

WE OVERCOME SATAN BY OBEDIENCE TO THE WILL OF THE FATHER as we

'LOVE NOT OUR OWN LIVES SO MUCH AS TO SHRINK FROM DEATH.'

'BOOK FREE'

ETERNAL
THE ▲ VISION

*Reach for a light bulb and God provides the ladder.
Reach for the stars and He designs you a spaceship.*

**DEPENDENT UPON GOD, INTERDEPENDENT AMONGST
EACH OTHER, INDEPENDENT OF THE OLD NATURE.**

A VISION OF.....

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A FURTHER NOTE FROM DAVID.....

I trust you have come through the previous 120 pages with a greater understanding of God's plan for you and the Church. Now we come to the most exciting and challenging part of the whole presentation.

You will by now, have a good idea of where I am coming from. So sorry if you now expect radically different things than in the teaching from The Word, because you won't find them. For it is vital that our vision be based upon the foundation of The Word. Otherwise it is all too easy to come up with fanciful human ideas that sound good, making the presenter look good, at least in some people's eyes. Unfortunately there are a number of leaders within the Church who have done just that. Unfortunately the inevitable conclusion of their human delusions is the formation of cults, where the leader or 'prophet' sets him/herself up as having a mystical insight into the scriptures, an insight not yet possessed by their merely mortal followers. It enables them to exercise control over those who choose to be misled and believe them.

I trust you will see for yourselves as you read on, that this is neither God's, nor my plan. I hope you know me well enough by now to understand my motivations. That is why I have spent so much time talking about my experiences and reactions to them. For any vision is only as good as the person bringing it. It is now up to you to decide whether I am hearing from God, or simply making up a good story.

The unique thing about the coming Tabernacle Church movement, unique in all Christian history, is that it will not be initiated or imposed by a person or persons with a special anointing from God. Rather it will rise up from within the body itself. For submission and obedience to God is not something that any man can impose on another individual. While a man (including women too!) can point out to others the plans and purposes of God, as I am attempting to do in what follows, only the individual can make the intensely personal decision to act upon it.

Let's face it, if we are to become the promised, perfected and united Church, it is going to take a miracle of God! No human or group of humans has ever been able to achieve anything like that, even in the world, more than superficially and then for a very limited time. Let alone in a Church that is currently more fractured than any nation state. No, it is beyond the capabilities of even the most inspired human being. It will have to be of God. Him working in the lives of individuals, gradually bringing us into His one perfect will. Not clones of each other, but a group of people motivated and directed by the Triune God, fulfilling His plan set down before time began.

So the future is up to each one of us. To make up our minds whether to fully commit to the Lord our God as He desires, or instead, move along the paths we desire. The choice is ours.

GOD'S OVERCOMING TABERNACLE CHURCH

RESTING IN THE RIVER OF GOD

A CHURCH OF DESTINY!

..... DELIVERY!

..... VICTORY!

SYMBOLICALLY DEPICTED AS 'THE RIVER OF GOD'

As Jesus is symbolically pictured by the Passover 'Cross', the Holy Spirit by the Pentecost 'Dove', God the Father is in turn depicted by the 'River of God' in Tabernacles.

The River of God symbolism represents

1. **The Reconciliation** of God with His purified church, washed clean, sanctified by the water of the Word.
2. **The Anointing** power of God acquired from resting in the River of Life, now to be used to reveal the glory of God to all the earth
3. **Access** to the very throne room of God, via the River of Life.

A CHURCH OF DESTINY of Final Reconciliation between Man and God.

To present to Jesus upon His return, a holy, blameless and radiant church, without stain, wrinkle or any other blemish, in a final act of reconciliation between God and Man.

A CHURCH OF DELIVERY of a People Willing and Able to Fulfil God's Purposes Upon the Earth.

A vibrant church, experiencing the truths of Atonement (Reconciliation with God) first fulfilled by Jesus upon the cross, now being lived out in His followers. These realities are:

1. **Atonement as an Ongoing Experience:**
 - a. **Being Worked Out in our Lives:** A process, not an event. Holiness, the practical application of Atonement, is obtained in greater measure the more we submit ourselves to the will of the Father. The greater the sacrifice of our own nature for the nature of Christ, the holier our lives will become.
 - b. **Available to All Who Desire It:** As with the experiences of Passover and

Pentecost, the truths of the Tabernacle Feasts are available on an ongoing basis, to all those desiring to participate.

2. **A Time of Rest:**

Our rest, our reliance, is founded upon the Lord, seven days a week. Seven represents completeness, a finished work. So we are able to rest in the completed work of Jesus at all times. Rest cannot be earned by setting aside one day or through good works. Jesus has done it all.
3. **A Time of Fasting:**

Fasting is a very practical acknowledgement of our heart attitude to the Lord, shown

through the temporary gift to Him of our most basic human instincts, food and sex. Fasting opens two way communication channels of both mind and spirit. Fasting is a regular, integral part of submission to God. Fasting is to become a pleasure, not an obligation.

4. A Time of Prayer:

Prayer is the very essence of our communication with God. To be a time of seeking a greater understanding of God's will. Our ultimate aim is to establish a two-way, 24 hour communication channel of prayer, so enabling us to react automatically to the Father's will in every situation. To be as one with Christ.

5. A Time of Humility:

a. Individual: An ongoing time of humility before the Lord, seeking His guidance and forgiveness.

b. Corporate: An increasing frequency and intensity in intercession, prayer and fasting in order to seek His will for His people.

6. A Time of Testing:

The Atonement experience is inevitably one of trial and testing. The cleansing and purifying of our soul; (defined as mind, emotions and will), our personality, our motivator, is at the very heart of Atonement. It is promised, He will not test us beyond what we can bear.

7. A Time of Worship:

Worship, along with prayer and intercession, is our entry ticket into the very presence of God. The Tabernacle church will see worship raised to new levels of intensity, as God's people become more and more desirous of entering into the Lord's glory.

8. A Time of Purity:

God's revelation and urgent requirement for the Tabernacle church, is personal and collective purity. Rather than merely seeking forgiveness for our sins through the blood, the very source of sin in our lives is to be

washed clean by the water of purification. Placing a new emphasis on the prevention of sin in our lives.

9. A Time of Righteousness:

Putting aside personal desires for excess possessions, pride of position, physical comfort and pleasure, in order to live righteous lives before God. God and His desires are to predominate in our lives.

10. New Ministry Roles For the Church:

The Tabernacle church is to fulfil new roles as part of its end-time assignment.

A. Present Roles:

a. Reconciliation to the Father:

Through an emphasis on both individual and corporate repentance.

b. To Subdue Satan: To be proactive in Spiritual Warfare, in order that Satan's kingdom might be defeated.

c. Ministry of Forgiveness: That sins might be forgiven on earth, rather than being judged by God later.

d. Bearing the World's Insults of Christ: As Christ's representatives in the world.

e. Disseminating the Power of the Tabernacle Truths: To the rest of the Church and to the world, primarily by example, but also in teaching.

B. Future Roles:

a. To Subdue Satan and His Angels: When they are cast down to earth in the last days.

b. The final Separation of Church and World: To separate the church from the world in the final days.

c. The Ultimate Goal: To be presented with Christ before the Father, a perfect bride without spot or blemish.

11. A Unified Church:

A unified church, to be presented with Christ before the Father's throne. This unity is one of purpose, not of yet another denomination. The Tabernacle church is a movement of people within God's various churches,

seeking to apply the greater truths the Tabernacle Feasts reveal. It is a movement that will grow, indeed is already growing, from the ground up, as individuals are convicted by the Holy Spirit to apply these truths to their lives. It cannot be imposed upon people from the top down - either individually or as a group - for a personal, 100% commitment is required to participate.

12. A Call to Perseverance:

The attainment of these goals seems impossible to the human mind. This is but an ungodly human mindset that we have to work through. For nothing is impossible in God. The writer of the book of Hebrews recognised this, constantly emphasising the need to persevere in our faith. While we will fail from time to time, these principles are being established within us on a progressive basis. We do not attain holiness or perfection in the twinkling of an eye. It is a process in which we must persevere, for the desired results to be attained.

13. A Call to Godly Living:

Tabernacle Principles are not merely another good Christian Doctrine, but a call to the individual, and the church, to godly living. Our life is a witness to the truth. Tabernacle truths can only be fully understood and entered into, through participation. Those who don't desire to participate will dismiss them as foolishness. Such has been the way of the Church throughout the ages.

14. A Hatred of Sin:

The Tabernacle church will illuminate the difference between right and wrong. 'Near enough is no longer good enough'. Believers are to live a life of righteousness. Sin is to be hated, firstly in us, then in other believers. Sin's awful nature will cause the Tabernacle Church to become more proactive in leading others to Christ. For the consequences of unforgiven sin are frightening. As we become more conscious of doing God's will, so the incidence of sin in our life reduces.

15. A Fear of God:

As we get closer to the Lord, a greater awareness of His awesome majesty, might, power and presence fills our lives. We become more aware of the dreadful consequences of falling under the judgement of the living God, so developing a 'Holy Fear' within us.

A CHURCH OF VICTORY
Reflecting God's Glory upon the Earth.

The Tabernacle church is to become the victorious church, reflecting the glory of God upon the earth, as prophetically illustrated in the joyous Feast of Tabernacles itself. These victorious reflections include:

16. An Outpouring of the Holy Spirit:

Such as has never been experienced in history! As the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the earth in abundance for a short time at the end of the age, signs, wonders, miracles and healings will form a natural part of the Tabernacle church. Christ however, will make these supernatural abilities available only to those who have proven themselves trustworthy, through obedience to the will of the Father. Otherwise chaos would reign!

17. The Time of Final Harvest:

The final and greatest harvest, as promised throughout the Bible and looked forward to by most believers. The Holy Spirit will do a quick work in people's lives. Churches will overflow with new believers, each one needing to be discipled and trained in the ways of the Lord. All Bible Believing churches will experience rapid growth. For some will be saved into the truths of Passover, others into those of Pentecost, while still others will proceed rapidly into Tabernacles. There will also be a great movement amongst present believers, as the Holy Spirit convicts many to seek further truths, to increase their level of commitment to their Saviour and Lord. However, there are many that resist change. Sadly, they will be highly resentful of the new 'spiritual

upstarts', those prepared to make the required sacrifices to move into a deeper relationship with God. Deeper levels than they are prepared to commit to. Much opposition will come from this group.

18. A New Concept of Church:

The Tabernacle church will not regard itself as a 'church' of the type we know today. It will not be just another denomination meeting in a building, separated from others, celebrating the truths that have been revealed to it. For Tabernacle church followers will regard their bodies as temporary dwellings, to be lived in but for a time, while eagerly awaiting the receipt of their eternal, heavenly bodies. This concept of '*temporaryness*', with its focus on what is ahead, will result in a distinct lack of interest in permanent church organisational structures and buildings. For they know that the return of Christ is near. '*Tabernaclers*' will be motivated to work within existing churches, seeking to lead others into the Tabernacle experience, while promoting unity in God's will amongst all churches. Barriers between churches will lessen as groups of like-minded people develop and mature within the various denominations. Denominational barriers will become of increasingly less significance as more and more attention is focused upon preparing for and eagerly awaiting, the Lord's return.

19. Aspiring to Perfection in Christ:

A church focused upon and fully committed to its ultimate destiny – to be the perfect Bride of Christ. This is not possible by human effort, attainable only through the complete submission of our wills to that of the Father. To become like Christ - for His will was totally submitted to His Father. An 'idealistic impossibility' when considered from the viewpoint of current experience, but attainable in the future through absorbing the principles of Atonement, in being healed by the power of the anointing of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It simply has to be possible, in order that the word of God may be finally fulfilled.

20. Total Sacrifice:

A people totally committed to seeking and living by the will of the Father, as reflected in the example of Jesus; even unto death, if required; washed clean by the water of the Word as well as saved by the blood of the Lamb; to be pure, as well as forgiven.

21. Eagerly Awaiting the Return of Christ:

The major motivation in life will be to be personally prepared, and to help others prepare, for the triumphant return of Christ, in total victory over the final barrier separating man from God – death. Hallelujah!

A MATTER OF TIME

As emphasised throughout, the attainment of these objectives is a process, not an event. For as the Holy Spirit convicts us, in new areas in our lives, so He guides us closer and closer to the scriptural ideal. We are not to be discouraged when we fail. We all fail, for not one of us has yet been made perfect. But if we diligently apply these principles to our lives, through the saving grace of Jesus, in the full power of the Holy Spirit, and in submission to the will of the Father, to the very best of our ability, changes will occur. For the Lord sees and honours our true heart. As we surrender to Him, so He teaches trains and encourages us in the application of His ways to our lives.

For the sacrifice of Atonement must be built into the heart of our very beings. Then we will be able to celebrate the victory, power and wonder of the Feast of Tabernacles. As individuals and the church, we will not experience the glory of the promise of Tabernacles until we have built God's Tabernacle within us. Glory follows, not precedes sacrifice! "My people, prepare yourselves," is the Lords heart cry.

Each one of us can make a start today. Final revival, the end –time harvest, the glory of God being manifested in the church, is dependent upon the sacrifice of our lives to Him, not upon an 'easy miracle' from the heavenlies. For God's Tabernacle is being built in each of us. His

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GOD'S OVERCOMING TABERNACLE CHURCH

collective glory will shine forth as His Tabernacle builds within each one. For Tabernacles is an individual, not a corporate experience. But God's glory will be greatly magnified by the collective witness of His Tabernacle church movement.

Let us then, get ready today for the victorious return of the Lord Jesus to collect his perfect bride, in accordance with the pattern established in the Tabernacle Feasts.

NOT THE FINAL WORD

Revelation, like the development of Christ in us, is an ongoing process, not a single event. It is the perfectly natural desire of every person with an apostolic or prophetic gifting, to receive brand new, supernatural, life and church changing revelation from God. Unfortunately when such revelation comes, it frequently leads to spiritual pride, accompanied by the belief that 'their word' (God's really!) is the final and ultimate word of God. God's next revelation has then to be given to someone else!

Naturally, being human, I would like to believe that there is some element of revelation in what has been written here concerning the development of God's end-time Tabernacle church movement. However it is neither all new revelation, nor the final word. The teaching on which these premises are based has been progressively revealed to many within the church over the past 50 years or so. While this has not yet all become mainstream Christian theology, bit by bit, piece by piece, these truths are gradually being absorbed into the wider church. For change and revelation in God's order, as in the exploration of a new country, is first carried out by a few pioneers, before being settled by the mass of its inhabitants.

As individuals, God takes our natural talents and breaks them down, before rebuilding them in His will, rather than our own. He does not make us 'Christian Clones', according to the human ideals of any one person or group. For we all have individual, God given personalities, each uniquely incorporating differing strengths and weaknesses. God will use our strengths, once they are submitted to him, while at the same time strengthening us in our areas of weakness, to making us better all-round people in Him. My three natural talents happen to be in the areas of envisioning the future, putting things into perspective, and explaining complex issues in a simple way. These are likely to be reflected here. I have many weaknesses. He is still working upon these!

Because we are human, every revelation contains elements of both God and the writer. This is no exception! I have tried my very hardest to ensure that as much as possible is of God, and as little as possible of David. This picture of the Tabernacle church movement has been carefully composed scripture upon scripture, word upon word, to line up, to the best of my ability, with God's word as developed in 'The First and Last Word.' You need to be the judge of my success or failure in this regard.

Finally, this is not the final word! (I can see David in that!) It is an attempt to provide a framework which others, more spiritual and knowledgeable than I, will be able to amend, expand and enhance. As time marches on, God continues to reveal more and more of his nature to us. But it won't be until the glorious day of His return that all will be revealed. Then He will have the final word! For the final 'Word' is indeed Jesus. To Him be all the honour and glory. Amen.

A GLIMPSE AT ONE MAN'S VISION FOR THE TABERNACLE CHURCH MOVEMENT

WALKING WITH JESUS

Before considering the vision, a brief understanding of the historical background of God's dealings with His people would be useful.

THE TABERNACLE CHURCH MOVEMENT BACKGROUND

Our God is a triune (three-part) being whose overriding desire has always been to restore relationship with His disobedient creation, mankind. He has approached this task in a logical, consistent way, the pattern of which is revealed throughout scripture. A pattern initially revealed when he set up His first church on earth, when the Israelites miraculously escaped from Egypt in c.1446BC, nearly three and a half thousand years ago. As the heavenly architect, God provided Moses with highly detailed plans for the first church building (Tabernacle of Moses). At the same time Moses received instructions for its operation (the Law). God's earthly representatives were appointed (the Priesthood), and the annual religious celebrations to be observed by His people were detailed. (The Feasts of the Lord - Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles.). God's plan of reconciliation is disclosed in all four, but is most clearly seen in the layout and furniture of Moses Tabernacle (an earthly type of Heaven), and through the religious festivals, the Feasts of the Lord, that the Israelites were to observe. This was the Old Covenant (Testament) church.

Nearly 1500 years later, this Old Covenant, based on the Law, was replaced by the superior New Covenant (Testament), based on grace. It was and is made available through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus. Through his death, Jesus fulfilled the pattern of the Feast of Passover. The 'new' New Testament Church was established on the Day of Pentecost, fulfilling the pattern of the Feast of Pentecost. That left only the three-part Feast of Tabernacles as the remaining Feast to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of

the Tabernacle Feasts, in accordance with God's pattern, is the honour, privilege and responsibility of the end-time church, for these feasts represented the final celebration and high point of the Jewish religious calendar. This task is the responsibility of the Tabernacle church movement, soon to culminate in the final reconciliation of man with God when Jesus returns to rule and reign upon the earth for 1000 years.

The development of the New Testament Church, a church now including all believers in Jesus, Jew and non-Jew, has many similarities to that of the Old Testament Church. As illustrated through the Israelites' journey to claim the Promised Land. The peoples' release from Egypt (Passover) was quickly followed by the giving of God's Covenant at Mount Sinai (Pentecost). Following this, through general disobedience, provision of the Promised Land was delayed for forty years, time for a generation to die in the desert. Possession of the Promised Land itself took more than 400 years, from crossing the River Jordan under Joshua, until final fulfilment under King Solomon (Tabernacles).

Similarly the New Testament pattern saw the crucifixion of Jesus (Passover) followed 50 days later, by the release of the Holy Spirit (Pentecost). After a time of growth the church went into a long period of decline during the aptly named Dark Ages. Since the Reformation of the 16th Century, the Church has gradually been restored.

