

WORD AT WORK

The Call To One Accord III
June 2002

Dear Friend:

In Mark 10 when James and John asked for the greatest thing they could imagine, Jesus did not say “no” but rather, “You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?”

Many of us, like James and John, have asked for very great things with no thought for the preparational price tag. The second thing to notice is Jesus assumed they were serious and honored their request preparationally by stating, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.”

After decades of adversity, the glimpse of glory fades and many of us need the dream renewed to even associate the price paid with what we initially asked. Such renewal of vision is often like the resurrection – it only comes when all hope is gone.

This is a season of finding God again in prophecy, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, gifts of healings – all the streams that once overflowed with torrential rain but have become dry sandy places where smooth pebbles are the only sign testifying of the magnitude of what once flowed.

Recovering the flow may well lead us to resurrected vision fulfilled, cities delivered and nations touched by God’s very own Thumbprint. The contribution we once dreamed of may yet come to pass.

Perhaps like Mordecai we shall say, “For such a season, we have come to the Kingdom!”

Yours in Him,

Al Houghton

W O R D A T W O R K

VOLUME XXII NUMBER VI
The Call To One Accord III

SATURDAY, June 1

Scripture: John 13:34-35

Verses 34 and 35 of John 13 say, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” As soon as Jesus demonstrated He could love the very one who was betraying Him, he not only established a yardstick by which love would forever be measured but gave a commandment demanding His disciples learn to walk the same path. The witness of the Church walking this path would guarantee the world’s recognition that we are indeed His disciples and His name is honored. So we need to ask ourselves – how well are we doing growing in the ability to love each other even when there is betrayal, criticism and judgment in the process? Only when we learn to overcome those things and continue loving people can Jesus truly be glorified.

SUNDAY, June 2

Scripture: Romans 14:10-12

Romans 14:10-12 says, “But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written: ‘As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.” Those of us who spend a considerable amount of time in church usually think of Isaiah 45:23 as a word to unbelievers, “...that to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath” is strictly with the unbeliever that one day every unbeliever will bow their knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. However, in this passage it is used for every Christian bowing their knee and giving account to God for the level of love we have learned to walk in and how many obstacles we have overcome in the process. For those of us who have not been able to overcome betrayal, criticism or judgment then we shall have to bow our knee and submit to the word of the Lord. Wouldn’t it be a lot more fruitful to submit here rather than waiting until the Judgment Day and be forced into it? While we’re here we can make some voluntary changes and get all the credit for it. If we wait we lose the credit for making the changes. Now is the time to choose to overcome every offense.

MONDAY, June 3

Scripture: Acts 1:14; 2:1

In Acts 1:14 we’re told, “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” I’m sure that ten days locked up with 120 people in the Upper Room had to create some real questions about how long they would have to implement this “**one accord**” stuff. I’m sure they began to question the love walk and to what degree their crucifixion would continue until Jesus could be seen through their actions. The process began in the Upper Room and I’m sure

they progressively understood the magnitude of what Jesus not only bought and paid for, but called them to emulate.

TUESDAY, June 4

Scripture: Acts 2:1-4

Acts 2:1-4 says, “Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” This love walk would now get some dramatic supernatural help. They would even have to search the Scripture to see what the value was of something they didn’t ask for. For three and a half years they healed the sick, cast out devils and raised the dead and suddenly they find themselves speaking in a language they never learned. That would not only have to have been somewhat disconcerting but much less of a manifestation than was expected. They were expecting the power of the Spirit to resume their healing, deliverance and miracle ministries only to find their mouths filled with a language they couldn’t even understand. Fortunately, as they searched the scriptures I’m sure they began to find in the Prophets the real value of this prayer language God had imparted. One would have to believe it has great value since even to this day these issues are debated and a dramatic schism exists in the Body of Christ over this issue. Zephaniah 3:9 is very clear, “For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, That they all may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him with one accord.” That “pure language” is a language whose origin is not in the heart of man but in the Holy Spirit of the living God! It’s the only thing we have that is untainted by human flesh and therefore qualifies to fulfill this prophetic promise. So we know the purpose of tongues is to overcome offenses and continue the love walk Jesus commanded. Are we using the weapons the Lord has given us to maintain the love walk?

