

W O R D A T W O R K

VOLUME XVI NUMBER III
Three Keys To The Upper Room II

FRIDAY, March 1

Scripture: John 15:1-5

John 15:1-5 is one of the strongest statements in Scripture about the value of finding our place of God-appointed ministry versus making something happen. To abide, **meno**, means to find your place and stay there by making a quality decision. Verse five says, "...without Me you can do nothing." God is committed, in verse six, to throw out those who refuse to find their proper place. Every believer's place of fruitfulness is determined by the Lord Himself, and we have to be willing to flow within the measure and parameters of our gifting and calling. God's grace comes into full manifestation in our lives as we commit to Father's plan. All eternal fruit depends on finding that place. The greatest temptations come when we set our sights on a position of our own choosing. Doing our own thing usually produces nothing but frustration. God will abandon us to manipulation as a substitute for the Holy Spirit, if we persist.

SATURDAY, March 2

Scripture: John 16:6-10

We are living in a season of great transition when the choices made now determine whether the anointing of God wanes or waxes greater in the days ahead. Verses six and seven tell us why. The withering process comes with a choice to reject what God is doing and can be seen over time. If God says get out of the boat, we need to walk on water if necessary and not stop because of financial feasibility! Faith and fruitfulness come when we are in the right place and only there will we find the fulfillment Father intended. God wants a people moving in the fullness of their anointing, gifting and calling. That can only happen when we seek the Lord, maintain relationship with Him, and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us. Do a self-survey for both you and your church. Is the anointing increasing or is it diminishing? If it is noticeably diminishing, there are only three options: somebody is out of place, or a wrong choice was made, or the season is changing.

SUNDAY, March 3

Scripture: John 15:11-25

This passage portrays a testimony about the condition of the religious system. God chooses people, anoints and sends them to the church, but because the church has become traditional they do not recognize the very ones God sends. Rather than receiving them, as God intended, they persecute them. The very people God anointed and sent for their blessing are rejected and become foundation for Holy Spirit withdrawal. Every individual demonstrates their maturity, or lack of it, by the ministries and words they receive or reject. Are we able to receive all God wants to send us?

MONDAY, March 4

Scripture: John 15:26 - 16:3

Notice the degree of deception moving in the church world in the last days. Jesus said, “They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.” This verse reveals a church doing its own thing, self-satisfied and separated from the Head. It claims to be the body, but because of separation from the Head, very little life is left visible. When the church says to God, “We want You our way,” promoting its own interest, following its own desires, it gins the process of spiritual entropy. God will expose it in order for His people to recognize what is transpiring. How do you get to know the Father? One way is to find your place and get in it. He will manifest Himself to you and you will begin to know the love and grace that only comes from above.

TUESDAY, March 5

Scripture: John 15:26-27; 16:1-3; Luke 22:19-23

The whole purpose of the anointing of God, and baptism in the Holy Spirit, is to empower people to give witness. We are coming to a season where we are going to witness as we have never witnessed before in a power and authority beyond anything we have ever known. The purpose is to bring in a great end-time harvest. God has to prepare those witnesses. They have to be chosen from among faithful people. They have to be prepared. One of the preparations which has to take place is in a realm most of us do not want to talk about --- betrayal! Just as Jesus was betrayed in the upper room, so we are trained by God in the upper room by experiencing disappointment. Situations arise just like the betrayal we read about here and have to be dealt with in the spirit, not in the flesh. The usual temptation is to deal in the flesh. That leads to unforgiveness, bitterness, animosities, strife, and sometimes vengeance. A person who deals with betrayal in this way cannot be trusted to move in what God has in the last days, characterized by the prophets as the former and latter rain falling in the same month.

WEDNESDAY, March 6

Scripture: John 13:12-30

All we have to do to see what is involved in betrayal is to read this passage. The Scripture says Jesus was “troubled in spirit.” Betrayal always brings tremendous trouble, consternation, and upheaval. It is extremely uncomfortable. How do we learn to deal with betrayal and rejection? For indeed it is a dark time, a hurting time, but if we walk through the upper room in the way Jesus intends it will, in fact, be a time of great growth and maturity. God wants us to grow to the place where the misactivity of people does not detract from and slow down the witness. We truly are going to be an army that marches together and cannot be wounded!

