

WORD AT WORK

April 2002
The Call To One Accord I

Dear Friend:

The gospel of John dedicates three chapters to Jesus' final preparation of the Twelve in the upper room. John chapters 13-17 give us a glimpse of what Jesus thought most important in setting the platform for launching the Early Church. Perhaps He saved the absolute essential core concept for His final admonition in chapter 17.

Verse 11 says,

“Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.”

Verses 20-22 state,

“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:....”

Perhaps it is time to ask if we are willing to make the same commitment the early disciples made to unity and harmony! Do we know as a community of faith what it really means to be “one”? How can we develop the covenant relationships God demands?

If we are ever to fulfill what Jesus prayed, serious dedication must rise toward relational Christianity. Knowing each other is essential. Relationship takes time and cannot be developed if all we have is two hours Sunday morning listening to one man preach. Something has to change! Where shall we start?

Yours in Him,

Al Houghton

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MONDAY, April 1

Scripture: Acts 1:6-8

Verses 6-8 say, “Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ And He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’” The disciples found themselves in a major transition where the source of their anointing was leaving permanently. Everything they had known for 3 ½ years was suspended. Business as usual ceased with the crucifixion. Now they must wait to see if they can regain any of the former glory. They question Jesus based on their own eschatology. The prevailing teaching of their day caused congregations to expect the Messiah’s visit to fulfill what the prophets saw in His rule and reign on the earth. What was hidden from them was His first coming “as a suffering servant” birthing eternal salvation. They fully expected the Jesus of Revelation to be manifested as Judge of all the earth. They were asking the Messiah when He was going to kick Roman rear and establish the physical and political Kingdom. They still were not ready to accept the Kingdom as a spiritual force to be received, embraced and utilized in the earth. They were still captive, even after 3 ½ years of the best seminary ever, to their original eschatology. In many ways they were pleading with Jesus to act like the Messiah they had come to know through the prophets. If the Messiah of the prophets were to visit North America’s churches, hardly anybody would recognize His ministry as having biblical roots. The generation Jesus visited rejected Him because He did not fit their understanding of prophecy. Our generation is not a whole lot different. Perhaps it is time to get *serious* with God and start looking for His patterns and principles which lead us to the fullness of His promises rather than assuming “rapture now” mentality.

TUESDAY, April 2

Scripture: Acts 1:9-11

After Jesus reiterated the fact they needed to stay in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high - He left. Apparently, they either had no time to respond or He ascended refusing to answer their questions; which is unlikely. We know from verse 9 He was taken up “while they watched” and “a cloud received Him out of their sight.” They were standing there taking in the event when according to verse 10, “two men dressed in white apparel” are suddenly noticed standing by them. They speak one message succinctly, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” The same Jesus who walked for 3 ½ years birthing salvation is coming again. But how do we prepare for Him? The preparation comes by believing and doing His revealed prophetic word. It may be that He is visiting church after church looking for a people who are willing to change – change their attitude – change their action – change their concept of church and become “doers of the word and not hearers only.”

WEDNESDAY, April 3

Scripture: Acts 1:12-14

The next three verses describe the disciples returning to Jerusalem from Mt Olivet and entering the upper room where they were staying yielding themselves to a season of prayer. Verse 14 tells us, “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” The compound Greek word translated “in one accord” is **hom-oth-oo-mad-on**. The first part **ho-moo** comes from **ho-mos** which means to assemble together in covenantal relationship. The idea goes beyond holding hands to linking arms. **Thoo-mos** means passion and it comes from **thoo-o** which is used to describe a sacrifice by fire. Locking arms covenantally and staying in relationship means everyone of us who attempt it are making ourselves a sacrifice by fire and God reserves the right to strike the match any and every time He deems necessary. **Hom-oth-oo-mad-on** means with one mind allowing God to bring us into one accord or blend together with one passion for His purposes. Can we lock arms covenantally and walk this out? Will we refuse to be offended?

THURSDAY, April 4

Scripture: Luke 22:14-20 and Genesis 15:1-3

Luke 22 records the exhortation Jesus gave in the upper room concerning their covenantal relationship, to which Acts precisely refers. Jesus instituted what we would call a covenantal meal or in New Testament terms – communion. This concept has strong support in the Old Testament because every time two parties entered into a covenant they finished the process by joining together in a covenantal meal. This was the end or the celebration of the covenant that had just been instituted. This is precisely what Jesus did and what the twelve and the hundred and twenty are going to have to walk out in New Testament terms. Covenantal relationship requires significant commitment and weekly work. What appears to us by tradition to be just “communion” was, in fact, a depth of relationship, commitment and dedication that went to the very core of life itself. Do we really have covenantal relationship in our churches or are we just going through the motions because it is a tradition we received years ago?

