



# Gold Refined in the Fire

Peter J. Scott . 2023

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## —Part I—

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What great worship this morning, “*The Sound of Heaven Came Down. . .*” One of the times in the New Testament when that heavenly sound came down was when Jesus was being baptized. The voice of the Lord came down and some people said that it sounded like thunder! I thought it sounded something like that today! The Lord is excited but He wants us to be excited as well. You don’t have an adrenaline rush in any other way except through worship and being with our God.

He is here this morning. That sounds crazy to the world. Put that on the nightly news, “Jesus showed up in Lake Katrine, in New York. These people are really out there.” And so we are. We are because what we are doing is reality. What they (in the world) are doing I have no clue to understand. It is not the sound of Heaven for sure.

### *Castle Rigg*

My wife Cheryl and I do a lot of traveling as a family and we had the opportunity once to go up into the Lake District in England which is quite a ways up there. It is a beautiful country, in fact some of the filming of Star Wars was done there, though when we were there it was raining most of the time. When we went we came to this one “stone circle.” There are hundreds and hundreds of them in England, Scandinavia, etc. With most of them people have concluded the stones themselves are aligned with Spring, Summer, Winter, Fall. They are aligned with the stars. This particular stone circle was some seven thousand years before Christ!

That’s really old. Before the Egyptians, before civilization, these people, probably around a thousand people or more in this community were looking over the same mountains I was looking over, putting up stones. I can imagine



them at least wondering whether there was a God in Heaven. Not gods in the plural, but God in Heaven that somehow blessed them with a community. I don't know if that is true or not but it certainly seemed to me on that particular day that things have not changed all that much in thousands of years. Because what they needed then is what we need now. I think they needed more than anything else the mercy of God just as we need the mercy of God. I've been praying for more and more mercy, not judgment. Judgment is up to God. The Word says He is the God of Judgment but I am praying for His mercy.

I've shared this before about a friend who was convicted of murder. We didn't know if we should pray for mercy or judgment for him. My thoughts towards the other guy I was talking to, "*I'm glad you are not my friend.*" I want my friends to be praying for mercy.

*Romans 5:<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

So we too should ask for mercy. If it were up to me I would open up Congress with that every morning. Nevermind who is Republican or Democrat, just pray for mercy. They actually have Chaplains to open up every session with a prayer. I would like to know what those prayers are. I know that the Chaplain's group at Stewart Air Force Base, actually do open with prayer and they have published the prayers that have been spoken by the White House Prayer Team! *There actually is one!* That is encouraging to us. Secondly the prayers they were praying were awesome. No matter what the government ends up doing, the prayer team is on the right track. Same here on our Friday nights. Amen. Thank You, Lord.

## ***Where Are We Now?***

Jesus starts to talk to the Laodicean Church which is lukewarm. Look how the Lord introduces Himself.

*Revelation 3: (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: <sup>15</sup> "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.*

Can you hear the frustration there?

*<sup>16</sup> So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*

Give Me something that is worthy of tasting!

*<sup>17</sup> Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

It doesn't get any worse than that. If you find yourself in that condition you would ask for mercy. What Jesus is saying to that Church and what I think

He is saying to the Church today (the denominational Churches and those that are all about institutionalism) He says:

<sup>18</sup> *I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire,*

That means we are going to have to go through trials and tribulations, things where we don't want to go.

*“Why is the Lord doing this to me?” “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich;”*

They said they were rich but they were NOT.

*. . . and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed;*

Get new clothes. You don't know how naked you are or how shameful your behavior has become. Then lastly:

*. . . and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

We do not “see” like we should see. We should see like the sheep that is coming back to the fold on Jesus' shoulders. We should see with His eyes. He wants to do something with us. The last of this scripture in verse 19 says:

<sup>19</sup> *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.*

We see that He isn't doing this for judgment. He is doing this to **bring them back!** That is why we pray for mercy.

*. . . Therefore be zealous and repent.*

Let that adrenaline flow.

<sup>20</sup> *Behold, I stand at the door and knock.*

Jesus stands and knocks not just for people to be saved but for people to be **awakened** from the slumber they are in.

*. . . If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and **dine** with him, and he with Me.*

This isn't a religion here. This is supper! What is for dinner tonight? Who is going to sit down with you? Who is here this morning? When you dine with somebody you talk about things even at random. For instance, “*You know I've been wondering for a long time . . .*” Jesus would reply, “*That's an easy one. Let Me answer it for you.*”

*“I with Him and He with Me.”* So it is a partaking of both Jesus and ourselves. God in us! That's an exciting thing, a wonderful thing to sit down and have dinner with Him! How often we miss the point of praying before we eat. Jesus is going to be with us.

<sup>21</sup> *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.*

That place of the throne is not just a seat but a *place*. Let's dine with Him again. Let's go back to that place where our faith isn't just a list of things we believe but they become real! The adrenaline is pumping into your veins; you realize and know that what you are doing is actual reality and what everybody else is doing is fake.

<sup>22</sup> *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

That's the end of the list of Churches that He is addressing. So I think that there are probably more Churches out there even now that we could address in the same way, shape or form; they've missed it. That is why the leadership of this congregation, this Family, this group of Christians where we have gathered together this morning, are devoted to our true and complete relationship with Jesus Christ, our Savior, our Friend, the One who wants to be with us through sickness, who wants to be with us through the adversities of life, who wants to be with us when we fall down and there is no one else to help pick us up. And so, we begin to understand what it means to give of ourselves to one another and the love between us grows.

