

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS III

WEDNESDAY, October 1

Scripture: Matthew 5:20-26

Matthew 25 and 26 point us to a judgment of captivity God ordains for all who refuse to deal with the issue of personal relationships. When captivity comes, our first response is usually one of resistance by speaking to the mountain, rebuking the enemy, or claiming covenant promises for deliverance. Some mountains of captivity will never move until repentance and change are embraced. We need to ask the Lord if the captivity is a result of our own attitudes and failure to be Christ-like. If the answer is “yes,” we should move immediately to heal and resolve the conflict. Verse 23 indicates our financial lifeline of covenantal sowing and reaping may be set on hold until relationships are restored. Covenantal sowing and reaping, guarantee a continuation of divine provision but Satan has devices aimed at restricting the flow. Verse 24 points us to the necessity of obeying our Father Who is a God of reconciliation. In Second Corinthians 5 we are told we have all been given the “...ministry of reconciliation...” and Jesus clearly stated in the Sermon on the Mount, if we do not seek reconciliation we can easily wind up in captivity. Are relationships responsible for any area of financial captivity in our life? God has the answer! Are we asking the right question?

THURSDAY, October 2

Scripture: Matthew 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43; Mark 1:22

To understand the power of the phrase which continually appears throughout chapter 5 and 6, “But I say to you...” we would have to understand the Jewish mind-set concerning the law. The first thing that happened in every Synagogue worship service was the holding up of the rolls of parchment which contained the law from the ark and carrying them around the congregation in order that everyone might show their reverence. The scribe or Rabbi never really would express his own opinion unless it could be supported with quotations from the great recognized teachers of history. Any form of independence was shunned tremendously. The rabbis were often quoted as saying, “Those who deny that the law is from heaven have no part in the world to come. Even if one says that the law is from God with the exception of this or that verse, which Moses, not God, spoke from his own mouth then there applies to him the judgment. He has despised the word of the Lord: he has shown the irreverence which merits the destruction of the soul.” Five times in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus quotes the law and then substitutes His own teaching in its place. He had the bold audacity to correct and change what everyone in the Synagogue believed to be the most sacred writings in the world that had come directly from the Throne of God. Is it any wonder the people were amazed at His teaching?

FRIDAY, October 3

Scripture: Matthew 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43; 7:28-29

When Jesus demonstrated the bold audacity to correct the law and substitute His own teaching for it, He didn’t even claim the phrase of the prophets, or teachers. The phrase of the prophet was, “Thus saith the Lord.” That saying was not a claim on personal authority, but only the individual speaking what he had heard from the Lord. The great Jewish teachers had a characteristic phrase which always precipitated one of their main points. The

characteristic phrase of the Rabbi was, “There is a teaching that....” The scribes and Rabbis never dared to express an opinion of their own without documented support from great teachers of the past. Is it any wonder the Scripture says the people were amazed because He did not teach them as the scribes but as one who had authority. The Greek word for “authority” in Matthew seven is **exousia** and the Greeks defined it as, “The power to add and the power to take away at will.” Jesus walked in that authority without apology only because He truly had it! He gave it to us for dealing with the devil! The early Church demonstrated it throughout the first three centuries. Are we demonstrating it to our generation?

SATURDAY, October 4

Scripture: Matthew 5:20-22, 27-28

Jesus set a whole new standard that went beyond the law. He said it wasn't enough to never physically kill a person; the standard was to never want to. It wasn't enough not to commit adultery, the standard was to never entertain the desire. The standard moved from the open physical commission of the act to the very thoughts, intents, and determinations of the heart which led to the act. It was at this point that reality struck, “There is none righteous, no, not one....” Jesus moved the point of sin from commission to conception demonstrating every individual's need for a power that goes beyond ourselves to keep us in the true and the right way. He locked everyone up under sin and then paid for the answer. A new creation with the power of the Holy Spirit resident to lead, guide, direct, and shape our future. The very power of God Himself resident to walk out the Christian life within each individual. It only works as designed when we choose to use what Jesus made available.

