

“BEING BORN of GOD”

— in Twenty Twenty-Four —

Peter J. Scott . Transcribed

—INTRODUCTION—

Well, the Lord spoke pretty clearly this morning about **forgiveness**, that intimate relationship which is really the key and cornerstone of our faith. . . the wonderful relationship we have with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We just heard that there were sixteen words for “forgiveness” in the Bible. Interestingly I was recently visiting the Air Force Academy in Colorado and they had sixteen spires there on their chapel. I asked everybody what that meant and the answer they gave me was, “*Nothing...*” Nobody knew, but now we do. . . forgiveness.

The most powerful nation (USA) of the Lord is based on “repentance” before our King, Jesus Christ.

—METAMORPHOSIS—

Today we will summarize.

*In John 1: 13 We were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,
...*

Are you kidding me?! The world would say that is certainly not true.
... nor of the will of man, but we were born of God.

We have a new destiny because we are not born of men. We are born of God, born-again. You all know of my understanding of embryology [described previously]. Born-again is exemplified by a butterfly. It goes into the chrysalis and “magic” happens and it comes out a butterfly. However, I don’t think a butterfly ever knew how to crawl like the caterpillar. I asked the Lord about that. So, when I was taking embryology, they told me that the butterfly indeed *did not know how to crawl*. Actually **two eggs**

are laid side by side like identical twins. One of them lives inside the caterpillar until it is time for it to hatch. In the chrysalis, it waited. It never knew how to crawl. It was literally born-again, a new creature. And so are we, a new spirit, not born of the will of men but born of the will of God! That metaphor is very deep in my embryologists' understanding of what metamorphosis is. And our understanding of what God is doing in our life is the same. He isn't building a NEW you out of flesh. He is building you out of the Spirit of God. You have a new destiny! That destiny can only be learned and understood by an intimate relationship that we have with God.

If any of you have read my book "Leaving the Ninety-Nine" (which is out back and free if you'd like) the idea is this: when Jesus went to find the little lost lamb out of the other ninety-nine in the flock, He left the ninety-nine and found that one little lamb and put him on His shoulders. That was probably the first time the little lamb had nothing to do! It didn't have to forage. It didn't have to listen. It didn't have to do anything but sit there on the shoulders of the Good Shepherd just like we do when He rescues us. But there is one thing that he learns up there. He is no longer on the ground, scrounging for his next bite of food, but he is up there and he can feel the breath of God. He can FEEL the warmth of the Savior, the Shepherd. He can see with his eyes things that he couldn't see before. He can see the briars. He can see the wolves. He can see the lion. He can see all the traps and when he finally gets back to the flock, the Good Shepherd puts him back down into the fold with a new understanding.

So we can see in the year ahead, it's not like we leave this earth. We are still here. We are still facing 2024; we are going to face it. He isn't taking us from it. He is leaving us in there but still holding onto Him with new eyes to see. Aren't you glad of that?! It is a miracle what God has done and is doing for us, that intimate relationship. We are born of God NOT the will of man. Amen.

—REVIEW OF HISTORY—

In a short historical context, history is all about wars and conflict. The people who were trying to analyze WWI as you recall said, "*What*

was that all about? Was it a war of ideas? (no) Was it a war about religion? (no)” It was a war of nations, nations against nations. Territory against territory. How absolutely crazy is that?! What about WWII? It was about ideas, nations and religion, *all three*. For the first time nations rose up against nations with an idea that **they were better than everybody else**. Well we know that God’s chosen people is the nation of Israel.

Quite literally Europe failed, literally, completely. It didn’t protect God’s chosen. They thought they could put all of them in Poland and they would be safe. Most of the Jews went to Poland. That is because it was one of the only places where they could really own property. They couldn’t do that in Europe because it was against the law. So the Jews became bankers and became really good at lending money. But we can see that they are still persecuted today for all of the money things they were involved in.

Out of WWII the 6 million Jews (and likely more) were murdered just like they are being murdered today. . . just like Christians are being murdered today. Did you know that a hundred Christians were killed in Nigeria just yesterday? And it was said, *“It was for fun.”* It is tragic what men do to men. That is not new; it has happened from the beginning. However out of WWII came one axiom. Israel said, *“That’s it. We will never trust any nation or group of nations for our safety as a people. We need a nation.”* And so they created with the help of the United Kingdom the nation of Israel which was always theirs to begin with.

–Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD)–

Out of that, during the Cold War, we learned *about Mutually Assured Destruction* (MAD) which is simply that: If you fire your missiles at us, we will fire at you and we will both be killed. Everybody. Because we have so much power in atomic energy, atomic and hydrogen bombs, neutron bombs, etc. We have so much ability to kill and murder the whole human race now! And who knows what would happen to the earth then? Mutually Assured Destruction. That was the axiom of our nations strength. The USA finds itself today still the most powerful military presence in the world no matter where we go. That carries with it something that we need to be responsible for because our nation wasn’t built on military power. It wasn’t. Some people say, *“Oh yeah. We got the British out of here.”*

That's actually not quite true. At that time the British were more concerned about the tea they were getting from India and other wars that they had going on so they just said, "*We cannot do two wars at once so we are going to let them do their thing.*"

But today we are being called into a new idea, a new place, not a religion but an intimate relationship with Christ. And a new Kingdom, a Kingdom of God, not the kingdom of men. You are not a Republican or a Democrat; you are a Christian. You are not just a citizen of the United States of America, the most powerful nation in the world. You are a member of the Church of Christ that has been born by the Holy Spirit being poured out, when the Baptism of the Holy Spirit came down on everybody that day. The Spirit came down on *everybody*. There was no waiting around; they just all started speaking in tongues.

–STRATEGIC SPIRITUAL WARFARE–

However today our warfare has some things waiting for us yet to do, some things which we as a nation are being judged for. The first one is **Abortion**. I cannot get away from that! I cannot say, "*Well there is something else God has for us this year, to come against in our prayer closets. There is some other evil that is worse. What is the greatest evil?!*" To me it is **still Abortion**. An innocent child even before they are born, in the mother's womb meant to be the safest place for a child to grow, is turned into a killing field! How tragic? How can God forgive us? Except for His divine Mercy and Forgiveness. We cannot even define it. Why would God do that for us?

Also, the enemy is coming against the **Family**, using LGBTQ or whatever. So we need to pray for our families and for wisdom to understand how to pray and what to encourage.

Thirdly the enemy is coming after the **Church** and I don't mean the denominational Church. When most people talk about this they get so confused about this issue. God in the Church of Christ is not a denomination, a list of doctrines, although there are many sound doctrines. Paul mentions sound doctrines over and over and over again. But our primary sound doctrine is our intimacy and the relationship we have with our Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ. It is not an archangel. Right?! Jesus is God Himself, God incarnate Who came down on this earth for the express purpose of showing His love towards us, giving us forgiveness on the Cross for our sins. But more than that, He would be raised from the dead and then sent down His Holy Spirit so you can live in the same wonder that He could live in . . . His will be done on this earth just as it is done in Heaven.

As our friend Don Rumble (Saugerties Christian Fellowship) was saying, we don't even know all the things that we will see in Heaven yet! Every day it seems like telescopes see more and more things that are unbelievable.

–New/Old Strategies–

HOLINESS

The old strategies (some of them) are pretty good. Some are worthless like sacraments with no meaning. Prayer with no meaning. Those are worthless strategies. But first of all there is still a call to Holiness. God wants us to be a Holy Church without spot or wrinkle. So if there is something in your heart that is not right, you need to get rid of it. You need to repent, ask God to forgive you and walk away from that. Purpose in your life, *“I will NOT tell a dirty joke ever again! I will not look at pornography ever again! I will walk away.”* A call to Holiness is in the scriptures. But not just in the scriptures. It is in the intimate relationship you have with Jesus. The Holy Spirit calls it to our remembrance.

CORPRATE PRAYER

Secondly, we are called to **Strategic Spiritual Warfare**. What do I mean by that? That means that it is effective. Strategic means it is in a place it needs to be, not somewhere doing its own thing. But our spiritual warfare is going to be strategic! I believe one of the strategic things is **Corporate Prayer**, especially as it is in a home group of five, six, seven people or even twelve. It is in those kinds of places where we can learn to love one another just as Jesus loved us. That is the new commandment that He gave to us. . . that we should love others as we love ourselves? **NO**.