FRIDAY, April 5

Scripture: Genesis 15:4-6

In the initial stages of covenant, two parties come together in agreement. Genesis 15 records the covenant God institutes with Abraham. The initiator of the covenant is God. He comes to Abram in a vision saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.” Abram replies that in affect anything God would give him is meaningless since he is childless and has no heir to inherit the blessing. Abram repeats his chief concern in verse 3, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!” Abram would like to enter covenant but he finds himself in a place where he has very little, if anything, to offer. When we find ourselves in a parallel place covenant becomes very important because God visits Abram in that place and offers to be his shield and his exceeding great reward. This is the beginning of Abram’s covenant. The only problem with accepting God’s covenant and the salvation that comes with it is that He dictates all the terms. We can request but that is about as far as it goes. In verses 4-6, we find in this covenant with God once we accept it our plans have to be put on the wayside. Abram had a plan. Abram was sure he was stuck with a servant for his heir because he was childless and God said “No, that’s not the case. You and Sarah will have a child. As a matter fact you will have so many offspring you won’t be able to number them all.” So Abram did what God called him to do in covenant – he **believed** His promise! Verse 6 says, “And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” Our job is to believe the promise – God’s job is to bring it to pass. This is what they were celebrating when they assembled together in the upper room and got into one accord. Jesus promised power from on high. Surely if they could stay together and pass the relationship test it would come.

SATURDAY, April 6

Scripture: Genesis 15:7-10

The covenant meant cutting so that blood flowed and when Abram assembled all the animals he had to cut them in two, except for the birds. In establishing covenant the two parties would stand there between the split animals with death on either side proclaiming they were entering a covenant reading their assets and suggesting, as they pointed to the split animals, that God would do so to them and more if they were ever to break the covenant. Once a family entered a covenant with an individual or another family then they were bound by it for life. Breaking a covenant was unthinkable in those days. In the Western world – breaking covenants is routine. This is one of our major societal problems today.

SUNDAY, April 7

Scripture: Genesis 15:13-16

When Abram had finished cutting covenant with God, the Lord honored that covenant by showing him where his future generations were going and what they were doing, His promised peace in the fourth generation when they would return and receive their inheritance. Our families should be blessed by God based on the covenant we keep with Him. Our obedience to walk with Him in covenant should bring blessing, deliverance and visitation to our children. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever and His covenant principles and promises have not changed. If we do our part, He promises He will do His!

MONDAY, April 8

Scripture: Genesis 17:1-9

When it came time for God to fulfill the covenant promise that He had given Abram, He came to him and said “From this day on Abram your name is going to change. You are picking up the “ha” of God’s Hebrew name and becoming Abraham and I will be known as the God of Abraham.” Abraham received part of God’s name and God became known as the “God of Abraham.” In covenant you always added the name or part of the name of the one to which you were joined. This, of course, is reflected in marriage today when the wives take on the name of their husband. Revelation tells us that Jesus Himself will give us a new name. The name change was a seal and a mark of covenant. As they joined together in the book of Acts to wait for God to fulfill His promises, they were called to walk out all the aspects of covenant we find in the Old Testament. A name change is followed by circumcision. This covenant had to be cut in blood. On God’s part – the blood of animals was shed. On man’s part – his blood was shed. This is all a picture and a type for the Messiah yet to come. Each of these things became a seal and a mark of covenant. Abraham carried the mark of covenant in his own body – circumcision. And God became known as the “God of Abraham.” Covenant is not a light matter. Why is it when we consider God’s assigning us to churches that we can go, do, partake or not partake whenever we want to? The truth of the matter is, if we are going to birth the full measure of the double anointing the Early Church brought forth we have to approach church as an issue of covenant. We can’t expect people to know it if we don’t teach it!