SUNDAY, October 5

Scripture: Matthew 5:21-22

There are two distinct Greek words for “judgment” with several variations. The Greek word used for “judgment” in verse 22 is **kri-sis**. A simplified distinction between **krisis** and **krima**, which occasionally holds true, is that **krisis** generally means the process of investigating, distinguishing, and separating, while **krima** is the decision or verdict. Therefore, verse 22 is a warning that anger brings us to the initial stage of the process where investigation, separation, and determinations are made by the Lord concerning our action and motivation. Anger in itself is not sin, but something everyone of us has to deal with. It can, however, quickly carry us over a line that brings us into a place of judgment, if we are not careful to deal with situations and relationships according to the purpose and plan of God.

MONDAY, October 6

Scripture: John 5:17-23

The Jewish religious mind-set could not handle the demonstration and demeanor of Jesus. Jesus blew away their tradition. They hated Him for it and wanted to kill Him. It galled them to no end to hear Him make Himself equal with God the Father. Jesus said He was only doing and saying what He saw His Father do and heard His Father say. He spoke of the absolute unity they had together. Finally, in verses 22-23 He declared that “...the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment (**krisis**) to the Son....” He outlined the purpose for the Father committing all judgment to the Son, which was the heavenly demand that everyone should honor the Son just as they honored the Father. Jesus went on to say, “He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.” This same principle in a different measure operates today through the different ministry gifts. We demonstrate honor by receiving or rejecting ministry gifts, which points to the foundation of relationships has a beginning place for judgment. Hearts are revealed when we interact or react to each other. We need to realize that God sends unique and peculiar people across our path for the revealing of our heart attitudes and determinations concerning the most important issues of life. The process of investigating, distinguishing, and separating belongs to Jesus and for each of us it happens through relationships.

TUESDAY, October 7

Scripture: John 9:1-39

Jesus was brought into conflict with the religious system of His day and got a very violent reaction because of healing the blind man. The reaction came not from healing, for everyone seemed to be in favor of sick people being healed. The problem arose because they didn't allow anyone to do any work on the Sabbath. Verses 17-17 record great division and you can see hearts revealed as the leadership interacts with the ministry of Jesus. Notice how what they say betrays what is in their hearts. "This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." While "Others say, 'How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?'" The end of this story is extremely exciting and relevant because it shows us the difference between **krisis** and **krima**. The blind man quickly accepts and believes Jesus is Lord, in dramatic contrast to the leaders. This contrast is the issue Jesus addresses in verse 39, "And Jesus said, 'For judgment (**krima**) I have come into this world, that those who do not see, may see, and that those who see may be made blind.'" All **krisis**, according to John 5, is committed to the Son, and in John 9 we see that His activity in the religious system became a (**krima**) dividing line for judgment proving men's thoughts and character. The man who did not "see" (in the natural) began to see (in the spiritual) and became a believer. Those who claimed to see (spiritually) in their inner action and relationship with Jesus demonstrated their blindness as they rejected Him.

WEDNESDAY, October 8

Scripture: John 9:24-41

This passage, perhaps more than any other, is so descriptive of the prophetic ministry as it functions and flows in a season of restoration with light, insight, and understanding for the days ahead. It contradicts the tenets of those who live according to the guidelines of the moves of the Spirit in days gone by. In John 9 the real conflict was between Jesus and the leadership but manifested through a dramatic miracle of healing. There is no doubt in the blind man's mind about the origin of Jesus ministry. He said, "Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." After that statement he was thrown out. After Jesus declares it is for judgment (**krima**) that He has come into the world, some Pharisees ask, "Are we blind also?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains." The **krima** of God is not only a decision or a verdict, it is a dividing line that comes through relationships of life, forcing choices to be made. The Pharisees were forced to choose whether to receive or reject the ministry of Jesus. Because His ministry did not agree with their doctrine they were quick to reject it and the **krisis** was made complete in **krima**. The judgment was not made by God in this case, neither the verdict. It was made by those who rejected the One God sent and would eternally pay the consequences. This very same process is still happening today. **Krisis** and **krima** are alive, well, and fully operational, oftentimes demonstrated in us by how we are doing with our relationships.