The Traditional/Evangelical Churches first embraced again the Passover truth, that of salvation through the blood of Jesus. In the 20th century the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church embraced the Holy Spirit truth of Pentecost.

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Now, the pattern of Tabernacles is starting to emerge within the Church. Since the 1950's, there has been a 'Trumpet Call' to action, during which time the Lord has revealed many more truths from His Word, including revelation of the importance of Moses Tabernacle and the Feasts of the Lord. This call is right now gradually being heeded as people, around the world, are beginning to apply 'Day of Atonement' principles of repentance, holiness and submission of personal goals and ambitions to the will of the Father Himself to their lives. The outworking of this is to be the promised, glorious end-time Tabernacle church movement, in fulfilment of the 'Feast of Tabernacles' itself.

Detailed scriptural principles upon which this is founded are contained in 'The First and Last Word'. This vision or dream, (confused as to whether I am a young or old man!), is an attempt to bring the facts to life. Adding flesh to the bones, putting forward one man's view of the development of God's plan of reconciliation, to be fulfilled through the Tabernacle church movement. It is a vision, it is a dream, but one firmly based up on the reality of the Word.

A CHURCH OF DESTINY.... Of Final Reconciliation between Man and God.

To present to Jesus upon His return, a holy, blameless and radiant church, without stain, wrinkle or any other blemish, in a final act of reconciliation between God and Man.

SHARING THE VISION

The clock ticks irresistibly on towards midnight on 31 December 1999. There is, particularly in New Zealand, the first to experience the awakening of the new millennium, a sense of keen anticipation of the future, muted by the fear of possible consequences of the Y2K computer bug. The clock strikes 12! The lights stay on! The fearsome Y2K bug has forgotten to hatch. The hours on the time clock of life tick relentlessly onwards.....8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 1, ... The new day, the New Year, the New Century, the New Millennium. No miracle hangover cure – for the head from the party the night before, or for the ongoing challenges of living. One century blends smoothly into the next. Or does it?

For the world so it seems. The pace of life continues to accelerate, people striving ever harder, reaching out to grasp those worldly ways of satisfaction that always remain, tantalisingly, just out of reach.

For most of the church too, there has been little change. Billboards outside the churches have cleverly adjusted their traditional salvation message by two words, from "Last Chance of Salvation in the Old Millennium" to "First Chance of Salvation in the New Millennium." Inside of people's hearts, the change has been even less dramatic. For the Christian life cycle grinds on, some enthusiastic, most content to go with the flow, always a few unfortunates departing, dejected, rejected.

During the past few months, while travelling around the country, I have listened to lots of cassette tapes, many now 20-30 years old, sounding out the 'trumpet call' of awakening to the church. Maybe you have heard them too. Calls to put our lives in order. Calls to prepare for the greatest revival of all times. And what have we done about it? Generally nothing! How disillusioned many of the 'trumpeters' must be, as the people have said, "That's nice," before carrying on with life as normal. Some have heard the call in their minds, others have even believed it in their hearts, but very few have been prepared to do something about it, to submit their wills and desires to those of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until recently, that is. For there is now a gentle stirring amongst a few of God's people. As the first puff of wind causes a gentle ripple to run upon a mirror-like sea, so the Spirit of God is starting to move in people's hearts. In ever increasing numbers, Christians are being convicted of the sin that remains in our lives, sin that separates us from the full love of God. Sin that surely as night follows day, prevents us from fully walking in His ways. Perhaps the Holy Spirit is convicting you as He is convicting me. Convicting us both to do something about it. Yes, a hatred of the sin in our lives is building within. Compromise is becoming less of an

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option than in the past. Black is black, grey is black however light the shade of grey might be. Only white is white. A greater desire to please the Father is being instilled within by the Holy Spirit; a desire to become more like Jesus, to do the perfect will of the Father as He did. "Lord, I am available. Please, please, use me!" is the increasingly harmonised cry of more and more hearts, a cry reaching out into the heavens. The chorus the Lord has been waiting for, the cry that so gladdens His heart. Reverberating chords of worship greet our King of Kings, followed by the soft sound of surrender to our Lord of Lords.

For a new sound is being heard amongst God's people. Whispers here, heart cries there. Cries of repentance. Cries of passion! Cries of a people awakened by the gentle puffs of Holy Spirit wind. Cries of desire for more of God. Cries of intercession. Cries of worship. Cries of intimacy. Cries of submission. Cries of commitment. Promises of obedience to the will of the Lord.

For a new generation is stirring amongst God's people. An impassioned, committed generation, desperately hungry for God. A new generation totally committed to righteous living. A new generation committed to the growth of the whole body of Christ. Dedicated to spreading God's word amongst all people. Committed to defeating the forces of evil upon the earth. Earnestly desiring to fulfil God's will. A new generation committed to becoming the perfect bride of Christ. A new generation, now eagerly waiting upon Jesus' return. A new generation is arising, of both young and old. One called by the Spirit of the Great High God. A new, overcoming generation who will "*not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*" (*Revelation 12:11*) A new generation, one willing to pay the price of total commitment.

A new generation is arising within the body, convicted by the Holy Spirit to be the start of the final end-time move of God. Not all are so called. But it is the highest calling God has for this generation. Salvation and the empowering of the Holy Spirit are free gifts from God. Obedience on the other hand, is our gift back to God, through which He empowers us to fulfil

His purposes. By its very nature, obedience has to be an individual commitment of our individual will. It comes from within. The Spirit of God initiates it. It is not of man, not of preacher, evangelist or pastor. It is our personal response to all that our God has done for us. It is a God inspired, personal response.

The Tabernacle church movement will not separate itself from the body to become just another denomination. For unity in God is at its very core. Units of God's Tabernacle Army will grow within existing churches, dedicated to doing God's will within the Body of Christ. For as individuals within churches grow in commitment to the Lord's will, so will unity permeate the Body. The 'unified end-time church' is neither a single world church nor a 'superior' denomination. Rather a unity of purpose amongst people in churches fulfilling the will of God. For as individuals get closer to God, so His will inevitably will be better expressed through His Body, the Church. Denominational walls are starting to crumble, as we become more in tune with our Master and Lord.

Inevitably, there will be opposition amongst some, indeed many, to this new move of God's Spirit. For there have always been individuals and churches content to remain at differing levels of truth. 'Tabernaclers' will recognise this, choosing to love those who criticise, for all form part of the one Body of Christ. The poisoned barbs thrown by those who have been at the forefront of previous moves of God, but who reject this one, will hurt the most. On the other hand, criticism from the 'worldly religious church' will be easily recognisable and dealt with for what it is.

There will be a 'quick work' too, amongst those the Holy Spirit convicts. People will rapidly rise to new levels of understanding and capacity through commitment, to the envy of those older Christians who have placed limitations upon their faith. For these believers will rapidly absorb the eternal truths of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Receiving the blood of forgiveness of Jesus, submitting to the fire of

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purification and testing of the Spirit, being perfected by the washing of the water of obedience to the Father's Will, in a way not previously experienced.

A commitment founded upon repentance. A hunger to get right with our God. An intensely personal repentance, an ongoing process of 'Atonement', a thorough cleansing providing the foundation upon which Christ can rebuild us into His image.

For repentance is an ongoing process, as the Lord reveals, layer upon layer, areas in our lives that need to be changed in order to fulfil his will. Yes, sin is present in attitudes as well as actions. Dealing with ingrained attitudes, firmly entrenched at the very core of our personality, is required of the 'Tabernacler.' Often so much a part of us that we cannot see them! So we must be prepared to let the Holy Spirit reveal them, allowing Him to change us as He turns up the heat in our life until we finally let go of our once 'sacred cows.' This process, normally so painful and time consuming is speeding up, as 'Atonement' impresses itself more deeply upon us. As we desire to be 'at one' with our God.

Change through repentance, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, is at the heart of this final Tabernacle experience of worldwide revival. We are now experiencing the 'latter rains'. Less than the 'early rains' of early New Testament times, but so welcome after the centuries long drought of the Dark Ages. Now we're eagerly sensing the imminent arrival of the final harvest, the fulfilment of the joyous Feast of Tabernacles, the time of God's glory being powerfully reflected throughout the earth.

Before this though, we must put aside our half-hearted ways, the greyness of our past. Meeting with our God in Atonement, in whole-hearted (and bodied!) praise and worship, prayer, fasting and intercession. Enduring the fire of testing in humility and righteousness, living pure and holy lives. Letting His awesome majesty, might, power and presence fill our whole beings. This is our entry ticket to the Feast itself.

Yes, Tabernacles is first and foremost a joyous celebration of the fruit harvest. The sweetest to the taste buds. Celebrating the harvest of the choicest crops. Far more rejoicing than there was for the basic but necessary commodity crops of barley and wheat. For now has come the tantalising taste sensation of the fruit of the land. Yes, the glory of the Lord will shine through those prepared to make the necessary sacrifices to join His Tabernacle Army, the final glorious, mouth watering fruit harvest of those who have fully submitted their wills to Him.

The signs, wonders and miracles of Jesus, as experienced in the early church will again flow through those who have paid the entry price to the overcoming Tabernacles company, only in much greater number. For God only gives power to those He can truly trust, those fully submitted to His will. Otherwise there would be chaos! To be trusted with miracles we have first to pay the price of obedience. The glory of the Lord shines through those prepared to make the necessary sacrifices to join His Tabernacle Army, the final magnificent fruit harvest, those who have fully submitted their will to Him.

Tabernacles also celebrates the final harvest of mankind, when multitudes upon multitudes come to Christ right across the world. For as Tabernaclers reflect the glory of the Lord in their lives, many others will be attracted to their light. Some will come in as barley, some as wheat, while others will hunger for the delights of the fruit of Tabernacles. The much awaited end time harvest will happen when individual Christians and the Church radiate the light and purity of Jesus. God's plan is perfect. He will not move before His church is ready to gather the harvest. For if the storehouse leaks and is infested with rats, the harvest will be spoiled, as it has been so often in the past.

The pattern of Tabernacles cannot and will not be fulfilled until His people and Church are fully prepared. Are we ready?

THE VISION STOPPED!

How I would love to move on further – to be able to see right into the future, to have God

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A GLIMPSE OF ONE MAN'S VISION FOR THE TABERNACLE CHURCH MOVEMENT

reveal the full glory of the Feast of Tabernacles that is to be experienced by His people. To be the prophet of prophets, to have all the answers about what the future holds. In my human nature, that is! To be honest, when I started writing, that is what in my heart of hearts, I hoped for. But it is not to be for I will not make it up in my imagination.

But wait, the Lord is clearly showing me as I write that that knowledge is not for now. We need have no concern for the future if we fully follow His ways today. To the extent we are prepared to submit to His purposes, He guarantees to guide us through the promised trials and tribulations of the days ahead. We are not to concern ourselves with things we cannot affect or influence. For God's will, will be done.

“Listen my people,” says the Lord. “My judgement is coming soon. For my will, my perfect will is being done on earth as it is in heaven. Prepare yourselves my people, gird your loins for the battle. Put on the armour I have provided for you. For the days of this age are drawing to a close. Prepare yourselves for the battle my people. For, to the extent you have prepared yourselves through submission to my will for you, so I will in turn protect you. Prepare yourselves now my people and I will give you a white stone, the admission ticket to my Glorious Feast. Do not delay, for as you can see my Spirit is already moving to separate the wheat from the chaff, the tares from the wheat. Do not worry about the troubles of the world my people, for they will receive my justice if they do not repent of their wicked ways. Do not neglect your salvation, for I am a righteous God and I am seeking a righteous people. Repent. Make your way right with me, with your brothers and all those you have offended. For I require it of you. Prepare yourselves the way of the Lord, for I am soon coming in might, power and majesty, as I have promised in my Word. There is nothing to fear for those who are fully submitted to me. But beware of *lukewarmness*, for I will spit you out of my mouth as surely as the night follows the day.

Listen to me my people, while there is still time. For I your God am a righteous God, slow to anger and just in my ways. But the day of the wrath of my judgement is very near. Come to me my people, come to me and I will protect you from my righteous fury against an unrepentant, self-centred people.

For I love my own and will see that you come to no harm. Rest in me; bathe yourselves in my love and tender care, for I am your Father who cares for you. I have marvellous things for you, things that you cannot even envisage, as my plans unfold for the end of the age.’

“For I am returning for my perfect bride, clothed in white linen, to dwell with me forever. Be part of my bride, my people, for although the cost is great, the rewards are unsurpassable. I Jesus, will be with you soon.”

Well, what more can I say! The Lord works in ways that man cannot comprehend. He leads us. We merely need to be available.

For we are living in days of ‘Atonement’. Days when we desperately need to get ourselves right with God, our Christian brothers and sisters, and all others we have offended during our lives. It's not easy. I know that! You know that too! But it is necessary if we are to enter into all that God has for us. Yes, the message for this time is to submit to the will of the Father for our lives. To be 100% sold out to our God. To be a part of His overcoming Tabernacle Army. To be as one with Jesus.

As mentioned above, before receiving the word from the Lord, I don't know precisely how the Lord will outwork His Tabernacle church movement. However He has graciously given me some words in prophetic, allegorical and poetic form, along with some practical application of His Word and observations on the direction of prayer and intercession. I trust you may find these helpful in gaining an insight into the exciting future that awaits all who are obedient to His will.

THE THREE ARMIES OF GOD

The Lord has given me a picture of three armies, all fighting the same enemy but with varying degrees of effectiveness.

THE OUTER COURT ARMY: This army reminds me of the Chinese Army. They appear to be a huge, seething mass of soldiers when looked at from a distance but as you get closer you can see that they are in ranks, very close together. Their uniforms are all much the same but there are epaulets distinguishing regiments. The regiments are separate and do not mix. The officer's uniforms stand out.

The soldiers are armed only with a very basic rifle. They are pleased to be in the army as it gives them security in an otherwise poor country. The only way they can win battles however is by sheer force of numbers. The leadership doesn't mind sacrificing soldiers in the battle, as there are plenty of replacements available. The individual soldiers however, while willing to sacrifice themselves in this way in the past, are not so keen to do so now, their education levels having increased. Most of the leaders however do not realise this, being of the old school. So there is increasing disaffection in the ranks and even desertions, as the soldiers are no longer prepared to be cannon fodder.

The leadership is at a loss as to what to do. They are not prepared to learn new tactical skills as they feel they already have all the answers. What used to work still should, in their opinion, but it doesn't. They have a defeated look in their eyes when confronting major battles. So they avoid these and restrict themselves to minor, low tech skirmishes, where their numerical superiority guarantees success. They are increasingly reluctant to enter into battle unless success is virtually guaranteed, for they know they cannot rely on their troops to accept the risks of all out warfare. This huge potential resource is slowly dying due to the lack of innovative and inspiring leadership and their leaders inability and unwillingness to employ the new weaponry their government is providing. It sits neatly in piles in

huge storage sheds that surround the army. The leadership have put armed guards on these sheds with orders to shoot on sight any soldier attempting to use their own initiative to go in and try out one of these weapons. The soldiers lose even more interest and many do not renew their contracts once they have served their allotted time. The army therefore, has to expend even greater resources on attracting and training to a basic level, new recruits. This distracts them from the battle even more.

Their enemies can see this and are getting bolder and bolder in their attacks. The size of their occupied land is shrinking as the soldiers gradually withdraw towards the safety of numbers in the middle of their territory. Yet the army is potentially a tremendously powerful one, consisting as it does of such huge numbers of soldiers. If only the leadership would employ new tactics and make use of the weaponry available to it, it could once again become a great force. Sadly, such a change does not appear to be in sight.

Encouragingly though, increasing numbers of the soldiers who are leaving realise the situation and are joining the adjoining supporting armies who they can see are prepared to use the weaponry they have been given. This, in spite of the leadership instructing them not to have anything to do with these armies, whom they sometimes incorrectly see as being the enemy.

The enemy, in increasing desperation, seeing not one but three armies gathering against it, is concentrating its attacks far more than it used to. Sadly, this first army is not adapting to this new situation at all well. It spends most time remembering past glory days, rather than adapting to today's battle conditions. While it cannot be defeated completely because of the huge numbers and infrastructure it contains, it is continually reducing in size and effectiveness, leaving more and more of the responsibility of the battle to its associated armies.

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THE HOLY PLACE ARMY: This army reminds me of NATO. Not as many soldiers as the first army although they cover a greater area, being spread further apart. This army is in a much more confident mood, having had recent victories, although in reality, against much less sophisticated foes. Their uniforms are many and varied, representing the diversity of countries they come from. The troops are more highly educated, needing to be to handle the sophisticated weaponry they have at their disposal. The officers are clearly distinguishable from the troops, not because their uniforms are radically different, but because they have adorned themselves with all sorts of gold braid and medals to make themselves stand out.

Everything looks pretty good on the surface but there are major problems underneath. Firstly in the areas of communications. For here are many different national languages spoken, so troop units have considerable difficulties in communicating with each other. An attempt has been made to overcome this by making the predominant, English language the primary one for the command structure, but misinterpretations are frequent, particularly in the heat of battle when stress levels are high. Resentment and uncertainty occurs, amongst both officers and men. This is a major problem with this army, for national pride supersedes efficiency and effectiveness on many occasions. Each national unit feels that they know best and want their own people to be at the top of the command structure. This has led to a top-heavy organisation, one slow in making decisions. Pride and bickering between units, each of whom have slightly different agendas, also reduces the effectiveness of this army considerably. But they are finding now, the more they fight beside each other and come to rely upon each other in the heat of battle, that their differences are not as great as they once thought they were. As the battle intensifies, they are realising that they indeed have all critical areas in common and that the enemy is the real foe.

Weaponry is not a problem for this army. They have more than adequate supplies provided by

their governments and the soldiers are keen and eager to use it. Unfortunately however, the weaponry is looked upon as being sufficient to win all the battles by itself. Technology is king. This reliance on technology has now got to such a state that the army is jeopardising the equipment's effectiveness by not being willing to risk soldiers lives in the employment of it. So massive firepower is poured out in a shotgun approach from a long range, losing its effectiveness and inflicting more damage than is really necessary, both to property, but more importantly, unnecessarily injuring and killing innocent civilians.