TUESDAY, April 9

Scripture: John 17:6-10

In John 17, Jesus began praying what the Early Church would have to walk out. Perhaps if we are to ever understand the full measure of what brought their bond of unity, throughout the first five chapters of Acts, we must go back and look at some of the last words Jesus spoke to them before He departed for Gethsemane and the cross. He made it very pointed in their hearing that He was praying for them and what they would have to do. Verses 9 and 10 are very poignant when they proclaim, “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.” The condition of the Church is what proclaims the effectiveness of the minister. These

men had trained with Jesus for 3 ½ years and their condition reflected the success or failure of His ministry. Our individual churches today and their condition reflect the success or failure of the ministers who have fed them up to this point. There is no way of escaping that fact. The best advertisement for how well a minister is doing is the condition of the people who listen to him, read his material or hear his messages. If there was a main motivation for unity and harmony in the Early Church enabling them to walk through five levels of coming into one accord, it is the fact they understood Jesus would be judged by their condition. Jesus is still judged today by our condition and we in ministry are judged by the condition of the people to which we minister. There is no way around it. If you ever want to find out how well you're doing – just look at the people who hear you minister.

WEDNESDAY, April 10

Scripture: John 17:11

In verse 11 Jesus brings the whole issue forward and we are still wrestling with it today. Verse 11 says, “Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.” The only way we can maintain a covenantal unity and harmony of the magnitude that is demonstrated in Acts is if someone is praying for us that God will keep us, usually from ourselves, that we may continue in unity and harmony and love each other beyond our faults and failures. Jesus wanted the same unity and harmony of spirit that He experienced with the Father in ministry in His people. Are we experiencing that? Is there a steady stream that flows out of heaven through your life because you've maintained a unity and harmony with others that God has honored? How can we ever have the same flowing stream Jesus experienced in unity and harmony with God if we can't walk in unity and harmony with each other?

THURSDAY, April 11

Scripture: John 17:12, 13

Verses 12 and 13 declare, “While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.” The first thing we learn from this is when we make covenantal commitments to each other we, at least the leadership has authority to keep in Jesus Name those who are assigned to our particular churches. We have the authority to keep them and we need to exercise that authority that none of them might be lost. If we possess the same unity and covenantal promises with the Father, that Jesus prayed we would walk just as He did, then we have the same authority to keep those God has given to us whether they are studying with us or they are attending our churches. We have the authority to keep them that they might not be lost. That definitely means a prayer and intercessory commitment on the part of the leadership. But the fruit of it is in verse 13 that the same joy Jesus had we might know and walk in continually. We need to ask ourselves: “Do we have the joy of seeing God's hand of salvation upon those God has given us?” God intended we have that and part of that process is walking in covenantal unity and harmony. If we'll do our part – God will do His part. We already know what His will is because Jesus prayed it.

FRIDAY, April 12

Scripture: John 17:14-17

Verses 14-17 say, “I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.” Jesus proclaimed we not only have the right in intercession to keep those God has given us, but even when the world makes inroads - through our prayer and intercession God will deliver them and bring them right back to the path He ordained. Our children are not **of** this world. We are not

of this world. When we accepted Jesus and said “yes” to Him our life was hid *in* God. We died *with* Him, we were resurrected *with* Him and our life is hidden *in* Him and it is not *of* this world. He gives us His word that it might bring the purifying cleansing process which results in a clear conscience empowered to face God in relationship and ask Him for His perfect will in the earth and that we might be a people who do business with God. We must invite His hand, be His hand and extend His hand for His purposes in the earth – whether it is speaking to someone in the office place – bringing a principle to our children – or turning the hearts of the leaders of the land. God intended us to be His hand. But the simple qualifier for being His hand is that we can maintain a relationship with each other and love each other beyond our individual faults and failures. How well are we doing in that category? Are we qualifying?

SATURDAY, April 13

Scripture: John 17:18, 19

Verses 18 and 19 proclaim, “As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.” For those of us who find ourselves parenting someone spiritually, we realize God requires us to walk in His word in order that our children, both spiritual and physical, may continue in His covenant. If we fail to obey, then we discover not only do we pay the price but all those who look to us, whether we be older in the faith or have a leadership position, all whose lives we impact, children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, people who have heard us teach are equally impacted. Our personal failures result in a loss to the spiritual children we have impacted somewhere over the panorama of our lives or through our testimony. We must maintain our walk in the Lord or we forfeit those God has given us to impact. If we disobey God’s word it impacts many more people than us. It has a detrimental affect on all we have witnessed to and we lose reward in their lives because it impacts them. Being the initiator of breaking covenant can have a devastating impact on children, physical or spiritual.