When I first came to this church, I don't know if I truly loved very many of you guys, but I love you now.

## ***John Chapter 15***

Let's switch now to the gospel of John Chapter 15. When we look around in the natural there doesn't seem to be much happening, However if we look around in the *spiritual* realm there are many things happening. We just have to have the eyes to see the vision of what God is doing. That cross our sister saw earlier is growing bigger and bigger than the whole Hudson Valley. It is bigger than all of our doubts thinking "*This will never happen.*" It is a LOT bigger than that!

*John 15<sup>1</sup> I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser.*

So we see, we are part of the Lord Jesus. We are not doing this on our own. **He** is growing the Church.

<sup>2</sup> *Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He **prunes**, that it may bear more fruit.*

It is more blessed to give than receive. When you give yourself away, you are pruned. You might say, "*Oh, I thought that was such a good ministry. Where I was ten years ago was so much better than now.*" But the Lord says, "*Well maybe you thought that but that's not what the vine dresser thought.*" Years back, when we had this room full, we thought that was going to be it! But this whole process of pruning is to bear more *fruit* not less.

<sup>3</sup> *You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*

Each one of you in my judgment are not only able to share the gospel but able to preach just as well as I am this morning! You might think you could

never do that but Yes, yes you could, easily, because of the “*word which He has spoken to you.*”

<sup>4</sup> *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

### ***The Abiding Process***

The **abiding** process means to live and to move in, move in with Jesus. He’s going to have supper with you every day. He never leaves you when you are abiding with the Lord. That vine is a part of who you are. You are going to be conformed into the image of Christ because He lives in you! That may be a hard concept to understand in the world but it is easy for us to grasp, those who have been filled with the Holy Spirit. We just have to let it happen. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself. We hear this over and over and over again. We cannot do this on our own.

*... unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

So there is going to be no fruit, there is going to be no help to the world if you are in your own strength and your own way of doing things. It may be the way you did it last year even, but the Holy Spirit wants to change and break that sack, getting all that stuff out of there *from last year’s harvest*. So we will be ready for this year’s instead. Now it is getting personal. He reiterates this theme.

<sup>5</sup> *I am the vine, you are the branches.*

So Jesus isn’t just the trunk of a tree and you are the branches of it. Rather a **vine** is made up of ALL the branches. You cannot say, “*Look at that. There is the vine and there are the branches.*” Rather they are the same. A vine is made up of many branches.

*He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire (the judgment of the Lord), and they are burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*

### ***Ask What You Will and It Shall be Done***

Most of the time I hear this teaching the last part is never really emphasized, “*you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*”

***I do emphasize this.*** Your asking has to be in the process as a participation of your abiding with the Lord Jesus. If that’s not happening, you can ask all you want and it is not going to happen. Your faith cannot be in faith itself; it is in your faith *in God!* Your faith is in the Lord Jesus. When you dine with Him, you are listening to Him. You hear Him. He comes to the table wearing different clothing that you might not be familiar with. You become more familiar with Him. “*That’s Jesus. I know Him.*” When you get to know people, you get to

know them from afar off. For instance when you get out of your car and you start walking towards me, even if I don't immediately recognize you, I come to understand who you are by the gate and your very walk. Each one of us is different, so uniquely different in many, many different ways. And we all have come into a place where we **know** Him in this way. His Holy Spirit goes over and over this with us until we get it. It is not so we will be condemned, "That wasn't the Lord, was it?" "Nooooo. But then this was." "Oh yeah. I get it. It definitely was."

In your prayer time you should talk to the Lord about these things. I do. "What did I do wrong? What did I do right? What's going on here?" It is always more important to know what God is doing than what the enemy is doing. The enemy really is not doing anything new. But what God does is "new every morning."

<sup>8</sup> *By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit (not just enough to get you by into Heaven); so you will be My disciples.*

. . . much fruit. Do you know how and why you are going to be called disciples?

### ***They will Know You by Your Love for One Another.***

*John 13:<sup>35</sup> By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

We may not have much love for those who are still in the world but we do have love for one another. Let's not put that aside. Make it a part of your routine, those who are sick, those who are struggling. Amen. It is going to be hard for you to pass somebody by that you have been praying for. I remember once when some particular persons were really bothering me and Jesus said, "Start praying for them." Okay I prayed for them every day. That very next Sunday, when I saw them I knew I had to go over and talk to them, because I was now committed. The love of God was in my heart.

<sup>9</sup> *As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.*

Abide where? *In His love.* So important. We are not abiding in a ministry. In the 70's a lot of people were known to have "ministries." But that is not where I want to abide. I want to abide in His love.

<sup>10</sup> *If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.*

Which commandments? You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself. Jesus is not asking us to do anything that He hasn't already done and demonstrated to us. Amen. How do I do that? Read the New Testament. Read what Jesus did.