WEDNESDAY, June 5

Scripture: Acts 2:44-46

In Acts 2:44-46 the Early Church moves on to the third level of being **in one accord** and they determine they really are going to be their “brother’s keeper”. They accept personal responsibility toward each other and the only issue which arises from this passage is the administration of that commitment. It’s an unbiblical assumption to expect the same administration today of the commitment outlined here toward each other. The absence of parallel prophetic events make clear the administration would have to be quite different for today’s church. God knew the persecution surrounding Stephen would strike the whole Church and suddenly there would only be twelve people left preaching to each other in Jerusalem. Acts 8:1 records those events. In anticipation of preparing the Church, the Holy Spirit chose to administer this “brother’s keeper” commitment by prompting them to sell their goods and bring them into the Church. What we need to do is look at the covenantal issue of commitment and make that commitment in our fellowship groups or our circle of friends allowing the Holy Spirit to administer this individually and corporately as He wills. He is really the only One we can trust to administer this. They trusted, they covenanted and they got the full measure of God’s blessing being fully prepared to leave town immediately when their lives were endangered!

THURSDAY, June 6

Scripture: Acts 3:6

The blessing for covenanting together over being their “brother’s keeper” was manifested in Acts 3:6 demonstrating God’s approval, “And Peter said, ‘Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you; In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.’” The resident healing anointing was birthed because they were willing to covenantally commit to be their “brother’s keeper.” Perhaps the healing anointing we’re seeking is awaiting our covenantal commitments to the same principle. Do we demonstrate that we are our

“brother’s keeper”? Are we willing to allow the Holy Spirit to take our resources on demand for the needs of the Body?

FRIDAY, June 7

Scripture: Acts 4:17-31

In Acts 4:17-22 we see some of the very same issues we have to deal with today concerning the prohibition of our courts – that we are not to speak in the Name of Jesus in school, no posting the Ten Commandments, no prayer, none of the things that made our nation great are we now allowed to do in school. When the Early Church faced this, instead of demonstrating, instead of fleshing out and going to the streets, they went to the church-house, got **in one accord** and went before the Throne in prayer demanding a second filling of the Holy Spirit and the level of anointing only seen in the Prophets. They asked God to “...look on their threats and grant Your servants ... boldness ... by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders would be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.” In verse 31 they were “...filled ... and they spoke the word of God with boldness...” and dramatic signs and wonders began to unfold. Certainly they continued in the love walk even though they were forced to confront government edicts they could not obey. Perhaps we should learn the humility of the Early Church and walk their path and maybe we would get a lot further impacting our government.

SATURDAY, June 8

Scripture: Acts 5:1-12

One of the power manifestations that was certainly needed in the Early Church, although apparently not expected, was the manifestation of judgment. It was very important that God demonstrate, not only in the Church, but in the world that the ascended, seated at the right hand of God, King of kings and Lord of lords had now transitioned from the Suffering Servant paying for eternal salvation to the Judge of all the earth dispensing His judgments and restoring the fear of the Lord to the Church. Such was the case. The same anointing which they had prayed for which no sickness or disease could stand in its presence neither could those live who retained a spirit of mammon. The very same anointing which destroyed sickness and disease would destroy those who served mammon over God! The chief issue between Jesus and the Pharisees was their unbridled use of God’s house and ministry position to feather their own pockets through sales, promotion and manipulation. Jesus encountered it twice – once in the beginning of His ministry and again at the end. Both times He was driven to confront, overturn and rebuke until the second time when it got Him crucified. The spirit of mammon, which is the other Lord in the universe, had completely taken over the religious system. The Early Church was forced to walk in love and yet confront this spirit of mammon even in their own members. They did in Acts chapter 5. And the Church had to make a choice – were they willing to continue walking together in covenant even though they had birthed an anointing that would kill those who refused to turn loose of a spirit of mammon. Verse 12 records their answer, “And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon’s Porch.” They chose to stay together, walking in covenant even though they had birthed an anointing that would kill friends and neighbors. That’s commitment. That’s a manifestation of the true love of God. Perhaps we need to learn from the Early Church and walk out their pattern. How shall we continue to birth the full measure of what God has promised? How can we walk it out in our generation?