The life of the soldier has become more important than the lives of the people they are fighting to protect or release. While the individual soldiers are prepared to fight, the leadership are unwilling to risk the public backlash that battle casualties are likely to cause. For they are most interested in protecting their lives and positions, and supplies of high tech weaponry. Sadly, the leaders' focus has turned inward, away from the battle to what is in their personal best interest. Getting the leaders to work together is harder than for the troops, but it is happening more.

While this army, in spite of its limitations, has been winning many battles, the enemy is getting wise to its major weakness, particularly the unwillingness to risk soldiers' lives. So the enemy has designed his tactics to get the army offside with the people it is trying to influence by exaggerating damage and casualty figures. If it can't win the war on the battlefield itself because of the power of the weapons employed against it, it will try to win the propaganda war, both amongst the soldiers themselves and within the civilian population. For the enemy's real expertise is in psychological warfare as in reality, he does not have a fraction of the weaponry of the army available to him.

While this army may appear to be on top of the present level of enemy activity, it currently does not have the willpower necessary to fight against a foe prepared to launch all his resources in one

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final desperate fight to the death. When this time arrives, this army is going to be faced with the most critical decision of its existence – are leaders and soldiers alike prepared to die for the cause? Some will and some wont.

Many will leave the army but there will be many more prepared to fight to the end, putting the cause ahead of their personal safety.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES ARMY: This army reminds me of the Israeli Army. An army that always appears to be facing insurmountable odds, both numerically and in weaponry, but continues to win its ongoing battle of survival. This army is not large in comparison to the other two, in fact it is really only now starting to be formed. But it is growing rapidly and will in time, become the most effective, although remaining the smallest of the three. The most impressive impression of it as it grows, is that it has a focused direction.

The soldiers' uniforms are not smart; in fact they display the dirt and grime of battle. The soldiers themselves have a battle hardened look, for they have personally experienced the harsh reality of war. Understanding only too well, the reality that they may be one of the next casualties. They know that war is harsh, hard and unforgiving. Realising that war is not a game, that it involves risks, that many don't return. Understanding war is necessary for survival, individually and as a nation. Yet their look is not one of exhaustion even though they are tired, but one of confident expectation, knowing that the victory is already won!

Interestingly they seem to be so well organised, moving as if one, yet their leadership is not obvious. No one person stands out by virtue of his or her uniform. All appear much the same. Yet the leaders are there and obviously well respected, giving instructions in an informal yet precise way. For the leaders are as one with the soldiers, giving the impression that they have come out of the ranks, rather than having been imposed from above. All speak the same language. Orders are therefore easily understood

and instantly acted upon as if the soldiers' lives depend upon it, which in fact they do. Surprisingly there appear to be far fewer fulltime professional soldiers in this army, compared to the other two. Even many of the officers have outside jobs and come and go as required. This doesn't seem to be a handicap at all, for they seem better able to relate to their soldiers than the professionals do.

Their weaponry is very good, but not necessarily the very latest available, although some is. Indeed much looks very battle scarred but is still in very good working order. For it is almost as if these soldiers are as one with their equipment. They obviously understood it thoroughly, through much training and wartime experience. Knowing what it can do and its limitations, they work within these to achieve the maximum results from their armoury. Differences of rank do not affect the jobs they do. Each job is done by the best person available and when a job is required to be done urgently, all 'muck in' and do it. This army operates on a team rather than a hierarchical basis.

The territory they control is actually not that large, although on a per man basis it is much greater than for the other two. What is most important though, is the key location of the area. It reaches out into the very heart of the enemy. So different to the first two armies, which have essentially become defensive in orientation. For this army, the best form of defence is attack. They instinctively know that if they sit back and wait to be attacked, they will be overwhelmed by the sheer weight of numbers of the enemy. Controlled aggression typifies their strategic thinking.

This results in their companion armies having a much easier time of things than they would otherwise have had. For they alone recognise that all three armies have a role to play in the overall victory. Even when their air of quiet confidence and successes are misunderstood, sometimes even envied by the other armies. Gradually however, through patient communication and because of the spectacular

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results this army is achieving, their companion armies are being won over.

Indeed recruitment skyrockets, as other soldiers want to join. However many can't pass the intense initiation programme which requires total commitment and dedication to complete. For this army can only operate successfully with those who are 100% sold out to the vision and prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice of their lives in the attainment of it. The vision of this army is not one of containment, but rather, a total and final victory over the enemy. They are highly educated, knowing their strategy and goals backwards. Most importantly, they know that when they follow the defined battle plan, their ultimate victory is assured.

INTERPRETATION: By now, many of the interpretations should be familiar to you. However, I am including a few hints to help you.

Outer Court Army: Traditional/Evangelical Church

Holy Place Army: Pentecostal/Charismatic Church

Holy of Holies Army: Tabernacle Church

Education: Movement/Army
Knowledge of the Word.
Regiments. Nations: Denominations, Ministries
Braid, Medals, etc: Vestments etc.
Uniforms: Picture of the nature of the people in the particular army.
Weapons: Spiritual Gifts.
Leaders: Pastors, Teachers, Evangelists, Prophets, Apostles, Ministers, Priests, etc.
Enemy: Satan and his army.
Battle: Between forces of good and evil.
Battlefield: External for the Church, internal for the individual.
Psychological Warfare: Waged by Satan on our mind, convincing us to give up the battle.
XXX Army: Similar to, but not precisely the same as. A human illustration only.

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UP THE MOUNTAIN

THE DREAM

Once upon a time, as all the best tales start, there was a man. He could have any number of names but we will call him John. John was a very ordinary man. He lived in a city on a vast plain. There were lots of cities round about similar to his, where millions of citizens got on with life, making a good living from the surrounding land and craft industries they had developed, producing the goods that go to make for a comfortable life. The people were happy with their lot. Generations came and generations went. Life began, was lived, and one day ended. That was that, and that was all. The sun rose, the birds came out to play. The sun set, the birds went back to sleep. The cycle of life rolled on and on throughout the ages.

John owned his own little house in a good area of town. Most comfortable and homely it was too. He worked hard, enjoyed kicking about an inflated sheep bladder, *footbladder* they called it, with his mates after work and in the weekends. Life was good. "This is what living is all about!" or so his mates told him.

But John had a secret dream. He couldn't tell his mates about it, lest they thought him stupid. For when he was young, sitting upon his Grandma's knee, she had thrilled him with stories of a people far away, living on a mountain. A land overflowing with milk and honey, a land very different to the one he knew. John had no idea what a mountain even was, for the plain was his world, stretching as far as the eye could see.

As a special treat for his fifth birthday, Grandma had drawn, on a very expensive, special piece of papyrus, a picture of the mountain of his and her dreams. For she had once been to the mountain, returning solely to share her discoveries with others. How sad she was, that so few were interested in hearing and even fewer in going to see for themselves. For life was pretty good, you see, right here on the plains.

But John treasured that present like no other. He knew that one day, he would search out this mountain and experience for himself, the wonders of her stories.

The inevitable happened and Grandma died. What would he do? Let his dream die with her? No. He would find the mountain! So John quickly 'rushed up' a designer sack with shoulder straps to make carrying the load easier on a long journey, good at design and stitching as he was. (men did these things in those days – women carried the burdens – still do, some say!) Named it a *rushsack*. After filling it with the needs of his journey, including his precious papyrus picture, off he went. Didn't tell his mates though, for they would only have laughed at him!

THE JOURNEY

He journeyed from city to city, showing people his picture, asking everyone he met if they had seen the mountain. But no one had. The cities themselves were interesting enough, for each had a different philosophy on life, but none excited him as much as his precious Grandma's stories. After several weeks of seemingly purposeless wanderings, John felt down in the dumps, wondering whether the journey was worthwhile. His *rushsack* seemed particularly heavy that day. "Perhaps I would have been better off staying at home, playing *footbladder* with my mates," he thought, in a moment of pensive reflection. But the dream he had so blissfully nurtured over the years was so strong that he convinced himself, "I must go on. I can't give up yet!"

Heading down the road, he caught up with another traveller, a kindly looking soul. As they pounded the *dirtments*, (for paving had not yet been thought of) passing the time of day, John, *rushsack* on his back, mentioned his search for the mountain. His friend's face lit up like a lantern. You want to go to the mountain, he exclaimed! I am heading that way too. And what's more, I have a map. I can show you the

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way. John was ecstatic! His dream was about to come true!

Together, they headed down the road at an increased pace. They were on their way to the mountain! The way John's newfound friend talked about the mountain was truly inspirational. John couldn't wait to get there! After a few more days of *dirtment* pounding, John's friend suddenly stopped. "Look over there", he cried. "The mountain! I can see the mountain!" John squinted. (the only treatment for short sightedness in those days.) He squinted again. Yes, there it was! As one, the two of them jogged off down the road. Running would have made the story sound a lot more impressive, but the mountain was still 30,000 paces away, their *rushsacks* were heavy, and we don't want them to collapse through exhaustion before they get there, do we? Would ruin a good story!

As they arrived at the foot of the mountain, John could see all the awe inspiring, craggy magnificence his grandmother had spoken about those many years ago. It was as if he was coming home. John was just so happy, he gave his friend a big hug. (men were allowed to hug then! Today too actually!) "Thankyou for showing me the way," he cried. It was a really emotional moment. He didn't care about his tears, though real men, even then, were not meant to cry!

At the foot of the mountain there was a river, deep and wide. "How do I get across?" John asked his friend. "For it is too deep to wade and the current is so strong." "There is a way" his friend replied gently. "A bridge. Come, let me show you." So he led John round a bend in the stream towards the bridge. As they got nearer, John's friend stopped. "I have to leave you here," he said with a sigh. "For we all have to make our own journey onto the mountain." As John watched with amazement, his friend was transformed. Light glowed over his whole body. A thousand candle power! Wings sprouted on his back. He rose gracefully into the sky. "Don't worry, I will be on the mountain too, keeping an eye on you," he said comfortingly, disappearing into the sunset.

John, walked towards the bridge, astounded. "What else is going to happen today! Well, I have dreamed of this moment for so long, I can't back off now," he thought to himself.

"Can I be your guide?" asked the man at the bridge. A man like he had never seen before. So kindly and merciful, yet strong at the same time. It was impossible to explain. "I would like to go across the bridge to the mountain," John requested quietly. "My Grandma told me how wonderful it is, and I would like to experience it for myself." "Have you got your toll?" the Guide asked gently. Now John knew what he was talking about, for tolls and tax gathering are as old as history itself. "So, how much is it to get across?" "It costs nothing to cross over the bridge my son, your ticket is my free gift to you. But, be warned, to climb the mountain will cost all that you have." "That's okay with me," John said quickly, so keen to get across. "Okay, let me take you by the hand, for the bridge is narrow and I wouldn't want you to fall off, after having come all this way." "How does he know how far I have come," John thought to himself. "He seems to know me better than I know myself!"

So John held out his hand, letting the Guide take him over the narrow bridge, into the land of his dreams. Halfway across, glancing down for a quick look at the water, John gasped with amazement, for the river was flowing blood red! Surprises abound for our intrepid traveller!

Upon recovering his composure, John looked up and down the bridge itself exclaiming! "It's made like a giant cross. Criminals are normally hung on these. The Guide doesn't look like a criminal, though!" "The cross is mine, the blood in the river is mine," said the Guide gently, again reading his mind. "It is the toll I paid to get you across." "Thanks so much," John exclaimed, staggered by the ease with which the Guide understood his thoughts. As they stepped off the bridge, he turned to John saying, "I have to leave you now to go back and bring others across. But I am leaving you with another friend to 'show you the ropes' of my kingdom. You can't see

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him, but he is now inside you. Just ask in your mind anything you want to know, and he will tell you.” Naturally, John thought this to be completely weird, but then, so was everything else about this place. The Guide obviously knew what he was talking about though, so he thought he might try it sometime. Bidding his Guide farewell, John headed off on a journey of exploration, keen to experience all that Grandma had thrilled him with, those many years ago, as he sat on her knee. “Great days, they were,” he reminisced. “But now, I can experience it all for myself!”

‘TWEET TWEET’

John was more excited than he had ever been in his whole life! Caused him to jump up and down with great glee! Hopped higher than he had ever managed before. That’s funny he thought. Must be the adrenaline! He turned round and looked at the trees. “Boy o boy, they seem massive!” He looked and he looked and he looked again. But his focus of attention was not now on the trees but a lot closer, to his face in fact. Before his very eyes, his nose was growing longer and longer and longer and joining up with his mouth! “Must be hallucinating,” he squawks to himself. “All the excitement you know.” So he waved his arms round in a circle, to relax his body and brain. “Hey, something’s not right here,” he thought to himself. “I feel as free as a bird on the breeze. Wait a minute! I am a bird on the breeze! And I am about to hit that.....” Thud! John’s world suddenly went black. Gingerly, he woke up, as if from a dream. “What’s happened? Surely not! It can’t be! It can’t b-b-be! B-b-but it is! I am a bird! A sparrow, even! What has become of me! Grandma never told me about this!” John looked for his *rushsack* but it had gone. No more *jellypeas* he said sadly to himself. (For no one had yet had the brilliant marketing idea of trebling their size and changing them into a bean shape, selling for four times the price! An idea that turned this ‘has bean’ ‘sweet pea’, into one of the world’s sweetest, succulent success stories!)

“Well, I guess I had better make the best of it,” he thought *sparrowfully*. Flapping his new found

wings he yawed his way up into the tree that had so rudely stepped out into the path of his first flight! After a perfect two foot landing on a high branch, a fine chirpiness feeling nested over him. “This is a birds eye view,” he exclaimed. “Well, it is for us sparrows,” said a chipper voice next to him. John looked around and there was this very nice lady sparrow, twirling her beak in a classic sparrow smile. “Welcome to the mountain,” she said sweetly. “Can I take you under my wing, metaphorically speaking of course!” she said *blushingly*, embarrassed by her little joke. “What a good idea,” John replied, “For this is all very strange to me.” “By the way, my name is Jill,” said Jill. “And mine is John,” said John, pleased to have the introductions done with. For he wasn’t too practised in introductions to beautiful ‘birds’ of the opposite sex!

So Jill winged John on a guided tour of the mountain. He really enjoyed the freedom of flying, being able to get from point to point, ‘as the sparrow flies.’ “Flying is certainly easier than climbing,” he thought to himself. Jill was obviously really at home. “There are two groups of us here” she informed John *tweetingly*. “The *Sparrowditionalists*, who have been here the longest and the *Sparrangelicals*, real enthusiasts for the Guide and his River of Blood.” Jill introduced him to many of her friends, about whom she talked freely. “Gossip, his grandmother would have called it,” thought John to himself. “But they all seem happy enough playing around, twittering from tree to tree, enjoying the sunshine filtering through the trees of the foothills in which they live.”

As they flew round John was feeling a little peckish but could find nothing to peck! He so wanted to try out his newfound beak too. Had noticed that all the trees were in blossom but there was no fruit anywhere to be seen. Finally, plucking up the courage, John asked Jill where they could get a bite to eat. “Oh that’s simple,” she tweeted, preening her feathers, “We have a field of barley over here. We can eat as much of it as we want. It’s not great food but there is plenty of it and we are happy enough, although

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more variety would be nice for a change. My friends often complain about it, but they are not prepared to look elsewhere either. Some people are never satisfied, are they! Let me take you there.” So Jill and John went to the barley field and joined thousands of other sparrows pecking their lunch. “Plenty of it,” John thought to himself once again, for he didn’t want to offend the beautiful Jill, “but it isn’t anything like the magnificent feasts Grandma used to tell me about. And those trees are strange. Always in blossom! But never producing fruit!”

John pondered all this inside his bird brain, which being sparrow sized, took time to compute. But unlike the *sparrowbrains* around him, he quickly became dissatisfied with his lot. Plucking up his courage, once again, (won’t have many feathers left soon!) he asked Jill if this is all there is to the mountain. Jill was not really surprised when he asked, for she was getting to know him a little by now. “I hoped you weren’t going to ask,” she said sadly, for she knew she was about to lose her friend. “You really do want to fly higher up the mountain, don’t you. Sometimes I dream of flying higher too. To be really honest though, life is very comfortable down here in the foothills. But I have seen that dream in your wistful sparrow eyes for a while now, and know that you won’t be happy until you give it a go. Remember our Guide at the gate telling you about a friend inside? Well, I have always been sceptical about him, but others say that he holds the key to flying high. So you’d better ask him. I’ll say my goodbyes now, for when you go away I won’t see you again.” Jill cried *sparrowfully*, gentle sparrow tears rolling fetchingly down her delicate beak. “And I was becoming fond of you too,” she twittered with a birdie blush, before disappearing into the sunset as all true, jilted heroine sparrows do. John was sad to see her go, but he had a greater purpose in life – to climb the mountain.

‘COO COO’

“I just don’t see how I can fly high,” he mused, totally bemused, “for my wings only lift me to the treetops, not the mountaintop!” For a quick lesson in *sparrodynamics*, he had taken. “This

will be a good test for my Friend Inside. I feel pretty stupid talking to someone I can’t see, but I really do want to go higher and I have run out of ideas myself.” Looking round to make sure no one else was watching, John said in his best bird thought, “Friend Inside, please tell me how I can climb further up this mountain.” “You want to discover the wonders your Grandma told you about when you sat on her knee?” a gentle voice replied. John was so surprised he did a *springsault* (for summer had not yet come) right there on the spot! “You too! How is it that you know so much about me? Like my Guide!” he squeaked. “We both knew you before you were even born,” his newfound friend said gently. Not wanting to get involved in a deep theological discussion about the origin of bird life, John accepted that his friend knew what he was talking about and queried again, “You know how to climb this mountain?” “Yes John, I do. If you let me, I can guide you right to the top.” “Can we go now, please,” John cooed in a most *unsparrowlike* manner. “That’s a funny voice I have! I am growing too, and my feathers are turning white! What’s happening? I like this! I’ll hop over to the ‘looking pool’ and see my reflection in the water!” “No need to, John, for I can tell you that you have been transformed into a dove. You have been prepared to trust me, so now are taking on my image. Spread your wings and enjoy yourself! Fly high, fly on up the mountain!” So John did. Now bigger and stronger, he effortlessly winged his way over the treetops, up onto the mountain itself.

