking to the prophets God gave them dreams and visions in which he revealed his word to them. Gen. 28:12, I Kings 3:5, Gen. 15:1, Num. 12:6. He also sent angels to them with his word at times. Gen. 22:15, II Kings 1:3. God's revelation to them many times was for their personal instruction and good. But always the Lord's message to the people was to the prophet first and then to the people. Amos 3:7.

Does God Speak to You, Part 2

by C. Parker Thomas

(Editor's note: This article was originally published in the September-October 1979 issue of the Midnight Cry Messenger.)

The Ministry Of Christ

As in times past God speaks to man today through his conscience, through the creation and, above all, through the ministry of the word. As surely as God called and anointed the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament, he calls and anoints men today. The ministry of Christ given to the church is just as valid today as it was when he ascended up on high and sent the Holy Spirit upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost. Eph. 4:7-16, I Cor. 12:27-28.

This does not mean that everyone claiming to be a minister, or recognized as such, is indeed called of God. Some volunteer, some are persuaded and a few are called. It is my conviction that many of them need to be born again. This is why there is such little life in the churches and among professing Christians. It takes life to beget life. Everything brings forth after its own kind whether it be natural or spiritual.

Although they may be few and far between, God has his anointed servants in the earth today. They may not be recognized by the reli-

gious establishment but they are recognized by the Lord. With a spiritual understanding that God has given them they have an insight into the written word that goes far beyond the confines of most of the church world.

The word they preach is full of faith and power. It edifies the saint, convicts the sinner and stirs up the devil in others. It is a manifestation of the kingdom of God resulting in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rom. 14:17. Because it is often prophetic in nature, it imparts life and foretells the future according to the sovereign purpose of God.

Although this word comes through the anointed lips of mortal men, it is an expression of God's divine wisdom, love and power. Various translations of the Bible interpret Heb. 4:12 as follows: American Standard Version, "For the word of God is living and active." Rotherham, "For living is the word of God and energetic." Weymouth, "For the word of God is full of life and power." Moffatt, "For the Logos of God is a living thing, active." Williams, "For God's message is alive and full of power in action." Taylor, "For whatever God says to us is full of living power."

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From these translations with their various shades of meaning, we begin to realize that God's word is more than a vehicle for thought. Laden with divine energy it is an expression or extension of Christ himself. It is actually Christ speaking in and through the church which is his body. Where the word is coming forth by the anointing it is Christ in the midst. Heb. 2:11-12, Matt. 18:20.

The name "Christ" (Christos) means anointed. It was by the anointing or the Spirit of Christ that the prophets spoke in the Old Testament. This is the meaning of Matt. 23:37 where Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

Men must hear the voice of the Son of God if they are to be saved. As surely as Jesus "...cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth" (John 11:43) he must speak to men today. It is the ministry given to the church that he speaks through. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

To the disciples Jesus said, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me." Matt. 10:40.

This is the way men hear and receive Christ today. His voice is heard through anointed lips. Heb. 3:7-8.

"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 5:24-25.

However, there is always a need to make a distinction between the anointed word and the letter of the word. The letter of the word (Bible) can be used, and often is, by demonic spirits who twist and pervert its meaning. This is why any particular group, though using the Bible, can interpret and preach it in such a way as to confirm and propagate their particular doctrines and religious traditions.

The fact that people use the Bible does not mean they have the anointed word of God. The Baptists use the Bible. The Methodists use the Bible. The Presbyterians use the Bible. The Seventh Day Adventists use the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses use the Bible. The Mormons use the Bible. The Catholics use the Bible. The Pentecostals use the Bible. The Charismatics use the Bible. The Children of God (movement) use the Bible. So did Jim Jones and thousands of others.

Don't let anyone holding the Bible in his hand claiming such great honor and respect for it deceive you. We need to be able to

discern whether it is Christ in them using the Bible or antichrist. I John 4:1-4. Remember Jesus said, "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Matt. 24:5.

The fact that many use the Bible and say that Jesus is the Christ doesn't mean anything. How else could Satan and his ministers transform themselves into angels of light? II Cor. 11:13-15.