SUNDAY, June 9

Scripture: Revelation 12:7-10

Verses 7-10 say, “And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven,

‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.’” Accusation and judgment continue to knock at the door because we have an accuser of the brethren whose chief assignment is to destroy the covenantal relational commitments we make and consequently the power of harmony through our commitments to demonstrate the love Jesus initiated. The real question, and the one we will have to answer before the Judgment Seat of Christ, “Did we learn to love as Jesus loved when we were on the earth?” We must learn to refuse to harbor or repeat the accusations of the accuser of the brethren. Then and only then can we expect the full manifestation of what is promised when we walk in love. These great promises are waiting to be embraced and fulfilled. Certainly, if we are willing to pay the price, we shall see the full measure of the fruit.

MONDAY, June 10

Scripture: James 3:13-18

In verses 13-18 we are told, “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic, For where envy and self-seeking exists, confusion and every evil thing will be there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” How do we “make peace” when people are obnoxious, accusing, judgmental and critical? As much as it is up to us we are told to live in peace with all men. The issue of what to do in making peace without compromise is the essence of what we must learn if we are to carry out Jesus’ assignment. It s time we moved in that direction.

TUESDAY, June 11

Scripture: James 4:11-12

James 4:11-12 says, “Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?” It appears the chief commitment we are called to is to bridle our tongue when it comes to criticism and judgment. If we would instead channel that energy toward prayer, speaking to the mountain, and cleansing the temple perhaps we would get some results that in many ways are uncommon. One thing is sure, the New Testament teaches us we have a solid and clear responsibility to walk in love with each other and not to judge or criticize but to demonstrate the full measure of God’s love. How are we doing fulfilling that assignment?

WEDNESDAY, June 12

Scripture: Romans 5:12; Second Corinthians 5:17

Jesus bought and paid for everything we need to deal with the carnal nature. Romans 5:12 gives us a clue of what it means to be born in sin. Verse 12 says, “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because all sinned -- ” In Second Corinthians 5:17 we are told, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” Its important to understand that when we were born again the Bible says we’re a “new creation” it is not talking about our attitudes or our soulish man. It is talking about our spirit man. Being “born again” means coming to spiritual life, a birth that bring forth a pure and clean spirit before God and then the process of growth and development begins for which we are held accountable. There are a number of things that being “a new creation” just doesn’t accomplish. There are a number of things that do not immediately change by just being “born again.” While the spirit becomes a “new creation”, there is a considerable amount of work that yet has to be done on our mind, will and emotions and the process of reigning in our physical body.

Being “born again” is the beginning point for embracing all Jesus assigned but it certainly is not the end and only takes us there with much change. There are several things we must embrace to get where we want to go.

THURSDAY, June 13

Scripture: Romans 12:2; First Corinthians 9:27

Romans 12:2 gives us some input concerning other parts of our makeup. We are told in verses 1 and 2, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Once we are born again, God begins the equipping process to walk in love but the next stage is the renewing of our mind to think like He does. While our spirit man is a new creation, it must maintain growth, development and a transformation in our thinking. We have to begin to see ourselves the way God sees us. We have to forgive ourselves the way God forgives us. Then we have to embrace what Jesus bought and paid for and walk in it. In addition, First Corinthians 9:27 tells us, “But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” So while our spirit man is a new creation, our mind must be renewed and our body subdued. If we don’t follow this process there is no way we can fully walk out the love of God and demonstrate the harmony, unity and commitment Jesus demanded. How are we doing developing the character of Christ?