That we should love others as **He** loves us! I don't know if I can do that. I actually know I cannot! But I know that Jesus can in me.

FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM

Thirdly, that place where we need to share the love of God – Evangelism. I am only giving you the condensed version here. There could be more or less strategies or more detailed. But **Friendship Evangelism** is an old strategy. However it is also a *new* one. Don't forget to make friends. Even in the Church environment. Don't forget. There are people who show up here on Sundays, Wednesdays at Home Group, on Friday night. They are your friends not just people that are part of the "Church." They are your friends. Jesus called you, Friend. You should call them Friend too.

KINGDOM OF GOD

And number Four, probably the most important, the **Kingdom of God**. There is only one King, one true King, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! He is the exact representation of the Father and the Spirit. It is the Trinity, the mystery of Trinity all in one. We still worship one God. I often pray, "*Lord Jesus, Father thank you for this food and Lord Jesus please bless it in Your Holy Name.*" I get it all mixed up. This doesn't bother Jesus at all. It doesn't bother the Father either because They are so one that it is no longer an issue, if it ever was.

—DEVOTED TO AN INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST—

When Jesus came to the earth incarnate it was for us to have an idea of who the Father was. We had an idea of who He was but it was the wrong one. *We walked away thinking it was a list of rules and regulations.* That isn't it! No, it is our love affair with Christ, with the Father, with the Holy Spirit, a life devoted to an intimate relationship with Christ. **Devotion**. We usually criticize the early disciples but do you know what they did get right? One thing they did get was: they were devoted. Maybe they couldn't stand Him being crucified on the Cross but they were still a devoted group of people. Mary at the grave is a good example of that saying, "*Where*

have you taken Him?" Then Jesus reveals Himself to her and they embrace. I love that relationship because people often think He is saying, *"Oh, Mary, don't hug Me. I still have to go to the Father, etc."* But that isn't it. He meant, *"Stop **clinging** to Me* (as in for a long time) [Literal translation]." *He didn't mind her hugging Him. We need to get that straight. I don't mind hugging my Lord Jesus when I am in prayer. I say, "Lord, I need a hug. Put me on Your shoulder. I cannot see clearly. Let me see with Your eyes."*

Oftentimes, at night before I dream, I actually go for a "walk" with the Father. And the Father says, *"Come here. Come hold My hand. I want to show you some things."* I don't necessarily get out of bed all the time though sometimes I do. But there are some things He wants to show me in the Spirit that I can get no other way. Even when I am reading scripture, if I don't have Him, the Holy Spirit in Jesus, the words are not going to make much sense to me. It is not going to be an eternal work. Eternal work comes from Heaven, the walk we have with God. Again, I remember Don Rumble [SCF] teaching on this one time. He said, *"Sit down and have supper with Him."* Jesus liked that. Eating together is good. It is the first thing He did with His disciples after the Crucifixion and was raised from the dead. He said, *"Come on, guys, let's have a fish BBQ."* Wouldn't that be good? Wouldn't you like to do that this morning? The Good Shepherd. Not just a shepherd but the Good Shepherd. What a wonderful metaphor we have before us. We are called to be *a Family* of Believers just like the early Church.

In Acts 2: ⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Oh, Lord, deliver us from grumpiness and a complicated heart. I might come to church grumpy or come with all kinds of ideas, my own doctrine, my own agenda. One of the things we do in the Men's Meeting is say, *"If you are coming to this meeting, we don't want to hear your agenda."* Guys do tend to do that, *"I've heard from God today and here is my agenda."* Well you may have one but I don't want to hear it; I want to hear God. Right?!

A Family of Believers. Isn't it wonderful, Simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all people. Really? Yes. We can only do that by being who you are in Christ. There are people who are *drawn* to you just because of who you are in Christ. They may not even know you are a Christian. Smile at the check-out counter. You would be surprised at what your response might be.

Prayer: So How Do We Then Pray?

The Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved. So how do we pray? We pray in the Power of the Holy Spirit *being poured out like never before*.