If, as the scripture says, "God is not the author of confusion," I Cor. 14:33, what is the answer to all this? It is simple. Religion as a whole is made up of Babylon the great and her many harlot daughters. Rev. 17:5.

The much confusion and divergent opinions that exist among these groups speaks for itself. There is no way that all of this can be interpreted as true revelation. If God is not the author of confusion, who is? The answer is found in Rev. 18:2 which says, "...Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

Some of these groups started out with a measure of light which they walked in to begin with. God blessed them and overshadowed them with his presence. By degrees many of them got their eyes off of the Lord and began to glory in their success and their movement. This led to building their own kingdom and making them a name rather than honoring and glorifying the Lord. Gen. 11:1-4.

Since God will not give his glory to another he had to remove his presence from many of these groups. As the Lord removed his presence, there was no oil (Holy Spirit) left to feed the candle of revelation. Without the continuing light of revelation they were filled with darkness. Pro. 4:18. Evil spirits in people began to enter their ranks. In process of time they took over. Dead doctrines, creeds, religious traditions and doctrines of devils (I Tim. 4:1-4) became their message.

This was their fall as they became the habitation or dwelling place of devils. Rev. 18:2. Many of the demon-inspired cults and splinter groups began with a spirit of rebellion as they split off from the existing church system. After all, there was only one church after Pentecost.

In some measure the entire present day church world is under the influence of the apostasy. Like the Laodicean church they glory in their prosperity and think they have need of nothing when indeed they are spiritually destitute. Rev. 3:14-19. This is why it is well nigh impossible for a sinner to be converted in the average church today.

Thank God, as long as there is one soul whose conscience is not so seared that he can't hear the voice of the Son of God there will be some place where they can hear sufficient truth to believe and be saved. However, these places are not on every corner. Those

desiring God must seek and search for his truth with all their hearts. Jer. 29:13.

In this hour you will not find help in most churches or religious establishments. People in them will have to come out if they get help. Jesus took the blind man out of the town of Bethsaida before ministering to him. After healing the man Jesus told him to not go back into the town, neither tell anyone who was going into Bethsaida. Mark 8:22-26. He would not permit any further witness in this place. Much of our religious world has reached this place.

No matter how much conscience-stricken man considers God as he observes the creation or the circumstances of life he has to come to faith to be saved. Heb. 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Faith to be saved cannot come by reading a book, a tract or the Bible itself. Men must hear the gospel preached in the power of the Holy Ghost. This is why Rom. 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

To the church at Corinth Paul said, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I Cor. 2:4-5.

This scripture makes a distinction between man's faith standing in the wisdom of men and standing in the power of God. The testimony of God or the word can be with excellency of speech and wisdom and yet devoid of the power of God. I Cor. 2:1. No doubt this is the form of godliness that denies the power thereof that Paul spoke of in II Tim. 3:5. This is also the difference between the ministry of the Spirit and the ministry of the letter of the word. II Cor. 3:6.

I have noticed during these thirty-one years of ministering God's word an increasing emphasis on ministers having a degree. More and more even small churches want a pastor that has a seminary degree.

Many congregations actually feel that it takes a man with a degree to minister God's word. I'm afraid prestige has become a big factor in congregations with this outlook. This attitude breeds contempt for preachers without a degree. Excellency of speech is more important to the modern church world than the power and demonstration of the Spirit. Being spiritually blind they do not understand that it is "...not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. 4:6.

The Bible Today

Although we have said much about the letter of the word and how the scriptures are twisted and perverted by some, let me hasten

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to add that the Bible is the Book of books to the man of God. Primarily the Holy Spirit uses the Bible when God speaks to man. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." II Tim. 3:16-17.

In matters that require wisdom in our personal lives it is not always possible to get a "Thus saith the Lord" from the scriptures. For example: If we need wisdom concerning a trip we need to make, we could not find a verse of scripture that says, "Thou shalt go to New York."

Conditions

To get wisdom from God for personal direction which he promises to us liberally, James 1:5, we must acknowledge him in all our ways. Pro. 3:6. This can only be done when we realize that God alone understands and has all the answers. Isa. 40:28. Of necessity we must realize that we know nothing as we ought to. I Cor. 8:3.