FRIDAY, June 14

Scripture: Luke 4: 5-8

The second temptation recorded by Luke in verses 5-8 says, “Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.’ And Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve”’. One of the things we have to ask ourselves is, if this is a valid temptation, and it must be, then where did the devil get the “authority” he claims was delivered to him? The answer to that has to be in the Garden of Eden where Adam relinquished his God-given responsibility over all the trees in the land of the Garden. Once it was yielded then it belonged to the devil and only a sinless suffering servant could pay the price to get it back! Jesus had to come in exactly the way the prophets described in order to fulfill and set us free from the dictates of the enemy. There is a process to walk out growth in the love of God covenantally and we must understand the power of the enemy in order to address it in each other.

SATURDAY, June 15

Scripture: Isaiah 14:12-14

To fully appreciate what Jesus has done for us, one of the things we must ask ourselves is what does it mean to be born in sin? When Satan was given authority in the earth and man began to propagate, each new life was born in sin but what does that mean? Isaiah 14 describes the five seeds of Satan which transformed his character from the Daystar, “son of the morning”, into Lucifer. Lucifer, the fallen one, once given authority in the earth, sowed in each individual who was born in the earth seeds of his character. Those are outlined for us in Isaiah 14:12-14. We are told, “How you have fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’” The five “I will’s” which formed the character and nature of Satan himself, when Adam yielded, were now seeds sown into every individual born on this planet. The only way you and I can be totally free from dealing with these seeds of rebellion is to *not* be born here. All who are born in the earth must face and deal with these seeds. If

we realize that, it should help us have compassion on others realizing that how we treat them is how others will treat us. Understanding how we got here should be a great help in motivating us to respond in the love of God.

SUNDAY, June 16

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

Scripture: Numbers 13:21-22; Joshua 15:13

Numbers 13:21 and 22 declares, “So they went up and spied out the land from the Wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob, near the entrance of Hamath. And they went up through the South and came to Hebron; Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were there. (Now Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)” Joshua 15:13 tells us what Hebron was before it was taken and re-named, giving us a fifth giant. It says, “Now to Caleb the son of Jephunneh he gave a portion among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, namely, Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron (Arba was the father of Anak).” So we have five giants who have one purpose spread out over three generations. The first one is Arba, the second is Anak, and the third generation consists of Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai. This is where the war is and why we have to renew our minds and subdue our bodies. In the same way these giants hindered, resisted and withstood the children of Israel, what they stand for and what they mean withstands and hinders our coming into **one accord**, birthing the full magnitude of God’s purposes. If we will choose to deal with our giants, we can have all God promises.

MONDAY, June 17

Scripture: Numbers 13:30-33

In Numbers 13:30-33, “Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said, ‘Let us go up at once and take possession, for we are well able to overcome it.’ But the men who had gone up with him said, ‘We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we.’ And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, ‘The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.’” In the same way that the giants withstood the children of Israel, they war against us and the war often is in how we see ourselves, how we see God, and our willingness to face the obstacles that arise. Our willingness to confront each other – face each other and in love, call each other to account over our own actions and attitudes is essential. The onslaught was too much for Israel and it cost them 40 years, a whole generation dying in the wilderness. Will it be too much for us? Will it cost us a generation? Will God have to bring our children into covenant relationship, unity and harmony so He can birth all He wants to do while we die off in a spiritual wilderness where the presence of God is noticeably absent? The choices we make in this season parallel the choices the spies made in Moses’ generation. What shall we decide?