THURSDAY, March 7

Scripture: Acts 1:8; Matthew 24:14

The witness God intends to bring in the last days comes in two forms and takes different preparations, depending on the magnitude of the form in which God is going to use you. The first and primary witness is each individual believer. Therefore the witness comes out of our character, out of the way we respond, out of our nature, out of our overall appearance. The second area of witness comes out of the things God gives us to speak and say. The first becomes a platform for the second. In other words, what we say will have very little impact as a witness unless it comes from a platform of purity in which we are the example of what we say and share. If we cannot back up what we are witnessing by our personal example, we really don’t have the power and authority to bring anybody under conviction through our witness and testimony. In the last days God is going to have an army who have His full divine authority in their witness and testimony because hypocrisy has been crucified.

FRIDAY, March 8

Scripture: Matthew 24:1-3, 14; Mark 13:1-4,9

The entire purpose of the body of Christ is to bring forth a witness. Notice that witness will bring persecution, but even surrounded by persecution the witness will have its ultimate purpose. What is that? It establishes a foundation for eternal judgment. We are told in Mark thirteen, verses ten through thirteen, persecution will come within a family, "Brother will betray brother...a father his child...children will rise up against parents." Even if arrested for giving a witness, we do not premeditate what to say for the Holy Spirit will give us in that hour what we speak. What does a witness produce? It produces a foundation for eternal judgment. The people who accept the witness are forgiven and live with God. The people who refuse to accept the witness, even though they may be religious leadership, will see judgment. We must prepare to be the witnesses God has ordained for the last days!

SATURDAY, March 9

Scripture: Matthew 10:16-36

In preparing for rejection and betrayal, we realize it comes simply because of the message God has given us to speak. Persecution arises because of the witness or testimony that has to come from our lips. Therefore, we know people are not the real problem, but it is the spirits who have them blinded and in bondage. For that reason God will empower His people to bring forth a witness which will break those bondages and we will see multitudes of people come into the kingdom, who in turn will get ready to be used themselves in their generation. Rejection, persecution, and betrayal are a lot easier to handle when we realize why they have to come and what God's purpose is in them.

SUNDAY, March 10

Scripture: Mark 6:1-13

Jesus said when you witness and the testimony is not received, know there is a procedure you are to follow. You are to "shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them." He said, "It will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the city or the individual who rejects your testimony." The principle is very clear. Your witness forms a foundation for judgment which individual believers are to establish in the last days. Let us thoroughly prepare and get ready to move in that stream!

MONDAY, March 11

Scripture: Matthew 12:22-30

It is imperative to recognize what Jesus is doing in the season He is moving. Matthew 12 depicts leadership of the church who do not recognize the more of the Holy Spirit and consequently set themselves against God. Jesus outlines the principle, "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad." They were actually leading the church but working against God in the process, because they did not recognize what God was doing in that season. Just as Jesus had to face it, so will we. Are we ready? Are we being prepared to face that kind of resistance within the house of God as a result of what the Lord will have us do and say?

TUESDAY, March 12

Scripture: Matthew 12:31-37

The Holy Spirit has been sent to do the eternal work and that eternal work comes forth from our witness as we share with people. For that reason, we cannot go back and reclaim opportunities to witness which have already passed. The heart attitude of verses twenty-two through thirty produced a fruit in verses thirty-one through thirty-

seven. Verses thirty-one through thirty-seven show us the fruit the Scribes and Pharisees were bringing about in their season, and it was a fruit they were not going to want to face on the day of judgment. Even if they turned to the Lord from the point Jesus spoke this, there would still be a season when they were presented with truth but didn't bring it forth and negatively impacted the people who listened to them. They worked against God and eventually would have to give an account. When the Lord brings us to a place of recognizing and moving on the leading edge of what He is doing, great blessing follows. We will have months of fruitfulness that can never be taken away.