SUNDAY, April 14

Scripture: John 17:20-21

Verses 20 and 21 go right to the heart of what Jesus prayed in this High Priestly prayer, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.” Jesus not only prayed for the twelve, and the seventy and the remainder of the number that totaled one hundred and twenty, but He also prayed for our generation, for each of us because we have all believed on Him because of their word. His prayer for us was the very same thing He prayed for them in verse 11, that we would “be one” just as Jesus and the Father were one, and the fruit would be the world would believe God sent him. ***We represent Jesus.*** The condition of the Church today represents, as we found out in verse 10, the Master we serve! Our condition is an advertisement or reproach for the Lord Jesus Christ. The condition of the church, either positively or negatively, reflects to the world the image of the Lord Jesus. If we continually debate, strive, split and “found” new movements, are we really representing the Lord Jesus, or are we personally building our own kingdoms? Our failure in the Church to love one another in our faults and failures has resulted in so many denominations, so many movements that the world hardly knows what to think of Jesus! When will we come to grips with the real foundational covenantal relational issues of Christianity? If we don’t – we may in fact lose our nation! The Muslims have demonstrated they would like to take over!

MONDAY, April 15

Scripture: John 17:22, 23

In verses 22 and 23 Jesus said, “And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.” We often hear people saying, “We would love to see the restoration of the glory of the Early Church.” But Jesus made it very clear how to get there! The only difference between us and them is they understood the pathway to glory meant a commitment to love each other and they couldn’t separate, they couldn’t split, and they couldn’t go do their own thing. They couldn’t “found” their own denominations and “begin” their own movements. They had to make covenantal relationship and walk it out. What do we do with the mess we inherited - a multitude of different denominations, churches and movements? We simply have to start where we are. We have to look in the mirror and say, “I **choose** to covenant with those in the church where God assigns me and let us birth the glory in this place and go from here. I’m not going to bash the Catholics. I refuse to denigrate the Pentecostals. I refuse to criticize the critical Evangelicals. I just plain refuse the strife. God didn’t call me to criticize. He called me to walk in covenantal unity and harmony.” There is a greater issue than whether we dot all the “i’s” and cross all the “t’s” doctrinally. The real assignment is demonstrating JESUS IS LORD through choosing to love each other. That is the heart of the issue. Where is the glory? Birthing it requires walking the same path as the Early Church. God is waiting for our obedience. They were obedient through the first five chapters of Acts and God gave them the glory. Will He give us the glory? The prophets all saw a season where the glory was doubled! What the Early Church walked in should be doubled for the Church that winds up the age. Surely that goal is worth deciding we can love each other beyond personal offenses, faults and failures. How are we doing? Isn’t it time we made some commitments and a few changes?

TUESDAY, April 16

Scripture: Genesis 11:1-4

Perhaps the best way to see the power of unity and harmony in action is to read God’s account of what happens when that unity and harmony is used in rebellion against Him. Such is the case with the construction of the Tower of Babel. They had been told to populate the earth and travel abroad and subdue it. Here we find them in Genesis 11 specifically having the unity and harmony of one language, finding a specific place and saying, in verse 4, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” They had unity. They had harmony. And they chose to use it in rebellion against God. Needless to say that brings one of the more dramatic interventions of Scripture. What we see here is that unity and harmony is the cradle for accomplishment – either with God or without Him. **With Him** we get to glory in His presence and the eternal fruit of birthing what He has promised. **Without Him** we get rebellion and divine judgment. I think its time we chose the power of unity and harmony and commit to our covenantal relationships.

WEDNESDAY, April 17

Scripture: Genesis 11:5, 6

If we ever needed a boost in understanding why God demands covenantal relationship fostering unity and harmony, it should come from Genesis 11:5 and 6. We are told, “But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the LORD said, ‘Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.’” God’s own words declare that when we are one in unity and harmony nothing we propose to do will be withheld from us. When President Kennedy called America to join together in unity and harmony because we had been challenged by the Russians in a space race to the moon, we accepted, proposed and prospered in accomplishing that goal. Here we see God’s word promising us if we walk in unity and harmony, staying in one accord, what we propose, hopefully by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, will not in anyway be withheld from us. If we are wondering where the glory went, perhaps we should ask ourselves have we made a commitment to find out what church God wants us in? Have we made a covenantal commitment to get involved? Have we made a commitment to get into covenantal relationship and walk out the pattern of the first

five chapters of Acts? Surely God's word in Genesis 11:6 should encourage us that if we do our part nothing we propose to do will be withheld. Surely it's a small price to embrace the cross, crucify our flesh and get into harmony and agreement.