### ***Joy***

<sup>11</sup> *These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.*



The first sign that you are going down the wrong path is the joy of the Lord is gone! That should be the first test of the Holy Spirit. *“Where’s my joy!? Ah, God just wants me to do it. I’ll just dig in.”* Well that is part of the process but the joy shouldn’t leave you because your joy is in the Lord. He says, “. . . *that your joy may be (meager? no.) made full.*”

### ***Definition of His Love***

<sup>12</sup> *This is My commandment, that you love one another as **I have loved you.***

He loved you enough to die for you on the Cross. Your love for one another should be the same. I can honestly say that’s probably not absolutely true in my life yet. But there are some people where I said to the Lord, *“You know I would really die for that person.”* Now maybe you haven’t picked anybody out and maybe you shouldn’t. But I did at one point. I knew I would die for that person and in my relationship that’s how much I would do for them. But we are going to learn that kind of love for everyone that we meet, especially in the Body of Christ.

<sup>13</sup> *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.* (He is referring to His death on the Cross.) <sup>14</sup> *You are My friends if **you** do whatever I command you.*

So we can see that the other thing to expect the Holy Spirit to tell or “command” you to do. It is not a suggestion, *“Do you think you want to do this?”* He will *command* you to do some things. Maybe in your prayers at night the Lord says, *“You really should talk to that person or maybe you should reach out. Maybe you should give up this or take this up. Whatever I command you.”* That’s important for us to know. We cannot say, *“I’m just going with the flow. Wherever this Church is going, I hope it is going in the right direction.”* Well, no. You need to understand and discern what He’s saying.

### ***Servant or Friend***

<sup>15</sup> *No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing;*

We live in a culture of slavery! In the Western world, anytime you have people paying somebody to do work, it is still a form of slavery because you are selling your work for money. It may not be slavery where you work for nothing or perhaps for room and board, but it is a type of not doing something “freely” without the reward of money.

*. . . but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.*

This is really about the Trinity here. Jesus really went to the Garden to “dine” with the Father so to speak. Jesus says that everything the Father told Me I have “made known to you.” Now because they were not yet filled with the

Spirit, they did not really remember or understand it very well or most of the time. However, after Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out on them, then they knew because now the Holy Spirit was IN them. They then remembered the things Jesus had said to them, “*Oh I get it now.*”

<sup>16</sup> *You did not choose Me, but I chose you . . .*

Isn't that good? Sometimes we may think we got here by our own choice. Be careful. Not really. “*I chose you . . .*”

*. . . and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, (Wither and die? No, remain incorruptible!) . . . that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. (That's a good place to be.)*

So as believers we are committed. We are here this morning and the Spirit of the Lord comes down on our worship; we hear the sounds from Heaven. That was awesome. Someone could ask us, “*Why are you here?*” “*I come here because the worship is just great and we want to hear from the Lord as well.*” Amen.

## ***The World Hates You***

But there is another process at work. The world, not just the world that the enemy is encouraging but the world that almost innately *hates* what we are doing here. It is not because they somehow got a revelation from the “Climate Change” people, or they got a revelation from “European Union” or from any such group. It isn't that the world got a special revelation. They hate you regardless. There will always be the world out there. But Jesus says this:

<sup>18</sup> *If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.*

Jesus came into this world and He was teaching a *great change* for the Jewish nation. They should have been embracing it! “*Are you kidding me? I no longer have to worry about the Sabbath doctrine anymore? Are you kidding me? I can just come and just be provided for and don't have to sacrifice living animals any more? Are you kidding me? This is so awesome!*” Why wouldn't they accept that?! Well, only God knows what is in the hearts of men.

<sup>19</sup> *If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*

“*Why is it that everybody hates me now?*” Well don't expect much else. Jesus is proclaiming it here.

<sup>20</sup> *Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.*

Get ready. I often think about that. Why do I have to go through that kind of persecution? People accusing me of things that I absolutely did not do. Well, because of these words to us.

*If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. <sup>21</sup> But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.*

Once they know Him, things will change. I remember people coming to me in much later years and saying, "You were right all along." Then I responded, "I wasn't right. Jesus was right."

*<sup>22</sup> If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.*

So up until then, the several thousand years of the "stone circle," they would have no sin, until the time when Jesus came, they were free of guilt whether they were judged for good or bad. But now with Jesus, it is a whole different story. You either accept the Lord Jesus or you don't.

*<sup>23</sup> He who hates Me hates My Father also. <sup>24</sup> If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.*

## **God the Father**

Jesus always refers back to Him, God the Father. It is almost an innate nature in man to somehow know that there is indeed a God in Heaven. That is why they are without excuse.

*Romans 1: <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,*

Creation itself speaks of a Creator. Scientific America made a statement the other day, "The preponderance of evidence is that there was intelligence in the creation of things."

*John 15: <sup>25</sup> But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'*

That is a sad testimony of what is happening in today's world. They are hating us without cause! They are hating our religion without a cause. Someone shared this at the "Chaplain's Meeting" the other day. Someone came up to them and said, "Don't talk to me about the bible. That's a white man's word!" Whoohah It just gets worse and worse. But the scripture gets better and better because it is written, not in our brain, but *on our heart*. There are things that I don't have to memorize because they are now part of my life. Yes.

*<sup>26</sup> But when the **Helper** comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. <sup>27</sup> And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.*

## *The Helper*

The Holy Spirit isn't here to just instruct us but when we are instructed we need HELP. When He tells you, *"You are wrong, you are going to need help."* When He commands you what your mission is, you are going to need help because in your own flesh, you will fail. You know, Covid is really only a type of cold but your flesh fails to subdue it. Many came down with Covid and their body should have been well able to handle it. They were saying that *18% of all the colds you have ever had were Covid related!* Well, what happened? Well, your body fails but the Holy Spirit never fails. He gives us wisdom in the face of disease. Amen.

