

Consecrate Yourselves Unto the Lord Our God (Go To Meeting)

Albert Jones—June 3, 2022

I think all of us would agree that our calling is nothing short of a miracle; that we have been called by God the Father to be a part of His Family. He reached out and called us by name, worked with us, and made it possible for us to come to an understanding about Who He is and what He is doing in the world and mankind, His created beings.

Being a part of God's calling, short of a miracle, He had to reach in deep places for some of us and pull us out and get our attention. Others making circumstances possible so that we would be a part of His Church. Indeed, He has called us unto Himself in that respect.

Let's set the stage for what this message is designed to really bring home, and that is our *special calling and unique relationship with God!* What does that mean in terms of our dedication to this way of life, having responded to the calling that:

- resulted in our baptism
- resulted in our receiving the Holy Spirit
- resulting in this walk that we are now a part of

as we journey in life to the Kingdom of God! There are a lot of things that are happening there. Let Paul kind of highlight this for us.

Colossians 1:1: "Paul, an apostle by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother."

We know about Paul's calling, that God specifically reached out to him and got his attention in a very powerful and dramatic way. Our calling was similar and powerful when you really look back and think about it.

Verse 2: "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* in Colossi..."

These epistles were written and designed for us to draw nourishment from as well. Let's see what Paul is saying to the brethren at Colossi, but also to us today.

"...Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ" (v 2).

I emphasize this so many times in just commentary and messages, that this work that the Father and Christ are doing in our lives is a 'tag team' affair; They are jointly working to insure that we are part of Their Family in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 3: "We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying for you

continually"—*as we in the ministry do for the brethren in our fellowships and various responsibilities!* But as a whole we pray for the brethren.

Verse 4: "Since hearing of your faith in Christ Jesus, and the love that *you have* toward all the saints because of the hope that *is* laid up for you in heaven..." (vs 4-5).

This commitment that we made is based on faith, and committed our lives in *believing* faith. So much in the belief that we acted upon that belief! Those of us who dedicated our lives through baptism—literally conjoining ourselves to the death of Christ—and conjoining ourselves to His resurrection *in the hope!* There's a great hope out in front of us, and we're marching toward that hope; that day that Christ will return and receive back what He's invested in.

Verse 5: "Because of the hope that *is* laid up for you in heaven, which you heard before in the Word of the Truth of the Gospel, which has come to you, even as *it also has* in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, just as *it is* among you, from the day that you heard and knew the grace of God in Truth" (vs 5-6).

Paul talks about a faithful minister; v 7: "Even as you also learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ for you; Who has also informed us of your love in *the Spirit*" (vs 7-8).

There are a lot of things happening with this calling. We're not only consecrated to God, we're consecrated to one another for edification. That we are going down this road together. We have God's love that we are exchanging with one another, exemplifying in how we:

- treat one another
- think about one another
- care for one another

Verse 9: "For this cause **we also**, from the day that we heard *of it*, **do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.**"

This is the most important thing: **Where there is no vision, the people perish!** We need to have a vision of what God is doing in our lives. He has painted a very visual picture in the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, especially in

Consecrate Yourselves Unto the Lord Our God
(Go To Meeting)

Revelation. We know how this turns out. In order for us to be there, we have to stick to it, not give up but endure to the end. *This is our calling and we recognize how serious it is, and that we do what it says:*

Verse 10: “That you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing...”

At all times committed and dedicated to God’s way; to righteousness, because when it’s all said and done, all that’s going to be left is *righteousness!* So, we need to be doing that which is “...all pleasing...”

“...being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God”:

- through study
- through prayer
- through fasting
- through drawing near to God

Verse 11: “Being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory...”

That is that power within us—God’s Holy Spirit—and we need to be utilizing it. We need to ask God to give us discernment, to give us His wisdom so that we can properly apply ourselves using the Spirit of God.