Jill looked on from far below, a tear welling in her misty eye. “Farewell John, I wish I was as brave as you but I am so comfortable here. I just can’t make the break. Maybe one day. Maybe.....” John didn’t hear for he was already flying high above the trees, delighted with the flapping power of his new wings. Up, up and away. He would get to the top of the mountain now! He climbed and climbed, so happy that he had now made it! But soon, feeling tired from exertion and excitement, he spotted a group of doves feeding. Thought he would join them for a well-earned rest and refreshments. He landed, again in a perfect two-point landing, feeling

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proud of himself for how far he had come. The other doves welcomed him warmly. They were so much more outgoing than the sparrows, although he soon observed that they were also expert at pecking each other too, when one got in another's way! But there was even more food here, and it was tender wheat, rather than the tough old barley of his sparrow diet. "Jill doesn't know what she's missing," John thought fleetingly. "But it's her choice." So reinvigorated after a good feed, he decided to take a look around.

There was just a different atmosphere about this place. Not as many doves as there were sparrows but they made so much more noise! So enthusiastic they generally were about life too. Oh yes, there was the odd reclusive bird. Suffering from something called 'spiritual *dovpression*' the others said. But most happily perched on the local tree branches, cooing about the good life. Noticing green fruit on the trees, John asked his *dovecostal* friends when the fruit ripened. "We don't know," they said in a chorus. Then each promoted a different theory in a hubbub of noise. But suddenly, there was silence. John looked skyward with the others to see why. For up there, a flock of jet black vultures wheeled around, seeking prey. Several careless doves were not quick enough at getting under cover and were caught in the vultures' trap. The vultures chased them relentlessly until their resistance caved in. They just lay down and died of fright. Dead doves - vulture food! It was so sad to see. He observed the battle of wits going on between the doves and the vultures. Like psychological warfare between two opposing armies. The doves would squawk at the vultures, most *undovelike* really, and the vultures would counter with their own blood curdling screeching laugh, that harbinger of death so feared by countless generations of desert dwellers. A contest of intimidation. A contest of wills. A phoney, yet ever so real war.

Now John wasn't just a *lovey dovey*, but really a most astute bird, for he remembered from his plains' days that vultures only fed on the dead. "Why then, did the doves fear them?" He shared

his thoughts with his fellow doves, encouraging them to call the vultures' bluff! "We're going to come out of the bush and exert our authority," he cried out to his mates encouragingly. "Remember, 'a bird in the battle is worth more than two thousand in the bush!' The vultures are already defeated! We will call their bluff!" Some decided that John was right, while the majority, as usual in such matters, thought, "He *doven't* know what he is talking about," or, "the vultures will kill us." Or again with dove-like caution, "we will wait and see how he gets on, before risking losing our beautiful white feathers in the battle." Much like the sparrows," John thought to himself. "Enjoying what they have, but not prepared to risk home comforts to fly higher up the mountain. While this place is great, I know there is more, for I haven't yet experienced all that my Grandma told me about those many years ago, when sitting on her knee. Well padded, comfortable, 'Grandma knees' they were too! Memories, memories!"

So John took his small intrepid band of dynamic doves out to face the vociferous vultures. The vociferous vultures circled above, vigorously vociferating, then dive bombed the dynamic doves. The dynamic doves responded by flying, feathers flapping furiously, fighting fear, up in the air as one, to do battle! They were perfectly dovetailed, one to the other. The voracious, viscous, vocal voices of the villainous, verbose vultures, vaporised vacuously, as the wall of pure white, dovetailed doves rose to meet them! Then the vanquished vultures voluntarily vanished! For they knew that their bluff had been called, that their hold over the doves had been broken.

Some of the watching doves flapped their wings vigorously in appreciation before flying off to join their victorious friends. Many others however, didn't know quite what to do, now that the vultures had, temporarily at least, vacated the area. In fact, in their heart of hearts, they really yearned for the vultures' return. For they were actually more comfortable with the enemy being there! Some doves you just cannot please!

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John was philosophical about all this, as he used his birdbrain to mull over the day's happenings. "Didn't happen like this with the sparrows," John thought to himself. "That was because the sparrows were not large enough to interest the vultures," John heard a voice from nowhere reply. Then he realised that the pearl of wisdom had come from his Friend Inside, whom, he had to admit, he had temporarily forgotten, in the midst of the excitement. "Perhaps he can also explain this phoney war," John thought to himself. "Yes I can." John's feathers underwent a rapidly ruffling reaction, now fully understanding that his Friend Inside could hear everything he was thinking. "That's okay then," he thought with relief, preening himself back to normality. "This place is certainly different to the one I grew up in. But I wasn't a bird in those days either! This mountain is surely a world apart." Yes, John was at last starting to attain a 'bird's eye view' of the world.

'SOAR SOAR'

"You are at last starting to understand the mountain," his Friend Inside exclaimed encouragingly. "The real, eternal world, is not back down there on the plains in the cities you came from, but here, living as a bird of the Spirit, on the mountain of God. As a sparrow, you were limited to the foothills, small, one amongst millions, yet even there, you were known by name. You wanted to fly higher. This I made possible by transforming you into a beautiful dove, with the ability to soar further up the mountain. But I know your heart's desire is to fly higher still. That was proven today, when by overcoming the vultures of sin, you earned the right to move up into the very mountaintops of God. Do you want to go?"

John took just two *tweetseconds* to come up with his answer. "Yes, Friend Inside, you know I do. My favourite Grandma stories were those about soaring over the mountaintops, overseeing everything happening on the mountain, while fellowshiping with the Lord of the Mountain himself. But I know that I can't go any higher as a dove, for the rarefied air will not support my

weight. I place myself completely in your hands, or wings, as the case may be!"

At that very *tweetsecond* John underwent a further miraculous transformation. His wings grew and grew and grew until he had to squint to see his wingtips! Not only had his wingspan wonderfully widened but his plumage too, glistened, the purest white reflection of the sun's supernatural glory. The doves standing nearby appeared positively dowdy by comparison! Now too, he was able to peek over that annoying rock that had previously blocked the sea views from his favourite preening perch! "A new perspective on life," he thought airily, before glancing down to find out why. Seeing his now massive masculine legs, John exclaimed, "Better than I could ever have hoped for, *stonelifting* in the gym!" Then the 'piece de resistance', for he was a bilingual bird. His designer claws! Sensational! So beautifully, yet powerfully sculptured for maximum grip and clutching power. Their razor sharp tips would tear a vulture to shreds in an instant. Yes, John was now a fantastic, fully-fledged, flying eagle machine! He knew that at last, he was going to be able to soar to the mountaintop to experience for himself, his childhood dreams.

"Thankyou, Friend Inside, for making my dreams come true," John glowed in ecstasy. "I am eternally in your debt. Whatever your desire is for me to do, I will do." "I know," said his now, Best Friend Inside, "for obedience was the single condition necessary for your transformation. You could only call the vultures bluff by trusting me to get you through. As an eagle, you shall now soar to the very mountaintop, just as your Grandma did those many years ago, there to dwell with the Lord of the Mountain.

The light now radiating from him dazzled John's *dovecostal* mates. Some asked how they too could become eagles. "Obey your friend inside and overcome the vultures" John stated in his newly acquired, deep and authoritative eagle voice. Some flew away eager to earn their 'eagle wings'. The not so silent majority however, were

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as we have come to expect by now, content to carry on in their own comfortable, established ways. Being strictly honest, they didn't really believe, in their deepest of *dovehearts*, that they could put the vultures to flight anyway, in spite of all their boisterous *bravebeak* bravado. Besides, they would quite miss them if they weren't there! Saddened by once again having to leave *birdmates* through their lack of desire to seek the mountaintop, but wanting more than ever, to fulfil his dreams, John majestically flapped a fond farewell, before flying off to discover the magnificence of the mountaintop.

As he soared John made an amazing *birdynamic* discovery! No longer did he have to flap his wings harder to fly higher, for now he could just soar, gliding free on the gentle eddies and currents the mountain wind provided. So effortless, yet so much more effective! Flying was now so much fun! "Thankyou Best friend Inside" he yelled victoriously, "I have *eaglely* awaited these wings for such a long time! Now I can be a soldier in the *Taberneagle Army!*"

Higher and higher he soared, enjoying the amazing freedom he now had, to go wherever he, or rather his Best Friend Inside, pleased. For John knew that without his friend's help and ongoing guidance, he could not possibly be flying high today. John cast his 'eagle eyes' round as he flew.

Then, as the recipient of a severe shock, he momentarily folded his wings in disbelief! But free falling like a stone towards a *squelchy* end rapidly revived our eager eagle! *Wingly* equilibrium was urgently re-established. "Phew, that was too close for comfort! I can't believe my eyes! My inherited short-sightedness has disappeared! I can now see everything! I can even recognise my old sparrow friend Jill right down there in the foothills. Brings back some memories, that does! Still down there playing with her friends, just as I left her. Oh Jill, you are missing out on so much!"

"Your 'eagle eyes' are for a purpose," reminded his Best friend Inside. "For you are to protect all

my birds on the mountain from the vultures, my friend." Now not particularly being a 'culture vulture', John was delighted with this new responsibility, for he felt so protective towards his old friends, wanting to encourage them to climb and experience the freedom of the mountain top, as well. So vigilantly victimising, villainous vultures, would be his pleasure! For John could now clearly see the insidious control the vultures had over the bird life of the mountain.

Needing a bit of a break, John alighted in one of the many trees that graced the upper mountain slopes. Immediately he could see that these trees were covered with the most delicious looking, mouth watering, ready to eat fruit that he had ever seen in his life. Taking his first bite, John discovered 'eagle heaven', for he had always liked his food. This fruit was just so much better than the barley and wheat he had lived on at lower levels. "My old friends just don't know what they are missing out on!"

"That's right," confirmed his Best Friend Inside, "for this is my fruit, the fruit of the nature of the Spirit you see, available to all who commit themselves fully to me. Eating of this fruit will satisfy not just your bodily needs but your whole being. For there was a time many, many years ago when the whole earth was full of trees such as these and this fruit was available to all mankind. But man was not content to merely live in paradise. He wanted to control it, to be the master of his own destiny. As if you could improve upon perfection! The Lord of the Mountain gave him his wish and you lived the results before coming to the mountain, successfully managing to turn gardens into deserts. As you remember from your days on the plains, mankind has had to fight weeds, bugs and disease and sometimes, other people, in order to eat. So the Lord of the Mountain removed himself from this mess, requiring mankind to seek him by coming to the mountain, entering over the bridge of the Guide. To be set apart from the world, by being transformed into a bird. As you have experienced John, in your progression from the foothills to the mountain

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peaks, two further major transformations are required to adapt to the new conditions experienced as you fly higher. For the trees of the fruit of the Spirit will blossom in the foothills, will pollinate and grow fruit in the middle reaches but will only ripen to full maturity on the mountain tops, under the pure light of the Lord of the Mountain, in the glory of his 'Son.'

For it saddens me John, to see the blossom of the sparrows, promising so much but failing to pollinate. They accept me in their minds only, but their heart and will are far from me. But I have still provided barley for them to eat. The doves have allowed me to pollinate their fruit by accepting me in their heart as well as their mind, but sadly, their fruit will never ripen. But I have provided them with wheat to eat. For you must understand, it is not until I am given mind, heart and will, as you have done, that the *sonshine* will ripen your fruit. Sadly, so many sparrows and doves think that if they do good works for me, they will produce ripened fruit. But ripe fruit only comes from the *sonshine* of submission and obedience."

It was amazing how so many of the things that John had often wondered about were being clarified. It was as if he was getting closer and closer to the origin of the voice. The more he listened and obeyed, the higher he soared. He was rapidly becoming 'in tune' with his surroundings. This both thrilled and puzzled him for something was definitely different up here. "What is it?" John asked his Best Friend Inside. "You are becoming as one with us," he replied. "With us?" John questioned. "Yes, with us. For we are three. The Guide who made the pathway for you to enter the mountain kingdom and who has been keeping his eye on you all the time you have been here, myself, your Best Friend Inside, and the Lord of the Mountain, to whose plan we operate. The higher you soar, the closer to us you get, the more like us you become."

Somehow now, it all made sense to John, for he had experienced it. He now knew though, that it was impossible to understand, before coming to

the mountain. Even as a sparrow and a dove, this 'mystery' was only partially understood. But as he became more in tune with his Guide, Friend and Lord, so the unity and purpose of the intimate relationship they shared, gelled in his birdbrain. And, even more amazingly, it was a unity of purpose into which he also was now absorbed. As if they were all one! Incredible!

John, now comfortably settled high up on a rocky crag, designer claws anchored to the rock, suddenly realised that he had not seen many other eagles up there with him. In fact, if it had not been for his Best Friend Inside, he would have felt positively lonely! There had been a few off flying in the distance, but it did seem rather a solitary lifestyle he was living. Still, it was far more satisfying than his sparrow and dove days. For he now knew what his Grandma had meant when she told him how she had felt to be at one with the mountain.

The views were magnificent and flying a dream with the latest developments in advanced *birdynamic* eagle wing engineering. John had been able to make many 'kills' in *birdfights* with the black vulture squadrons whose weaponry was no match for the superb fighting machine he now was. His telescopic eyesight, speed, manoeuvrability and designer claw armaments spelt instant destruction to the opposing *vultureforce*. He remembered how he had found them to be all bluff and bravado in his dove days, no match even then, for a unified, dovetailed *doveforce*. But getting the *doveforce* to fly in formation under a single *dovemandar* was the problem! With the *Taberneagles* however, it was as if the vultures knew that defeat was inevitable. After an initial short show of bravado they would quickly 'turn tail', trying unsuccessfully to escape their inevitable fate. "But there are so many of them," John thought to himself, "far more than us few eagles can annihilate by ourselves." As he mused, the sun set. Now tired, John in good eagle fashion, rested his head comfortably on his left wing, ready to take his 140 nightly *eaglewinks*. The end of another fulfilling day. He slept soundly, for vanquishing vultures is a tiring business.

‘TRUMPET CALL’

At 132_ winks John was not so rudely awakened by the blast of trumpets coming from the highest reaches of the mountain. The sound was a 100-decibel blast to him, for he was near its source. Further down the mountain in *Doveland*, it still registered 60 decibels, sufficient to wake all but the heaviest sleepers amongst the doves. In *Sparrowland* too, a more gentle 30 decibels reverberated, bringing to life many but by no means all, the residents.

“What is that sound!” John exclaimed, as he awoke. He listened more intently. The trumpet calls resounded, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of the Mountain. Prepare yourselves for the return of the Lord.” “Wow!” thought John, “the day of promise is about to come, the greatest of all days when we will be able to fly to the very top of the mountain!” An air of excitement and anticipation descended upon all the eagles, many of the doves and some of the sparrows. The remaining doves and sparrows got quite angry, for all they heard was a loud noise that startled them out of their very pleasant *birdreams*, a mite earlier than they desired.

Amongst all those who heard the voice in the trumpet, there was an urgency to fly higher and higher, into the very presence of the Lord of the Mountain himself. John stretched out his eagle wings and took off to soar to the mountaintop. As he did so, he found the other eagles he had previously only seen from a distance, joining him. It was great to be in the company of other eagles. They immediately bonded as one.

Further down the mountain in *Doveland*, there was a great clamour, for many more doves now desired to scale the heights of the mountain too. The vultures wondered what had hit them, being attacked by clouds of dovetailed doves. The Friend Inside all of them, was kept working flat out as more and more doves were prepared to place themselves fully in his hands. Transformations from dove to eagle now became commonplace sights in *Doveland*. John’s Best Friend Inside was now busier than he had ever

been! He was so happy, well able to cope - no problem. In fact he had been looking forward to this time, right from the very beginning.

In *Sparrowland* too, there was considerable activity, as numbers of sparrows were blasted out of their complacency and sought to fly higher. John’s former friend Jill, was one of the ones galvanised into action by the call of the trumpet. “Interestingly” the Best Friend Inside observed, “many sparrows are now more motivated to soar than lots of the doves. They will not need to spend too long in *Doveland* before becoming eagles. Will surprise and shock some of the older, more self satisfied doves, I am sure!”

With all this upward activity on the mountain, a strange phenomenon gradually started to take place. For as all these birds started to fly upwards, more and more light reflected from their transformed whiter and larger wings. This reflected light began to shine as a giant beacon over the cities of the plains, even reaching those places furthest from the mountain. The citizens of the plains were either attracted or repulsed by this supernatural light. Large numbers of people flocked to the mountain where they were now more than willing to accept the free toll the Guide offered to enter the mountain, to cross over the cross shaped bridge. No qualms about the ‘life price’ to climb the mountain either. Never in all history, had so many people crossed the bridge in so short a time. Both the Guide and the bridge were well up to coping with the influx. “Although I would have built the bridge for just one person to cross, this influx is the fulfilment of the promise made to me by the Lord of the Mountain before it all started,” the Guide thought thankfully to himself.

Amongst those people who remained on the plains, lawlessness and war now broke out. They tried their hardest to stop others seeking the mountain, being possessed by the vultures of the plain, but they were not successful, for those on the journey to the mountain seemed to have a hedge of protection around them.

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The trumpeting from the mountaintop continued daily for six days.

BIRD CRIES

As the sound of the trumpets faded, the wind came up, a gentle zephyr at first, much loved by the doves but ignored by the sparrows. Gradually the puffs of wind increased in intensity, penetrating every nook and cranny and every bird on the mountain. There was no way to avoid its effects. All the old hiding places where smart birds would go to get out of the wind when it blew too strongly for their liking, were penetrated by this new wind. A wind of repentance from which there was no escape.

As the wind grew in intensity, so a new noise arose from the mountain. Almost imperceptible at first, the cries of the birds gathered in strength as a wave forming on the ocean, increasing in size and power before inevitably crashing on the shore in a thunderous cacophony of conviction and repentance. Plaintive sparrow cries intermingled with the louder grief of the doves. There were even a few screams from the eagles, as all remaining impurities were expelled from their bodies. For the eagles had already partially experienced this phenomenon, before being awarded their *eaglewings*. As the wind penetrated feathers, right into the very bodies and hearts of the mountain's *birdlife*, multitudes of bird tears flooded to the ground and streams of repentance flowed down the mountain into the Blood Red River of Sacrifice that the cross-shaped bridge spanned. A more powerful intermingling of the blood of sacrifice with the water of sanctification had never been witnessed throughout all history. The birds were being purified, as was required by the Lord of the Mountain.