THURSDAY, April 18

Scripture: Genesis 11:7-9

In verses 7 through 9 we find God confronting a rebellion that will inevitably succeed because of unity. The Scripture says, "Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth." Judgment is inevitably the result of people who come into unity and harmony in order to rebel against God. Is it not also inevitably the result for those who refuse His command to come into unity and harmony with each other that the world may know that Jesus was God-sent? Jesus prayed we would be one and are we not now experiencing the judgment for failing to follow that assignment? The judgment is a lack of the glory. That judgment demands speaking the word of God to governmental leaders in the land who have no fear of the LORD and have no reason to listen. They don't believe Jesus is the Son of God. Their misguided beliefs are aided by the condition of the Church. Isn't it about time we made some changes?

FRIDAY, April 19

Scripture: Psalm 133:1,2

In Psalm 133 we're told, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron. Running down on the edge of his garments." This Psalm proclaims unity and harmony is the soil that accepts the seed and produces God's anointing to the point it overflows and runs all the way down our garments on every aspect of our being. When we break covenantal relationship we allow the enemy to steal God's intended precious anointing oil from the top of our head to the soles of our feet. Many times we are left to our own devices and what our own ability can produce. A church in this condition cannot demonstrate Jesus as LORD. We must have the full measure of the anointing oil from the top of our head to the soles of our feet. The only way to get it and keep it is to commit to staying in relationship. God ordained unity and harmony in relationship to be the foundation for His anointing proving to the unbelieving world that the Father sent the Lord Jesus Christ. Can we look each other in the face and declare "I will walk in relationship with you" for the purpose of God's presence in our midst so the world can come into the Kingdom? Surely this is where the battle lays. When we deal with our flesh and refuse to be offended perhaps we will get the full measure of anointing we have all sought and the result will be cities and nations coming into the Kingdom.

SATURDAY, April 20

Scripture: Psalm 133:3

Verse 3 says God's anointing is, "...like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing – Life forevermore." The Hebrew word for "forevermore" is **olam**. It means perpetual and in perpetuity or of limitless time, without limitation. The promise here is if we will walk in unity and harmony, the precious anointing oil will come from the top of our head to the soles of our feet and it will not leave. It will remain perpetual. It will remain without limitation. History records this is apparently what the Early Church birthed because the anointing they experience in the first five chapters of Acts they passed on to successive generations and it did not wane until they had won the then known world. How is it the Early Church understood the necessity of staying in covenantal relationship in order to accomplish God's goals, but in our generation we have yet to see that necessity and as a Church are bearing all the consequences. Isn't it time we birthed an anointing that all God's people can experience?

SUNDAY, April 21

Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-12

Understanding God's heart for the full measure of His anointing brings us to the season of restoration in which we now live. In this season of restoration we find there are primarily two ministry models in Scripture. There is the unity, harmony church body ministry model of Acts 1-5 that Peter, James and John experienced. But then later on there is the ministry model of Ephesians 6:10-12 pioneered by the apostle Paul. One thing we know about Paul is that prior to being knocked off his donkey he was the most notorious persecutor of the Church causing a number to lose their life in the process. This endeared him to the Early congregations and after being saved made him somewhat, because of reputation, anathema to the majority of church bodies. He was simply not a very popular fellow and its not to hard to figure out why. Paul's personal adversity proved to bring forth another ministry model which was needed to compliment the unity, harmony ministry model of Acts. I'm going to call what Paul pioneered the individual warfare ministry model. When we look at early Acts, versus Paul's ministry model, it is much easier to birth a measure of God's purpose and anointing individually than what we see in Acts 1-5. Paul didn't have to wait on the slowest member of the group. He didn't have to wait on persuading everyone this was in fact God's direction. As an individual he could simply follow his heart wherever God led and at the speed God wanted to go. He was not hindered by anyone's different opinions or their inability to discipline themselves at the same level and magnitude he did. The individual warfare ministry model has tremendous advantages. The problem is those very assets inherently produce its greatest disadvantage. Unity is the reason why the Early Church did not lose what they birthed until they won the then known world, the Roman Empire. They refused to break covenant and consequently could keep the full measure of anointing that was birthed in their midst. Since 1900 the restoration of the Holy Spirit in our lifetime demonstrates when we birth something by the Pauline ministry model and bring it to the church, we keep it 7 or at the most about 14 years before it simply bleeds away. It usually bleeds away because of our disharmony, disunity and church splits over a particular move of the Holy Spirit. In the early 1900's the Holiness people split over the issue of tongues and the Pentecostal Movement was begun. In the latter '60's and early '70's many denominational people began to receive the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Usually what happened is they received the left foot of fellowship and were forced out starting a plethora of Charismatic churches. All we have to do is review recent Church history to identify what the Pauline ministry model has brought the Church. We have received a tremendous renewing but because of our failure to understand the required foundational commitments to covenantal relationship, we have forfeited those anointings that were birthed and deposited in the Church. This is what the Early Church refused to do and the fruit of their actions won the then known world by 325 AD. Isn't it time we learned something from Church history? God may, in fact, be waiting on us.