WEDNESDAY, March 13

Scripture: Matthew 12:38-45

This is a passage I disliked for years because of what it seemed to imply. The part I never liked was the unclean spirit going out of a man, walking through dry places and coming back bringing seven other spirits more wicked than himself. I always thought, "Lord, what good does it do to get someone delivered if that happens to them? They would have been better off to have never been delivered than to end up seven times worse. I don't like that passage." Then God began to unfold the real understanding of what it meant. I couldn't see any relation between Jonah and his generation, the Queen of Sheba's generation and the unclean spirit, until God began to clarify. Jonah preached to the Ninevites. The Ninevites listened and acted on what Jonah said. The Queen of Sheba rode a camel for nine months just to hear the wisdom of Solomon. She went home and acted on what Solomon said. The people Jesus preached to listened to His word, just as the previous preacher's generations listened to them with one major difference. Unlike Jonah and the Queen of Sheba's Generations, Jesus' audience did not **act** on what they heard. Consequently they opened the door for a worse religious bondage. In effect Jesus said to them, "You would have been better off to have never heard what God said than to have heard it and not do it." This rule of the Spirit will again operate as God's people witness for Him. The day is coming when the Holy Spirit will move in such a strong way, we will bring forth a witness people would have been better off to have never heard than once hearing not doing. Are you ready to present the gospel in such a way God will hold people responsible eternally? I believe we are in preparation for it!

THURSDAY, March 14

Scripture: I Peter 2:1-10

In Peter we see the very same principle of Matthew 12 worked out in the life of Jesus and consequently coming as a manifestation in our lives in the last days. We are living stones, and notice the chief Living Stone was rejected by men but chosen by God and precious. We also, "as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house," meaning our witness and testimony in miniature is going to produce the very same thing Jesus produced. There will be those who reject it and we, in a mini measure, may be "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." Betrayal and rejection follow. Not everybody will receive our witness and testimony, but God wants us prepared and ready to speak up regardless of who receives and who rejects. He will have eternal fruit in the last days, and He will have the greatest harvest the earth has ever produced. We are going to bring it in!

FRIDAY, March 15

Scripture: John 6:28-66

The upper room training is really a training to bring a witness right up to the point of total abandonment. It is one thing to be rejected by the world, it is entirely another thing to be rejected by our own movement, church, friends and companions. In this passage we see it all happening simultaneously. Jesus is rejected by the Jewish people, His own family, the leadership of the church, and finally many who have walked with Him turn away! Are we prepared to bring forth that kind of word at the Lord's command to which even our best friends might turn away? One thing we can learn from this passage - maturity is progressive. It is something we grow into by experience as the Lord's hand comes upon us for training.

SATURDAY, March 16

Scripture: Psalm 2:1-12

I believe Psalm 2 gives us both sides of the issue. It tells us what happens to the one who betrays and it tells us what happens to the one who is betrayed. For the one who is betrayed will rule and reign. To partake of the ministry is to partake of rejection, persecution, and betrayal. The one who betrays has a reward. That reward is destruction. The Lord sits in the heavens and laughs. He holds them in derision. He will speak to them in His wrath and distress them in His deep displeasure, for He has set His king on His holy hill of Zion. He has declared the decree. Jesus will rule the nations with a rod of iron. He will rule through His people. The one betrayed rules and reigns over the betrayers. Faithfulness and obedience bring forth maturity that is always rewarded.

SUNDAY, March 17

Scripture: Luke 22:7-20

The very first upper room experience is a manifestation of covenant. It lays the foundation for everything God is going to do. It really provides the overall understanding for the purpose and plan of God. God wants to give everything He has in anointing, power, wisdom and demonstration of the Holy Spirit to those He has called. Before He can trust them with the fullness of what He has to give, they have to give themselves wholly to Him. In covenant when we give ourselves wholly to God, He will give Himself wholly to us. The covenant manifestations of Acts 5 where everyone was healed and delivered is coming again to the people of God to wholly give themselves over to Him to be trained. “Know ye not your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost who is in you and you are not your own, you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit which are His.” In the upper room God desires to shape men in motivation, attitude, and condition of heart to reflect His glory. He is wholly ours and we must be wholly His!