Secondly, we must desire to do the Lord's will regardless of our own opinions or feelings in the matter. John 7:17. This is a very difficult place for most people to come to. Very few are free from selfish motivation that influences their wills. Most of mankind cannot believe in nor receive Jesus Christ because their wills are not free.

It could be religious bondage like the Jews or the bondage of natural, selfish desire. We cannot, nor will we, die to our own selfish wills until, by revelation, we see Christ. When we see Christ we will see the kingdom of God. Matt. 16:13-19, John 6:68-69, II Cor. 4:3-4 and John 3:3.

Man cannot will to do the will of God without the revelation of Christ. This is the revelation that caused Peter to say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6:68. This is the rock upon which the church is built, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against. This is what makes God real to us and enables us to endure in times of great trial. Heb. 11:24-27.

Thirdly, we need to wait on the Lord until light comes. Isa. 50:10-11. Waiting on the Lord can be a very trying experience. Most of us are impatient by nature. When in a state of indecision we are prone to anxiety and fear. It is in this state that we become vulnerable to false revelation and do the wrong thing. We need to ever remember that God has a purpose in such delays. When this purpose is accomplished he will give us such light as we need. James 1:2-8.

This light may come in the form of a word of wisdom from God. This could come directly to our heart by the Holy Spirit or

through a human vessel we have contact with. It could be through the preached word of God by the ministry.

Sometimes this wisdom comes by a peace or spiritual rest that witnesses to our heart that we are in the will of God as we move in a certain direction. The Lord said to Moses, "... my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." Ex. 33:14.

The rest that comes from God's presence is a very important factor in being led of the Lord. I have learned over the years that when the Lord wants to lead me in a certain direction he stirs up my spirit and causes me to think of the thing he wants me to do.

However, I have learned to not be too quick in responding to such urging lest it be the enemy instead of the Lord. After sufficient prayer over the matter the Lord ministers faith to my heart to either drop the thing or surrender to move in the direction indicated. In either case the Holy Spirit ministers peace and rest to my heart and I know I'm in the will of God.

Religious Phenomena

Even today the Lord uses dreams, visions and, on occasions, sends an angel to us. However, I personally believe that angels are often used to minister to us even though we are not aware of it. Heb. 1:13-14. It is only on rare occasions that God allows us to see the angel that ministers to us.

This is because man is so proud he is subject to let the enemy exalt him because of his phenomenal experience. Even Paul, the great apostle, was given a thorn in the flesh to humble him lest he be exalted above measure. II Cor. 12:7.

Religious phenomena such as visions, dreams, angelic visitations, prophecy, discerning of spirits and other manifestations of the Spirit are discounted by formal Christianity. Those who believe in it are accused of witchcraft or, at best, ignorant religious fanaticism. And it is true that demonic power is responsible for much of the religious phenomena claimed by such groups.

However there are true phenomena given by the Lord as well as delusive phenomena given by satanic power. True phenomena are sovereignly given by the Lord to his people in times of great stress or need. It is a people who love the Lord and believe in Elijah's God. Although they believe in supernatural phenomena, they walk by faith and neither seek nor ask for signs and wonders.

Satanically inspired phenomena come to those who love not the truth that they might be saved. II Thess. 2:9-12. Not rooted and grounded in the word of God, yet religious, such people are open to the deceptions of Satan through religious phenomena.

By nature man is religious. He is prone to embrace something religious -- either good or bad. By nature he is also a rebel and hates the

truth that would set him free.

Religion that offers him a hope of heaven that does not cross his will and demand repentance appeals to him. When such religion is attended by supernatural phenomena it is especially appealing to the religious rebel.

This being the day of man's greatest rebellion against God in rejection of truth he is more open and receptive to supernatural religious delusion than ever before. Satan is being enthroned in the temple of God (heart of man) like never before. II Thess. 2:3-4.

This is the reason for such a revival of the occult. Witchcraft, spiritualism and astrology have become popular and respectable. There is an increase of the cults with their doctrines of devils. Sound in the faith people like Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians are being brought together with the Pentecostals and the Catholics through the phenomena of speaking in tongues.

This is the basis of fellowship and the drawing power of the Charismatic movement that is uniting and bringing together many divisions of religion. The basis of fellowship is not what you believe nor Christ and him crucified, but have you received the baptism and spoken in tongues?