“...unto all endurance... [to the end; hang in there, brethren] ...and long-suffering with joy” (v 11). *That joy is because we understand the hope that lies within us!*

Verse 12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for **the share of the inheritance of the saints** in the Light; Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness and has transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love; in Whom we have redemption through His own blood, *even* the remission of sins; Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* Firstborn... [from the dead] ...of all creation” (vs 12-15).

There are more to come; we will be a part of that firstfruit harvest, but there are more to come after that. We have been consecrated to God to be of assistance to Him to help usher in that Kingdom. To help support spiritually the people that God will bring to Him in the Millennium, and bring up out of the grave in the Great White Throne Judgment.

So, our calling is indeed a marvelous thing. But being born into the Kingdom of God is the consummation of it all, but not the end of it. We have so much work ahead of us; so much work to do with God.

Verse 16: “Because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth,

the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him.” *That includes our calling!*

We are drawn to God for His purpose, His use, His service. We need to understand how important that is. It will be a joyous thing to rule and reign with Christ in the Kingdom of God.

Ephesians 2:1: “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins.”

That was our condition prior to God’s calling. So, God reached down and got our attention! Got us to recognize that our condition was not good. To show us that there was another way, there was a way of righteousness that is better than the way of wickedness, the way of sin, which is that *dead status* that is described by Paul.

Verse 2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air...”

We could really emphasize a lot about what Satan is doing to try to destroy God’s plan, but we know that ***he does not have the power*** to take us out of God’s hands. He can deceive us and cause us to doubt to the extent that we could turn away from God, turn away from His Truth. ***But Satan doesn’t have the power to take us from God! We pray to the Father to keep us from the evil one!***

“...the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience” (v 2).

The wrath of God is held in store for the children of disobedience. Final judgment is held in store!

Verse 3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the world*. But God, Who is rich in mercy... [filled up with mercy] ...because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ....” (vs 3-5).

We have said that we *died in the watery grave and pledged our life!* We gave it up in order to be raised to life in the hope of the resurrection we were baptized into His death. We came up out of the watery grave alive unto Christ. We’re still flesh, but our hope and vision, and our status now, is that with Christ. Our lives are dedicated now ***unto God to do His will unto righteousness!***

- no more sin
- no more wickedness
- no more selfishness and lust

Consecrate Yourselves Unto the Lord Our God
(Go To Meeting)

all the things that pull us into darkness! But now we are dedicated unto life, and that hope that we have is very powerful and strong.

The Prophet Isaiah emphasizes that we should very much take note of:

Isaiah 52:1: “Awake! Awake! Put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful robes, O Jerusalem, the Holy city, for never again shall come to you the uncircumcised and the unclean ones. Shake yourself from the dust; rise up! Sit, Jerusalem! Free yourself from your neckbands, O captive daughter of Zion, for thus says the LORD, ‘You *were* sold for nothing; and you shall be redeemed without money.’ For thus says the Lord GOD, ‘My people went down at first *into* Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now, therefore, what have I here,’ says the LORD, ‘that My people are taken away for nothing? Those who rule over them howl,’ says the LORD; ‘and without ceasing My name is blasphemed every day. Therefore, My people shall know My name, thus *it shall be* in that day, **for I am He Who speaks; behold, it is I**” (vs 1-6).

We’re talking about the Sovereign God, the Holy One! When God speaks, we need to listen!

Verse 7: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace; who brings good news, who publishes salvation; who says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’ The voice of Your watchmen shall be lifted up! They lift up the voice together; they sing aloud, for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD returns again to Zion. Break out, sing together, you waste places of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted His people; He has redeemed Jerusalem” (vs 7-9).

We see a duality here, that these words are very passionately given for God’s love for His people and for His Church, His spiritual Family. We have gone through the days of Unleavened Bread, celebrated the first and last day, let’s think about our standing in God’s Family with some of these words as well:

Verse 10: “The LORD has bared His Holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and **all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.**”

When they see that they will glorify God! They will see the product, the end result of God’s work.

Verse 11: “Depart! Depart! Go out from there! Touch not the unclean. Go out of her midst; purify yourself...”