TUESDAY, June 18

Scripture: Numbers 13:22; Mark 10:35-37

Since Arba is the first giant we should look at him realizing what he stands for and who he represents foundational attitudes in establishing his kingdom. Arba stands for self-effort, or selfish ambition. The root or seed sown at our birth is, “I will be like the Most High.” It should not be strange to us that Jesus had to deal with this in much of His ministry with the twelve. In Mark 10 we find a perfect example. In Mark 10:35-37 we’re told, “Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, ‘Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.’ And He said to them, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’ They said to Him, ‘Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.’” Selfish ambition doesn’t get any better than this. James and John are asking for the Number One and Two spots in all of eternity! This is Arba to the max! They have mega doses of this spirit operating in their lives and Jesus has to face and deal with it. The first thing to notice in this encounter is James and John do not lose their position because their giants manifest. The gifts and callings are without repentance. Our giants don’t scare God at all. So why,

when God will not walk away from us when our giants manifest, do we walk away from each other when giants manifest? Why was Jesus committed to us, giants and all, but we won't commit to each other – giants and all? Where is the failure? It is in our willingness to stay connected, confronting and facing each other's giants in the love of God. The only other option is separation and breaking of relationship – which the Church has conveniently done for years! It may be our chief sin! How are we doing embracing the ways of the LORD?

WEDNESDAY, June 19

Scripture: Mark 10:38

In answering James and John, attempting to bring them into reality and reign in their giants, Jesus responds by saying, “You do not know what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” Jesus faced Arba in the twelve throughout His three and a half years with them. He was quite familiar with this giant of selfish ambition and self-effort. He faced it many, many times. In an attempt to bring some reality to James and John He began to focus on something we have often neglected but may have the same kind of moderating effect on our giant of selfish ambition as it did for the twelve. Jesus began to tell them that each ministry position had a separate and parallel preparational price tag. The greater the position for which they were asking, the greater preparational price tag. In order to ask for a very high call, you must also be willing to pay a very high and extended preparational price. Jesus didn't say “no” – what He said was, “Are you sure you want a call that has the preparational price that parallels My own?” We can ask for things that will bring us into the very same level of crucifixion Jesus walked in. This was His message to James and John. It is still His message today and it hasn't changed! The question is when we face Arba manifesting in our friends – do we separate – do we walk away from them – do we get offended and end our friendship? If we do, our sin is greater than the manifestation of their giants. What shall we do? Perhaps we should take the same approach Jesus took. How many nails are you willing to have driven into your hands and your feet? How many lashes are you willing to endure on your back? How many crowns of thorns are we willing to wear on our head? How many spears are we willing to have thrust in our side? How much blood are we willing to shed resisting the temptation to walk away from our gifting and call? How many Gardens of Gethsemane are we willing to endure? Are we sure we want such great things? How much blood do we have to shed? The preparational price may cost us every drop! But instead of bringing reality to each other's selfish ambition it is much easier to get offended and separate *then* we don't have to walk through the painful confrontational process. Consequently we have today a fractured Church that does not demonstrate the love of God and is far short of the glory God intended. Isn't it time we embraced the pattern and chose to walk the covenantal path?

THURSDAY, June 20

Scripture: Mark 10:39-40

In verses 39 and 40 James and John respond to Jesus question off the top of their head without consideration for what He really told them. Their giant is really blinding their eyes. We are told in 39 and 40, “And they said to Him, ‘We can.’ And Jesus said to them, ‘You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.’” Why is it that James and John could not only miss the point Jesus was trying to make, but could so glibly respond that they were willing to endure the very same preparation Jesus did and then to be told they were going to have it! What they were asking for was not His to give. So, in effect, they managed to get themselves into a place where they were going to have to walk through the same preparational price Jesus paid, baptisms – cup and all – and still not necessarily get what they were asking for. One of the things, I suppose, we need to learn from this is we better watch out what we ask for because we may get to prepare for it! They got the preparation but one thing is for sure, when this process was completed their giant wasn't asking for anything. It was DOA – dead on arrival – crucified! Is it possible that what we ask for determines the level of adversity in our life and that God with us, like James and John, takes us seriously when we ask Him for high level manifestations? Are we the ones responsible for all the adversity in our lives?