THURSDAY, October 9

Scripture: Matthew 23:25-33

Matthew 23:25-33 is a dynamite passage in which Jesus declares war on hypocrisy. He shows the difference between the outside and the inside of the Pharisees. He says, "For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also." Jesus refuses to sanction hypocrisy in any measure and He says the heart of man on the inside must match the activity that comes forth on the outside. In verse 33 we find the word **krisis**, "Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation (**krisis**) of hell?" Jesus, in effect, said to them, "How can you escape the process of investigating, distinguishing, and separating which at the current time shows you headed for hell?" Is it any wonder the leadership of that day wanted to kill Jesus, the very one they claimed so aptly to represent?

FRIDAY, October 10

Scripture: Matthew 23:34-38

After using the word **krisis** in verse 33, isn't it interesting that the very next verse says, "Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar." After using the word **krisis** in verse 33, Jesus points out that God's response is to send prophets and ministries. According to the remainder of verse 34 they will not be received but will in fact be rejected, killed, and crucified, demanding the **krima** of verses 35 and 36. Verse 38 says it well, "Your house will be left to you desolate..." which means no more anointing for healing, deliverance, or multiplying the loaves and fish. All divine provision will be cut off. Again we see the pattern of **krisis** and **krima** as the separating and distinguishing is fulfilled through the receptivity or lack of it for the messengers God sends. Jesus was telling the leaders of Jerusalem that God was looking at their hearts and judgment would correspond to how they treated His messengers. How do we treat and relate to those whom the Father sends with a message that is very different from the stream we grew up in. The full testimony of Scripture declares how we **relate** to those God sends determines our judgment.

SATURDAY, October 11

Scripture: Matthew 23:25-39

Jesus outlined the pattern for Jerusalem's leaders beginning in verse 33 from the **krisis** (judgment) of hell to the progression of demonstrating **krima** out of their own hearts, through their relationships with the very ones He chose to send. We have the lament of verses 37 and 38, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" Jesus did not slam the door shut in judgment completely. What He said was, "you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" The demand that Jesus left with the leadership in Jerusalem was they would see no more of the anointing that every priest should walk in until they were willing to receive the ones God sent. He made the determining factor ... relationships. "Will you relate to the ones I send by receiving them? Until you do, you will not see the anointing you should have resident within your churches and congregations." God is a God of relationship and He almost always sends people with enough peculiarities that we have to humble ourselves to receive them.

SUNDAY, October 12

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-6

Jesus is not only the author and finisher of our faith, but the One Who set the example for us in the area of resisting sin unto the shedding of blood. We are exhorted as sons not to despise the chastening of the Lord. This passage shows us clearly that all judgments as they relate to the children of God are purely redemptive and corrective in nature, the intent being to draw us back to a straight and narrow walk with Him. If we open our heart in understanding to the correction of the Lord, we move in a direction of safety. We maintain an open line for receiving reproof and greatly increase the probability of finishing our course in the full measure of God's ordained purposes. **Krisis** and **krima** portray the whole progressive spectrum of the judgment of God. Judgment, for us who are believers, should not be something of which we are afraid or ashamed, but a reality to be received, walk toward, and grow from. The choice is ours.

MONDAY, October 13

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-8

Verses 7-8 show us clearly that we have a choice to make when a measure of judgment comes. God deals with us as sons. Verse 8 clearly says our attitude toward the corrective, chastening, reproof, rebuking of the Lord

determines whether or not we continue to walk in sonship. He calls all those who refuse to receive the correction of the Lord "...illegitimate...not true sons." The scribes and Pharisees in their relationship with Jesus determined their own judgment (**krima**), as do we in relating to those God sends. It is time we determined to be open to the full measure of correction, whether it come through word, circumstance, or situation. The choice to accept and act on it is life from our Father.