This a part of that consecration that we do; we’re dedicated to righteousness. We reject sin in

every form, because we dwell in righteousness with God, the righteousness of God is upon us.

“...you who bear the vessels of the LORD, For you shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight; for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rear guard. Behold, My Servant shall rule well; He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. Many were astonished at Him—for *His body was* so disfigured—...” (vs 11-14).

This is talking about the death of Christ; the One Who makes this all possible. We understand that our consecration is unto Him! The Father sent Him, He came and made possible this relationship that we have with God. Everything that was said before culminates again into what Christ has done.

“...even His form beyond that of the sons of men. So shall He sprinkle many nations... [that blood, the hope in Christ and His resurrection] ...the kings shall shut their mouths because of Him; for they will see *that* which *was* not told to them; yea, what they had not heard, shall they consider” (vs 14-15).

We will be a part of revealing this Truth to the nations in the Kingdom of God and the Great White Throne Judgment! Yes, we have a marvelous calling! That calling God continues to work with us through it.

I’m going to highlight something in terms of sanctification and what it is, what God is doing in our lives.

In our Statement of Beliefs we have a description of what God expects of us in terms of our sanctification to Him. We are justified before God, which is an incredible portion of that. We are sanctified unto God, as well. It is described in:

The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version, Appendix M: **Beliefs and Doctrines of the New Testament Church**:

Sanctification is the act of setting someone or something apart for a holy purpose and use. Christians are in a continuing state of sanctification after repentance...

We’re set apart not for this world, not for what we were before, but when we came up out of the watery grave our lives became the property of God! We don’t think about it that way, *because we willingly submitted ourselves to God!* We willingly with great joy and anticipation committed ourselves unto God, because of our faith and hope in Christ, and the life that we are aspiring to. Soon to be revealed in that day, which we will celebrate the Holy Day that pictures that day: *Pentecost!*

...baptism by immersion...

he death of the old self

...and the receiving of the Holy Spirit...

- that's the game-changer
- that's what makes the difference
- that gives you the power to have real change in your life
- to be dedicated to God every single day

...as a begetting from God the Father. In the Scriptures, Christians are referred to as "saints", meaning those who have been made holy by the sanctification of God the Father.

We see a calling by the Father unto Himself! He called us to Himself for a special purpose! Let's look at an example of that and understand what He is doing, as God is very exact and wise in His way of doing things.

Exodus 13:1: Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Sanctify all the firstborn to Me, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, of man and of beast. *It is Mine.*' And Moses said to the people, 'Remember this day *in* which you came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage... [tie in Eph. 2] ...for the LORD brought you out from this place by the strength of His hand. There shall be no leavened bread eaten'" (vs 1-3)—*representing sin; days of Unleavened Bread!*

This understanding was given to us that sin cannot dwell in the righteous ones of God. Sin cannot be something that is being practiced by the people of God. Those who are consecrated unto God cannot live in sin and be acceptable to God. Therefore, we have the cleansing power of Jesus Christ, and we must avail ourselves to it daily.

Verse 4: "On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. And it shall be when the LORD shall bring you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. You shall eat unleavened bread seven days..." (vs 4-6)—*putting sin out of our lives!*

I want to focus in on the consecration of the firstborn who belong to God.

Verse 12: "You shall set apart to the LORD all that opens the womb, and every firstborn that comes of any animal, which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD'S. And every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. **And all the firstborn of man among your sons**

you shall redeem. And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What does this *mean?*' you shall say to him, 'The LORD brought us out of Egypt by the strength of *His* hand, from the house of bondage'" (vs 12-14).

This is what God did for us. We know that there is a type of us coming out of this world, being brought out with a strong hand by God.

Verse 15: "And it came to pass when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn of the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of animals. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD all that opens the womb that are males. **But all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.**"

This is a very important aspect of what God has called us into as firstfruits. That we are special to Him as the firstborn were special in this particular setting. As a firstfruit, you have a unique position within God's Family.