MONDAY, March 18

Scripture: Luke 22:24-27

Jesus knows if He doesn't shape the condition of His disciples' hearts, even when the Holy Spirit is poured out, the revival will be short lived. Through the fruit of the flesh (rivalry, strife, competition, self exaltation and politics), men will take the anointing and turn what God intended to benefit man into a foundation for building a denomination, claiming authority over each other, organizing and eventually institutionalizing a move of the Holy Spirit. History shows us every major revival died this way. Every vessel God desires to be a container of His power and glory must first be shaped so it comes to reflect the image and likeness of God. Verses twenty-four through twenty-seven tell us major moves of the Spirit should never become denominations with some leaders telling other members of fivefold ministry which churches to take, when and where to go. Show me a bishop in the Bible who dictortally ordered people around. It was never God's intention or plan and it is contrary to Bible teaching and doctrine. Let's let God shape us now in the upper room that we may carry His power to the complete fulfilling of His end-time purpose in bringing in the great harvest.

TUESDAY, March 19

Scripture: Acts 2:34 - 4:22

God has an ultimate purpose in taking a number of His people through upper room preparation and training right now. That purpose is a confrontation between positional authority and divine authority. Jesus is coming back to fight for His church, for He does not have control at this time in many churches who carry His name. He is going to fight for control, and many times He does that by pouring out divine authority on the people who have no position or formal ecclesiastical training. This account is clear in Acts. It shows us what happens when God pours out divine authority on people who have no positional authority. The divine authority becomes a threat to those who have positional authority and they feel they must move contrary in order to maintain their position. Therefore,

decreeing in front of all heaven they are living in hypocrisy, and the very One Whom they claim to represent, they don't even know. I believe the greatest confrontation between positional and divine authority is yet ahead and we are now in the preparational stages.

WEDNESDAY, March 20

Scripture: John 13:31 - 14:4

God has a unique way of selecting and training people for an outpouring of His divine authority. He loves to get people the world thinks are out of character and out of place, usually total failures. Peter is one of those, full of pride, full of arrogance, full of boasting, and obviously a Hollywood graduate. "Lord, I will lay down my life for Your sake." It is even better in Mark chapter fourteen, verse twenty-nine. Peter said, "Even if all are made to stumble, yet I will not." There is a guy who has a pretty good opinion of himself! What is Jesus response? "Assuredly, I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." What is wrong with Peter? Nothing! He is just moving in one hundred percent flesh! Get him over in the spirit and you have a dynamo! What is Jesus saying in John 14? "Peter, relax! You are going to crash, fall, fail but I am going to pray for you. You are going to be all right and I am going to prepare a place of ministry for you in which you can move in the Spirit as you have never moved before!" I believe God is saying that again - to us!

THURSDAY, March 21

Scripture: John 14:22-25

You see it is only when we come into the place God has ordained will we ever see His glory, and we are in preparation for the literal fulfillment of these verses. Jesus is coming to make His home with us. We are going to see the full manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit in such divine authority that no sickness or disease can stand in our presence. People will come under such conviction they will fall on their knees and get saved. I believe in the last days God has ordained for His people to carry with them, everywhere they go, the divine presence of God. We will literally see mansions of God, palaces of power in the last days. But before God takes up full residence in us, it appears He is determined to clean up the place!

FRIDAY, March 22

Scripture: John 15:1-5

There is a principle which dictates our fruitfulness in the kingdom. That principle is a very simple one, it is based on the word **mon-ee**, or mansion, becoming a reality. Our fruitfulness depends on how much of God abides in us. It depends on how much of the fullness of the power of His Holy Spirit He can release in our life. He is the power. He is the authority. We are but the branches, the pipelines. If we will hook ourselves into Him, fasten ourselves into Him, then we will be in the right place at the right time to manifest His purpose and plan. We have to come to the realization that without Him we can do nothing and with Him we can do all things. I believe God is going to bring forth such a desire for harvest and fruitfulness it will drive us into the vine as we have never been anchored before!