In the midst of this hodge podge of counterfeit religious phenomena inspired and brought forth by the power of darkness there is a genuine.

We need to beware of and examine every supernatural experience by the word of God. It is also good to be in fellowship with a church with spiritual discernment that can examine our experience.

Any experience that exalts a person or group and causes them to feel spiritually superior is suspect.

Any experience that supposedly replaces the Bible or goes beyond its revelation in matters of faith and practice is suspect.

Any experience that eliminates the necessity of prayer and dependence upon God for help and wisdom is suspect. It is significant that the fortuneteller and the clairvoyant offer you such wisdom.

Any experience that causes division and leads to independent action apart from the church is suspect.

Any experience that causes an individual to become contentious and resist correction and counsel from the church is suspect.

In spite of the fact that Satan counterfeits everything that God does like Pharaoh's sorcerers and magicians of Egypt (Exodus 7:10-13), there is a genuine. If we walk in reverence and fear of the Lord and in harmony and fellowship with our brother we will know the difference.

The Scriptures

In the matter of needed wisdom for us personally, don't rule out the possibility of

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God using the scriptures to speak to you. You would be surprised at the depth of wisdom in the scriptures that can be used for this purpose.

I personally believe that this is the number one means God has ordained to use to speak to his people. The more scripture we learn and hide away in our hearts the easier it is for God to speak to us on a given occasion. David knew how important this was when he said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. 119:105. Read also Ps. 119:11, 92, 93, and 130.

I cannot overemphasize the need of God's word for those who desire intimate communion with the Lord. This is why it is so important to study the word without your religious glasses on.

Some study the Bible through Baptist glasses, some study it through Pentecostal glasses and some study it through Jehovah's Witness glasses. And some, even though they belong to a church, don't take time to study it at all. Like some who denied personal study of the Bible to the laity, they leave the study of the Bible to their clergy.

This is also why it is so important to have a ministry that is not restricted or confined to some religious prison house, behind walls of doctrine, creeds and religious tradition. Isaiah 42:22-25. If people are to be set free they have to have a ministry that is free. Jesus was a perfect example of such a ministry.

"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 broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke 4:18-19.

As we observe Jesus' life and ministry we notice that he constantly used the word of God. Over and over again in reference to the scriptures Jesus would say, "...it is written..." Matt. 11:10, Mark 7:6, Luke 7:27 and John 6:31. Jesus came against each of the three great temptations of Satan on the mount with the scriptures by saying, "...Satan, it is written..." Matt. 4:1-11.

Those who believe in and honor the word will be honored by the Lord. Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." John 14:21.

To have his commandments and keep them simply means that Jesus is Lord of our life through the ruling principle of God's word. This is more than Sunday religion. It is walking with the Lord as we govern our life by the

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BOOK CORNER

Delivered From Demons, by C. Parker Thomas

The story of a young girl's deliverance from demon possession and also a collection of a number of other articles relating to Satan's kingdom and activity, specially as it relates to the end of this present age. Suggested Price - \$6.50.

Does God Speak To You? by C. Parker Thomas

This booklet is composed of a wonderful series of articles published in the Midnight Cry Messenger during 1979. In this time of great spiritual darkness and deception what are the various ways in which He speaks and how can we learn to recognize His voice and respond? Suggested Price - \$3.50.

Examine Yourselves, By Phil Enlow

Paul said to "examine yourselves." There must be a way to do that. Can you say with Paul, "I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." 2 Tim 1:12. Suggested Price - \$7.50

The Gospel, By Phil Enlow

What is the gospel? Everyone thinks they know--but do they? In this day of watered-down "easy-believism" it is critical to know what real salvation is. What was the gospel that Paul preached? Suggested Price - \$3.00

How Do You Know You Are Right? By Phil Enlow

A spiritual challenge. A study of spiritual knowledge and how it is acquired. This is an area of critical importance in this hour of spiritual darkness and deception. We cannot afford to blindly rest in tradition. Suggested Price - \$4.00

Immortality, By Phil Enlow

What does the Bible teach about immortality, the future of unbelievers, the future of God's people? From the eight-part series in the MCM. Suggested Price - \$5.00.