Exodus 34:1: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Cut out two tablets of stone like the first *ones*. And I will write upon the tablets the words that were in the first tablets, which you broke. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. And no man shall come up with you, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mountain. Also do not let the flocks nor herds feed before that mountain'" (vs 1-3).

Why is God being so specifically careful here? *Because God's presence is on the mountain!* The mountain is Holy. The entirety of it! Therefore, nothing unclean can touch it. That's what makes this very important.

Verse 4: "And he cut out two tablets of stone like the first *ones*. And Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tablets of stone. And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth'" (vs 4-6).

This is God announcing Who He is so that all Israel who are about to enter into a covenant with Him understands, as we understood on the day of our baptism.

We recognize who we were conjoining ourselves to recognize who we were consecrating ourselves to. We committed our lives to God and the hope of the resurrection, the hope of being born into

the Family of God. God is describing that, yes, He **“...merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”**

Verse 7: “Keeping mercy to the thousandth *generation*, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, **but Who will by no means clear the guilty...**”

This is a very important point, because this is why Christ had to die. Someone had to deal with the issue of sin. Sin was on us all, every single one of us were guilty and Christ redeemed us, saved us, made possible salvation through His life and resurrection. He is now not done! He sits at the right hand of the Father still working, serving as intermediary, advocate, propitiation for sin and on and on; His office as High Priest for His people! So, sin had to be dealt with here.

“...but Who will by no means clear *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and to the fourth generation” (v 7).

Christ is the answer to that predicament! We were all under sin, every single one of us. Christ has redeemed us, so we have this hope in Him and the life that He is promising to bring us!

The people of Israel, as we are, were consecrated to God through obedience. That was the deal. Obey God’s voice, the guilty is redeemed through sacrifice.

Exodus 20:1: “And God spoke all these words, saying, ‘I *am* the LORD your God, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me’” (vs 1-3).

This is God laying out His laws and commandments, which are the foundation of this relationship with God. The relationship and foundation of righteousness before God. The commandments are all laid out.

Verse 18: “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, ‘You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die.’ And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not fear, for God has come to prove you...’” (vs 18-20).

So you understand Who you’re dealing with; Who God is: the Sovereign all powerful God; the only God! The one true God!

“**...and so that His fear may be before your faces, so that you may not sin.**’ And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God *was*. And the LORD said

to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, “You have seen that I have talked with you from the heavens. You shall not make with Me gods of silver, nor shall you make gods of gold for yourselves. You shall make an altar of earth to Me, and shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In all places where I record My name I will come to you, and I will bless you. And if you will make Me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of cut stone; for if you lift up your tool upon it...”’ (vs 20-25).

Or you try to make it in such a way that your handiwork is involved in with it and think that it’s going to be acceptable to Him, God says, *NO!*

“...for if you lift up your tool upon it you have defiled it” (v 25).

Brethren, righteousness is from God! God has called us and given us His Spirit.

- He is working out righteousness in our lives
- He is the One Who is orchestrating this change and metamorphous that’s occurring
 - we are willing participants
 - we are committed
 - we have hope
 - we have praise toward God

We understand that ***we are going to be in God’s Kingdom because God is doing a great work in us!*** That is something to rejoice in! This is applied to us individually, but also applied to us collectively. God is doing a work in His tabernacle, in His Church.

We understand that the relationship we have with God and what is expected of us. We were called to righteousness. *God says, through Peter:*

1-Peter 2:1: “Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders, as newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow, if you yourselves have indeed tasted... [experienced] ...that the Lord *is* gracious. To Whom coming, *as to* a living Stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God, *and* precious, **you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house...**” (vs 1-5)—*collectively!*

We’re consecrated to God for righteousness and to one another by God’s instruction, and by God placing us in His Family for edification and lifting each other up.

“**...a Holy priesthood...**” (v 5).