SATURDAY, March 23

Scripture: John 15:26-27; 16:13-15

Jesus begins to speak of the purpose of the Holy Spirit. Number one, He is the Spirit of truth and He comes to bring forth the truth concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to be witnesses by His authority motivated by the truth that is in Jesus. He is to lead us and guide us into an understanding of truth. He will speak only what God gives Him. He will show us things to come which we are to know and He will lead us in such a way as to bring glory to the Father. He will reveal the full measure of things the Father has ordained for us to have. Therefore it is

through the leadership of the Holy Spirit the boundaries of our life and ministry are really defined, and only when we allow Him to have His full way will we ever move toward them with any measure of what God has determined.

SUNDAY, March 24

Scripture: John 16:7-12

We need to intimately know the Holy Spirit. Scripture says, we are in better shape because the Holy Spirit is here than if the Lord Jesus Himself were walking the face of the earth. The reason, Divine access is only a breath away versus gaining access to One individual somewhere in the earth. He will bring conviction to the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. There are people who need all three, sometimes simultaneously. There are some who only need one, while others may need two of the three. Only the Holy Spirit knows which one a person needs. That is why you cannot design a formula for ministering to people. One does not exist. You have to cultivate and develop your relationship with the Holy Spirit committing to move in whatever direction He leads. There are people who need conviction of sin, primarily because they do not believe in Jesus. There are those who need conviction of righteousness. They may be believers, but are not walking in a way to reflect the righteousness of God. Then there are those who need conviction of impending judgment because every manifestation of the devil, his purpose, plans, desires and activities, motivation, and methods of operation, have all been judged. When anyone is captured by a deceptive spirit of the enemy, even though they are believers, and occupy pulpits, there is a judgment coming to them. If they do not have a confrontation and conviction, they will march headlong into that judgment. God's grace and mercy is looking for people who will allow the Holy Spirit to use them in such a way the Father can bring any necessary manifestation of the Holy Spirit through a yielded vessel. Let's pray you and I will be those yielded vessels!

MONDAY, March 25

Scripture: John 17:6

Here we see the principle governing all ministry. God gives people to ministries who perceive truth revealed. There are progressive principles of ministry. I love verse six because it tells us God is the One Who gives revelation. Then He selects people who have the right heart, desire, and all the things God looks for, which, added up, enable them to receive the revelation and run with it. Not everybody can! God gives the truth and He gives the people who are able to handle the truth. He is working on both ends! God works in amusing ways. We occasionally receive appreciation letters for the revelation which comes through the "Word at Work," but the writers seem oblivious to how much we appreciate them! When you meet people who don't like what God gave you to say, a real love develops for those who do! The truth of the matter is we appreciate the people who receive the "Word at Work" perhaps more. It is not enough just to give revelation. God has to give a people who can receive it because their heart is right and they are "doers of the Word and not hearers only."

TUESDAY, March 26

Scripture: John 17:7-10

The fruit produced in the lives of people who hear and do the truth forms the foundation for judgment as to the source. Here we see the inner workings of ministry as God ordains it, both in the individual and the message He gives, and the people who receive it. It is very easy sometimes to add or diminish, or take away from, the things God gives. Perhaps it is easier to take away from, because sometimes God gives things so sharp you can almost anticipate the reaction if you say them and your flesh really does not want to speak it! Jesus said He did not withhold a thing God gave Him. He said it all, He gave it all, and because of it, the Father was glorified in the condition of the people He ministered to. Each individual God calls into ministry either brings forth glory or condemnation, depending on the condition of those after their ministry.

WEDNESDAY, March 27

Scripture: John 17:6-10; Matthew 23:13-15; Matthew 7:15-20

When you put the whole perspective together, you begin to see how God looks at the function and operation of His word in the earth. In Matthew 23, there are those who refuse to open up to the word of God, or to bring it forth, because it endangers their position. There are those entrenched in the religious system and when God makes a change, they refuse to change with Him. They like things the way they are, usually because they are comfortable, spiritually or financially! Matthew, chapter twenty-three verses thirteen through fifteen, speaks very strongly to those individuals. These scriptures say the people they minister to are an exact replica of the nature and condition of their heart. "For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves." In Matthew 7 we see Jesus saying, "...you will know them by their fruits." What are their fruits? The fruit of a ministry is the condition of the people who sit under it. **YOU ARE THE FRUIT OF THE MINISTRIES YOU LISTEN TO! YOU ARE THE FRUIT OF THE CHURCH YOU ATTEND! WHAT CONDITION ARE YOU IN?**