However this cleansing windstorm was not welcomed by many of the sparrows and doves. The wind was too strong and there was no longer anywhere to hide. Large numbers now looked longingly back to the plains from whence they had come, for they had had enough of this strange land. The pleasures of the plains now seemed so much more attractive. So these

birdsliders flew back over the river, upon landing on the plains, to become humans once again. The Guide was very sad to see this exodus, for he had given his very life for each one of them. But he also realised that the sounding of the trumpet heralded a time of great upheaval, a time when the strength and penetration of the wind would cause many doves and sparrows to leave the mountain. Returning to the cities from whence they had originally come, many became the bitterest critics of the ever-increasing *birdlife* on the mountain.

And as usual, there were those who toughed it out, digging in their claws, determined not to lose that which they had, but too fearful to let the wind change them. What a sorry sight they made, indeed.

At the mountaintop however, the scenario was completely the opposite. For John and the other eagles, having adapted to the new intensity of the wind, were perfectly equipped to take advantage of these new conditions. For they were able to go with the flow, joyfully taking advantage of all the many eddies and currents, making use of the wind rather than being blown round by it, as were the other birds. John too, quickly observed that the air was now becoming thick with '*Taberneagle Squadrons*,' for the windstorm had caused many sparrows and doves to desire *eaglehood*, to join the *Taberneagle Army* and fly high in the sky.

The power of the wind removed all the remaining weaknesses and impurities from John's eagle body, so he and his eagle mates could now soar to the very mountaintop, into the presence of the Lord of the Mountain himself. It was a place that until now, no bird had been able to reach, for the uplifting wind of the Spirit had not blown to these heights before. Yet, as he reached the summit, John saw that one had been there before him and was now waiting for him to land on the mountain peak. Yes, it was the Guide who welcomed John as he landed. He was the one who made this journey possible, who had pioneered the way. "Well done, my good and faithful *eagleservant*," the Guide said lovingly,

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“for you have made my return journey to be with the Lord of the Mountain worthwhile.” And he revealed his name as being ‘Jesus’. John’s white eagle body glistened, a heavenly, perfected, pure white, for he was now one with the Lord of the Mountain. His life dream had been fulfilled.

But there was still work to be done! For the wind so enraged the black vultures that they all took to the air in furious frenzy. They knew that this was their last chance to do battle with the doves and even the sparrows. The Guide saw all that was happening and ordered his *Taberneagle Force* into action. With a mighty roar, the eagles descended to take on the vultures one last time. The vultures concentrated their attacks on the doves and fought the sparrows too, for they knew they could not defeat the eagles. The battle raged over the entire mountain, claiming many sparrow and dove casualties. The eagles spearheaded the fight. Inevitably though, through the preparation the Guide had done on their behalf, turning them into lean, mean, eagle machines, every last vulture was either slaughtered or captured, including the Field Marshal of the vulture forces himself, one satan by name. Satan’s forces were *an-eagle-ated*. There was a huge victory party on the mountaintop as the wind stilled, having fulfilled its task. The *Taberneagle Army* finally reigned supreme on the mountain.

THE LAST TRUMPET

On the seventh day there was a new trumpet call – the trumpet call of victory, blown by the Guide - by Jesus himself! The sound of the victory trumpet resounded throughout all the land, from the top of the mountain to the furthest reaches of the plains. Doves, sparrows and plain dwellers alike - all were stopped in their tracks, mesmerised by the incredible sound. Their attention was drawn to the top of the mountain from where there was a mighty reverberation of wings as the victorious *Taberneagle Army*, John and Jill amongst them, took to the air with their Supreme Commander, the Guide Jesus at their head. As one, the *Taberneagle Army* flew off the mountain, spreading out over the plains below. A mixture of fear and wonder overcame the plain

dwellers as the eagle army approached. Passing over the river of blood and water called Salvation, the eagles underwent a bodily transformation. John saw that his body had once again taken on human form. He could still recognise himself, even though he now radiated the glory of God. Looking around, he saw that his body was perfect in every detail. He couldn’t believe it. Yes, this body would never again get sick or grow old. It was his, perfect and unchangeable, forever. And what is more he realised with a start, he was still up in the air, flying without wings! Around him too, he saw that the army was now surrounded by hosts of angels, who did need wings to fly! Among them he spotted his angelic friend, the one who had originally guided him to the mountain. John waved out to him vigorously, doing a *summersault* (for summer had now arrived) in the air, not quite yet having refined the piloting skills necessary for human flight! His angel friend arrived in a flash, to steady him. Yes, his Guardian Angel was still there. John now understood that he too, had been with him all the time he had been on the mountain, keeping him out of trouble when he flew faster than his wings had been designed for. For John had always been a *speedfreak*, pushing his wings beyond their *birdynamic* limits! But he was healed of that now!

Yet, the most exciting thing about his body was the glory of the light that shone out of it. Enough to turn night into day! The glory of the Lord of the Mountain was his forever!

Looking down, he could see the people running for cover, for the light was too bright to bear. Jesus gave the order and the victorious army landed on their feet, right through the land. The people now came out of cover, attracted to the light of the individual overcomer arriving to govern their area. The whole *Taberneagle Army* moved about the land seemingly as one, with automatic communications. No radio transmitters or receivers required here!

Taking a moment or two to get his bearings, John looked out into the distance, momentarily

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blinking, unable to believe what he saw! For he was still getting used to his new 20/20 vision. He remembered his earlier short-sightedness and could hardly believe the difference! But it was what he saw that truly amazed him. For the fields and deserts that he had remembered were now beautiful gardens, as they had been at the very beginning of time. One vast Garden of Eden! As the people realised what had happened, they too were delighted, for living in a garden paradise is attractive to all.

Equally surprising to the people of the plains was how they all now started to get along well together, no longer having the desire to fight one another. While the people themselves did not understand this new phenomenon, John knew that it was because Satan and his vultures had been defeated, the survivors having been bound and thrown into a bottomless pit from which there was no escape. The ultimate black hole!

Some of the people came to John wanting to know about Jesus and the army, before setting off on their own journey to climb the mountain. But, as usual, most were quite happy to enjoy the gardens and their new, harmonious environment, carrying on with their lives, just as they had always done. Some things, some people, never change!

After a few days had passed, John heard a great groaning and gnashing of beaks coming from the direction of the mountain. For the remaining sparrows and the doves had finally comprehended what was happening. The eagles had flown! The vultures had gone! All was peaceful and pleasant on the mountain. While enjoyable for a few days, this relaxed state of affairs had soon got pretty boring really! In desperation, the doves and even some of the sparrows that normally enjoyed the quiet life, asked their Friend Inside what had happened. They were told, "The eagles have flown to the top of the mountain where you all were encouraged to go. But you did not choose to leave your home comforts to fly high. The eagles have now attained their reward. To rule and reign on the earth with Jesus for 1000 years.

Your reward will come too, but you will have to wait until the end of that time."

The enormity of the situation hit them squarely in the eyes. For they had missed out on the very best that the Lord of the Mountain had to offer. They would live most pleasantly, for the vultures had been defeated, but would have to make do with barley or wheat until the end. Their reward was delayed because of their own actions. "Why didn't we climb the mountain while we had the opportunity" they cried out to each other. For this was the weeping and gnashing of beaks that John heard, as he reigned and ruled with Jesus in the cities far away.

And so John lived happily ever after, as his Grandma had promised all those years ago, when he sat upon her knee.

INTERPRETATION

Given by the Lord after the 'fairy tale' was completed!

- The Dream:** The witness of others into our life.
- The Journey:** Making the decision for Christ.
- 'Tweet Tweet':** Fulfilment of the Feast of Passover, as reflected in the Traditional/Evangelical Church
- 'Coo Coo':** Fulfilment of the Feast of Pentecost, as reflected in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Church
- 'Soar Soar':** Individuals throughout history, living their lives in full submission to the Father's will.
- Trumpet Call:** Symbolising the Feast of Trumpets, now in progress.
- Bird Cries:** Symbolising the Day of Atonement. Now starting to be fulfilled by the growing Tabernacle Army.
- Last Trumpet:** Symbolising the Feast of Tabernacles itself. To be fulfilled in the 1000 year reign of Christ.

David Tait: 4 May 2000

‘TABERNEAGLE’ THOUGHTS FROM.....

.....THE SHOWER

1. A foolish man knows his strengths, a wise man acknowledges his weaknesses and makes allowances for them, while a godly man seeks to overcome them.

.....BEHIND THE LAWNMOWER

2. A foolish man needs wisdom, the wise man godliness, a godly man the character of Christ.

.....ON THE RIDEON

3. A foolish man denies God; the wise man acknowledges God, but the godly man experiences his God.

.....A SLEEPLESS NIGHT

4. The foolish man seeks pleasure on earth. A wise man builds treasure in heaven. But the godly man seeks to build heaven on earth.

5. Earthly possessions are perceived to be:
 - Owned - by the foolish.
 - Rented - by the wise.
 - Administered - by the godly.

6. The true heart of a man is found in his wallet:
 - A foolish man spends all he has on himself.
 - A wise man tithes 10% to the provider.
 - A godly man spends all he has been given on the provider's behalf.

.....IN FRONT OF THE COMPUTER

7. The foolish man rejects God, the wise man respects God, but the godly man lives for his God.
8. A foolish man speaks before he thinks, a wise man thinks before he speaks, but a godly man lets his life speak for him.

9. The foolish man is satisfied with reading the Word, a wise man follows the Word, but the godly man is as one with the Word.

10. The foolish man listens to himself, a wise man listens to others, but a godly man submits to spiritual oversight.

11. The lips of a foolish man blaspheme God, those of a wise man honour God, but a godly man's lips glorify his God.

.....IN THE SPA

12. A foolish man loves pleasure, a wise man finds pleasure in love, but to a godly man, pleasure is love.

13. Unity of fellowship is spurned by the foolish, acknowledged by the wise, but sought by the godly.

14. Foolishness is effortless, wisdom a gift, but godliness requires submission.

15. Satan loves the foolish, attacks the wise, but fears the godly.

.....AN EMAIL

16. Wisdom is easily read, takes time to acquire, but needs to be applied over a lifetime.

17. A fool believes he has all wisdom, a wise man is prepared to learn from others, while the godly man's teacher is the Holy Spirit.

.....IN THE SPA AGAIN

18. A foolish heart seeks only God's blessings, while a wise heart seeks to bless others, but a godly heart first blesses God.

NB: A lot easier to write than to live! But God and I are working on it together!

WHAT A G.E.M!

SEEKING NEW HORIZONS

DAY 2

Back at beautiful Bowentown beach once again, seeking God inspired revelation concerning the Feast of Tabernacles. What an awesome study, for this feast of joy and celebration provides the pattern for the end-time Tabernacle church to come.

This morning, I woke up to an absolutely incredible day. It is early winter here in New Zealand, yet this morning would not be out of place in early autumn. The sun peeking over the horizon into a cloudless sky, so grateful to be able to radiate the full glory of its light and warmth to an eagerly awaiting world. Now I have to admit to taking a little ‘non poetic’ licence here. Not for speaking on behalf of the sun, but in having to admit to not actually seeing the sunrise, preferring instead to turn over in bed and dream about a song that had suddenly come into my head!

I wish I could justify my laziness by the ‘super-inspirational’ nature of the song. But that would be less than truthful. In fact, a downright lie, the truth be known! For this embryonic masterpiece was about the leader of the Fijian coup, George Speight, to be sung to the tune of the ‘real’ Australian national anthem, Waltzing Matilda! He does have an Australian wife after all! It goes something like this:

Once a jolly con man sat upon his haunches,
Under the shade of a coconut palm.
And he ranted and he raved as he waited for his
kava to boil,
For our Georgie is the saviour of Fiji.

CHORUS

Waiting for Georgie, waiting for Georgie,
We’re all waiting for Georgie you see.
He comes out with more demands, while waiting
for his kava to boil,
Always promising his captives to free.

Now it is very difficult to relate this nonsense to either the Feast of Tabernacles or the beautiful day, so I won’t try. The mind works in mysterious ways – well mine does anyway!

Shortly after sunrise (sounds good until you realise it is only two weeks away from the shortest day of the year) my guilt got the better of me, so I bounced out of bed, quickly threw on my running gear and headed off down to the beach. The beach was simply, absolutely, gloriously magnificent! The sun’s glistening rays playfully sparkled on a lightly dimpled sea, whose gentle waves smoothly rippled their peaceful way into the welcoming arms of a thirsty, lightly browned, sandy beach. January in June. Heaven on earth.

Running along the sand leaving footprints of memories past, each new step but a fleeting moment of time present, striding into a never ending vista where infinite grains of sand rapturously greet an ongoing procession of sparkling waves in a joyous celebration of life. So I ran and I ran and I ran. My normal, long 40 minute run, done. Maybe, just possibly, I could really extend myself, add on my short run and run for an hour? Haven’t run that far for years now.

It was a breeze! Even had to add a bit to make up the full hour! And while fasting too. Finishing with plenty of energy and not tiring later either. How could it be? For seemingly, I had entered a new realm. A realm where yesterday’s dream became today’s reality. Where yesterday’s barrier became today’s launching pad. Where today’s seemingly impossible, idealistic, unrealistic dream of the Tabernacle church will become tomorrow’s reality.

And how will this be? Through striving harder?
Through applying PMA (Positive Mental

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Attitude) principles? Through living a better life? No, no, and again no. Have been down that track and know it just doesn't work! For these involve the application of worldly thought patterns to achieve godly principles. It's only by using God's methods that we can learn God's ways. For only 'GEM' actually works in our life. That is

God
Empowered
Motivation

God activates His GEM in us as we submit our will to Him. Couldn't be simpler, yet more difficult. For we like doing our own thing. Yet submission, obedience to God's will for us, is the key to entering the experiences of the Feast of Tabernacles.

For I would not have thought of running for an hour this morning by myself, having had a self limiting, forty-minute barrier imposed upon my thinking. But the Lord provided the environment, as I have tried to convey, where the previously impossible, became the perfectly natural. I am of course, delighted with the result, but I acknowledge that it was God's doing, not mine. For I didn't go out this morning intending to run for an hour. It just happened! God provided the inspiration of the moment on this unseasonably beautiful day, placing the idea in my mind. I still had to place one foot in front of the other, but in view of the source of the motivation it was a breeze, a real thrill, a celebration. A dream had effortlessly come true. So it will be for those who choose to move into Tabernacles. God's world is at our fingertips!

DAY 3:

In the Natural: Last night I broke my fast after two days, for it was a time to celebrate and feast, in line with the writings I had just completed on the Feast of Tabernacles. That is my excuse, and I am sticking by it! I went to a local family restaurant where I ordered steak and salad in celebration. The pepper steak was nice, if a little overcooked, but what really delighted me was the salad. Believe me, I am not normally delighted by salads! For this nicely presented salad was dressed with good old, home made, Highlander condensed milk mayonnaise, which I

love. Ask Kathy. It's hard enough to find in anybody's home these days, let alone in a restaurant. A little thing perhaps, but it really made my celebrations complete.

This morning I looked out the window and saw that it was going to be another perfect day. So I hopped out of bed, noticing amazingly, that I wasn't suffering any after affects from yesterdays run, and took off down to the beach to watch the sunrise. It was well worth getting up for! Even though it was really time to get up anyway! I stood on the beach looking over the sea. Gradually the sky lightened. The sun blinked promisingly from some small wisps of cloud, giving a glimpse of its glory to come. "It will come up here, no - maybe there, no - definitely here," I mused to myself, as the sun's rays playfully hopped from one small cloud to another. The closer sunrise came, the brighter the reflections became. The moment I settled in my mind exactly where it would come up, it fooled me, by impishly coming up nearby!

For an instant, the sun appeared as a small round sphere of intense light, before immediately sinking again below the horizon. Come and gone? No. For now it slowly and majestically rose in a blinding display of piercing yet glorious light, as its rays, the harbingers of a new day, raced nimbly across the water to greet me. I turned and looked behind me. It seemed as if a gigantic streetlight had suddenly been switched on, illuminating the surrounding area with a comforting, early morning glow. A new dawn, a new day had arisen.

Getting used to the light I started to run, my shackles of two days ago well and truly broken. "I can now run down to the next town," was my first thought. So I did. On the way I passed a gentleman, in his seventies at a guess, running the opposite way. I had seen him yesterday too, and wondered how far he was running. Saw today that it was a longer distance than I had guessed at! Noticed too that he was running barefoot and wondered why. Was soon to find out! For I came across a stream to cross, one too wide to jump. My friend, for we had waved out to each other several times now, had been able to

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run right through. I had to take a detour up to the road, across the bridge, then back down to the beach. The second time this happened I gave up! Running up to the road, I turned towards home and ran and ran. As I had very nearly reached the centre of town, I was more than happy with my achievement. In a nice little touch, I ran up 'Beach Access 19'. Nineteen just happens to be my favourite number. Funny the little things you notice when running.

Running along the road was unlike the peace and calm of the beach. For cars were whizzing busily by, people were up and moving, getting up and on with their day. As I ran on and on, I realised I had been going for over an hour. "Perhaps I could do eighty minutes and double my previous limit." So I did. Extended the run to include parts of Bowentown that I had not previously covered. My watch stopped at 1:20:41 as I reached home. I had done the impossible! While keeping my running form too – relaxed upper body with low swinging arms. Must admit though, I was quite happy to finish! But if anyone had told me two days before I would run for 60 and 80 minutes in the next two days, I would have laughed it off as being impossible. But I had done it! A breakthrough made in my running life.

In the Spiritual: As yesterday morning was a picture of the days of the Tabernacle church, so today was a natural picture of the return of Jesus, in glory and blinding light. For as the sun rose, it urgently penetrated the darkness of the night, establishing its rule over the earth for another day. Sin as represented by darkness, was quickly swept away by the all-encompassing power of the 'Son'.

While the running achievements of yesterday were great, with a power and freedom beyond what had been previously experienced, and typical of the Tabernacle church, today's reward was far greater again, a type of reigning and ruling with Christ for 1000 years. Complete freedom, complete release, in a new, eternal, no ache, no pain, heavenly body. What a wonderful thought!

The older man running along the beach was a picture of the truth that no one, irrespective of age or past experience, is excluded from the opportunity to join in Tabernacles. Provided we are prepared to participate in the training regime of submission, that is! In fact this gentleman, who could easily be excused from running because of his age, was better prepared than was I, to complete the task.

The everyday activities going on along the road, were a picture of life proceeding as normal during the 1000 year reign, albeit without the darkness of sin, spreading its pervading influence upon mankind. Maybe policemen and prison staff should look for new occupations now!

As for the mayonnaise and Beach Access 19? Of no special spiritual significance to me! Just nice experiences! Maybe you are more spiritually enlightened than I. Please let me know the answers if you are.