We often quote that we are going to be resurrected to be kings and priests with Christ. We

Consecrate Yourselves Unto the Lord Our God
(Go To Meeting)

emphasize the kingship quite often, but what about the priestly duties that we will have in the Kingdom of God? What responsibilities will we have and be exercising?

“...to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this reason it says in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I place in Zion *the* Cornerstone, chosen *and* precious; and the one who believes in Him shall never be put to shame” (vs 5-6).

We’re standing on those promises, anchored to Christ!

Verse 7: “The preciousness *is* to you, therefore, who believe; but to those who disobey, *the* Stone that the builders rejected has become *the* Head of the corner, and a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense; *especially* to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, unto which *unbelief* they also were appointed” (vs 7-8).

But God says of us, v 9: “But you are a chosen stock, a royal priesthood, a Holy nation, a people for a possession of God...”

- this is God’s Church
- this is our calling
- this is what we have committed ourselves to

This consecration that we have dedicated ourselves to, and we pray and fast, and ***ask God to give us the strength, the humility, the wisdom to live this way, and to hold fast in hope until that day, so that we can be with Him in the Kingdom of God!***

*This standing that we have will be viewed by others so “...**that you might proclaim His excellent virtues, Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;** who once *were* not a people, but now *are the* people of God; who had not received mercy, but now have received mercy. Beloved, I exhort *you*, as strangers and sojourners, to restrain yourselves from fleshly lusts which war against the soul; having your way of life honest among the Gentiles so that although they speak against you as evildoers, through having witnessed *your* good works, they may glorify God in *the* day of visitation. Therefore, submit yourselves to every human institution for the Lord’s sake; whether to *the* king, as supreme, or to governors, as sent by him to execute vengeance *against* evildoers, and to praise those who do well. For so is the will of God, that *by* doing well yourselves, you may put to silence the ignorance of senseless men; as free, and not using *your* freedom as a cover for evil, but as bondslaves of God” (vs 9-16).*

That consecration unto God is what Peter is saying!

Verse 17: “Show honor to everyone. Love the brotherhood, revere God *and* honor the king.”

We’re not of this world! ***We’re not of it because the Kingdom that we’re looking forward to is coming, and our hope is in it!***

Ephesians 2:13: “But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far off are made near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, having annulled in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in *the* decrees of men, so that in Himself He might create both into one new man, making peace; and *that* He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it” (vs 13-16).

Verse 17: “Now when He came, He preached the Gospel—peace to you who *were* far off and to those who *were* near. For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father” (vs 17-18). ***This is the operation at work here!***

Verse 19: “So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but *you are* fellow citizens with the saints, and *are* of the household of God... [the Body of Christ] ...You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets... [we have those examples and the Word of God preserved through them] ...**Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone...** [and Orchestrator of all of this great work] ...in Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together is increasing into a Holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit” (vs 19-22).

Each of us are habitations from God in the Spirit, and collectively we’re the House of God for God’s presence is in the midst of His Church. We are here by God’s own decree.

Acts 15—this is the great debate regarding what was obligatory for newly converted Gentiles in the Church to have to go through in order to be saved. That’s was the actual question around circumcision.

Acts 15:5: “But there stood up certain of those who believed, who were of the sect of the Pharisees, saying, ‘It is obligatory to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the Law of Moses.’ Then the apostles and the elders gathered together to see about this matter. And after much discussion had taken place, Peter stood up and said to them, ‘Men, brethren...’” (vs 5-7).

This is Peter expounding on the Truth regarding God’s calling. That it can be hindered by this act of circumcision. There is much more to the story, which I won’t be going into it, but here:

Verse 7: "...Peter stood up and said to them, 'Men, brethren, you know that from *the* early days, God made *the* choice among us *that* by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the Word of the Gospel, and believe. And **God, Who knows the heart, bore witness to them...**'" (vs 7-8).

The same consecration, that same relationship, whom God is calling from all nations upon the earth, Peter says:

"...by giving them the Holy Spirit, even as He did to us, and made no difference between us and them, *and* has purified their hearts through the faith" (vs 8-9). *The same faith that all of us have! There is no difference here!*

Verse 10: "Now therefore, why do you tempt God by putting a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But by the grace of *the* Lord Jesus Christ we believe we shall be saved in the same manner as they also" (vs 10-11).

