

# SPEAK THE WORD ONLY

## ARTICLE 1

Words are important. Although words often appear trivial and weak, the teaching of Jesus and other statements within scripture leave no doubt that all words are important. Consider Jesus' statement in **Matthew 12:36,37**

**36 "But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. 37 For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."**

Every uttered word will be important on that day. According to the Amplified Bible, this means every inoperative or non-working word. This includes casual or off-the-cuff statements. Every word will be carefully weighed in the judgment.

A passage in **Proverbs 18:21** is associated with the above scripture in Matthew: **21. The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.** The phrase "those who love it", means "those who indulge it". My Thesaurus explains "indulge" as "to give free reign to (as curiosity or desire).

It seems that in the early years of Peter's life he was given to impulsive speech, and so it is especially instructive to read his words in **1 Peter 3:10**: **For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.**

My priority in this Article is to show that the authority of the kingdom of God was expressed by words. Jesus, who came preaching that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand (was near), demonstrated the authority of that kingdom by the words that He spoke. He influenced material things like wind and waves, and immaterial

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realities such as the devil and demons, by the words that He spoke. Jesus also gave the authority to command to His disciples, and they returned with the joyous news that **"even the demons submit to us through Your Name"**.

Matthew's gospel contains the account of a Roman Centurion [a commander of 100 soldiers] who came to Jesus because the Centurion's servant was in great pain and experiencing a paralysis. A careful reading of the history of this event will be rewarded with refreshing insight into the nature of authority, and particularly the Authority of the kingdom of heaven which Jesus expressed through words.

### **Matthew 8:5-13**

**5. When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 6 "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." 7 Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."**

**8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.**

**9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.**

**11 I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.**

**12 But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." 13 Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go. It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour.**

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The Centurion understood authority. He was a man "under authority", meaning that he had received authority from the Roman empire to command the 100 soldiers under him. He was authorized to speak/command his people, and they were obliged to obey him. When he said, "Go!", the soldier went. If he said, "Come!", the soldier so directed came. His servant immediately performed the action directed by the Centurion. He understood the authority of the Roman Empire. He was under it himself, and he could speak/command activities within the scope of the authority delegated to him. However, the most amazing thing concerning the Centurion's observation was his understanding that Jesus could also exercise authority by speech. The Centurion spoke the authority he received from Rome and got immediate results. Jesus spoke the authority He received from Heaven and obtained immediate results. This man of such keen insight could command healthy servants, but he was powerless to command paralysis, or intense pain. Jesus, on the other hand, did not often command Roman soldiers but He continually expressed authority over sick-ness and suffering, and He did so by speaking to it. This explains the Centurion's eagerness to have Jesus simply speak to the paralysis and pain which was gripping the servant... "But **just say the word and my servant will be healed**".

Also, it is important to see that this authority of the kingdom of Heaven as expressed by Jesus was present in all the words He spoke. Read the Sermon on the Mount and when you come to **Matthew 7:28,29** you will read these words:

**28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.**

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Jesus spoke to the issues of attitude, motive, and interpretation of Scripture. As He spoke this otherworldly authority was present. His words penetrated to the dividing of spirit and soul. They entered and searched the thoughts and the intentions of all who heard them. Is it any wonder that the demons were compelled to blurt out their presence and beg for a delay to their final sentence? The listeners were "astounded" at the tremendous difference between the scribes' words and Jesus' words. Again, the authority of the kingdom was expressed through speech.

Where did this authority come from? And when did it come to Him? There is no credible evidence that Jesus manifested this authority over all of the laws of nature before His baptism, by John, in the Jordan River. He was very much the Son of God from the moment of His conception, but His baptism was in many ways the beginning of His ministry. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus in a bodily form and a voice from Heaven was heard commending Him as the Son of God. What happened immediately following this Baptism is what I want to discuss next. We find the chronology in **Luke 4:1-8:**

**1. Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, 2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. 3 The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." 4 Jesus answered, "It is written: `Man does not live on bread alone.'" {Deut. 8:3} 5 The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. 7 So if you worship me, it will all be yours."**

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**8 Jesus answered, "It is written: `Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" {Deut. 6:13}**