TUESDAY, October 14

Scripture: Hebrews 12:9-13

The whole purpose for judgment or correction is that we may move into different levels of holiness and purity. Verse 11, at many times, is an understatement, "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." Verse 12 says, "Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees,...." It is a straight forward encouragement to receive the correction God sends through each encounter or relationship. Verse 14 is very specific in telling us that the Lord has relationships in mind when He says, "Pursue peace with all men, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord...." Divine encounters, whether it be with messages, preachers, books, or in our church services, prove where we are "in God." Relationships are the foundation of all growth and development in the kingdom. It is only when we become relationship oriented, which is extremely tough in an individualistic society, can we grow to the full measure of what God has for us. It is time we put some work into the relationships God wants to develop, as we move toward the measure of maturity which enables handling end-time events and bringing in the greatest harvest the earth has ever seen. The preparation is here. The question is are we willing to receive and move with it?

WEDNESDAY, October 15

Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-17

Verses 14-15 clearly demonstrate that relationships go beyond individuals to governmental institutions such as courts, councils, planning commissions, building departments, and all the areas where great warfare and persecution are now coming toward the Church. We're told in verse 14 to "Pursue peace." Verse 15 says, "looking diligently lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;...." To "...fall short of the grace of God..." is not to receive the measure of ability necessary to walk in the situation with forgiveness and victory of heart. It takes a great measure of the grace of God to overcome bitterness when persecution prevails in a society. When relationships get testy and offenses come, it takes great grace to walk in forgiveness and restoration. The other option is to walk in unforgiveness which usually degenerates into bitterness, destroying our future and derailing the purpose and plan of God. Are we asking for the full measure of His grace?

THURSDAY, October 16

Scripture: Hebrews 12:14-17; 10:32-34

Falling short of the grace of God and seeing a root of bitterness spring up had definite reference to Hebrews 10 where governmental persecution brought the loss of their homes and all their goods. Such a situation is hard to imagine for those of us who live in America. Generations of Americans have never really faced anything comparable, and yet the early Church faced it and walked through it with a grace that allowed them to continue to love and preach salvation to the very people who took all their possessions. Some undoubtedly sold their birthright in order to keep their homes, and deny Jesus but they were very few. Such things, at this point, are almost inconceivable to those of us who have grown up in a nation founded by people seeking religious freedom. If we should ever face such an hour in America, will we be able to receive the grace of God and walk in peace? Or will we react in bitterness? There is a daily training in crying out for God's grace to receive and walk in the relationships we now have. That is very important for what comes in the future. It is time we soberly began to deal with relationships and receive God's grace to walk in them accordingly.

FRIDAY, October 17

Scripture: First Corinthians 11:23-26

First Corinthians 11 deals with the subject of Judgment. God's corrective judgment, while redemptive in nature, has stages or levels which vary in intensity, undoubtedly designed to gain our attention and bring us to a place of openness where we can see, understand, receive, and act on all God reveals. When we take communion, we are proclaiming, preaching, and declaring a life-style that Jesus lived for us according to verse 26. We preach not the resurrection when we take communion, which is our hope, but we preach the Lord's death, the willingness to yield, lay down our life to accommodate His purpose as it relates to others through us. To preach the Lord's death is to declare a willingness to live the life-style demonstrated by Jesus for other people, while denying ourselves. This life-style does not come easily or automatically. We're certainly not born with it. We, in fact, appear to be born with just the opposite nature. Therefore, to embrace this life-style demands a grace which goes beyond all natural ability. The cross is every bit as much a part of our life-style today as it was for Jesus. It's greatest impact often comes when we aren't expecting, or refuse to deal with reality, that we open ourselves to the judgment process of God.

SATURDAY, October 18

Scripture: First Corinthians 11:27-30

To eat and drink in an unworthy manner is to eat and drink judgment to ourselves and to open the door to three distinct levels of God's dealings. The Scripture is very clear in its presentation of our responsibilities toward each other and the society in which we live. The entire basis of eating and drinking judgment to ourselves is based in this passage on Church relationships. Once again, we find the New Testament clearly establishing the fact that relationships determine where we are in God. They become the foundation for God's dealing with us and for His redemptive judgments manifested in our lives. Three of them mentioned here seem to be very serious. No one wants to be weak, sick, or dead before his time. Yet, these three things are specifically mentioned as coming when we refuse to function in church life as God intended. How are your relationships at church?