The Keys of the Kingdom, by C. Parker Thomas

A clear study of the keys as they apply to us in today's world. Suggested Price - \$3.00.

Light in This Present Darkness, by Phil Enlow

From the series in MCM. Message for God's Remnant in the earth regarding the present hour of darkness. Suggested Price - \$7.00.

Lying Signs and Wonders, by C. Parker Thomas

A collection of articles concerning the end of the age exposing much deception as well as giving forth important truth needed by those who would be prepared for Christ's soon return. Suggested Price - \$7.00.

The Midnight Cry, by C. Parker Thomas

Contains two articles that set forth the truths concerning the midnight cry: what is it? who hears it? who makes it? what is its significance for us. A must for people who would understand this ministry. Suggested Price - \$1.00

Sex and Marriage in the Light of God's Word, by C. Parker Thomas

From a series of articles covering a whole range of scriptural and practical truth designed to help God's people in this important area. Suggested Price - \$7.00.

Sudden Death Overtime, by Phil Enlow

From the series published beginning in 2001. A look at our world and its prospects through biblical "glasses." What can we learn from history? What lies in our future? Why is the world like it is? Things every Christian should know. Suggested Price - \$7.00.

The Sure Foundation, by C. Parker Thomas

A collection of four articles published in the early 1980's on the important subject of the foundation believers have in Christ. Suggested Price - \$4.00.

Tongues: My Testimony, by C. Parker Thomas

Contains the article by the same name as well as an article entitled "Tongues Should be Tested" by Gerald McGraw in which he recounts lessons learned from testing to discover the spirit enabling someone to speak in tongues. Startling! Suggested price - \$3.00

What About Genesis? by Phil Enlow

How should we understand the Genesis accounts of the creation and the flood? Can a simple historical understanding of these accounts be defended in this age of scientific skepticism? Does it matter? Suggested Price - \$4.00.

What Does Deception Look Like? by Phil Enlow

Recognizing spiritual deception at the end of the age. What are its characteristics? Satan is waging all-out war and his chief weapon is the lie. As never before believers need to be grounded in bedrock truth. Suggested Price - \$9.95.

Your Adversary, By C. Parker Thomas

Awhile back, while looking through some of our oldest issues of the MCM, we uncovered this timely gem, published in about 1960! There is a simple directness and clarity in this teaching that will help anyone who desires to walk with the Lord and overcome in this hour. Suggested Price - \$2.50.

Note: The prices listed above are suggested with the thought in mind of simply covering the costs of printing and mailing these materials. It is not our intention to become "book-sellers," selling books for profit. Our desire is to get out truth that can help set God's people free in this critical hour. Please write to us at:

Midnight Cry Messenger

P.O. Box 685

Southern Pines, NC 28388 USA

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word. Such a person becomes so sensitive and God-conscious until it is easy for the Lord to speak to him.

Having a knowledge of the word and being sensitive to the Holy Spirit, they quickly recognize even the small, still voice of the Lord. Although that voice is hardly more than an impression at times, they recognize it as from God.

If we have his word it is a matter of exercising ourselves in spiritual things. This will increase our ability to discern between good and evil. Heb. 5:14. There is no shortcut through religious experience or teaching that can take the place of such discipleship.

Although personal dedication and discipleship is a must, two things primarily are responsible for a lack of Christian growth and development in the church today. The sub-par condition of the ministry and the churches in general do not provide the spiritual nutrition necessary. You cannot grow and develop when you do not have proper food and exercise.

Like those in Hebrews 5:11-14, most of God's people today are spiritual babes that must be fed with milk and not solid food. It is difficult for them to discern good from evil. This was the condition of the Corinthian church. Paul said, "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." I Cor. 3:1.

Strong churches and ministries will challenge the people, causing them to take Christ's yoke which will enable them to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Matt. 11:28-30, II Peter 3:18. It is only when we present our bodies a living sacrifice that transformation by the renewing of our minds begins to take place. To the degree this transformation takes place we will be able to prove or know "...what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Rom. 12:1-2.

This, beloved, is the desirable place that God wants to bring us to. This is the place where we will be able to hear his voice. This is also the place where we will be vessels. "...unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." II Tim. 2:21.