MONDAY, April 22

Scripture: Leviticus 20

The Church's obedience or lack of it has national repercussions. This brings us to the issue of asking if the Church were walking in "one accord", would we not have mitigated the impact of the terrorist attack that happened on 9-11? How do we interpret 9-11? What opened the door? Is it because of the sin of the nation or the sin of the Church? Could it have been averted? Leviticus 20 makes it very clear there are four areas in which a nation defiles itself so they can no longer adequately protect themselves. The first, in verses 1-5, is the sacrifice of innocent children which we have done for several decades now under the auspices of abortion. The second area, in verses 6-8 of Leviticus 20, is the proliferation of witchcraft among our population. The third is a generational disobedience and disregard for parental authority often manifested through the rebellion of the drug culture. The fourth, in Leviticus 20:10-24, is the proliferation of sexual sin: fornication, adultery, incest and the perversion of homosexuality and lesbianism. Verse 23 tells us that whenever a nation statutorily protects what is an abomination to God, i.e. homosexual rights, then that nation begins to fill its cup of iniquity and can no longer protect itself. It is impossible to argue, at this stage, that there isn't a dimension of protection lost based on the

sin of the land. That should be obvious to the most casual Christian observer who has the ability to think and reason based on biblical principle. It is definitely an element. The issue is how much is it an element? If we were to attribute everything to the sin of the land and not look at the sin of the Church, we would probably be making the most grievous of pharisaical errors. If, however, we were to attribute it all to the sin of the Church we would be denying Scripture. Where is the balance? Where is the truth? We need to face it if we are going to become all God has called us to be.

TUESDAY, April 23

Scripture: Romans 1:18-32

Romans 1 describes the 7 step slide to judgment by which a covenantal nation reaches judgment. Verse 21 records step **one** "...they knew God but did not glory Him as God." That was certainly demonstrated in America when prayer was taken out of schools by our Supreme Court. **Second** step, "...nor were they thankful..." is seen in banning Christmas displays, Manger scenes and any reminder of religious holidays. Step **three** in the slide to destruction is they "...became futile in their thoughts..." That was certainly proved when the Ten Commandments were removed from our schools – by the Supreme Court. Number **four** is when our "...foolish hearts were darkened." There is nothing darker than the Supreme Court decision on Roe v Wade. The **fifth** is in verse 22, "Professing to be wise, they became fools..." When we took Jesus and the Bible out of school we opened the door for Secular Humanism where "man" has become his own God. Verse 23 records, step number **six** where we have promoted animals over people by giving them "rights" that God never did! A farmer in California went to jail for plowing up rats. The stupidity of the Animal Rights Movement and the legal status given to it by Congress is a promotion of nature worship that brings judgment from which there is no deliverance! The **seventh** and final step is when the leadership of the land promotes homosexuality and lesbianism. That, of course, was first done by President Bill Clinton and will probably be his spiritual legacy. It's impossible to state that what happened on 9-11 is totally and categorically a failure of the intercession and ability of the Church and yet neither can we say that it is totally and completely the fault of the nation because the Church is placed in the nation and commanded to intercede that we may live a peaceable and godly life so that salvation may come to that land. How do we balance out biblically what happened and how can we in the Church prevent it in the future? At whose feet does the fault rest?