SUNDAY, October 19

Scripture: First Corinthians 11:29-32

The purpose of being weak, sick, or dead is to turn an individual quickly back to God's way, and, therefore, every bit redemptive in the context of its outpouring. The Expositor's Greek Testament says the difference between these first two Greek words is that stage one indicates weakness as temporary sicknesses that come and go, each one having a recovery after it has run its course. The second word translated here "sickness" means the ongoing kind that comes and stays even though modern medication temporarily grants relief. The overall condition stays and can't be removed. The third and final area needs little description. It simply means to go home early and to die before your time. Verse 32 clearly calls these three levels the "...chastening by the Lord..." Each one has redemptive purposes "...that we may not be condemned with the world." Judgments are real, they are operational, and need to be recognized and discerned almost on a daily basis in order for us to respond and move into God's very best.

MONDAY, October 20

Scripture: First Corinthians 11:33-34- and 17-21

The whole issue of weak, sick, and dead depends on relationships in the local church and whether or not we are willing to take our place living a life-style that is free from the sin that so easily besets: selfishness where everyone looks for his own gain from his own quarter. Verse 21 says it best, "For in eating, 1 (each one takes) 2 [his own supper] 3 'ahead of others'..." The attitude outlined in verse 21 that was so prevalent in the Corinthian church was directly opposed to the life-style Jesus lived. When they took communion they were preaching one thing, the sacrificial, servanthood life-style of Jesus as the norm of laying down His life for others. But, in fact, they were living like the world. This hypocrisy demanded judgment. The judgment that came was in three levels --

weak, sick, and dead. Relationships are so important to the Lord that if we continually refuse the life-style of commitment we can ultimately find ourselves going home early rather than continuing to stay and leaven succeeding generations with more hypocrisy. God is serious about our purity and He is serious about developing the life-style of Jesus within the Church. God is looking at our relationships. Are we listening to what He is saying?

TUESDAY, October 21

Scripture: Hebrews 6:1-2

As uncomfortable as it undoubtedly is to deal with the subject of judgment, the Scripture clearly outlines it as one of the foundational doctrines. We're called to go on to maturity which builds upon the foundation of six major doctrines. The last one listed here is that of eternal judgment. Now the judgments of God in Scripture are much broader than just those relating to eternity. But nevertheless it's foundational doctrine that seems to have been lost. We've had nearly forty years of "love of God" preaching and very little teaching about judgment; consequently the evident fruit of an absolute lack of the "fear of God" is within the Church and certainly within the nation. Judgment is a foundational doctrine and needs to be laid again in the Church so that coming generations can walk before the Lord in a manner pleasing to Him. It may be this doctrine will get established in our lives through experience individually, corporately, and nationally in the days ahead. We need to understand the issue of judgment!

WEDNESDAY, October 22

Scripture: Hebrews 10:30-31; First Peter 4:1-5

The New Testament clearly recognizes and sets forth, sometimes in dramatic terminology, the judgment of the Lord concerning His people. We are told in verse 30 of Hebrews 10, "The Lord will judge His people." Then verse 31 says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." We would probably not be so concerned about our nation if we didn't recognize this principle is virtually lost to the understanding of the majority in today's Church. An awakening over this issue is beginning to take place from coast to coast. More than ever before we have ministries talking about judgment and the people of God are embracing the issues of judgment. In verses 1-5 of First Peter 4, we are told suffering comes in order that we might be delivered from living the rest of our time in the flesh for the desires of men, but be translated into an arena where we are demonstrating the will of God. This issue is so important that verse 5 states, "They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." Eternal judgment is not only a foundational doctrine for the Church, but there is an aspect of judgment which flows here and usually long before we step into eternity. Judgment flows while we are living, functioning, moving, and relating here within our jobs, businesses, and families. Judgment is a way of life that operates both while we are living and finally at the end of the age in the resurrection. Do we recognize the current judgments of God as they occur?