*. . . whom I shall send to you . . .*

The Holy Spirit. Who sends it? Jesus. Where from? The Father. From where? The throne of grace and mercy, the Spirit of Truth, not lies. Not one lie. Not one falsehood, no corruption. *"who proceeds from the Father."* The Trinity is right here, clear as day and night. He, the Holy Spirit does one thing more than anything else. *"He will testify of Me."* Jesus. *"And you also will bear witness."* Why? Because you have the Holy Spirit within you! *"Because you have been with Me from the beginning."* Isn't that good?

I think anybody that is "pro-death" doesn't understand that scripture. He knew us while we were in the womb of our mom, even before our mother knew us very well. And my mom got to know me pretty well before I was even born. However, even before then, Jesus knew me! And brought me through the circumstances of my life. We all have stories; the circumstances of our lives are so different. Some may be pretty much the same. But Jesus was there the whole time IN YOU to ordain you, to point you as Christians, that testify, not of a religion but to testify of a relationship where you dine with Him on a daily basis, where you sit down and talk with Jesus. Everyone here in this Church believes that they talk to Jesus. Amen, we do. We may be crazy people in the world's eyes but not in reality. The reality is that He is SO REAL that He will never withdraw from us. He will never say, *"Oh that's it. It is not working. Let's start over."*

## *Another Flood?*

Another Flood will not happen. Every time you see a rainbow, it should not remind you of gay unity. It should remind you of the promises of our Father. See, the world has twisted everything. Right? The more I read, the more twisted the world becomes. Why are they twisting everything around!!? Because they hate the Words of our Father; they hate it.

Instead we are standing in a Holy Place. Let's stand together in a Holy Place, a place where God wants us to stand this morning, in and amongst believers that love the Lord, in and amongst believers who love to worship Him, get excited about Him. We are not excited about who is going to be the next President. We are excited that Jesus is King of kings, Lord of lords, the One who is

the savior of the world. Our Friend who no longer calls and gives us money for the work we do, no longer servants or slaves. Rather He calls us free men, His friends.

*So, Father we ask You, O God to renew our life. Everybody here knows the things we've been preaching. This is not new. Rather it is a reminder and an encouragement to us. As we worship You in the morning it is a reminder, an encouragement that our God is so very real, not just maybe real, but really real. This is not a religion called Christianity. This is a RELATIONSHIP with You, Lord Jesus. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit really do exist today and our life and our testimony is an example before the world of that reality. Thank You, O God. Amen!*



# Gold Refined in the Fire

## —Part II—

Peter J. Scott . 2023

I was sharing in Part I the passage from Revelations 3:18

*I counsel you to buy from **Me gold** (not from the enemy but from the Lord. “from Me . . .”) **refined in the fire** that you may be rich . . . and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; . . . and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.*

Isn't that great? The end of that passage says:

<sup>22</sup> *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the **Churches**.*

So He isn't just saying that to you individually; He's saying that to the Churches, in the plural. I'd like to talk about how we view our Christian experience. That is because ever since I became a believer of the Lord everything seems to be pointing to the idea that it is about “you and Jesus.” Jesus has to be your personal Savior. There is a personal context that you cannot get from your peer. You have to have a personal relationship with our Lord, you and Him.

*However* there is something more that I want to talk about today. In fact even though the Lord ministered to the individual and we know that He took Peter aside and said, “*Do you love me?*” (He said it three times.) He actually talked to Martha not just the whole community of believers there that day. So we know that He did relate individually to people while He walked upon this earth. BUT He ministered to the plurality also, to all His disciples together. He didn't call just one disciple; He called twelve. He didn't send them out one or two; He sent out seventy. He sent them out two by two. Can you imagine the one that was sent with Judas!? What happened after Judas betrayed the Lord? But as we look at this, what our Lord did was a lot more than just “pairing up.” When Jesus addressed His disciples as we will shall see in Chapter 16 of John . . . (I've been avoiding this Chapter because I knew that if it is taken out of context, it is very depressing!) Jesus talks to the disciples, plural, not just to one or two of them. We know He did that on occasion; at the Mount of Transfiguration He took a couple with Him. When He went to the garden of Gethsemane, He took a couple with Him. “*How come you cannot stay awake a little bit? What is wrong with you guys?!*”

However, most of the time, He addressed them in the plural. Isn't that interesting? Now when we talk about plural government in the Church, as elders we like to hear that word a lot, we see Jesus isn't just talking to one or two of the elders. Rather He is talking to all of us, plural, all three of us elders. It is our vision to come up with one mind from us all in knowing what the Lord is saying to all.

## *Knowing the Times*

I believe what God is doing in this hour and time, as the pages of Heaven are turning, He is doing that same thing in *all* of our Home Groups. He is not only addressing you, personally, but He is addressing you as Home *Groups*. He is addressing Churches, not just a denomination but addressing a group, a community of believers. It isn't an overflowing of the Spirit (as in the recent Asbury University revival) just for a few. I remember in Charismatic Magazine just a few days ago saying, "*The revival at Asbury University is overflowing into the restoration of Churches.*" Do you remember our brother Don Rumble saying that was a restoration theology he never even heard before but it was something we can identify with? Jesus is restoring what the New Testament Church was to what and where we are today. That is a wonderful concept!

