



## THIS DAY OF VISITATION

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We are living in exciting times! The Spirit of God is beginning to emerge like a swelling wave from an ocean of divine energy and love; a wave of revival destined to sweep over all nations on earth. The climax of the ages is upon us. I believe that the Feast of Tabernacles is about to be fulfilled in a great harvest that will close this age (Matthew 13:24-43).

The future will be unlike the historical past. Preparation for tomorrow does not lie in strategies and visions of yesterday. The Lord has promised to shake all that can be shaken, whether it is in the heavens, on earth, or in the church. He will raise up His body as a mighty army, united under Him, to gather in the harvest. All dynamics must flow out of the anointing of Him who is head over all in the church.

The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the power and love of God as a witness to all nations (Matthew 24:14). Every member of His body has a place of service. The Lord will anoint children, women, men, young and old, for every member will be needed to gather in the great harvest. God's grace will fly as a great banner over His army.

However, there will be much opposition! The era of harvest, a time when God's glory rises upon the church, will also be a time of great deception and darkness in the world (Isaiah 60:1-7). Lawlessness, hedonism, and New Age glorification of self-love highlight the thrust of this darkness. Our victory lies in the message and way of the cross: a way of **humility, submission, accountability, and self-denial**; qualities that mark the order of God's Kingdom.

# THE SIN OF DISORDER

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To properly understand what God's order means in a Christian life, we will first ask the question, "What is disorder?" The following scripture provides an answer:

*For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder... (James 3:16).*

If one exalts himself to a higher place than intended by the Lord, that is disorder. If one seeks to fill a position belonging to someone else, that is also disorder. If I refuse to walk under the authority that God has placed over me, that too is disorder. Spiritual rebellion, elitism, domination, manipulation, and exploitation of the vulnerable all express disorder. Disorder is anything contrary to the arrangement of authority intended by God, whether in social, family, or church spheres of relationship.

God's order does not result from edicts and laws, rather, it comes from obedient responses to God's lavish outpouring of grace, mercy, and love. Divine order cannot be separated from God's love, which is the strongest force in the world. ***It is easy to submit to love!***

When God created the first angelic beings, they were placed under an authority covering of the anointed cherub, Lucifer (Ezekiel 28:14). That was a picture of divine order. The first sin, and the father of all subsequent sin, was rebellion. When Lucifer sought to exalt himself to a higher position, even to be equal with God Himself, he introduced disorder into the universe.

We see a similar picture in the early history of mankind from the following observations (Genesis 1-3).

1. Adam was created, being made in the likeness of God by the spirit breathed into him.
2. Adam was charged to populate and rule over the earth, exercising the authority of God as its lord or overseer.
3. Since Adam was unable to fulfill this role alone, God put him to sleep, took one of his ribs, and made woman as a suitable helper for him. She completed Adam. The Lord did not breathe life into her, since she received the life of God from Adam. God did not commission her separately, for she received His charge, being in Adam when he was commissioned by God. Their creation and relationship pictures God's order for Christian marriage. A wife has a vital and complementary role to play in the ministry and calling of God for her husband. He will not be complete without his wife. Her call and

fulfillment are intertwined with his. God calls them through marriage to become one in serving Him; a unity based on true love and self-sacrifice from both parties. Even though their graces and anointings may be different, they are equal in worth. It is so important that young people do not marry in haste, but wait for the one God has chosen for them.

4. Sin and disorder came into the earth through two acts. First, Eve listened to Satan and was deceived into disobeying God without seeking her husband's counsel. Secondly, Adam acted in direct disobedience to the command not to eat of the forbidden fruit. Although both acted in rebellion to God, it was Adam who God held responsible (Romans 5:12). To Eve, God said, "...and he (Adam) shall rule over you." (Genesis 3:16). This was a statement of divine order.

Although sin has increased in the earth since our foreparents' first sin, there have been many occasions of revival where multitudes were saved. These usually took place in times of great sin and apostasy; not unlike today.

In recent years, there has been a shift in the heavens, one that is bringing great anticipation of the Lord renewing His church. As He restores unity, and His rightful place as head over His body, the Lord will move to gather in a final harvest of souls.