David Tait: 8-9 June 2000

GIVING TO GOD

PRAISE & WORSHIP – PRAYER & FASTING – TITHES & GIFTS

THE GIVERS DICTIONARY

A 'RELIGIOUS PERSON' follows rules to earn God's favour.

The 'CHRISTIAN' delights in giving to God, in gratitude for what He has given us.

'MAN' delights in turning gifts to God, into rules. (Only fools make rules)

'GOD' seeks an 'attitude of gratitude' from the giver

THE '5G' PRINCIPLE

A 'GIVER' GRATEFULLY GIVES GOD GRACIOUS GIFTS

WHY GIVE TO GOD?

A very good question! Surely, if God created us and owns "*the cattle on a thousand hills*" (*Psalm 50:10*) there is nothing we can give Him anyway! Sounds pretty good logic to me! Reminds me of a good joke. "Yesterday I got given everything in the world. Now I don't know where to put it all!"

But there is one thing God doesn't own – us! Why? Because He wants us to own Him! If God had wanted to own us He would have created us as human robots, programming us to do His will. Now that sounds a pretty good idea for teenagers – from a parent's perspective anyway! But God desires from us what most seek in a marriage – love, relationship, companionship, etc. It is most interesting that none of these things can be purchased over a shop counter. The world may try to convince us that they can be bought, through deceptive counterfeits. For example, lust for love. But, in reality, love is voluntary, given as a matter of choice.

But in order for a choice to be made, there must be at least two alternatives to choose between. Now, can you start to see where God is coming from? To develop a loving relationship with us, He had to give us the choice (called freewill) of loving Him or not. So we can choose to live in "sin" (apart from God) or in "righteousness" (right standing with God). It is our choice.

But David, what does this have to do with giving? Everything! How? Well, there are several ways we communicate to another person that we love them.

1. **We tell them so.** Spiritual equivalent is 'praise and worship.'
2. **We give them presents.** Spiritual equivalent is 'tithes and gifts.'
3. **We put our own desires second.** Spiritual equivalent is 'prayer and fasting.'

Isn't it amazing how the natural patterns are duplicated in the spiritual. This is the way we obtain much of our understanding about things spiritual – by applying natural principles to the unseen spiritual world, as revealed to us through God's word, the Bible.

Remember our '3 S's' of Salvation, Spirit and Submission? We will see that our attitude towards each of the 3 areas of giving detailed below, depends on what stage we are at in our walk with the Lord. Some of the ideas presented may appear a bit radical to you. Please don't just reject them out of hand though. May I suggest you put problem areas to one side and come back to them another time.

For these matters are very personal and challenging, cutting to the very core of our beliefs and faith level. I know it! For I have experienced many challenges in these areas over the years too! I have argued with myself, with my wife, with my pastor, with my God, and lost,

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nearly every time! I well know the feeling of knowing what I should do, then finding every excuse not to do it? Just a tip from experience! It is easiest to give in quickly and gracefully, because it makes bowing to the inevitable a lot less painful! That is, of course, if we really do desire to walk in God's will for our lives.

Please remember that there is no condemnation from God or David if you don't feel able to agree with, or aspire to, what is written. For God does not set religious rules. He just desires our love to the extent we are able to give it. For even the best of us, (which I am not) fail from time to time, none having reached perfection just yet! So please be encouraged, we are all in the same boat. For we are all challenged in these areas.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP

I am really into praise and worship! That has not always been the case, as I described earlier. Won't bore you with the details again! But I have been through all the stages and still seek even more! As my love and appreciation for my God grows, so I desire to worship Him more and more! This is a very unnatural reaction for the natural David, I can assure you! It just has to be God working in me!

Now I am probably not going to win friends and influence people with the following. We all like to think we are worshipping our Lord as He desires. In reality though, it is rather more likely that we are worshipping Him to the extent we are prepared to let go of our reserve. The two are normally quite different! For we very easily fit into a 'worship culture', hugely influenced by those we are worshipping with. Try going into a church where the worship is significantly more, or less, exuberant than we are used to and you will soon know what I mean! I am most fortunate to be in a church where worship is highly esteemed. A right rowdy, enthusiastic bunch we are! "But David, I am not comfortable in that sort of environment", I hear you say. Surely it is not the 'I' that is important but rather the 'He'! *Mark 12:30*, the most important

commandment of Jesus, gives us the clue as to the desire of the Father in this matter.

"Love the lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."

Now that is very straightforward to me, praise and worship being the outward expression of our inner love. No ifs, no buts, no maybes! One word in every 6 of this verse is that most uncompromising, concise, yet big word, 'all'.

When I joined a Pentecostal church I discovered that there is a 3 step (surprise, surprise, surprise!) pattern that God has revealed for praise and worship, that pleases Him. It is based on the 3 parts of the Tabernacle of Moses. The exciting thing about this pattern is that it shows us where we are heading, as well as how to get there! Let's take a look.

1. THE OUTER COURT – GIVING THANKS TO JESUS: The Outer Court had, as its focus, the Brazen Alter, on which animal sacrifices were offered, specifically for the sins of the people. This is of course a picture of what Jesus was to do for us on the cross, 1,500 odd years later. He was sacrificed for all our sins. Therefore the emphasis in this first part of our praise and worship is on Jesus, giving Him thanks for all He has done for us. This is typical of many of the great hymns and songs of the Traditional and Evangelical churches.

But our praise and worship is not to stop there. For the Lord has revealed more. That is why, even in these churches, more modern songs, often identified as 'choruses,' have being introduced. For there are less and less churches where the traditional 3 or 4 hymns of my youth, admittedly many years ago, (in pre-historic times according to my family!), separated by prayers and a sermon, are still in vogue. Generally such churches are populated by older folk, and are likely to finally die as their shrinking congregations dwindle away to zero. Please, but please, neither God nor myself, is being critical of

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GIVING TO GOD

these, mostly God honouring people. But it is simply reality. And there is so much more available to us.

4. THE HOLY PLACE – PRAISING GOD BY THE SPIRIT: More controversy. To those who don't participate - it's all just emotion and no substance. Those who do participate in Pentecost, believe they place equal emphasis on both praise and worship. So I might as well be in trouble with everyone! Show no favouritism that way!

For my observation of many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches is that most are more comfortable in, and have a greater understanding of, praise rather than worship. For praise is typical of the added dimension of the Holy Spirit, (Jesus plus the Holy Spirit) which go to make up the realm of Pentecost. Pentecostal praise is typified by enthusiasm, noise, clapping, dancing, etc. Hence the name 'happy clappies'. Although used in a derogatory way by many of those who won't participate, in reality it is a positive nickname. It's an accurate description of the praise and worship of Pentecost. This worship type represents a huge advance on the older, traditional form of worship and has literally been responsible for keeping the church alive in many places during the 20th century. But there is still more.

5. THE HOLY OF HOLIES – WORSHIPPING GOD THE FATHER: This is the ultimate. To enter the very throne room of God, to be in His presence. How can we worship in the very presence of The Father? Only by being perfect, which none of us yet are. But we are on the way, aren't we? Aren't we? I hope so, for that is what our walk is all about. As Paul says in *Philippians 3:12-21*.

“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.....I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has

called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. All of us who are mature should take such a view of things.”

So let's have a look at how worship has evolved throughout the ages and where we are heading to in the future. Never believe any person or church that says that they have it all. For God's 'all' has not yet come in any area of the church. Thank God for that! For there just has to be something better than we currently have, don't you agree? Yes, God's best is yet to come. God's best is perfection!

a. In The Past (Old Testament): All man's encounters with God the Father to date have been strictly limited, because of human impurity. For an impure man cannot exist in the presence of pure God. It is man who gets zapped, not God! For God told Moses,

“you cannot see my face for no one may see me and live.” (Exodus 33:20)

God then, protected Moses from the full glory of His presence with His hand. In the Tabernacle itself, God's presence was in the ark, which in turn was in the Holy of Holies, inaccessible to all but the High Priest, and then only on the annual Day of Atonement.

b. At Present (New Testament): What applied in the past is still of practical relevance today, because we cannot yet physically enter into the full presence of God himself, even after salvation. The curtain to the Holy of Holies in the temple was torn at the time Jesus died, spiritually giving us access to God's presence through belief in Jesus, but we have not yet been able to access it in the natural as sin remains in our life. In mine anyway! So we all for now, have split personalities! Our old human nature living side by side with our new spiritual nature. Only once we become 100% pure will we be fully physically able to enter His presence.

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GIVING TO GOD

With the arrival of

“the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name.....” (John 14:26)

at Pentecost, a new revelation of, and enthusiasm for, worship was given. This was lost after a short time by the early church. It was always retained by ‘a remnant’ over the centuries, but only in the last 100 years has the influence of the Holy Spirit returned in a more general way.

The Spirit works primarily in the area of faith, involving the heart, the seat of our emotions. So we have seen in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement a great development of thanksgiving, praise and worship, both structured and free. We desire to stretch out our hands towards God, to get closer to Him, which we do in the Spirit.

‘Happy clappy’ does not necessarily mean that God is a ‘happy chappy’ with us! For our worship must come from the spirit of God living within us, not solely, (get the pun!) from our human or ‘soulish’ emotions. For praise and worship is not just having a happy time – sometimes we don’t even feel like it – but rather the giving of all we have and are to God.

- c. **In The Future (Book of Revelation & Other Prophetic Scripture):** Now for the radical! You see, most people are looking for a more intense experience of the same to get even closer to God. That is what I thought too, until God revealed to me otherwise. Two verses, *John 4:23 & 24* reveal the truth!

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is Spirit and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

What is that horrible “T” word? TRUTH! Not just in spirit, which is where we are at currently, but in truth also. ‘Happy chappy clappies’ who worship with all their emotions on a Sunday, yet live sinful lives for the rest of the week are not the worshippers God desires! Now I am sure that you have never fallen into that category! But I know I have, from time to time. It’s so easy to do! To have the form but not the substance.

Know what I am talking about? To break through to the next level of praise and worship does not mean singing louder, but rather, getting our lives right with God. I sense that the Lord is starting to bring us closer to that place, as a people arise who are sold out to Him.

The process is explained in *Hebrews 10:19-22*.

“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, (Salvation – Traditional/Evangelical Church) by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart (Spirit – Pentecostal/Charismatic Church) in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies (Submission – Tabernacle Church to come) washed with pure water.”

From these verses, we can see Jesus has done for us a completed work ‘positionally’, but this has to be worked through ‘experientially,’ personally and collectively as the church. To my simple mind – we must live it, not just believe it! For it is so easy to simply rest on the laurels of Jesus having done it all for us. So what are the implications for our praise and worship?

1. Now – in our Imperfect State:

Experience shows, that as we draw nearer to the Father in our still less than perfect state, we fall down before Him in reverence and awe of His purity and power. Our worship quietens, sometimes being reduced to a whisper or even a groan, as we come nearer the presence of the glory of our God. It is as if we are just beginning to enter through that torn curtain, into the Holy of Holies itself, getting a foretaste of the majesty of our Father. But is that all we can expect? No.

2. Later – When we are Made Pure:

Those who have been fully cleansed and purified will be able to stand, to live in the very presence of God, to honour and glorify Him and to rule and reign with Him. For God has done everything to finally bring us back into relationship with Him. And relationship is a two-way thing.

*“They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.”
(Revelation 3:4)*

Yes, we will be able to walk with God, to relate to the Father as a child to a parent, to Jesus as a wife to a husband, and to the Holy Spirit as a mentor and closest friend. I appreciate that the full implications of this restored state are not easy to grasp. I know that it is common for Christians to believe that when they get to heaven they will spend all their eternal time singing praises to God, an eternal praise and worship session. Right? Wrong! In the sense we understand worship now, anyway. For we are to become as one with Jesus, given

“the right to sit with me (Jesus) on my throne.” (Revelation 3:21)

The full implications of this are impossible for us to currently grasp. For as the 3 members of the Trinity

are one in a way we don't yet fully comprehend, so we will become as one with Jesus in unity of purpose, in a way that we don't yet fully understand either. It remains a mystery to us.

“For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Corinthians 2:16)

As we submit in a greater way to the Father's will, in which Jesus set the perfect example, so our understanding will increase.

To attain fulfilment in praise and worship we must become pure. Now, of course we need God's help to do this. We cannot attain purity or perfection by our own efforts. But this does not mean that we give up and leave it all to God! Remember Paul's quotation earlier. It is our responsibility as mature Christians to “*press on toward the goal*” of perfection in Christ. As we submit to God, so He brings us closer to Him, enabling us to enter new realms of praise and worship. It is up to us! Radical - yes, different - yes, true - yes, exciting - yes! Then let's do it, shall we!

PRAYER AND FASTING

“Why combine these two,” I hear you ask. The one I love! The other I hate! A bit of an exaggeration, but you get the idea. Yet together, they fit into the true Christian lifestyle in a similar way that praise does with worship. And no, it is not just an Old Testament concept. For example, in the appointing of elders.

“Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.” (Acts 14:23)

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In spite of many ideas to the contrary, Jesus very often fasted when He prayed. The classic example is the time He spent 40 days in the wilderness, preparing for Satan's temptation. No doubt He spent most of this time in prayer and He fasted too.

"After fasting 40 days and 40 nights he was hungry." (Matthew 4:2)

Not surprisingly! But fasting and praying, together provided Him with the strength to resist Satan. Jesus often went away by himself to pray and I suspect He didn't take a cut lunch with Him! You see, Jesus was very much against making public spectacles of both fasting and praying. For Him, these were His primary means of personal communication with His Father. Interestingly Jesus talks about them both in the identical way,

".....your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:6 & 18)

He was particularly critical of the Pharisees for their hypocritical public displays of both praying and fasting. Why? Let's find out.

WHY PRAY AND FAST?

a. PRAYING: Prayer is our primary means of establishing and maintaining an ongoing relationship with our Father in heaven. Without mutual communication no effective relationship can survive, let alone thrive. Every marriage seminar focuses on the key importance of communication, yet most of us continually continue to ignore it! What a difference it does make, when we are prepared to put in the time and effort, as Kathy and I have found out over more recent years.

As Christians, we are meant to be the bride of Christ. So how are we doing in establishing our communication channels with God? Yes, prayer is our 'bread and butter' means of keeping in touch with our Lord. We may occasionally have dreams, visions or receive prophecies, but prayer is the primary means we have of getting to

know God. I find it ironic that we spend most of our prayer time telling God about our problems and desires, when He knows all about them already! After all He is God! But we spend very little, if any, time listening to what He might want to say to us.

Don't you get really put out when you have a conversation with someone, and all they are interested in talking about is their own self? It saddens rather than annoys me now, as I have grown so used to it over the years. How do you think God feels about it, particularly as He knows the full story anyway! But then, you or I would never bore God like that, would we? My thoughts do happen to concur with those of Jesus, at least in this area!

"And when you pray do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." (Matthew 6:7)

b. FASTING: I can see myself getting into another minefield here! But if the cause is good enough, a soldier is prepared to risk his life! And the cause is good enough! In fact it is so good that it is worth dying for – but not by fasting though! Too slow! For fasting is a principle of God that has been largely ignored by the modern church. By coincidence, I am on a regular fast day today, so I am not just speaking (typing actually!) theoretically.

Why fast? Fasting involves the submission of our natural bodily desires (food and sex) to the Lord for a period of time so that we may seek and be open to receiving God's desires for our life. Fasting creates clearer communication channels with God. (alliteration is fun – helps the memory too!) Apparently fasting is good for our health too! Now I appreciate that some people have medical conditions that do not allow fasting, but very few of us do have the luxury of that excuse.

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For fasting is the most concrete physical means (outside martyrdom!) through which we can demonstrate our commitment to our Heavenly Father. It also follows in the personal example of Jesus.

If you like food as much as me, you too will know that it is not easy – it takes personal discipline and commitment, two principles that are not popular in our modern, humanistic, if it feels good - do it, world. Fasting may not be easy, particularly to start off with, but is definitely worth it. Take the word of one who has had tremendous struggles over the years, failing often, but keeping on coming back to it.

If the thought horrifies or scares you, can I suggest you just try missing a single meal for a start? We all miss a meal occasionally anyway, don't we, so that isn't too hard to do. God will reward you for it, although that shouldn't be our reason for doing it – just a nice side benefit.

PRAYING AND FASTING IN THE CHURCH

I must be a glutton for punishment because I know what I am going to share now is going to create still more controversy, amongst those who don't understand where I am coming from. It is not said to hurt or to criticise, but to encourage those who are seeking more of God. To press further and further into these most vital areas, in order to develop a deeper and deeper relationship with Him. It is most interesting to see the development of prayer and fasting through the types of church we have discussed earlier. Having been involved in both evangelical and Spirit filled churches I have experienced the differing attitudes towards prayer and fasting, plus the Lord has shown me a little of what is still to come.

a. TRADITIONAL/EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS

- 1. Fasting:** Basically is either unknown or ignored.
- 2. Prayer:** Consists of giving God thanks for salvation and the good things of life He has graciously given us, followed by a long list

of requests for things we would like to have or see done. This prayer is generated primarily from the mind, is low key, and non-demanding. It is preferably done in private, with prayer meetings being hard work and generally poorly attended.

- 3. Concentrating on:** Meeting man's desires and needs.

b. CHARISMATIC/PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANS

- 1. Fasting:** The principle of fasting is generally recognised and usually, but not always, entered in to for specific events, or when special requests or favours are required of God.
- 2. Prayer:** The release of the Holy Spirit adds an extra dimension to the believer's prayer, releasing too the realm of spiritual gifts.

“To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.” (1 Corinthians 12:8-11)

These gifts result in greater enthusiasm both for and in prayer, particularly when praying in a group, as the prayers are now sourced from the heart or emotions. An increased element of faith (a spiritual gift) is invoked, faith primarily being of the heart, as we have learned previously. There is an emphasis too on spiritual warfare, as Satan concentrates his attacks on those who have been released into the Spirit. Aspects of praise and worship to the majesty of God are introduced also. But this enthusiasm can give rise to certain problems also. Faith in faith, rather than in God – such as the name it and claim it theologies falsely promote - noise being

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equated with power - a product of over enthusiasm - with more power being ascribed to Satan than is his due – because of his reality in Spirit filled believers lives.