So we can see Jesus is speaking to us more and more not just as individuals, though a lot of the songs we sing are about individuals and their personal trials. "*Lord I depend upon You the Rock.*" We could also sing it as "*We depend upon You the Rock.*" It would be hard pressed to talk to some of the other countries that were occupied by Nazi Germany for them to say, "*I ...*" rather they were saying, "*We ... are oppressed. We are going through a trial that the world has never faced before.*" Imagine the French resistance saying it was "just us"? No, they knew that it was "*We*" are facing the enemy. **WE.**

Now there is something about that concept that we do not really know nor understand fully. But now God is revealing it to us. Elder Paul brought to our mind a book called, "*The Man in the Boat.*" There was a documentary referenced in that book called "*The Men of 1936.*" That was an interesting year, a year after the depression. We read most of these boys were put into Crew boats. When you are rowing in those boats, you have to pull both oars *evenly*. If you pulled one more than the other, you started going around in circles. So it is interesting that even when we think we are all by ourselves we have to learn to think plurally, coordinating things. Coordination is a plural thing. So as you lift up your hand, there are five fingers, not just one. If there was just one, you would probably fail most of the time because there are five and connected to one hand; coordinated they become a unit.

Well these boys were taken from logging camps, most of them had to scratch for a living. The reason they joined the Crew at Washington State University was to get something to eat as that was the only place they could have two square meals per day, not even three. Wow. So they were put through the ringer. The coach was not a very fun guy. The coach was projected as, "*Well, if you don't make the grade, you are out.*" So these guys started out as Freshmen and then went on to the Sophomore team. As they were going into 1935, they were racing against a college in California who previously were always the winners, even over the Ivy League schools in Poughkeepsie, Princeton, Harvard, Vassar, etc. whoever had Crew.



But we see in 1936 they were racing against **Nazi Germany!** That's where the Olympics were that year and Hitler wanted very much for the Crew boats to win from *his country*. Four Crew boats were winning, but all Eight Crew boats knew they were in for heavy competition, Italy and many others. *But they knew the boat from Washington State University was the boat to watch out for!* Washington had a strategy that they would always come from behind. They had one particularly strong oarsman, very, very strong. His background was gruesome. His stepmother basically kicked him out and he had to live on his own when he was only twelve. He had to live in the woods for a while. Finally his older brother said, "*Why don't you come to Washington to see what we can do.*" So they were cleaning out houses that were re-possessed by the banks. This was a pretty rough time in American history. This guy was there but he was unbelievably strong even from highschool. One of the coaches saw him and got him into college. However he was still a loner as we all seem to be today ... just me and Jesus.

And yet if you look at our Home Groups, you might say, "*I don't know about that one ... Why cannot they straighten up?! Why can't they be more like me?*" Then you would think that might not be a good thing! Most likely not! And so, **what I think the Lord is doing now is building teams together in our Home Groups.** We are learning to accept the frailties of who our brothers and sisters are and realize that we are together in the boat with them.

As the Washington team came over together in the boat from New York to Berlin, their lead oarsman who was the "tempo setter," lost too much weight so the coach took him out. The day of the race, the rest of the team told the coach they would not race without him. That's how much they were built together! I don't know about you but in my Home Group I could say, "*Oh well, I could do without that person.*" But no, this Crew team stood together saying, "*No matter how weak he is, we're going to compensate for that person.*" Then they went into that race fully ready to meet their competition. They were behind maybe three or four lengths, which they expected to be. However this time a little longer than usual. Finally this one guy, the strongest person decides, "**It's time.**" When one oarsman leans into his oars that means the other side of the boat is going to have to compensate for him. There has to be communication. Does that ring any bells to you in Home Groups? There has to be communication. You say, "*I'm going through this. What are you guys doing? How are you doing?*"

So you see, we are meeting an adversary who has met us in all kinds of ways and shapes. Interestingly in this season (2020) he has met us with Covid or with Covid like symptoms. How are we doing with that?

Anyway as the strong oarsman started to change his direction from just getting through the race to actually winning it (He could move that boat all by himself. That's how strong that guy was.) he had to communicate with the other side of the boat so they didn't end up going around in circles. So the Washington Crew listened and they went right from third place right up to first at the finish

line and won! Hitler was not happy. Nor is the enemy happy about what the Lord Jesus is planning to do in our midst as He makes us into “**Gold Refined by the Fire of Adversity.**”

### *Plural Team Ministry*

*Mark Chapter 6:<sup>7</sup> And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. <sup>8</sup> He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff. . .*

There was no one else they could depend upon for their journey, nothing except the Lord.

*—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts—<sup>9</sup> but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.*

Not two, just one. This is when somebody is prepared for battle. When I was playing softball for the Church down in New Paltz, you took off everything: your belts because you didn’t want the belt hitting and hurting anybody. You took off your wedding ring because you didn’t want it to be scraped in some way. It can be just that dangerous when you are in competition. Older men actually have a worse chance of getting hurt than those younger. So we took off anything so we would not be hindered in any way. That’s what the Lord was saying here.

*<sup>10</sup> Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place.*

Now there will be a place of provision for you during these trials and what He is sending us out to do. What God is preparing us for is indeed to send us out into **battle!** Not just for ourselves but for other groups and Churches.