FRIDAY, June 21

Scripture: Genesis 15:1-3, 4-7

In Genesis 15:1-7 we find Abraham complaining to God about his position. We are told in 2-7, “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.’ But Abram said, ‘Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’ Then Abram said, ‘Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!’ And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ‘This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.’ Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. Then He said to him, ‘I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.’” Abraham registered his dismay, upset and frustration with God in that he had left home, come all this way, and God still had not fulfilled His promise. In verse 2 we can hear the frustration, “...what will You give me, seeing I go childless....?” Then in verse 3 he amps it up a level, “...Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!” Abraham was mad. He was ticked. He was upset with God. He has gotten a raw deal and he is in complaint-mode! He is complaining, yelling, and screaming and God comes back to him and says, “Here it is – its coming – I’m going to give it to you – relax – you’re going to have it.” Now if this story stopped there, Abraham would have been in good shape because God would have brought His promise to pass. But Abraham didn’t stop there! And this is often true of us. We go one step further than we need to go and it sets us up to pay a price that is beyond description!

SATURDAY, June 22

Scripture: Genesis 15:8-13

Abraham should have stopped after verses 2 and 3 because God came to him and made it very clear He was going to give him a son. But notice, after God’s promise and reassurance that His promise was certainly going to come to pass, Abram pipes up the second time and says in verse 8, “And he said, ‘Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?’” Now that had to be somewhat of a slap in God’s face because God already told him He would perform the promise! Then the Lord brought him outside and said “Look at the stars, your descendants will outnumber those.” Abraham believed but then Abraham comes back and says, “You know what, You promised me this before and it hasn’t come to pass yet so how am I going to **know** You’re really going to do this?” The fun begins! God tells Abram to go get animals, cut them in two – they are going to do a blood covenant. In verse 13 the language now gets very very important because in verse 8 Abram says, “...how shall I **know**....?” In verse 13 God says to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.” God gives Abram a covenant and tells him to “**Know certainly**....” The problem is that covenants are two-way streets. So once you get a covenant from God – the very same thing you have asked God for, God now has a right to ask you for. In the same way Abram demands to **know** that God is going to bring it to pass, God has a right to demand to **know** Abram’s heart in obedience to God. Abram is about to experience the baptisms and the cup! The preparational price tag has now come into play in much greater measure.

SUNDAY, June 23

Scripture: Genesis 22:2, 10-12

In Genesis 22 after Abram gets his promise, God comes back to him and says, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” Now Abram has a choice - will he obey or will he not? He does. In verses 10-12 we’re told, “And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, ‘Abraham, Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ And He

said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I **know** that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.’” How did Abraham set himself up for this baptism and this cup – this preparational price tag? He put a demand on God to **know**. And God said, “Alright, you want to **know** – you’re going to **know** and so am I.” Just like James and John were oblivious to their preparational price, so was Abram. We see the same pattern in his life. Abraham dictated by what he asked for, his level of adversity! Is that not true of us? Are we not doing the same things?

MONDAY, June 24

Scripture: Philippians 3:8-10

In Philippians 3:8-10 we find the apostle Paul asking to **know** God in a very unique way. We are told, “But indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...” So Paul is asking to walk in the full measure of resurrection power. He is asking to **know** Jesus in the process that brought Him to resurrection – including the fellowship of His sufferings and being conformed to His death. He is asking for that level of anointing. We know he got it because Scripture declares he walked in it. The question is – did he have to pay a preparational price that was parallel for what he was asking? The answer, of course, is “he did.” Acts 14:19-20 records this, “Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.” Paul asked for it – and he got it! Probably not in the way he planned to acquire it. He wanted to **know** Jesus in the power of His resurrection, but he certainly wasn’t asking to be stoned to death! When the disciples gathered around him and prayed – he came back. See, what we ask often determines what we endure. When Arba impels us to ask beyond what God has ordained for us, that is where the trouble begins. Lets reign in the giant and make sure we’re asking only for what God has already ordained for our lives.