WEDNESDAY, April 24

Scripture: Second Chronicles 7:14

Certainly when we read Second Chronicles 7:14 we have to admit there is a measure of accountability which the Church bears over this issue. Second Chronicles 7:14 says, "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." Second Chronicles 7:14 makes it clear that the Church has a very strong responsibility to walk in the ways of God and when we do God then will give us our land, give us His anointing, turn our captivity and restore the land. The Church in America has certainly not restored the land. It has gone down-hill rather than up-hill. Who is responsible? We must admit that those of us in the Church bear significant responsibility for the condition of not only the Church but of the nation. If we were to walk in covenantal harmony could we not birth an anointing like that which came upon Elisha showing us where the enemy would attack and allowing us to save ourselves – not once or twice. The Early Church birthed the double anointing. Elisha walked in a double anointing. Elisha alerted his nation where the terrorist were attacking and they saved themselves numerous times. Where is that anointing in the Church? Why has it not been birthed? Surely if we will **walk in God's ways** we can avert future 9-11's. Isn't it time the Church begin to rise and do what God called it to do? How many more 9-11's will it take to motivate the CHURCH?

THURSDAY, April 25

Scripture: Psalm 2:7-9

Perhaps the real origin of 9-11 is in a dimension and realm that many of us have yet to consider. Psalm 2:7-9 says, "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.'" For nearly 20 years we have been encouraged to pray for the 10-40 Window. The 10-40 Window includes the majority of Muslim countries on the earth. Years of intercession for these nations have brought about a reprisal in the natural. Perhaps the place we should be looking, rather than just the sin of the land or the failure of the Church, should be the principles involved when we are led by the Lord to embrace His promises and we pursue them in prayer with expectation for harvesting cities and nations. Is it possible that the real origin of 9-11 is in the realm of the spirit where for two decades we have been pursuing in prayer revival, salvation and deliverance for Muslim nations? Is this the classic counter attack of the enemy?

FRIDAY, April 26

Scripture: Luke 14:25-28

We are told in verse 28, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it --...." Have we counted the cost of interceding for Muslim countries? Is it possible we have pursued something in God's heart but have yet to consider the necessary foundation to bring to pass that for which we have been praying? Is it possible the very thing we have been praying for is now highlighting the areas of failure we have within the Church – not to mention the sin of the land. Has all the intercession for the Muslim countries brought us to a place of exposing failure in the nation behaviorally and failure in the Church covenantally? If that is the case, perhaps God is laying the ground work for revival at home and victorious salvation abroad if the Church will bow to the pattern!

SATURDAY, April 27

Scripture: Luke 14:28-30

We are told in verses 28-29, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it – lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all who see it begin to mock him,...." Suddenly we find ourselves in a war and we're not sure we have the **will** to finish it. The Lord impressed me to go back to Philip Schaff's work entitled The History of the Christian Church, the most comprehensive work we have on the subject. It was published in the early 1900's. History reveals startling similarities. Its amazing the parallels we find ourselves in now versus the Early Church and Islam. Schaff says on pages 150 and 151 of Volume IV, "While new races and countries in Northern and Western Europe, unknown to the apostles, were added to the Christian Church, we behold in Asia and Africa the opposite spectacle of the rising progress of a rival religion which is now acknowledged by more than one tenth (when published, one fourth) of the inhabitants of the globe. It is called "Mohammadism" from its founder, or "Islam," from its chief virtue, which is absolute surrender to the one true God. Like Christianity, it had its birth in the Shimitic race, the parent of the three monotheistic religions, but in an obscure and even desert district, and had more rapid, though less enduring success. But what a difference in the means employed and the results reached! Christianity made its conquest by peaceful missionaries and the power of persuasion, and carried with it the blessings of home, freedom and civilization. Mohammedanism conquered the fairest portions of the earth by the sword and cursed them by polygamy, slavery, despotism and desolation. The moving power of Christian missions was love to God and man; the moving power of Islam was fanaticism and brute force. Christianity has found a home among all nations and climes; Mohammedanism, although it made a most vigorous effort to conquer the world, is after all a religion of the desert, of the tent and the caravan, and confined to nomad and savage or half-civilized nations, chiefly Arabs, Persians, and Turks. It never made an impression on Europe except by brute force; it is only encamped, not really domesticated, in Constantinople, and when it must withdraw from Europe it will leave no trace behind. Islam in its conquering march took forcible

possession of the lands of the Bible, and the Greek church, seized the throne of Constantine, overran Spain, crossed the Pyrenees, and for a long time threatened even the church of Rome and the German empire, until it was finally repulsed beneath the walls of Vienna. The Crusades which figure so prominently in the history of mediaeval Christianity, originated in the desire to wrest the holy land from the followers of “the false prophet,” and brought the East in contact with the West.” Anyone who thinks that Islamic faith is “peaceful” – better think again because history shows an entirely different picture. The core values of Islam are “conquer the enemy and impose your religion by force”!