Matthew 24:14 — "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

Website: www.midnightcry.org

Singing in My Cell

by Lawrence Medici

*Born again in Prison,
Sentenced to Life, plus 10 years,
I spend my time Praising God,
for calming all my fears.*

*I often look outside my cell,
And notice there's a crowd,
Wondering how, in a place like this,
I can sing so loud.*

*So when the guard opens the gate,
I tell them that God took my hate,
With love mere words could never tell,
That's why I'm singing in my cell.*

*Not long ago, there was a time,
I had no song, I had no rhyme,
But Jesus saved my soul from hell,
And now I'm singing in my cell.*

*The loneliness and pain is real,
But Faith has taught me how to feel,
And that is why you hear my shout,
For someday God will call me out.*

*But if in prison I must die,
They can put me in the ground,
But my soul will still be singing,
"I once was lost, but now I'm found!"*

Please pray "...that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel..."
Ephesians 6:19.

TV Network Broadcast

— (30 Minutes Weekly) —

The NRB Network (DirectTV 378)

Sunday - 6:30 AM Eastern

Monday - 3:30 AM Eastern

SacFaith TV - Sacramento, CA

Monday - 8:00 AM Pacific Time

Tuesday - 8:30 PM Pacific Time

Watch Online or on Cable Channels
Comcast 20 / AT&T 14 / Consolidated 19

AllNationsTV.com Worldwide - Online

Monday - 9:30 PM Eastern Time

Tuesday - 3:30 AM Eastern Time

Wednesday - 9:30 AM Eastern Time

Sunday - 3:30 PM Eastern Time

Broadcasts

RADIO STATIONS

Monday - Friday

Stat.	Freq.	Location	Time
KXEG	1280 AM	Phoenix, AZ	9:00 AM
KCNW	1380 AM	Kansas City, KS	12:15 PM 9:30 PM
KKIM	1000 AM	Albuquerque, NM	6:00 AM
WDZY	1290 AM	Richmond, VA	2:15 PM
WEMM	107.9 FM	Huntington, WV	11:00 AM
WWVA	1170 AM	Wheeling, WV	9:30 PM

Short Wave Radio

WHRI ANGEL 1

Australia/New Zealand

Mon.-Fri.: 0900 UTC - 12.015 Mhz

East/Central Africa

Mon.-Fri.: 1600 UTC - 21.610 Mhz

Caribbean/Central & South America

Mon.-Fri.: 2315 UTC - 7.315 Mhz

WHRI ANGEL 2

East North America

Tues.-Sat.: 0015 UTC - 5.920 Mhz

KWHR ANGEL 3

China - Mon.-Fri.: 0915 UTC - 9.930 Mhz

Bonus Airings on Webstreaming

Angel 2 - Off Air-Streaming Only - 2000-2015

Angel 3 - Off Air-Streaming Only - 1715-1730

For a current schedule of "Angel" stations go to leseas.com/whr/program-schedules/, scroll down to "Detailed Schedule Search," enter Midnight Cry for the program title and then click "Start Search."

Television Broadcast

— (30 Minutes Weekly) —

Local Broadcasts

Albuquerque, NM - KAZQ - TV 32

Sun. 7:30 AM

Boston, MA/Manchester, NH

WBIN-TV 18 - Sun. 6:30 AM

Chicago, IL - WJYS TV-62

Sun. 7:00 AM

Dallas/Forth Worth - KTXD TV-47

Sun. 8:00 AM

Greenville, SC - WGGS TV-16

Sun. 7:00 PM

Harrisburg, PA - WGCB TV-49

Sun. 9:30 AM

Jacksonville, FL - WTLV - Ch. 12 HD

Sun. 6:00 AM

Los Angeles, CA - KDOC-TV 56

Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Minneapolis, MN - WUCW-TV CW23

Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

Phoenix, AZ - KASW-TV CW6

Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

San Francisco, Oakland, California

KBCW TV-44 - Sunday, 6:00 A.M.

Seattle, Washington

KVOS TV-12 - Sunday, 6:30 A.M.

COMING EVENTS

June Convention

June 21-24, 2017

Southern Pines, North Carolina