THURSDAY, October 23

Scripture: Acts 10:34-42

Have you ever wondered what Jesus taught the eleven after the resurrection during the forty days prior to the ascension? Many times I have wondered what He emphasized during that season. Perhaps Acts 10 is a glimpse into that dimension, which will help us appreciate this subject. Verse 42 says, "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead." During that forty days of instruction concerning the things of the kingdom, Jesus commanded those who walked with Him that there was one aspect of eternal truth which had to be preached in every generation. The issue was judgment. It was not only ordained by God but demanded that they preach Jesus as judge both of the living and of the dead. Do we realize that just as we will one day stand before Jesus and give an account of everything we've done in the body, so we stand under His gaze each day in our relationships and our dealings one with the other. He truly is Judge of the living and the dead. Hebrews reveals many of the judgments that come to us are for the purpose of maturity, purity, and holiness. Our relationships reveal where our heart is daily. Are you aware of the reality of Jesus the Judge?

FRIDAY, October 24

Scripture: First Corinthians 5:1-12

The Scripture's proclaim Jesus as Judge of the living and the dead. In First Corinthians 5 we have a manifestation of judgment flowing to the living. Verse 4 says, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ,..." Jesus as Judge of the living definitely shows manifestations of that judgment within the Church, through leadership, for the sole purpose of restoring wayward believers to a godly, pure life-style. It is not hard to understand the three levels of judgment outlined in First Corinthians 11 after we've read chapter 5. To deliver someone to Satan for the destruction of the flesh shows the absolute seriousness of God's determination to restore wayward believers and His commitment to deal with them in their physical bodies through sickness. He will even take them to death's door, where the majority of people facing such an hour quickly turn to the Lord. Judgment, in today's world is very real!

SATURDAY, October 25

Scripture: First Thessalonians 4:1-7

First Thessalonians 4:1-7 once again reiterates the commitment of God as a judge of the living, the avenger of verse 6. The Greek word translated "avenger" here means "One who exacts a penalty." Jesus is very definitely the Judge of the living and many manifestations outlined in Scripture prove He continues to operate in that mode, even today, long before the final judgment seat of Christ. As the author and perfecter of our faith, judgment is a tool in the hands of the Lord for growth, development, correction, and repentance. It comes in a variety of packages on different levels, with manifold purposes, dealing according to fleshly motivations. The "fear of the Lord" only returns when we recognize the on-going ministry of the "Judge of all the earth."

SUNDAY, October 26

Scripture: James 5:1-12

Amazingly enough, the issue of spiritual, financial management appears in Scripture as an area of concern and judgment in the end-times. The judgment of the Lord is enumerated for those who are captured by the idol of wealth in James 5. The very wealth they cling to will literally eat up their flesh like fire, and even though they have heaped up treasure for the last days, when "...the cries of the reapers reach the ears of the Lord of the Sabaoth..." He ordains a corresponding judgment in the earth. All the ministries who are crying out for finances to fulfill the call of God are instructed to be patient and to wait for the former and later rain, because the Judge has heard their cries and He is standing at the very door. A very important part of that waiting, in verse 9, is not to be groaning and complaining over each other's activities or lack of them, but rather trusting the Lord and knowing His judgment will some day release all the finances that are needed for the end-time harvest.

MONDAY, October 27

Scripture: Revelation 19:11-16

The picture of Jesus' ministry presented by the book of Revelation is very different from the suffering servant of Isaiah and the gospels. Revelation says He is the soon coming King, the Judge of all the earth. Verse 11 says, "Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He **judges** and makes war." In this passage He leads an army, a sharp sword goes out of His mouth, and He is called the "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This is Jesus the Judge coming back to fulfill God's word and set things straight in the earth. Prior to His manifested appearing, prophesied in Revelation 19, He comes to and works through the Church to restore and bring in a great end-time harvest. The judgments we are currently experiencing in the Church are designed to purify, get our attention, and call us to holiness in preparation for God's great end-time purpose.