This calling, this relationship with God affects all of us!

Revelation 21:1: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the Holy City, *the* New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from heaven say, **'Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men...**'" (vs 1-3).

The one we read about in 1-Peter; this Kingdom that we have our allegiance to in heaven. This is describing it's establishment on earth.

"... 'Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and *there* shall not be anymore death, or sorrow, or crying; neither shall *there* be any more pain, because the former things have passed away" (vs 3-4).

Verse 5: "And He Who sits on the Throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' Then He said to me, 'Write, for these words are true and faithful.' And He said to me, 'It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts, I will give freely of the fountain of the Water of Life. The one who overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son. But *the* cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone;

which is *the* second death" (vs 5-8).

We were emphasizing last week in our family Bible study *the greater resurrection!* The first resurrection is a better resurrection because over those the second death has no power.

Our relationship with God is built upon faith in God's promises and the actions of His Son Jesus Christ and the promises that have been given to us through His actions:

- the access to the Father that we have
- giving us the ability to come before God the Father and pray to Him to petition Him
- have Him involved in our lives
- have Jesus Christ working with us to help us to achieve these things

It is a great and awesome thing that God is doing!
This is for us to be encouraged to hold fast, hold onto at all times.

Colossians 1:24: "Now, I am rejoicing in my sufferings for you, and I am filling up in my flesh that which is behind of the tribulations of Christ, for the sake of His Body, which is the Church; of which I became a servant, according to the administration of God that *was* given to me for you *in order* to complete the Word of God; **even the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints**" (vs 24-26).

Again, Paul is summing up the foundation on which our hope is all based; as we study God's Word and we're learning more about God's plan. We see the connectivity between:

- what He did at the beginning at creation
- what He did in working with the hope that the righteous ones on the other side of the Flood to bring Noah and his family through
- what He has done in calling Abraham in establishing His nation unto Himself
- what He did to die for our sins and give us a means and way through which we could be saved
- what He is doing in His Church today
- developing the very character of God and the mind of Christ

So that in the Kingdom of God we can serve Him and be beneficial members of God's Family to those who are coming to God.

Verse 26: "*Even* the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints; to whom God did will to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**" (vs 26-27).

Our hope is in Christ! It says that ‘there are those who say there is no resurrection. If there is no resurrection there is no hope’ (1-Cor. 15)—*there is nothing to hang onto!*

So, this season, this time of year, this Holy Day that we are about to celebrate, ***all began with the resurrection of Christ, the life that He now has and the faith of Him returning!***

Verse 28: “Whom we preach, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, **so that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus**.... [for all mankind: men, women, children, those who commit themselves to God] ...For this cause I also labor, striving according to His inner working, which works in me with power” (vs 28-29).

That inner working is God’s Spirit, which we all have! It’s doing a work in us! It is allowing us to come to God and be changed from within, ***so that day when He returns we will be changed completely from flesh to spirit, born into the Family of God to live and reign with Christ forever!***

- hold onto that
- continue to consecrate yourselves unto God every day
- recognize that we are of righteousness and the world is of sin

We’ve come out of the world and looking to Christ, the Righteous One! We await that day for His return!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 1:1-16
- 2) Ephesians 2:1-5
- 3) Isaiah 52:1-15
- 4) Exodus 13:1-6, 12-15
- 5) Exodus 34:1-7
- 6) Exodus 20:1-3, 18-25
- 7) 1 Peter 2:1-17
- 8) Ephesians 2:13-22
- 9) Acts 15:5-11
- 10) Revelation 21:1-8
- 11) Colossians 1:24-29

Scripture referenced, not quoted: 1-Corinthians 15

Also referenced:

Appendix M: Beliefs and Doctrines of the New Testament Church (*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*)

AJ:bo
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