THURSDAY, March 28

Scripture: Acts 1:8-15

The progression of upper room preparation is much like different periods of Church history. The first period is when Jesus is manifested and begins to speak to people. He tells them what is ahead and what is coming and they get an idea and an understanding prophetically. Then He leaves for a season and there is a lull in preparation before the power falls. The first stage seems to be upon the Church in the form of the Toronto blessing. I believe we are in somewhat of a similar situation where the Lord by His Spirit is outlining what is coming, what is ahead; this is a prophetic restoration to the Church. When a lull comes in preparation, or a transition, before the power falls don't be discouraged. Power preparation is temple cleansing! They have been purified in the upper room and are vessels off honor, ready to move with the Holy Spirit. Is that us? Is this the season? Let's let God have His perfect work!

FRIDAY, March 29

Scripture: Acts 1:16-24

You may enter into a period (still in the lull before the power falls), or season of questioning, waiting, wondering, praying, searching, seeking, finding our place in preparation for God's unfolding drama. Here we see a group of people walking with God. There are positions open and they do not know who is to fill them. This is the season where you have to seek God and find out, "Lord, what is my place? What are You doing, and where am I going to fit in this next move of the Spirit?" This has to be prayed out. It is God's desire to show us and His desire to give it to us, but only when we are ready to move in that position being a blessing and bringing forth fullness of His purpose and plan.

SATURDAY, March 30

Scripture: Acts 1:25-26; 2:1

In the third phase, we come into a transition where changes are coming forth, producing an upheaval. Proper places are being found and filled which is an upper room experience. Here we have a man (Matthias) who has been with them from the beginning but has never been a member of the twelve. Possibly he was a member of the seventy, and has now been chosen to fulfill a vacated position. Matthias takes his place among the twelve apostles. He was not selected initially, but he comes into it in the end. That is the way many of us are. There are a lot of things we were not selected for initially, but we did not realize in the process a lot of people were going to fall. In the winding up of the age many vacancies have to be filled. The training is in progress!

SUNDAY, March 31

Scripture: Luke 22:28-30

Jesus outlined in Luke 22, in the upper room, what those positions were and yet one of those individuals had to leave and fulfill his destiny, creating a vacancy. We are going to see a number of vacancies in the days ahead, God is already beginning to prepare people, although many like Matthias do not have the revelation and understanding. We have not seen all of Acts, chapter one, fulfilled in type, but are in the upper room in preparation, moving in that direction. Jesus has the positions; they are outlined. The purposes are there just waiting for us to fulfill the season of preparation and come into the place where we can move in what God has had for us all along!

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ITINERARY
Al Houghton

March 8-10

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GATHERING OF THE REMNANT

A remnant is coming to the rescue.
Deliverance awaits at the door.
Conquerors rise from the ashes, with compassion,
to heal and restore.

The streams are converging together;
as a river expanding in width and in length.
Their direction all flows with one purpose,
like a torrent increasing in strength.

Like a family, they love one another;
and the brethren all know where they stand.
Their Father is calling a meeting;
a reunion of sorts is at hand.

A trumpet arouses a people,
and a troop marching forward is not looking back.
Companions of a similar calling
are uniting, with their weapons intact.

They have triumphed through great opposition.
Their faces are set like a flint.
Overcomers are joining each other;
to the ends of the earth they are sent.

As eagles, they are flying together.
They are united in the vision they share.
They call through the skies to each other.
The heights of the heavens are theirs.

A residue bears His salvation.
They are a people who have counted the cost.
Their assignment is health and recovery;
and restoration of all that was lost.

They have borne the reproach of affliction,
and have walked through the shadow of death.
Bathed in forgiveness and mercy,
they emerge with life-giving breath.

Like the mightiest fish in the oceans,
they have explored all the depths of the sea.
A species is swimming together.
Deep has been calling to deep.

They move in agreement and unity.
Bring truth to the sick and confused.
A remnant is secure in their calling.
They will mend all the broken and bruised.

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