TUESDAY, October 28

Scripture: Revelation 2 and 3

In Revelation chapters 2 and 3, we see Jesus the Judge of the living at work corporately within the Body of Christ, church by church. There are numerous examples of Jesus the Judge individually working, but here we see Jesus the Judge working corporately with His Church, which is an entirely different level of judgment. We need to realize that just as God works with individuals He also works with whole corporate bodies. When Jesus the Judge deals with the corporate Body, as in Revelation 2, He says, "...you have left your first love...repent, return or I will come quickly and remove your lampstand from its place – unless you repent." Here Jesus the Judge promises to remove the divine purpose and anointing to carry out the assignment which settled on a corporate body. If that were to happen, they could continue their meetings but it would be without the intensity, fire, and anointing of the Holy Spirit. The church at Smyrna was warned about coming persecution unto death and encouraged to be faithful so the Judge could give them "...the crown of life..." To the church at Pergamos, Jesus the Judge says, "Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against you with the sword of My mouth." Jesus the Judge left the rest in that scenario to the imagination of the believers. But we would all certainly agree the last thing we would want as a church body is to have the Lord fighting against the very purpose for which we were summoned initially (only pharisaism has such fruit). To the church in Thyatira Jesus the Judge gets very specific by saying, "...because you allow the spirit of Jezebel to beguile My people...and I gave time for repentance and you didn't change...then I will cast you into a sickbed and send great tribulation and I will kill your children with death." He says He is the One "...who searches the minds and hearts responding to each person's works." Jesus is very much the Judge of the living! We not only need to be open to Jesus the Judge personally, but we need to be very aware of Jesus the Judge corporately and His individual dealings with the corporate body where we attend. Is your church open to Jesus the Judge? He visits whether we're open or not.

WEDNESDAY, October 29

Scripture: First John 1:5-7

The clear message of Scripture in First John 1:5-7 shows God's determination for His light to shine in every area of our life, and He ordained the pathway for fruition of that purpose. Verse 7 sums it up, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." This passage, in effect, tells us God ordained relationships for our cleansing; and it is only as we walk in relationship, receiving each other's reproof and correction, being willing to confess and face with transparency rather than deny and retreat to eventual destruction. Jesus is faithful to forgive and cleanse us from all unrighteousness when we are willing to deal with each other openly and honestly. Maturity comes when we open up to relationships for the purpose of cleansing, growth, and maturity.

THURSDAY, October 30

Scripture: First John 2:7-11

The commandment to love one another has two sides. One side is an attitude of willingness to deal with each other where we are. The other side is a commitment to bring forth correction when we see the need for it, rather than dividing, splitting, and going our different directions. Verse 10 says, "He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him." To walk in the love outlined in First John we have to have a solid commitment to correction and restoration through confrontation. Correction with love is not offensive. Correction with the wrong attitude can be extremely offensive. Have you made a commitment to receive as well as give correction?

FRIDAY, October 31

Scripture: Matthew 5:20-26

Jesus was very clear in outlining how anger can lead down a pathway toward severe judgment. He divided this process into three levels. Judicial level one was local. In the society of that day, the local elders usually numbered seven and the punishment they could hand out was very limited. Jesus said angry words without a cause, unchecked, and without the attitude and motivation of restoration could bring us to a place of limited judgment. But if we do not channel that anger toward the redemptive dimension of confrontation and restoration, we most likely find ourselves voicing our disgust with character judgments and contempt. This, of course, brings us to level two which was the council or Sanhedrian, whose scope of punishment was stoning. The third and final level was to judge someone a **moreh** (fool) from **moris**, a rebel or apostate from all good, which demanded assignment to the valley of the living dead, signifying eternal loss. Jesus was very quick to point out that anger has to be channeled in the right direction, and the only safe place for it is confrontation for the purpose of redemption. Anything else can lead us down the pathway of progressive judgment, which can greatly hinder our activities for God in the earth and ultimately bring us up short of His eternal purposes. Jesus is the Judge of the living and the dead. We need to live with both in view daily.

©1997 Al Houghton\ “Word at Work” Ministries, Inc. P O Box 366, Placentia, CA 92871-0366

Reproduction in whole or part is encouraged to share with others.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please keep us informed of your **current** address. The Post Office only forwards the “Word at Work” by grace through faith.

ITINERARY

October 9-11	International Fellowship of Ministries Word of His Grace Fellowship 11833 - 124th Avenue NE Kirkland, WA 98034 Phone (206)820-1872
October 12	Grace Covenant Christian Center 206 Frontage Road North Ste A2 Pacific, WA Phone (206)735-5602
October 25-27	City Of Refuge Andrews, TX Phone (915)523-7773