*<sup>11</sup> And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!”*

*<sup>12</sup> So they went out and preached that people should repent. <sup>13</sup> And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them.*

I don’t know if they were expecting that but it happened. Whoa.

*John 15:<sup>26</sup> “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. <sup>27</sup> And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.*

Who is sending the Holy Spirit? The Lord Jesus Himself. The Holy Spirit has been with the Lord from the beginning of everything! The Trinity was always there. One God. A mystery to us all today. How can three entities of God be One and yet they are? Amen. It is a mystery that people are still trying to understand. But it is true.

## ***Knowing the Times***

### ***John Chapter 16***

16: <sup>1</sup> *“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.*

So He is speaking to them so they won't fail but they will succeed. Then He says to them the worse things that could happen to a Jewish boy:

<sup>2</sup> *They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.*

It may happen to us! I don't think it is in this season. In fact I'm pretty sure it is not. But there will be coming a season in which things can become that terrible.

<sup>3</sup> *And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.*

They are doing it in complete ignorance.

<sup>4</sup> *But these things I have told you, . . .*

What has He been telling them? About the Holy Spirit, about how He is going to be with them.

*. . . that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.*

You see what He is saying. He is not saying this to Peter alone, John alone, or Nathaniel alone. He is talking to **all** of them, the disciples, plural. You are going through some things not as individuals but together you will be facing major adversity when He sends you out! Then He begins to talk about the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit, how it will comfort us, but even more. Many of us know after going through trials personally, how powerful the Holy Spirit has been to us. Right?! Amen. We know how powerful He can be! But do we know how powerful the Holy Spirit can be in our midst as a Church, as a Home Group, as a group of Elders at a Conclave? I don't think we are really there as yet. Every time we went to St. Louis, it was always about the individuals or individual Churches really. It was not about us as a *group* of believers.

However I believe the Father is now speaking to the Church in groups just as He did then.

### ***The Work of the Holy Spirit***

<sup>5</sup> *But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’* <sup>6</sup> *But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.*

I have to honestly say to you that if the Lord said those things to me and to us today I'd say, *“Whoa. I don't want to go to those crazy places.”*

*<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.*

So the only way He can send the Holy Spirit is from the Throne of Grace, the Throne of Mercy, from the Father's Throne.

*<sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

This is the work of the Holy Spirit through you, plural. They don't know what sin is. Right? They certainly do not know what it means to be righteous. They may do "good work." But it is actually "dead work" because they do not know what true righteousness is. True righteousness is found only in our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that! However the World does not. They think they know it all! They would take our children away if they could. They would take away our ability to even preach this sermon this morning if they could.

*<sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.*

So here we see Jesus is looking through time; almost always He does this, all the way from the beginning up to the end. Cool. We need to see with His eyes. So how can we do that? By spending time with Him, singularly and also together. When we come and worship the Lord on Friday nights and in our Home Groups, *revival is happening. Right.* We don't have to go to the Asbury University revival, because revival starts in our heart and the intensity of that revival can hit each one of us and in us collectively. So we come and worship in the Spirit and say, "*Whoa, what just happened!?*" That is because the Lord is spilling over His revival into our hearts, plural, NOW. Because we are devoted to Him, each one of us individually as well as together.

*<sup>12</sup> I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup> However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. <sup>14</sup> He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup> All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

### ***Sorrow Will Turn to Joy***

*<sup>16</sup> A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.*

So here He is prophesying His death.

*<sup>17</sup> Then some of His disciples said among themselves, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?" <sup>18</sup> They*

said therefore, *What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying.*

<sup>19</sup> *Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'?"<sup>20</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.*

Doesn't that sound like what is happening? The World rejoicing with some of the craziest things we have ever heard!

<sup>21</sup> *A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.<sup>22</sup> Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and **your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.***

Sometimes a mother in labor has real fear of what is going to happen. Many pregnancies could end up in death. That is a fearful thing. Today in this hour because of Covid flu and other things the death rate amongst pregnancies is rising 200%. That's statistics. Whoa! But as soon as she hears that scream, that cry, that whimper from the child, she no longer remembers but takes courage that a human being has been born into the world.

You may have sorrow today saying, "*I don't want to go through this ever.*" But the Lord says, "*NO. You personally are going to have to go through things.*" Maybe this very Church will have to go through some things also. "*. . . but I will see you again and **your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.***" No one can take the joy of the Lord from you? No. I can remember when I graduated from college and having my haircut, the barber says, "*So. What are you going to do? The Summer is over.*" I told him I was finished and had graduated now. He said, "*Nobody can ever take that away from you.*" I remember this verse we were just talking about, "*. . . **your joy no one will take from you.***" Some may think your college education is worth nothing or they may even think your relationship with the Lord is worth nothing. BUT, they can never take the joy of the Lord away from you. That will never happen.

<sup>23</sup> *And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.<sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*

You no longer can just ask on your own behalf. You ask in the name of the Lord Jesus. We are praying in His name, not our own strength. No. We pray in Jesus' name. When we pray to the Father we pray in *Jesus* name.