SUNDAY, April 28

Scripture: Luke 14:28-30

If we don't count the cost, then people will say, “...this man began to build and was not able to finish.” Did all who led us to pray for the 10-40 Window count the cost? Will that be said of the Church of our generation or will we rise up and spiritually finish what we started? Its amazing that in the early conquest of the Islamic faith the only reason they were able to make inroads into the Church was because the Church after 500 years broke their covenantal relationships and began to depart from the unity and harmony which marked their first beginnings. Listen to Schaff characterize this season in Volume IV, page 152, “Viewed in its relation to the Eastern Church which is robbed of the fairest dominions, Mohammedanism was a well-deserved divine punishment for the unfruitful speculations, bitter contentions, empty ceremonialism and virtual idolatry which degraded and disgraced the Christianity of the East after the fifth century. The essence of true religion, love to God and to man, was eaten out by rancor and strife, and there was left no power of ultimate resistance to the foreign conqueror. The hatred between the orthodox Eastern church and the Eastern schismatics driven from her communion, and the jealousy between the Greek and Latin churches prevented them from aiding each other in efforts to arrest the progress of the common foe. The Greeks detested the Latin Filioque as a heresy more deadly than Islam; while the Latins cared more for the supremacy of the Pope than the triumph of Christianity, and set up during the Crusades a rival hierarchy in the East. (First attempt at denominationalizing the Church). Its certainly obvious the Early Church, after the 5th Century, lost the unity and harmony that marked its early beginnings. When this departure was made the enemy came in like a flood! Is it possible that all the advances of the Islamic faith in Europe and America are directly proportional to the disharmony and disunity of the Church? Have we embarked on praying for a 10-40 Window and spawned a potential repeat of history? It would appear that perhaps **we are there!** Will we choose “one accord” or lose our land? Do or die may be closer than we think!

MONDAY, April 29

Scripture: Luke 14:31

Verses 31 and 32 say, “Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace” We have prayed for the 10-40 Window and suddenly we find ourselves at war with nations within that region – should that be a great surprise? No! Where does this war have to be won? It has to be won in the spirit because its roots are spiritual. We have made the same mistake as the Early Church and the enemy has made inroads. Its time to correct the error – learn our covenantal relational responsibilities and begin to live them out on a daily and weekly basis. When the glory comes no one can withstand the glory of the LORD. He will give us cities and nations if we will do our part, we must count the cost and walk it out!

TUESDAY, April 30

Scripture: Luke 14:33-35

Verses 33-35 tells us, ““So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple. Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”” Jesus made it very clear that if we are going to walk out in the last days His will, purpose and plan, we would have to be fully and completely committed to that plan. There are things we cannot afford. One of them is disunity and disharmony. When a supposed Christian nation goes to war with Muslim nations, they rally together as is evidenced by the alliance of terrorist groups meaning - this war will not soon end. In fact, it should escalate and escalate dramatically. Where will the Church be? It’s the Church’s job to win this war – it has to be done in the heavenlies – it has to be done by prayer – and it can only be done from a platform of **hom-oth-oo-mad-on** – of being **in one accord**. Are we willing to walk out what God has already given us? HE is waiting on us! Our nation hangs in the balance!

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ITINERARY

Al Houghton

April 7-10

Rock Church
640 Kempsville Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Phone: (757)495-5200
7th AM & PM 8th 7PM 9th 7PM 10th 7PM

April 12-14

Daystar Ministries
109 Holiday Drive, Summerville, SC 2483
Phone: (843)875-4370
12th 7:30PM 13th 10AM & 7:30PM 14th 10AM

**Advancing together
Arm locked in arm
Intercessors unite
And sound the alarm**

**In this key hour
With one voice please cry
Til MY holy anointing
Fall like rain from the
Sky**

Jayne Houghton