3. Concentrating on: Overcoming Satan.

c. TABERNACLE CHRISTIANS

1. Fasting: Becomes a way of life, not for reward, but as the submission of our natural human desires to the Lord of our life. In so doing, to remove the static from our lines of communication with Him. To give of ourselves and to hear from Him.

2. Prayer: To seek God's will for our life and actions, rather than making demands of God. Seeking what God wants of us, rather than what we want from God. To listen rather than to speak. To relate as a friend on a one to one basis. To work towards becoming one with Jesus, so that His desires become our desires, His will our will. To break through the barrier that Satan has established around the earth. To enter into the magnificence of what is known scripturally as the third heaven, the dwelling place of our God. Impossible? No. There are reports from leading intercessors world wide, that such breakthroughs are starting to take place. For paradoxically, to receive everything, we must give up everything. But what we give up is merely a shadow of what we will receive. Just look at the promises made to the "overcomers" in the earlier chapter on the promises to the churches of the Book of Revelation for confirmation.

"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne." (Revelation 3:21)

Who could ask for more, than to be one with Jesus!

Concentrating on: Becoming as one with God's will.

This obviously, is only an brief overview of a huge subject. For prayer and fasting are at the very core of our relationship with our God. There is no way out. Without prayer and fasting

we can't have a personal relationship with God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A 'Christ'ian cannot be a Christian without believing in Jesus 'Christ'. And what did Jesus do for us? He gained access for us to, and communication with, God the Father, the Ruler of the universe and (hopefully!) our lives too, through the power of the Holy Spirit, our teacher, friend and guide who dwells within us. Yes, God has made the way for us to be restored into a full relationship with Him, through Jesus taking upon himself our sins, on the cross. That relationship grows and matures through prayer and fasting. You can't be a Christian without it! Let alone a Tabernacle Christian!

TITHES AND GIFTS:

Another area of testing! Parting a man from his money! Invisible glue! A real test of faith!

To me there are two simple tests of a genuine conversion to Christianity.

1. Putting matters right with people you have wronged prior to your conversion, and
2. A change in what you do with your money.

These two actions clearly show the true state of our heart, far more than any religious words that may pour forth from our mouths. I am a very practical person at heart and look for reality, both in my own and other people's lives. I am my own worst critic too by the way, being harder on myself than on others, although my kids would probably disagree - but then most kids do, don't they! But back to the point!

What we do with our money really shows the state of our heart towards God. Jesus knew it too! For Jesus talks more about money than he does any other subject! Considerably more actually!

Not that there is anything wrong with money in itself. Surprising though it may seem at times, money is nothing more than a very useful, inanimate means of exchange. Is far more convenient than carrying around 2 chickens in our pocket, ready to exchange for a sack of potatoes. The change could be quite messy if the

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potatoes were only worth 1_ chickens! Plus we would need bigger pockets! Blood and peck proof too! Stop it, David!

Why then, does such an inanimate item get us into so much trouble? Because of what it stands for. Wealth brings security, independence, comfort, power and luxury to name but a few attractions. I had better stop now before I convince myself! I am sure you can add many others. For 'there is nothing wrong with money in itself, it is just the self in money that is wrong!' (I like that – it is original, although, no doubt, someone else will have thought of it too!) For the human benefits of money are all self centred. And we can so easily be lured by them, can't we. Let's be real! But in *Luke 16:13 & 15* Jesus tells us,

*"You cannot serve both God and Money" and
"What is highly valued among men is detestable
in God's sight."*

Most interesting that "Money" is spelt with a capital "M". I hadn't noticed that before I came to type it out. The choice is ours. To serve God with a capital "G", or Money with a capital "M"! God does not say that money is evil – it can't be as it is inanimate - but it is our obsessive desire for it that causes the problem.

*"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of
evil. Some people, eager for money, have
wandered from the faith and pierced themselves
with many griefs." (1 Timothy 6:10)*

I just love how the bible is such a practical as well as a spiritual book. So what does the bible require of us, in practical terms, when it comes to money?

It amuses but sometimes saddens me, when I go to a Christian meeting, that the best prepared and presented 'sermon-ettes' are often given just prior to the collection, on the subject of giving. You are not going to get another one here!

For the biblical principles are clear and straightforward, when it comes to giving to God.

Applying them is the problem! There are two forms of giving – in money and in kind.

1. THE TITHE: (meaning one-tenth) The first 10% of what we are given by God (which is everything!) is to be given back to Him, to His storehouse, our local church. "But how can you be so dogmatic, David?" It is not just I. God is even more straightforward!

" 'Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me.' But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' 'In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse – the whole nation of you – because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,' says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.' " (Malachi 8-10)

Wow! No punches pulled here! "But it's Old Testament, David." Yes, but it is an established principle in God that the New Testament nowhere rescinds. We are to give the first tenth, the very best to God, not what we happen to have left over at the end of the week. As a former flower grower, I know that the first flowers of a crop are the best, quality wise. 'If we give the best, God will provide the rest!' (Another original! Want it? You can have it!) I don't need to say any more really. We either believe God or we don't. It can be hard at first to take the necessary step of faith. If you don't currently tithe, all I ask is for you to give it a trial for a month, then see if God keeps His word. You can't lose too much in that time anyway, can you? Look what you stand to win! Beats a lotto ticket any day!

2. GIVING: Giving is to tithing, what fasting is to prayer – the icing on the cake! Notice the verses quoted from Malachi talked not only about tithes but also offerings. The tithes were to go to the storehouse, (local church) but what about the offerings? "Surely we don't have to give more than 10%, David?" Well, yes actually!

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“But when (Not - if!) you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”
(Matthew 6:3-4)

We are to give, as the church should also be doing too out of our tithes, to the needy, to missions, to all those who are looking after people and/or spreading the word of God. The amount of giving is voluntary, and should be according to the Lord’s leading. Once again Kathy and I have proven that giving brings blessings, although that is not why we give.

- 3. OUR ATTITUDE:** When it comes to tithing and giving, and everything else we give to God for that matter, it is our attitude that is important. Let’s take some human examples.

Who likes paying taxes? Not too many of us! That is reflected in our attitude to the Tax Department, and the Tax Department’s attitude towards us, however many public relations programmes they run! In New Zealand, the Inland Revenue Department has had a slogan, ‘It’s our job to be fair’, which has been the butt of many cruel jokes over the years. We all know we need to pay taxes to run community services, but none of us like doing it. If that is the attitude that we take towards God’s simple tax system, the tithe, (one flat rate of 10% on net income – Like GST or VAT!), it is hard to imagine God being too happy with us either.

Even worse of course, are those “tithe evaders” who don’t bother tithing at all! They think they can get away with it because there are no earthly “Tithe Investigators” to enforce God’s tithe system. However we will all be called to account at the time of our judgement, a ‘going over’ which will be more thorough than any earthly tax investigation!

Similarly with giving. If I give my wife a bunch of flowers because I feel guilty or feel I ought to, her reaction is going to be vastly different than if I buy them just because I love

her, and tell her so. As long as she believes me! Which she does!

These words about giving from 2 *Corinthians* 9:6-9 summarise well, God’s views on giving.

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: ‘He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.’ ”

Who are we to disagree with Him?

SUGGESTED ‘3 x 10%+’ PERSONAL GUIDELINES:

VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: The following are not rules or requirements but simply suggestions for you to ask God’s advice on

These are guidelines that I have worked out for my own life and I believe the Lord would have me to share them with you. For I believe that, if we are sold out to God, the tithe, the 10% principle, should extend beyond mere money, and apply to all areas of our personal lives. As with the principle of giving being on top of tithing, I see these ‘10%’s’ as being a minimum rather than a maximum for me. And I again stress the ‘for me’ bit. I am not saying that the same has to apply to you.

I see 3 areas in my personal life where this 10%+ principle should apply.

1.TITHING MY TIME: (1_ hours + Daily)

Building any relationship takes time. Time is the most valuable gift we can give our spouse and family. Time is also the most valuable gift we can give God. I therefore believe that I should spend at least 10% of my waking day

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(1_ hours +) seeking to build my personal relationship with Him and doing His work as He leads. (Apply the same criteria to my marriage and family too? You need to remember this, David!) This time doesn't include church or church type meetings – they are extra. For it's not easy to develop a personal relationship in a group situation.

We can, and must, if at all possible, meet with our fellow believers for praise and worship, giving and receiving teaching, mutual encouragement and support, etc., etc., all things we cannot easily do by ourselves. But if we are foolish enough, we can do all those "meeting things" without ever being mates with Jesus. It is called religion. How very sad. Bible study, personal praise and worship, prayer, (including time just listening for what God has to say to me), helping people out and doing whatever the Lord leads me to do for Him. e.g. writing this book. Worth considering?

2. Tithing my Money: (10% + Gifts) As I have testified previously, this has been an amazing blessing in my life. For I started my Christian walk with nothing, as a bankrupt, and God has faithfully looked after me over the past 10 years. He has enabled us to give lots away, as well as having sufficient left for ourselves. Now, working fulltime for the Lord is a new challenge, made possible at this stage by Kathy's grace in continuing to work fulltime to put the food on the table. Once again I am facing bankruptcy through the collapse of our property development project. My mistakes. My responsibility. Talk about going the full circle! Only this time it is with God on my side, which is far superior, I can

assure you. But the Lord has promised me that money will not be a problem, and through past experience, I believe Him! Worth considering?

3. Tithing my Bodily Desires: (3 Days Fasting per Month) I have talked about the difficulties I, and everyone I know who fasts actually, have in relation to fasting. Submission, particularly for men, is not easy. I do find it easier to fast on a regular basis, rather than intermittently. But that is just me. 10% fasting requires one day a week, for 3 weeks of the month. It is not so difficult when you look at it that way – so I kid myself anyway!

An interesting and sometimes more convenient alternative, the one which I generally follow, was instituted by John Wesley for his Methodist ministers. They were required to fast 2 days a week until 4pm. A similar approach to the above time-wise. I do this again three weeks a month. Fasting is not just very old or very new!

If you don't feel able to do either of these, you could try starting by fasting for just one meal. You will soon find you can extend to two, and so on. Worth considering?

Well, that's it! God has given us everything. Surely we should return the compliment. For giving, in whatever form, is a practical measure of our commitment to our Lord. Our giving of time, money and ourselves is a practical yardstick of the depth of our commitment to our God. Let's show Him then, shall we, how much we really love Him.

‘NEARER MY GOD TO THEE, NEARER TO THEE’

THE POWER OF INTERCESSION

INSTRUCTIONS ON WORSHIP

“I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone – for kings and all those in authority that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men – the testimony given in its proper time.....I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer without anger or disputation.” (1 Timothy 2:1-6, 8)

“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance to God’s will.” (Romans 8:26-7)

WHAT IS INTERCESSION?

Dictionary definitions are not very helpful in defining the difference between prayer and intercession. For in reality, there is a blurring between the two. But to me, the key distinction between interceding and praying is contained in three words, ‘on behalf of’. For Jesus gave His life ‘on behalf of’ us. Now He intercedes with God the Father ‘on behalf of’ us. So we are to intercede ‘on behalf of’ others, in accordance with God’s will, as we are led by the Holy Spirit. Prayer is our own direct communication with God. Intercession is the heart cry of God being offered back to God. Now I realise that this definition of intercession doesn’t make a great deal of sense to our natural mind, but it is of vital spiritual importance to God.

THE POWER OF INTERCESSION

The expression of God’s will through us, is a hugely powerful weapon in the battle with Satan’s evil army. Our ongoing declarations of God’s will are the hydrogen bombs of the spiritual world, devastating and defeating the demonic forces arraigned against us. For Satan cannot defeat the will of God. And the job of overcoming Satan has been delegated to us, as expressed in our key verse of *Revelation 12:11*.

“They (Christian ‘brothers’ or ‘brethren’) overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony: they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”

The process of intercession is a classic practical example of ‘dying to self’ that this verse expresses. For the intercessor powerfully prays in submission of their personal will to that of their God the Father, as guided by the Holy Spirit, under the all-encompassing protection of the blood of Jesus. A winning formula if there ever was one!

ENTERING THE HOLY OF HOLIES

By now we know that Jesus made the way for us to enter the Holy of Holies when He died upon the cross. We became ‘pure’ in God’s sight through the forgiveness of our sins. However we also understand the practical reality that we don’t yet always walk in this purity – well at least I don’t. So what has been done for us ‘positionally’ has yet to be fully experienced.

We also know from the example of the Tabernacle of Moses, that the way into the Holy of Holies is through worship and prayer, as symbolised by the Incense Altar. Now, while I cannot justify this with scripture, my personal

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observation and experience has been that the people who are leading the way into the Holy of Holies are the intercessors. Come to think about it, this likely does reflect the fact that, at least for a time, the intercessor is operating in God's will rather than their own. For they intercede on His behalf.

The key to entering into the Holy of Holies is purity. Purity, normally expressed as sinlessness, is probably better expressed as 'walking in God's will'. For that encompasses not only the aspect of sinlessness, but also includes the positive aspect of doing what God wants us to do with, and in, our life. For our walk is not one merely avoiding the Old Covenant negatives of 'the law' but also one of living the positives of the New Testament commandment of love of God and our fellow man. In the words of the old (before my time) famous song, we should 'eliminate the negative' and 'accentuate the positive'. Not a Christian song but one with a real message, in that part, at least. So, intercessors, walking in the will of God, are leading the way into the Holy of Holies.

THE CHALLENGE OF HOLINESS

Many have tried to walk in holiness in their own strength and dismally failed. Others of us have not bothered to try for we perceive it is unattainable, alright maybe for the super spiritual, but we're not good enough, so we won't try.

But did you know that holiness really comes from God? For He places the desire in our hearts. All we have to do is make the positive choice to go along with His desire for us. To put aside the memory of our past failures and not be held back by them. To yield ourselves to our God and let Him build us up. To choose to align ourselves with our God. To choose to flee from sin. To choose to move to a new level of faith. To repent. To attain a new level of reverence and awe of our God. To instil the positive 'fear' of God in our lives.

If we are prepared to make these positive choices as God lays them on our heart, holiness is not a big deal. It is a natural progression of the

submission of our selves, of our will to that of God. It doesn't make us 'super spiritual' or 'holier than thou' – indeed the reverse. For a godly humility (not man's definition of 'weakness') grows in our lives.

While there have always been a few people who have chosen to follow this path, at God's leading, the call to holiness is now being stirred in more and more people's hearts. It is to be a major characteristic of the Tabernacle Church movement, people consenting to walk the way of holiness.

But holiness is not an end in itself. It is the means by which we are genuinely motivated to help others, and as a bright beacon for God, attracting others into the kingdom. Holiness is not self-centred, as has effectively often been seen to be the case in the past, but 100% God centred. Holiness indeed, is the reflection of not loving our lives "*so much as to shrink from death.*"

For this is the commitment God is calling us to in these days. But as with everything else in God, it is not, indeed cannot be done in our own strength, but only through letting the power of God work in our life. By resting in Him. Isn't it marvellous! If only we let Him, truly give Him the authority to change us, He will do it all for us!

INTERCESSION AND WORSHIP

The two are so closely related they are difficult to separate in a practical sense. The connection between them has been there for 3,500 years. From the beginning of the Old Testament Church, in the earthly heavenly pattern that was Moses Tabernacle. For the Incense Altar was at the very entrance to the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God dwelled amongst His people. Symbolically the sweet incense speaks of Praise and Worship and Prayer and Intercession. These remain today as the primary ways in which we approach the Throne of God, the way we enter into the presence of the Holy One.

True worship, where we have no option but to fall on our faces in adoration and 'holy fear' of

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our Creator and Lord while bathing in His overwhelmingly powerful presence amongst us, is becoming an increasingly common experience as we seek more of Him. It is a key indicator of the growth of our faith from Pentecost to Tabernacles. For Pentecost is primarily based on praise, worshipful though much of it is. Tabernacles on the other hand, centres upon entering into the very presence of God, where true worship and submission to the will of the Father occurs.

The natural progression from this 'new' experience of true worship is intercession, where the very power of the Father is poured out through us. It is the Father's heart that contains the power for us to fight and yes, to overcome the spiritual enemy we face. While the enemy often appears to predominate in Pentecost, we are starting to rise to a new level of authority in Tabernacles that will finally enable us to overcome Satan and His army. This is starting to happen, for reports are coming in from around the world of intercessors breaking through the battle lines of the forces of evil, experiencing a foretaste of the glory of Heaven.

THE THREE HEAVENS

The natural concept of the three heavens is a very helpful one in understanding, from a human perspective, the invisible but very real spiritual battle we are all a part of.

In the natural we have the earth on which we live, surrounded by the atmosphere. This forms part of a vast system of galaxies that surround the centre of the universe. The Bible shows that this natural pattern also applies to the spiritual world.

1. The Atmosphere – The Home of Satan:

“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. (Ephesians 2:1-2)

“Then he continued, ‘Do not be afraid Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom (i.e. Satan) resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the King of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.” (Daniel 10:12-14)

The two passages indicate that Satan's home is between earth and God's dwelling place. Hence, the spiritual battle we are involved in requires us to defeat Satan in order to break through into the heavenly realms of our God. This battle rages in the realm of Pentecost, where very often Satan seems to have the upper hand. A little 'David Ditty.'

*“God's battles are fought, even now victories won,
But when we succeed, the devils bigger become!”*

Seemingly a never-ending battle! But from practical experience, a battle that requires increased levels of unity and support, one with another.

In due time this heaven and earth are to be replaced by a new sinless and perfect new heaven and new earth.

2. The Second Heaven

This, the heaven of outer space, will feel the effects of the final spiritual battle.

“Before them the earth shakes, the sky trembles, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars non longer shine.” (Joel 2:10)

Some battle!

3. The Third Heaven – The Home of God:

The centre of the universe, where is the very dwelling place of God. The 'open heaven' often talked about in scripture. For example:

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"I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know – God knows. And I know that this man – whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows – was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.....To keep me from coming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12: 2-10 selected)

Yes, there is a greater 'Tabernacle' revelation and victory available to us. Certainly it comes at a cost, but the potential rewards far outweigh the sacrifice. It is these areas into which some intercessors are starting to venture, breaking through beyond the range of Satan's arrows,

approaching the glory of God's third Heaven. For in the spiritual realm, intercessors are the pioneers of the Tabernacle Church movement, opening the way for the settlers to follow.

The numbers of intercessors throughout the world is rapidly increasing as the Lord is laying His intercessory burden upon more and more of the hearts of His people. Yes, intercessors form the front line of God's Tabernacle army.