Now Jesus gives us some hope. Right now I do not think we are on the verge of going into the “Great Tribulation.” I just don’t think that is where we are at seasonally. Remember where King David said that he had some men, sons of Issachar who were aware and knew the times of the ages and seasons. Well that’s what God is telling us this morning. The pages of Heaven are turning. Now is a time of a different context of what we as a Church are going through. We need to be aware of what is going on around us. So, when you see the circumstances of affliction as they hit us, not just individually but even as Home groups, the enemy wants to divide us, separate us! But God wants us to work together as a team! That team is what won the Olympics for those nine boys in their boat. . .

### ***Jesus Christ Has Overcome the World***

*<sup>25</sup> These things I have spoken to you in figurative language;*

Did you ever wonder why the Lord did that? Maybe it didn’t even occur to them? He openly confesses that He’s been talking in a figurative language, metaphors.

*. . . but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you **plainly** about the Father.*

Isn’t that a great verse?! Wouldn’t you like Him to tell you that? I do think that’s what He is indeed telling us today. You no longer have to guess. I am going to talk to you directly. That is the day and the hour that we are now living in here and the other Churches that are coming to the Lord in droves. In Viet Nam right now. How many did Franklin Graham just bring to the Lord!? Wow. Thousands. We are in the midst of the revelation of the Holy Spirit even today in our own midst.

*<sup>26</sup> In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you; <sup>27</sup> for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. <sup>28</sup> I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.*

So Jesus is no longer here physically with us. He is here with us Spiritually. When the Holy Spirit is with us, the Lord Jesus is with us. Now the disciples (plural) get it.

*<sup>29</sup> His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! <sup>30</sup> Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.”*

*<sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone.*

He was speaking about the crucifixion. However, that was only for a season. Listen to me; **things come in seasons**. Your affliction individually is only for a season. Many people give up and many die because they don't understand that concept. Most medical problems or episodes are only there for a season, even if it is a chronic condition. The worst if it is only for a season.

*And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.<sup>33</sup> These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but **be of good cheer**, I have overcome the world."*

How did He do that? On the Cross. How are you going to be able to do that? Because He went to the Father and sent the Holy Spirit down to fill the Church at Pentecost. When He came down, everybody began to speak in tongues. It was the "fire from Heaven" on each one of their heads. No one can accurately understand what happened that day, but it has happened repeatedly over time. The people who are filled with the Holy Spirit many times are unable to describe what happened to them. As they give their testimonies, "*I don't really know what happened. It was a very confusing time for me. But I know I am no longer the same person.*" I know the outcome was different in my life. When I was not filled with the Holy Spirit, I believed the Lord Jesus Christ was my Savior. I believed that He existed. I had faith that He could do all things. But after being baptized in the Spirit, I didn't have to believe. I **KNEW** it! There was a conscious knowing that He was the Christ. I no longer had to somehow work up some faith to resist the world. Now I know **HIM**. When you've really met Him, He's there. You can "smell" Him. Right!

When some of my grand kids come over they always seem to migrate over to lay down onto the bed nearest my pillow. I think it is because they can smell me! There is something very wonderful about the fragrance of our Lord Jesus. We are going to feel and to smell it and when the angels come, we will feel the breath of angels' wings. All of these things will happen because we will **KNOW** it is real! Not fantasy, not a Star War's movie. It is real.

Now as the **Fire of Affliction** has come to us of late, it is from the world. It can come spiritually in many different ways. For instance if we preach about the reality of one woman and one man and the headship of Christ, the headship of family, the headship of Home Groups and talk about Spiritual authority and things of that nature, there will be people who come against that! But the enemy also works on us physically since we are body, soul and spirit. So we see the enemy comes and attacks us through the world systems and the physical systems of the world, big time!

In Mississippi recently 60 miles was torn up by a tornado; at least 23 people were killed! They knew it was coming and were prepared but still some did not survive.

But in these individual circumstances that the enemy has been putting you through, illnesses, finances, job situations, schools, whatever hoops we have to jump through, you had to go through that for a reason so that we (plural)

come to realize, just like that Crew rower that he had to communicate to the other side of the boat. He had to say to his team mates, *“This is it. We are going. Germany is going down today!”* Not by the Ivy league schools that knew it all, but by Washington Hicks, the worst, the scum of the schools. People attending the Olympics didn’t even know where Washington was in 1936. Now it is huge but in those days it was just a lumber camp.

Jesus says to us our joy is going to come from *Knowing Him*. We are going to get through any circumstances individually. He has been teaching us that. Therefore when I was experiencing the worst of the problems with my recent shoulder pain, I would retreat to a place of worship. What held me together most of all was worship. Now with plural worship, that is going to be what is holding us together. We are not going to be rowing the boat by ourselves through the circumstances that face us. We are going to be Home Group to Home Group. In any other circumstances where we are with other Christians we are going to find our strength in our brothers and sisters. We will say, *“That guy over there I thought would never help me was indeed the one who did.”* The one that was the weakest, the one you never seemed to understand, you will now understand. Something you should have been the expert at, they will know and bring it to your attention, I know because it has happened to me.

I could have said, *“You know I am the expert here. Why didn’t God show it to me?”* Because He wants us to be a *team*; He wants us to be together just like His disciples. He knew that they would be scattered. He also knew the Holy Spirit would be poured upon them, not individually but collectively. That is what He is about to do in this hour. I believe it is already happening. Anywhere now where God wants to do it; He is going to do it. Asbury University, different colleges, Viet Nam etc. It is going to spill out where we least expect it maybe even in our government!!! Maybe even here in New York or Albany!!! Amen. Manhattan! Come on. Is there any door that He cannot open?!!