## KINGDOM ORDER

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The essence of salvation is a voluntary return, through repentance and faith in Christ, to a place of personal submission to and relationship with God. His kingdom will eventually fill the earth. This wonderful state of being begins with the church, and comes to fullness when she makes herself ready for Christ as His bride (Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 19:7-8).

The final order of God's kingdom is pictured for us by the following scripture:

*Then comes the end, when He (Jesus) delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and all power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For He has put all things **in subjection under His feet**. But when He says, "all things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. **And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected***

*to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).*

A key word in this text is the word “subjection,” which is translated from the Greek word, HUPOTASSO; HUPO meaning “under,” and TASSO meaning “to arrange, or draw up in order.” All things are destined to come under the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ as this age draws to a close. He is building believers together into a people who will reflect the order of His kingdom; everyone set in array under the will of our heavenly Father!

However, today we live in a period of transition as the Lord moves in renewal and revival power to free us from the spirit of rebellion, which is so pervasive in the world. Our need is very great! Because we are descendants of Adam, in the depth of our human nature, we would all be rebels apart from God’s mercy and grace. In all likelihood the Lord’s ***greatest enemy is our self-centered will!***

Satan, knowing that his time is short, has a strategy of deception in which the spirit of Jezebel has been placed over our nation to destroy family life and children of this generation. Weak families mean a weak church; children raised without knowing the love and order of a godly home! Satan seeks to pervert the roles of men and women, of husbands and wives, by removing male leadership in marriage and godly fatherhood from families. Demonic spirits are behind abortion, homosexuality, divorce, pornography, New Age philosophy, lawlessness, as well as spouse and child abuse. The voice of the media cries out for gay rights, human rights, minority rights, women’s rights, etc. We are exhorted to rebel, to assert our rights, love ourselves, and seek for freedom of choice in what we do. Self is to reign.

In contrast, the Lord calls us to ***submit*** ourselves to one another in the fear of Christ. His love and forgiveness brings us back into a relationship of life with Him. However, once saved, we must personally embrace His lordship in order to bring His headship into our family and church lives.

The following scripture is a foundation stone of truth by which this can be accomplished:

*But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and man is the head of woman, and God is the head of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:3).*

If we accept as truth that God is the head of Christ, then we must also accept as truth that Christ is the head of man and (at least until the resurrection) man is the head of woman. The word “head” (KEPHALE in Greek)

implies source and metaphorically denotes authority; however, it does not imply an overbearing domination, control that manipulates, demeans, or puts down another. Rather, it points to authority that flows out of true love which, when responded to by **submission**, brings glory and honor to one with authority. Such submission reflects the order of God.

For example, God is the head of Christ, who is the radiance of His Father's glory. He is the exact representation of His nature; the image of the invisible God (Hebrews 1:3, Colossians 1:15). All that He is or does brings glory to His father.

Christ is the head of every man. Because He created man by His Spirit and in His image, man is declared to be the glory of Christ. Later, Christ created woman in His image, and because she was made out of man and for man, she is the glory of man (1 Corinthians 3:7-12). Thus, although man and woman are of equal worth, they are dependent on each other and have different functions in their marriage and family relationship. The overseeing nourishing love of a husband for his wife is to reflect Christ and the church. God's ordained distinction between men and women is what Satan seeks to pervert. One of the deceptive overtures he uses to achieve this is the New Age theme of God being feminine. Both families and the church are to reflect God in their headship and God is our Father, not our Mother; He is our King, not our Queen!

## BUILDING ORDER INTO OUR LIVES

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Divine order exists wherever Jesus reigns. It is not a question of special revelation or methods; the issue is simply our heart response of obedience to the love and forgiveness of God, not once or twice, but in an ongoing lifestyle. The following scriptures illuminate various levels of commitment that we face in living such a lifestyle.

### In Society

How our communities see us seven days a week determines how well they may listen to our testimony. Do our lives reflect the following order of God?

***Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution...***  
*(1 Peter 2:13)*

***Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready in every good work; to speak evil of no one, not quarrelsome, but forbearing, having displayed all meekness to all men.***  
*(Titus 3:1-2; INT. BIBLE)*

Submissive to worldly authority, known for deeds of charity, for gracious, uplifting words, for forbearance and meekness; lights of the kingdom in the world's darkness!

## In Marriage

Husbands who dominate or manipulate their wives in order to control them do not reflect God's order. A husband who encourages his wife, who loves her enough to lay down his life for her, will prompt a response to his headship that brings glory to him.

*Husbands, **love** your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her... So husbands ought to **love** their own wives as their own bodies.... (Ephesians 5:25, 28)*

*Wives, **be subject** to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, **love** your wives and do not be embittered against them. (Colossians 3:18, 19)*

*In the same way, you wives, **be submissive** to your own husbands... let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way, in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, **being submissive** to their own husbands... You husbands, likewise, live with your wife in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. (1 Peter 3:1, 4, 5, 7)*

God is against any male chauvinist spirit. Wives will be a glory to husbands who, out of love, encourage them and nurture their place of ministry; who seek their wives' fulfillment in the things of God, and who readily receive all that God has given to their wives for them. He has begun to address weaknesses in this area in a marvelous way through ministry of the Promise Keepers.

## In Church

The Lord's anointing for ministry can rest upon any member of His body: children, single sisters, married women, men, the young or old. Gifts of the Holy Spirit are not restricted to a select few. In His sovereignty, God moves as He pleases. For this reason, it is important for church leaders to recognize that their primary role is to equip each member for his (or her) place of service (Ephesians 4:11-16). By teaching — and the example they set — they will seek to build the interpersonal relationships and character traits that permit and encourage the ministry of each member

(Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14:26). In this way, a local church reflects the order of Christ's headship.

True overseers will shepherd the flock, feeding and equipping them because they love Jesus, not because of any reward they may receive (John 10:11-13; 21:15-17). They will not dominate or lord it over the sheep, but will build them in relationship to the Lord, and to one another, so that Christ is functionally head over the assembly.

All of the early apostles, like their Lord, saw themselves as bondservants. Overseers (elders) are to have the same heart attitude, being willing to lay down their lives in shepherding the sheep (Matthew 20:25-28; Philippians 2:5-8).

They are also men of maturity who are held in esteem; men who rule their households well (Titus 1:5-9).

*...an overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity... and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (1 Timothy 3:2-7)*

Women played a significant role in ministry and support of the first apostles (Romans 16:1-7). However, oversight of the early churches belonged only to qualified men.

*But I do not allow a woman to... exercise authority over a man... (1 Timothy 2:12).*

Since all believers, including leaders, are under oversight, the following scripture expresses the order of God:

*Obey your leaders, and **submit to them**, for they keep watch over your souls... (Hebrews 13:17).*

It takes humility and honesty for a leader to recognize that he alone does not have sufficient grace to properly equip and care for all the sheep. All five ministries listed in Ephesians 4:11 are required to equip the saints. Apostles, supported by prophets, will ensure that the foundation of the assembly is sound (1 Corinthians 3:10; Ephesians 2:20-22). Diversity in submission, where there is mutual accountability, is essential for successful team ministry and plural leadership. Lone rangers need not apply!

In summary, godly oversight requires more than an anointing to minister the word of God. It requires vision and grace to establish believers in Christ as a spiritual organism rather than an institution; a body where the love of God binds members together in unity of spirit — a unity essential for the harvest ahead (John 17:21-23).

## CONCLUSION

**Humility** and **submission** in response to God's love are expressions of divine order; an order that the Lord is building into His mighty army. And every believer has a place of service specifically prepared for them (Ephesians 2:10). A place for everyone, with everyone in his place!

Someone has said, "The garments we are wearing today are the ones that we will wear for all eternity." There are special places of honor and authority in the age to come for those who overcome in this life. The following scriptures express what can be attained by those who walk in the order of God today:

*...whoever then **humbles** himself as this child, he is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew. 18:4)*

*Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3)*

*Blessed are the **meeek** (humble), for they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5)*

The way of the cross is the path God has placed before each one of us.



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