I visited this site in the fall of 1992. Located west of Jericho in a very rugged desert wilderness, the setting of this temptation of Christ is a very inhospitable place. Visitors today will see a distant monastery built into the side of a rugged mountain, apparently located to commemorate the event recorded by Luke. It is important when reading this account to remember that Satan is described by Jesus as **"a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" [Jn 8:44]** and, consequently, we do not believe everything he says. But this dialogue reveals an important choice in the earliest moments of our Lord's ministry. In a spiritual vision Jesus was shown all the splendors that this world is capable of bestowing. Imagine the glories of the ancient world, of Babylon, of Egypt, of Rome, and of ancient South America. Think of all the prestige of the modern positions of high society and political influence. Satan does not possess ultimate authority over the nations: God does. However, Satan does have a kingdom and a sphere of influence; and this was the kind of power he was offering to Jesus in return for worship. The choice that Jesus made was necessary background for the Centurion's request. The One who would express the authority of the kingdom of Heaven must first reject the enticements of the kingdom of this present world system. Think about it. If this choosing was necessary for the sinless, spotless Son of God, how much more is it an essential choice for us?

Before we proceed in this study it may be helpful to briefly address a few difficult questions: Was it possible for Jesus to have accepted Satan's offer? I believe the answer is, Yes. Was Jesus enticed by Satan in the sense that He (Jesus) found

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some parts of this Satanic offer attractive? I believe the answer is a resounding, No. In what way, then, was this a temptation? This was a test of the Holiness of Christ, and He passed with honors, meaning that His holiness was illuminated by means of the test. Satan tempts or entices to evil. James writes as follows:

**James 1**

**13. When tempted, no-one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;**

**14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.**

Satan enticed Jesus, but Jesus did not find Satan's offer enticing. Jesus was not attracted to the offer because nothing contained in the broad scope of the offer found a receptive place within the mind or spirit of our Lord. Jesus was free to accept the offer had He thought it appealing. He did not in any way, shape or form find it seductive. On the contrary, He deemed it revolting and disgusting in every way because our Lord's complete devotion was to **"do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."** [John 4:34](#)

One day a mother came to Jesus with an eager request. Her sons, James and John were both disciples and it is possible that her husband, Zebedee, was reasonably affluent. She knew that Jesus would reign as a king and she wanted her sons to be His foremost men. This is the narrative found in [Matthew 20:20-28](#):

**20. Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. 21 "What is it you want?" he asked. She**

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said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." 22 "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them.

"Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered. 23 Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father." 24 When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. 25 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 26 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 27 and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

They wanted authority, but according to Jesus they desired the wrong kind. Jesus contrasted the authority of the Gentiles [essentially the authority of this world] with the authority of the kingdom of God [the authority of the world to come]. The authority of this world is really a Satanic kind of authority which seeks power and dominion over others. Jesus described the prominent ones in the kingdom of Heaven as those who would be servants.

Returning in our thoughts to the Centurion who could wield the sword of Rome. This is the authority of the Gentiles, but it is helpless in the face of pain and suffering. Conversely, the authority of the Servant successfully commanded the paralysis and pain to leave -- and that from a distance. Many of us accept that Jesus is a King, that His kingdom is "not of this world", and that He expressed the authority of His kingdom by "fiat" (an authoritative command). After all, we

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reason, the Universe was created in this way -- it was spoken into existence.

**(Read Genesis 1)**

**3. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.**

**6. And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. 9. And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. 11 Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so.**

**14. And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, 15 and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. 20. And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." 24. And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. 26. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, {Hebrew; Syriac all the wild animals} and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.**

Now we turn to the question: Did/does Jesus delegate this authority of the kingdom of Heaven to His followers? That He exercised this authority there is no doubt, but did others also? Read **Luke 9:1,2:**

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**1. When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.**

Clearly, the twelve were authorized to command demons and diseases; AND, to preach the kingdom of God. They accomplished this by speech, by speaking it. Now this is particularly important. Jesus was a Man of prayer. The disciples would become men of prayer. Prayer is the Communion of the human spirit with God Himself. But in the face of demons, disease, and all the works of the devil, they (Jesus and the disciples) did not pray for healing and deliverance; they commanded healing and deliverance. Carefully observe this as we continue in the inspired Scriptures.