TUESDAY, June 25

Scripture: Mark 10:41-42

We are told in Mark 10:41 and 42, “And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, ‘You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.’” Arba always brings strife. The fruit of selfish ambition and self-effort always bring strife to a group of people. If we’re ever to be free from strife we have to confront selfish ambition when it manifests. In addition selfish ambition that desperately needs crucifixion is outlined for us in verse 42. Jesus said, “You know that those who are considered rulers...” The Greek word there is **ar-kho**. This is the same word translated “principalities” – the first level of devil we are said to wrestle with in Ephesians 6. How can we make an impact on the enemy’s kingdom if we are attempting to attain to a leadership position through the giant Arba? When this giant is not dealt with in the life of leaders, it guarantees that no lasting impact is made on the kingdom of darkness. Jesus said in verse 42, “‘You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles...” then He uses a word, ‘...lord it over them....’” “...lord it over them...” is from the Greek word **kat-ak-oo-ree-yoo-o**. It means to lord against control or subjugate. It comes from the root word **koo-ree-yoo-o** meaning to rule, to have dominion or exercise lordship over. The Greek word **koo-ree-os** comes from **koo-ree-yoo-o**. **Koo-ree-os** is lord master, supreme in authority or the controller. This is the Greek word Jesus used when He said, “No man can serve two **koo-ree-os**/masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” We know the issue of heart-motivation is what makes it possible for us to be servant-leaders. Jesus is outlining the fact that no person who hasn’t dealt with Arba can ever build a servant organization. They will actually build something exactly like or on the same

principle which characterizes principalities and powers on the demonic side of resistance. It is absolutely essential that we deal with our giants in order to make the impact God ordained on the kingdom of darkness, otherwise we will build organizations on their principles that will have no impact at all!

WEDNESDAY, June 26

Scripture: Mark 2:42-43

In verses 43 and 44 Jesus said, “Yet it shall not be so among you: but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all” Isn’t it interesting that as we see apostolic networks come into existence, many of them appear to be based on the very principles that Jesus prohibits declaring, “...it shall not be so among you...” As apostolic networks emerge they must demonstrate a willingness to serve – not control. Perhaps the greatest issue of service is what is required financially. We can’t find anywhere that the apostle Paul required 10% a month from the churches which he established or helped serve or helped set in order. That didn’t happen. What makes us think that requirement in itself doesn’t qualify as a **kat-ak-oo-ree-yoo-o**? It seems that it does. Will we follow the Bible pattern – or will we not? This will become the true issue of the emerging apostolic authority God wants to restore to the Church. Will we embrace the pattern Jesus outlines or will we attempt to use a model from the world? The choice is ours! This giant must be dealt with. Will we serve each other and bless each other or will we attempt to control each other and “...lord it over...” each other? Loving each other uses position to serve and advance another. This is the **call**. Can we rise to it?

THURSDAY, June 27

Scripture: Luke 22:19-24

In Luke 22 we find when Arba is not dealt with in the lives of people then it often has a devastating manifestation. In Luke 22:19-24 we’re told, “And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. But behold the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!’ Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing. But there was also rivalry among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.” They have been ministering with Judas for three and a half years and yet they cannot discern the betrayer who is right there at the table with them. They are questioning in verse 23 among themselves who it is, but no one can discern it. The question “why” is obvious in verse 24. The answer: Arba has them by the throat/heart and because they have not dealt with the issue of self-effort and selfish ambition they cannot discern the betrayer among them. The first casualty of the giant Arba, when it is not dealt with, is we lose our ability to discern the enemy’s work in our midst and that sets us up for tremendous devastation. Isn’t it time we embraced God’s pattern and His ways?

FRIDAY, June 28

Scripture: John 13:1-4

In John 13 we see what made the betrayer – the “betrayer”. We also see Jesus and what it means to walk in love. Isn’t it interesting that Jesus declares war on Arba by pouring water in a basin and beginning to wash the feet of His disciples - including the one who is going to betray Him! He goes on to tell them “You don’t even know what I am doing to you right now” – which was absolutely true. They didn’t. They were clueless! They did not know the magnitude of what Jesus was doing. But He was demonstrating God’s love even to His betrayer. Verse 2 says that He knew it and Judas knew it – yet Jesus washed his feet anyway. What does it mean to walk in the love of God and demonstrate covenantal unity and harmony even in the midst of betrayal. Jesus gives them the example. If they don’t get the victory over Arba, they will not be able to birth

the Church in the unity and harmony God intends. Therefore, Jesus implements drastic, unusual procedures to get their attention!