### *He Himself*

The Spirit of the Lord is upon us. Right after Jesus was baptized and the Spirit led Him into the wilderness, He comes out and He goes right into the Synagogue where He was related to. Jesus says:

*Luke 4: <sup>18</sup>The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,  
Because He has anointed Me  
To preach the gospel to the poor;*

The Good News is not just the world’s oppression. They already knew what it was like to be persecuted. He preached the **Good News!**

*He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, . . .*

To heal those who were sick physically, emotionally, spiritually. The Lord draws near to the brokenhearted but He keeps away from those who are proud. If you find pride in yourself, repent of it and come to the Lord with a bro-



ken heart, broken to the sadness that so many fail in the face of their test. But you have the keys to success! An individual relationship to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but also collectively in Home Groups and also collectively in Churches, Assemblies. In one of the Churches that just recently exploded (physically) the pastor said, “*The Church is not a building. It is a **community** of believers.*” Amen.

*. . . To proclaim liberty to the captives . . .*

Whatever your jail might be. It just might be some place where you were never able to break out from. As an example you can open up a gate to a herd of cows and they will not go through it if they never went through it before. They will go up and look at it but turn around and go back, even if the grass is really greener on the other side. However it is not until the “lead cow” goes through that they will finally go through the gate together. Liberty is not just you alone but us as a plurality.

*. . . And recovery of sight to the blind, . . .*

We are blind in so many different ways but we need to see with the Lord’s eyes. We need to see with the Shepherd’s eye not another sheep’s. We need to be on another level, the Shepherd’s eyes, another level.

*. . . To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*

That word oppressed is better translated “*to be sent out from.*” We’ve been oppressed too long; we’ve been confined too long. But NOW we are going to find ourselves amongst small groups where we never thought we would be. You may even be in a party and find three or four Christians around you and you are all talking about what God is doing in this day and hour. Well we can do that! Individually and in plurality.

*<sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*

This is the season of the Lord’s bounty! No matter what God is putting you through there is still a bounty to reap. You can go to a drug store and find things that might not be good but there are things there that might help you. There is a bounty in our country. If you go to the grocery store, it is not empty yet! You can go to the Used Car Dealer and find a car that is still affordable to you. Actually right now we are still in good times. During the last Depression they couldn’t do that. Mostly because before that they had squandered all their wealth. How much they must have thought about John Chapter 16 in those days?

I don’t know if I’ve ever heard a New Testament teacher teach on “plurality” in this way. They will always teach about an individual’s relationship with Christ. It is so important for you, yourself need to be involved, foundationally as the place to start. *However*, we don’t want to stay there. We want to bring those we are related to, friends and family. Friendship Evangelism isn’t a new concept. It is there because it actually works. Your brother or sister, your children.

Don't stop praying for them. The prodigals that you've known in the past who knew the Lord and are drifting away, don't give up on them. Bring them back in, even by your prayer! And as a Home Group, plural, pray. Bring them back.

We need to pray together for our progeny, for those who have drifted away, those who may now have never been introduced to the things of the Lord. Amen.

Let's stand together then and do it:

*Thank You, Lord God. Lord, we are not individual rowers today. We accept the fact that some of us might be a lot different than we ourselves are. We may not be so comfortable with it either. But that doesn't matter. We are in the **same boat**. And You are steering this boat, Lord God, not us. It is Your will, your purposes that are before us today and as we push a little bit out through that "gate," just tentatively thinking, "What's on the other side?" We pray for courage in each one of us. Each Home Group. We do not shrink back but we stand up in the different places we find ourselves in. Aglow, the Chaplain's group, other groups we find ourselves in. Lord God, that You would go before us and that these individual trials that we go through are not for nothing. They are not just for us but they for us . . . together, to share. I thank You, Lord God, for this building You have provided for us. We thank You for this country that You have provided for us to freely worship You in this day and in this hour. Amen. Thank You, Lord.*



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(THE BATTLE CRY, Prophecy, 6/2023)

I am in the business, says the Lord your God, I am in the business of restoring what the enemy has stolen.

There is coming a day, says the Lord, when the ransomed of the Lord will return. When the ransomed of the Lord return. I am bringing My people back.

I, I'm doing this; the Lord your God is moving before you. The enemy thought he had won when I died on the Cross. Satan thought he had the upper hand; he Did Not!

I am going before the Church, I am going before the Church, and I'm bringing the ransomed people that I have called by My name unto me!

Some of you may feel like you're going through a "Job time." Where there is no reason that you can understand of why you are going through what you are going through. BUT, let Me tell you this day. I am forging you as weapons, says the Lord your God. For your battle is not against flesh and blood, your battle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities of darkness, against spiritual forces of evil.

If it feels like you're going through a hard time, I am forging, forging is a hard time, but what I will reap out of that pain and suffering, you will need for the coming days ahead. You will need for the coming days ahead.

Now is not the time to lay down. Now is not the time to give up. When you feel like giving up, DON'T!

When you feel like laying down and saying well this is all there is, this is how my life is. NO! Know that I your God am with you.

Now is the time to Rally to me. This is my war cry, **Rally TO ME! Rally TO ME**, says the Lord your God. Don't let the enemy scatter you. Rally to me, Rally to me! There is Victory in the Lord! There is Victory in the Lord this Day!

(Jessica Scott)