TESTIMONY AND THANKS

I must express my thanks to Lorraine Wells and all the members of our intercessors group here at the Abundant Life Church in Tauranga, for the amazing support, protection and encouragement you have been to me over the time of my writing. One of the best 'spiritual' things I have ever done was to join 'Intercessors'. Thankyou too, for leading me into new realms of experience of God and His glory. We are all growing heaps together. You are a great group of friends.

THE WINNING TEAM

In late October 1999, there was a major catastrophe that personally affected many, indeed probably most, New Zealanders. It wasn't a plane crash, or a volcanic eruption, although the resulting ash cloud of burned up expectations clouded the country for weeks. It was the loss of the 1999 Rugby World Cup by our national Rugby Union team, the All Blacks. Certainly reflects the sad state of priorities of our nation where rugby is God to more people than to whom God is God! It is indeed our national religion!

Not only did we get beaten in only the semi-finals, the World Cup itself was won by our arch trans-Tasman rivals, the Australians. To rub salt in the wound they have now won the World Cup twice to our once, in the game we taught them to play! Sufficient reason for national mourning!

What will be the reaction when Jesus comes? The World Cup of Rugby will be a minor loss compared to losing the World Cup of Life! But I am determined to be on the winning team! My desire inspired this story, which I hope you will appreciate, rugby fan or not, sportsperson or not. For the bible tells us that we all have a race to run. (a game to win!)

THE WINNING TEAM

A three person coaching staff with ultimate vision, proven experience and integrity, and amazing personal insight heads my team. Fondly known to those in our team by their initials, GF, JC and HS, they are so in tune with each other that outsiders often have difficulty in separating them. Their nickname is "The Trinity." They have that amazing ability, which no other coaches have ever had in spite of sometimes claiming so, to be able to see the oppositions game plan in advance, then to train our team in the countermeasures necessary to win the game.

Their training system is set out, step by step, in their 'Life Training' manual. Interestingly and sometimes frustratingly, the steps aren't always set out in a simple, logical order. They have their

reasons though. To make us study the manual continually so we absorb it all – “until it becomes part of us,” they say. Pretty hard work sometimes though, particularly when we would rather be out playing the game. HS keeps telling us though, "If you don't understand the rules and strategy, you'll get murdered by the opposition."

It is funny though, that our opposition can't understand our manual at all. They think it is irrelevant to the modern game because it was written 2-3,500 odd years ago. But our coaches tell us that the basic principles of the game never change, something the All Blacks could take heed of in their modern, affluent, materialistic, professional era. There is no substitute for putting our life on the line. “The example JC set for you in the past still remains valid today,” we are told.

You know too, our coaches didn't pen the manual directly themselves. They cleverly used 40 odd players to write this 66-section 'Bible' for them. So the game is thoroughly analysed from all perspectives. Remarkably with so many different authors, it still comes together as a single, successful, united game plan. To be honest, when I first joined the team, I found it a little difficult to understand, and a bit dry at times. Incredibly though, once I allowed HS to explain it to me, it all started to make much more sense. Funny how some of my team mates are still reluctant to let him show them too! For HS taught me how it all fits together like a giant jigsaw. Have tried doing the jigsaw by myself from time to time though, but can never seem to get the pieces to fit! Strange that! I tell you, I always used to be sceptical about this game plan, before joining the team. But since being involved, I have found out that it is perfect. For GF is the master of that. He has analysed and organised each play to the infinite degree. Nothing has been left to chance.

And there is practical experience too! For the coaches don't ask us to do anything that is not possible. As we are continually reminded, JC set

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an incredible example in his playing days, achieving a far higher standard of performance than is required of us current players.

HS too, is an amazing guy! He seems able to keep his eye on all of us, all of the time, as if each one of us was the only player on the team. Can't understand how he does it! All with such a quiet mannered calmness about him too.

The only hiccup to an otherwise perfect programme seems to be in their player selection system! For they choose the most unlikely looking players for their team. Seems as if they want to give themselves a bit of a challenge! For a more motley lot of recruits you wouldn't see anywhere. They say they deliberately pick those no one else would want! They say it helps show up the quality of their coaching. For it is obvious that we, the players, cannot possibly take credit for the results we achieve. Certainly giving themselves more than a few problems, coping with us, though!

Like the All Blacks, our team trains well at our Sunday morning training sessions, but unfortunately many of our players seem to lose the plot when they rejoin the Monday to Saturday game. Putting the perfect plan into action seems to be a problem for both the AB's and us! For once we're on the field it is up to us what we do, so the coaches tell us. Something called freewill they say. Sometimes I think they should programme us like robots. But the coaches say they would never know if we would do what they desire if they did that. Their choice, I guess.

However, unlike the All Blacks who have to wait another 4 years for their (inevitable!) win, there has recently been a new sense of unity, optimism

and increased level of performance amongst some of our 'Tabernacle' team. This is encouraging us to believe that the final victory may not be too far away. A good number of us seem to be attaining a new level of confidence and skill, when facing the inevitable, final, desperate thrusts of the opposition. For we know that the winning of the game is finally to be ours, just as the coaches have told us!

And you know what? From such unpromising beginnings, some of us players are now looking as if we could beat the All Blacks (not too much of a challenge at the moment!). And we have absolute surety we will soon be good enough to win the World Cup of Life and attain the eternal rewards that go with this ultimate victory! Amazing what the coaches have been able to achieve with such unpromising recruits!

Sadly, quite a lot of the original team have fallen by the wayside, because they haven't been prepared to do what the coaches have told us to do. Some have given our team an undeserved bad name. For it is not the coaches or the teams fault (although sometimes we team members are not as good to our fellow team mates as we could be!) that they choose to leave the team. Rules are rules, if the game is to be won! They often love to have someone else to blame though. Saddens the coaches particularly!

If you haven't yet joined our team, we do have a few positions left, so why not ask our coaches today. They are always excited to accept the challenge of blending keen new players into our team. Any current player on the team will be more than happy to put you in touch with them. And, unlike the All Blacks, if you follow the coaches' instructions, you can't possibly lose!

VICTORY!

An Explanation: The inspiration for the first two parts of this poem came from a cross island trek Kathy and I went on when we were staying on the beautiful Island of Rarotonga, in the Cook Islands. For those who don't know, The Cooks are situated around the Tropic of Capricorn in the Pacific Ocean. A great place to visit! The last part is based loosely on the book of Revelation, Chapters 21 and 22, the biblical promise of what is to come. Hope it is both enjoyable and challenging to you. Of course it is just verse, so is not all strictly theologically accurate! Called poetic licence!

VICTORY!

THE MOUNTAIN CLIMB

I rang a guide, booking a trip for the day,
So Kathy and I, could go out and play,
“Any special offers?” as I always ask,
“Yes sir, but are you up to the task?”

“How much will it cost?” showing more interest,
Now more open to tackling Mount Everest!
“Our special offer is entirely free,”
This now, I couldn't wait to see!

So off we go in a very smart minibus,
Kathy and I, some others, a group of us.
There we first meet our new guide to be,
Jesus by name, seemed friendly to me.

Hopping off the bus, now ready and eager to go,
Our lot in with Jesus, we were all willing to throw.
Until Jesus said, “There's a small catch to my
generous offer,
The trip's tough, no turning back,” the advice he did
proffer.

Two people looked at the track ahead,
Could see the markers, all coloured red.
“Don't think we can do it,” was what they said,
“We'd rather stay in bed, being newly wed!”

“The choice is yours,” our guide kindly does cry,
“Maybe another day, you will come back and try,”
As he leads the rest of us on, up into the trees,
“You must try in life, even when there's no fees.”

As we wend our way ever upwards on the path,
Sweating heavily now, would love a cold bath!
The blood red markers were now on every side,
To tree after tree, with love they'd been tied.

This Jesus our guide, is oh so strong,
Always encouraging us to move along,
And when the load is heavy on our backs,
He helps us out, willing to carry our packs.

He shows us all the interesting points along the way,
Has a guidebook, called his ‘Bible’, I heard him say.
Knows all the small birds, twittering from tree to
tree,
His oneness with the creation, is just wondrous to
see.

For some aren't used to this mountain climbing lark,
Exercise for them means a leisurely stroll in the park!
Of these ones Jesus takes considerable, extra care,
Before their continual grizzling, gets into our hair!

The tropical rain forest was so lush at the beginning,
But as we progress, the trees they are now thinning,
The further we go, the steeper the track,
Some of us wish, we could now turn back.

But rules are rules, as teachers so often say,
A condition of the trip at the end of the day,
So we all plod on as the going gets harder,
Learning new skills, seeking to be smarter.

Until two of the party hit upon a brilliant idea,
A shortcut ahead, look! There, nothing to fear!
So off they went, full of confidence that they best
knew,
More insight than the rest of us, two of the chosen
few.

Jesus stands sadly by, watching them depart,
Their leaving weighing so heavily, on his heart.
Surprisingly he says, “Let them go, that is their
choice,
Should they cry out though, I will still hear their
voice.”

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Another of the party misses a turn in the track,
Off into the bush, a sense of direction did lack.
Jesus stops us all, while he goes to look,
In finding this person, every care he took.

At the top of the mountain the scenery did change,
The summit now in view, well within our range,
Grasses indeed, now the landscape predominate,
Sprinkled about with wild orchids, looking great.

At the summit we rest, our faces all aglow,
We have made it! No more climbing to go!
We thank our guide Jesus, for taking us right up
there,
But our own efforts too, we are wanting to compare.

Jesus just looked at us with a wry grin on his face,
“How little they know, thinking they set the pace.”
But he says nothing, for we’re still learning the way,
“Let’s go down to the waterfall’, then see what they
say.

So down the mountain towards the waterfall we
wander,
Satisfied with what we had done, but our legs do
wonder!
For we have reached our goal, or so we thought,
In the ecstasy of our achievement, we are caught.

On the way down, we all get a little careless,
Tripping over a stump, my side now a mess,
Suddenly learning that a journey isn’t complete,
Until you are safely back, sitting in the bus seat!

More carefully now, we wend our way down,
Conscious of our need, to get back to town,
To have a shower, to again get clean,
Jesus grinned, this he had often seen.

For he did, and still does, know more than we,
Some of us by now, understanding him you see,
Could glean that he has more surprises in store,
For those who want to move on, who desire more.

UNDER THE WATERFALL

Finally the track bursts out into a clearing,
A sigh of relief, so many of us are feeling,
But the few who noticed the grin, those minutes ago,
With a new sense of anticipation, now begin to glow.

Here is a sparkling, different world.
Vines aplenty with leaves unfurled,
Spreading their wings with reckless abandon,
We can see we are entering a heavenly garden.

Centre of the landscape is a refreshing waterfall,
Cascading gently down over a sheer rock wall,
Bouncing, dancing into a delightful rock pool,
Over which the waterfall, as master, does rule.

The pool is bordered with trees so lush,
The sound of the water, they seem to hush,
And flying among them I see a pure white dove,
Which Jesus tells me, is the sign of perfect love.

Is something about this place I can’t work out,
So I seek out Jesus asking, “What is it all about?”
He looks at me, as only a father looks at his son,
“Enjoy it my son, It’s all for you, my job is done.”

Looking back to the water I hear, “David come in”
A voice from somewhere - seemingly from within!
Now that is impossible, I think to myself with
‘logicality’,
“Pull yourself together, clear your head, get back to
reality!”

Coming to, I turn again towards Jesus, only to find,
He’s gone to the bus, leaving some of us behind.
For you see, others did not want to go on into the
pool,
Would rather go back to the hotel, to enjoy their cool.

As Jesus hops in the bus, ready for the drive,
He waves back at me, motioning me to dive,
Lovingly now too, he points down by my side,
He’d left me his guidebook, to take on my ride.

Opening the cover, not knowing what I’ll see,
A personal note there, one from him to me.
“Trust in me, my son, I will never lead you astray,
My Spirit’s with you, always to show the way.”

Sitting down on the rock, a tear in my eye,
“Can’t ever repay him,” I think with a sigh,
For the book of life, he’s so generously given me,
With it beside me, I’ll always enjoy his company.

Hearing that voice again, “David, the water is cool”,
See Kathy there too, already enjoying it in the pool.
Taking the guide book with me, waterproof so I
found,
Now jump right in, to where Kathy is playing around.

THE ETERNAL VISION VICTORY!

A great splash - the water is so refreshing!
Gives a new lease of life, 'tis a real blessing.
Can't now understand my reluctance to hop in,
Feel really at home here, amongst kith and kin.

Kathy calls me to come, walk under the waterfall,
Together we stand there laughing, have a real ball!
For the water has special healing properties,
Curing us all our aches, pains and disease.

Such healing water, able to lift my spirits inside,
No longer feeling the need, to run away and hide.
Strange really, how it refreshes my soul,
'Tis so much more than a watering hole.

After playing round in the pool some more,
Hopping out to dry off, being wet to the core.
Sitting on the side, calmly enjoying the breeze,
I am attacked by mosquitoes, as big as bees!

Slapping at one, then another, then a third!
Slap, slap, slap, until that voice again I heard
Coming from deep inside me, so gently saying,
"Jump back in, it's with me you should be staying."

A few more slaps before learning my lesson,
Wiser now, back into the pool I do hasten!
In the refreshing water my bites do soon disappear,
The Spirit, in the right direction, would me steer.

In him, by now, I was coming to trust,
Just as Jesus earlier, had said I must.
For such a slow learner I am sometimes,
Until my head clicks, then the bell chimes!

So once again enjoying the play,
Happy to go on from day to day,
But I have to admit to becoming a little bored,
"Surely there has to be more", my inside roared!

RIDING THE RIVER OF LIFE

"What is this I do hear?" the Spirit said,
"New words appearing, inside your head.
They are the ones I have been longing to hear,
So you my son, in a new direction, I can steer."

"For I must explain," the Spirit then told me,
"To move on, your decision only, must it be,
For to do the will of our Father is the highest call,
To attain this goal, you must sacrifice your all."

"I can show you the way, point out the bends,
But the success of this journey, on you depends,
For this step involves 100% commitment,
Your own desires, being substituted for atonement."

"Sounds good to me" I said, after some deep thought,
For giving up dreams is not what I had been taught
As being the real way to be successful in life.
But pursuing them, had only brought me strife.

"So how do we proceed?" I asked the Spirit,
"Tis easy", he said, "if you really want to do it.
Look over to the far side of the pool,
See there, the river starts, it's so cool!"

Turning towards the river to look for a wee while,
"Not many swimming in it," I think with a smile,
To my mind, that was so good to see,
Appealed to the adventurer, within me.

Seeing one person take the plunge,
Bobbing up and down like a sponge.
Struggling at first, fighting against the flow,
Before relaxing – now that's the way to go!

Looking back at numerous people in the pool,
All happily swimming, many playing the fool,
Yelling out to them, "Hey, look what I have found!"
But no one hears me, by pleasure they are bound.

The stream is so inviting,
The journey so exciting.
Now I can no longer wait,
Others to join me at the gate.

Do a fine swallow dive, deep into the river,
Bounce in the current, hither and thither.
It is a new sensation to be unable to stop,
The water too deep, me on my toes to hop.

Hearing that gentle voice again inside,
"Relax now David, in me you do abide,
Obey me implicitly on this journey of life,
That's the only way to keep out of strife."

So relax I do, and float down the stream,
No effort on my part, life is but a dream!
So this is what living is all about!
For me there is, now no doubt!

Looking up to the sky, what do I see,
An eagle high above, flying so free.
Eagle eyes searching the river below,
A victory song, he does now bestow.

**THE ETERNAL VISION
VICTORY!**

“But where will this stream take me?” I think,
Once again questioning, not wanting to sink,
“To the heavenly city,” the voice inside replies,
I believe him again, to me he never, ever lies.

“The heavenly city, wonder what its like?
I know!” The thought to me, then did strike.
For it is described in the guidebook Jesus gave,
The last two chapters - here it is - for it I did save.

Pondering this greatest of all cities as I float along,
“Is it possible that to it, one day, I will belong?”
Where the very glory of God has its home,
Living in perfect peace, no more to roam.

To view its great high wall, with twelve large gates,
Going in past the angels, now to be with my mates!
Seeing the names of the twelve tribes there inscribed,
With those of the Apostles on the foundations inside.

The wall is made of jasper, shining as clear as crystal,
The foundations of precious stones, emerald to beryl.
A main street of pure gold, like transparent glass,
Like everything else in this place, it has real class!

Floating down the stream,
Ever content in my dream,
I’m being cleansed inside,
No longer any sin to hide.

The voice inside now cries out – “Look! Look!
A city ahead – greater than any picture book!
The glory of God surrounds it from above,
And the light of the Lamb bathes it in love.”

Struggling against the flow to take a look around,
The voice said, “Don’t David, you’ll run aground,
Just rest in me, only I know the way to take you in,
Your own effort now, would merely end up as sin.”

So lying back, enjoying the current’s flow,
For the Holy Spirit, he knows where to go.
The goal of my life is now about to be achieved
With the Spirit’s help; ’tis what I’ve perceived.

One last bend, the river runs through the gate,
To a life full of gladness, no bitterness, no hate.
Entering the city, to be completely surrounded by
gold,
More magnificent even, than the stories I’ve been
told.

The river, from the very throne of God does flow,
Yes, I am in his will, that much I certainly know.
For the river flows through the main street of the city,
Its gurgling waters bubbling, bouncing - oh so pretty.

Looking to the left, then to the right,
The trees of life there, what a sight!
Twelve crops of fruit each year they bear,
An abundance of goodness for all to share.

Then coming to the final, eternal destination,
On a throne of gold sits the author of creation.
Welcoming there, truly magnificent in his glory,
I see it is my Jesus, long promised in his story.

Falling at his feet, overwhelmed by his glorious
presence,
The air being charged with the most delightful
fragrance.
His face smiling, radiating so much love and care,
I know it is he, for he still has his long black hair!

Then, the most amazing thing I have ever known,
A culmination of all that in my life has been sown,
By so many helpmates on my journey through.
He held out his hand saying, “David, I love you.”

As my hand grasps His, He gently raises me up,
Saying, “Come, be with me and share of my cup,
For you have overcome, won the final victory,
Earning the right, to rule and reign with me.”

Guiding me to my personal, hand built throne,
My heavenly glory reflects a little of his own.
For no longer does my earthly body smother,
The joy and fulfilment, of being his brother.

David Tait: 11 April 2000