SATURDAY, June 29

Scripture: John 14:1-3, 22, 23

Immediately after Judas leaves, Jesus gives them a commandment that they have to love each other as He has loved them, then goes on to remove the essence of the rivalry among them. In verses 1-3 of chapter 14 He says, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a **mo-nee**...” meaning a dwelling place or a ministry assignment. It does not mean a mansion in heaven! It means a place where you can possess the anointing that goes with your **call** and nobody can take it away from you. If we are going to translate **mo-nee** as mansions in verse 2, we certainly should be consistent and translate **mo-nee** as mansions in verse 23. Verse 23 says, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our **mansion** with him.” Its very obvious that the same word used in the same context has to be translated differently in verse 23 and yet it is the same concept over the same issue. **Mo-nee** speaks to the issue of who is going to lead and why. Jesus is saying to them “You don’t have to worry about it, nobody can take your gifting or calling. The Father and I will come and We will make our residence in your life and out of that relationship and anointing you can establish your gifting and calling. You don’t have to fight for it because nobody can take it away from you.” If we find our place, God’s presence is promised and no one can take it away. From washing their feet to guaranteeing their gifting and calling, Jesus is successfully dealing with Arba in their lives! We should understand He is just as committed to successfully dealing with Arba in our lives as He was dealing with it in theirs.

SUNDAY, June 30

Scripture: Leviticus 10:1-2; Acts 1:15-20,26

There was an Old Testament manifestation that appears to be somewhat of a divine commitment whenever Arba takes over in the life of a leader. Leviticus 10:1-2 points us to selfish ambition and self-effort in manifestation and God’s response. We are told in verses 1 and 2, “Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.” The law of self-effort seems to dictate that what we initiate in the flesh will end up crucifying us and we die with it. It cannot accomplish God’s purpose and therefore it receives a death sentence from the Most High! If we start a ministry in selfish ambition, God is committed to killing it. We must learn to only raise up what God commands and only by the principles of servanthood. Arba has to go! The question is – are we willing to send him on his way or does God have to kill him in us? Either way – deliverance will come! The very first manifestation, the very first test of being **in one accord** in Acts 1 is the Arba test. In verse 14 they are in one accord and in verse 15 they have to face the issue of promoting someone to fulfill the office Judas has left vacant. The question is “who” will get the position? And which is more important – to stay **in one accord** or who gets promoted? This is an Arba test. And they are going to have to pass through it and be much more concerned about staying **in one accord** than “who” gets the position. The lot falls to Matthias and he is never heard from again in the New Testament. This would seem to indicate that their staying **in one accord** was far more important than the man who got the position. Can we come to that place where we understand it is much more important to stay **in one accord** than who gets the position – even if we are the ones who are much more qualified? This is the issue of Arba that has to be dealt with if we are ever to bring the Church into the place of power that God has ordained.

ITINERARY

Al Houghton

May 30 – June 2

Church Of The Living Word
Beaufort, SC
Phone: (843)838-6095

June 14-17

City Of Refuge
Andrews, TX
Phone: (915)523-7773

June 28-July 6

The Ministry Of Living Stones
Sterling, AK
Phone: (907)262-7321

Through Sadness to LIFE

Walking through sadness
Emerging unscathed
Though not always aware
In His presence I bathed

Christ was always beside me
Loving me all the while
Though at times I forgot Him
And could not even smile

And my dark heavy heart
Never changed His sure grace
All along He was there
Pulling me toward His face

And is it not amazing
What was said – He transformed
For the challenge matured me
To His image conformed

Jayne Houghton