—PART TWO—

—STRATEGIES IN THE DAYS AHEAD—

DISCERNMENT

We need Discernment! We have a lot of people doing things but they don't have any discernment. So the second thing is: we need to DO what God wants us to do. We need to be a *discerning people*. How do we do that? Here is an interesting scripture:

Matthew 7: 15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

So there are going to be “false prophets.” Have you identified any? Maybe you haven't but if they are out there, you should discern them. I don't know that I do but I can hear the voice of a false prophet very clearly. Usually it's pretty loud among other things. They come in “sheep's clothing.” So they come in a way *they* think you want them to come but inwardly they are “ravenous wolves.” They have another agenda. But here is how you are going to change what we do here, your discernment:

16 You will know them by their fruits. . .

So you are not going to know them by their gifts. “*How good a teacher is that?! Awesome! Look at what that person did? They healed. They brought so many miracles on the land and on the Church.*” That's

not it. You are going to know them by their fruit! And what is the biggest fruit but the Love of God. Do they love you? Is God's love expressed through them? That discernment you can learn almost immediately. So when I am hearing a prophet, when I'm hearing a teacher, what am I looking for? The **Love of God**. I am not looking to see how clearly the person presents the scripture, or how clearly they give a whole list of things they think I should be doing.

. . . Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

Another words if it is not *in* their heart, it won't be out there either.

¹⁷ Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

There is a lot of scripture about "Do Not Judge." But He is asking us to be discerning, judging correctly, righteous judgment.

—What Satan is Really Against Today—

1) Relationship with Jesus

Here is what Satan is really against today. He is against your relationship with Jesus Christ. He is really primarily against that. He does not want you to have that relationship. He can sidetrack you in many different ways. "*You can do this. You don't need the Lord. See how well you did?*" Even if you did it really well, it is a complete failure if you didn't do it with Jesus.

2) A Call to Holiness

The enemy wants to come against your call to Holiness. He wants to bring you right down into the dirt with him. He wants you to be evil just as he is evil. He first does that by taking you away from the call of Holiness that you are called to, the righteousness of Christ, not in your own self, but in Him.

3) Corporate Prayer / Power in Godly Fellowship

Satan wants to *isolate* you from the power in Godly fellowship. There is one big problem I have when I am ill. I have to stay home and am isolated. If you are in the hospital, who is going to come visit you now? That is really a strategy of the enemy. Covid was not a strategy of God. It was a strategy of the enemy to isolate people. So many left even this congregation and have not returned. It was the evil one's strategy! That is not from God! Interestingly some are coming back now that weren't even here originally. **That** is the strategy of God.

So where does Discernment come from? The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our teacher, our comforter. You know that already! But Teachers have to have a comforter because if you just know the truth, sometimes it is pretty painful. *"Oh. I was wrong again! I hate that."* The Comforter comes in, *"I know you hate that. That's why I'm here. And I am really good at doing that. It is what I am supposed to do."*

Here's a reminder, as an aside, Prophecy is supposed to be *encouraging*. Teaching is supposed to be *encouraging* also. I heard somebody teaching recently at the Air Force meeting. Their criticism was that some of the cadets and airmen want to be encouraged. They don't want to come to the prayer meeting to be discouraged. *"What are you doing?!"* And that is true. We need to be encouraging even if the person we are trying to help doesn't see anything but what the enemy is doing. We **STILL** need to be encouraged. Isn't that right?

So again, Discernment comes from the Holy Spirit. And you! You encourage me! I encourage you. We encourage each other. It isn't somehow divorced from what God is doing. That encouragement is a part of who we are in the Body of Christ. It is a wonderful thing when you share. You can share the exact thing that I am sharing and I will still get blessed by that. It is true, awesome. *"I just love the way he shares that. I just love the way she sings."* It is unbelievable how much that encourages the Body of Christ.

–OUR STRATEGIES IN THE DAYS AHEAD– DOERS OF THE WORD

So, firstly we need to have Discernment. Secondly we need to be Doers of the Word. Here's the test.

Ephesians 4: ¹¹And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, . . .

Remember these ascension gift ministries?

. . . ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry (you), for the edifying of the Body of Christ,

That is – YOU are to be apostolic, be prophetic, be an evangelist, be pastoral, or be able to teach. Every one of you should be able to teach on Water Baptism. Every one of you should be able to shepherd one another when you are going through bad times, to have your hand and your heart ready for them when they cry. Every one of you should be able to share the Gospel of the Kingdom as evangelists. Every one of you should be able to pray prophetically as I've heard you do. Every one of you should be apostolic and say, *"This isn't just for this Church. This is what God is doing for all."* That is an Apostolic vision.

. . . ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ; (Who? Of Christ! Nothing less.)

¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and from and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

It is happening in the world; it is also happening in the Church.

. . . ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies (not just a few) according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the Body for the edifying of itself in love.

Amen. So if you aren't sharing and/or doing what those guys shared, being Apostolic, Prophetic, Evangelistic, Pastoral, Teaching, then those guys are for nothing. Are they given to the Church for nothing?! And so if you aren't growing into it, they have failed. Wow. So the next time you show up at a meeting and you don't share anything or you don't have any prophetic sense in your heart of even how to pray or something else, you should be asking the Lord, "*What do You have in me that You would like to express this day and in this hour?*" That does not mean it has to happen on Sunday. Or all the time. But there should be in your heart a desire to do the things that the Ascension gift ministries have in their heart to do. And many of them do it just by example, having learned and seen it from someone else. Isn't that how you learned from your parents? They were being an example to you even if you didn't want to learn some things; they taught them to you anyway, by example.

—SUMMARY—

I didn't have to bring the Word of God today. We already heard it from different people here. We heard Him say how we need that intimate relationship with Christ. We don't need to have just *another religion*. We don't need those things. But we certainly need the forgiveness of God in everything, every day. We don't even see what we are doing but the Holy Spirit does. And He will show us. He will expose those things in your life that need to be changed. Right?! I am driving a new car and the Lord says to me, "*You know you are really too proud about this.*" He says it again the next day as I'm still proud of it. I love that car and I am not going to stop LIKING the car but the Lord wants to do something in my heart about my heart attitude. This is just "trash." This car is something in which, years from now, will be just trash!

Well, what God puts together, He puts together for Eternity. Even though our bodies will be put into the ground and the last words of our Eulogy said, we will never be forgotten by God, our Father, because we will live Forever, in Him. Even though our grandchildren's children will not know us or remember our name, He will never forget us. I love that song that says, "*. . . we will worship with the heroes of our faith.*" I want you to do this: look into your mind and think about the heroes of *your*

faith. I'm not talking about the "Billy Grahams." I'm talking about the ones you grew up with in Church, those heroes, the ones you looked up to. You are going to be worshipping with them one day! Although other people won't even be remembering their name, you will. You are going to be standing right next to them, worshipping the Lord. Isn't that good?!

That is because God has given YOU something of Himself which is going to be Eternal, that is a *love* for those who are in the Body of Christ. I know it is true. When the Saugerties Church show up and join us, there is a gladness in my heart that will not stop. You here in this Church are so wonderful to me. Your very presence feels so good in my heart, even those I don't have a weekly Home Group with. I still have gladness in my heart when I see you smile. I still have gladness in my heart when I get to pray for you, or when you get to pray for me.

*So Father, we come before You this morning, not in our own strength. In our own strength people are afraid of 2024. Seriously? The World is very afraid of what might happen. But, we are not! Because Your Kingdom doesn't stop at the stroke of midnight. Your Kingdom doesn't even care that it exists. That is because Your Word went forth in power and might even from the beginning of Time, **before** the beginning of Time, to create this Universe, all the planets and stars. You know each one by name! We know a name is not just a noun but it **describes** what that thing is. Father, You know all the stars **by name**. You know us by name. You have not and will not forget us. Father, as the enemy comes with all kinds of diseases and afflictions, Lord we come to You in the shelter of Your wing, Lord, on the prayers of the Saints, Lord, that You would bring us to a place where we are not just victorious because we want to be. Rather we are victorious because of YOU! And what You are pouring into the Church today. And I know what You are doing. You are calling together a Church that is not born in a denomination. It is not born of doctrine, but born in that **RELATIONSHIP** that we find ourselves in this morning, the relationship with Your Son, Jesus Christ.*

Thank You, O God. Thank You, O God for what You are doing here, specifically in the Fountain of Life, Saugerties . . . Lord, the Churches that we are related to, those believers. We ask You, O God, to give us the courage to face the enemy, not shrink away. Not say, "O, this is too much for me." It is, but not for what God is doing in the Church. Call up your friends. Ask them to pray. Bring us together, Lord God. In Jesus' name. Amen.