### **Luke 10:1,9,16-19**

**1. After this the Lord appointed seventy-two {Some manuscripts seventy; also in verse 17} others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. 9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.'**

**16 "He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me." 17. The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." 18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.**

**19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.**

The delegation of authority now includes the seventy sent ones. They accomplished their assignment by using the authority given to them, and they

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exercised this authority by speaking it/commanding it. They did not pray for the sick; they healed the sick by "speaking the word only". When confronted with demons, they did not pray that the demons would leave; they ordered the evil spirits to come out. The real key to their (disciples) power is found in verse **16** **"He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."**

When the seventy returned they joyfully reported that even the demons were subject unto them in the Name of Jesus. The Chain of Command is clearly stated in verse 16: During His earthly ministry, Jesus received Authority from His Father. When Jesus spoke, it was as if the Father spoke. Jesus also received from the Father the power to delegate this authority, and He did. When an authorized disciple spoke, it was as if Jesus spoke. Notice again verse 19 which clearly shows that the disciples were given authority over ALL the works of the enemy. They were not expected to pray for what was already given to them. They were instructed to use what they had received, and they used it by speaking it as commands.

Why is this authority seldom exercised today? There are two possible reasons. First, Jesus no longer wishes to delegate it (for whatever reasons). Second, Jesus has not changed His mind on it, but our spiritual vision is very weak and in great need of a new reformation. Which is most likely?

In the context of our study, it is very profitable to tour the Book of Acts. Was the authority of the kingdom of God present?

Did the disciples express that authority by speech? The following is a sampling from **Acts of the Apostles**:

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**Acts 3:6** Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

Read the entire account from your Bible. Notice the context.

Was prayer optional? No. They were on the way to prayer when confronted with the lame man. Did they pray for his healing? No. They commanded his healing based on "... **but what I have I give you**". The authority came from the Person of Jesus, the Christ, and was delegated to the Apostles, but it was necessary for Peter to use/apply/**speak** it.

**Acts 5:**

**9** Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look. The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

The history of Ananias and Sapphira is sobering indeed. Notice that the authority of the kingdom of God is, in this case, spoken forth as judgment. Remember. The Word of God is infinitely powerful, and when it is spoken by a person who is qualified to speak, it will accomplish the objective -- whether that be healing, deliverance, instruction in righteousness, or **judgment**.

**Acts 9:**

**34** "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and tidy up your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up.

There are no "ifs", "ands", or "buts". There is an order given in the Name of Jesus, and no degree of impediment may remain when it has been commanded

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to leave. Do not lose sight of the balance, however. The authority comes from the Lord, but it is exercised by the disciple.

### **Acts 9:**

**40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning towards the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.**

Notice the relationship of prayer and authoritative speech. First, Peter prays. Then, Peter speaks the command.

### **Acts 10:**

**44. While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.** The ministry of the Holy Spirit (baptism of the Holy Spirit) happened while the words were being spoken.

### **Acts 13**

**11 Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind, and for a time you will be unable to see the light of the sun." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand.**

Again, judgment is spoken. Read the entire account.

### **Acts 14**

**10 and called out, "Stand up on your feet." At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.**

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The power/authority of the spoken word is seen here in the preaching of the Gospel and in the ministry of healing.

### **Acts 16**

**18 She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so troubled that he turned round and said to the spirit, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her." At that moment the spirit left her.**

Paul may well have prayed concerning this situation which became a daily harassment, but the eviction of the evil spirit was accomplished by a spoken command -- not by prayer.

### **Acts 20**

**10 Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive." The boy was dead. The action of Paul is reminiscent of Elijah [1 Kings 17:21] and Elisha [2 Kings 4:34,35]. Paul then spoke the words, "his life is in him".**

### **Acts 28**

**8 His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him.**

Notice the sequence of events. First, Paul prayed. Second, Paul laid his hands upon Publius' father (the laying on of hands is an exercise of authority and claiming the person on behalf of the kingdom of God). Third, Paul healed him. The inspired scripture says that Paul healed him. No doubt this actual healing (restoration to wholeness) was accomplished by Paul as he commanded the healing.

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Keep the balance now. The authority originates with the Father and resides in the Person of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus delegates this authority to his disciples. The disciple expresses the authority of the kingdom of God into this world and its circumstances by speech -- the spoken command.

The next Article (Article No.2) will seek to address the questions:

What is the key to the delegation of this authority?

Why do we seldom see it manifested today?

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## **ARTICLE 2**

Article No.1 considered the expression of the authority of the kingdom of Heaven and presented Scriptural evidence to show that this authority was demonstrated by speech. The power/authority of Jesus' words was nothing less than the authority recorded in Genesis chapter one. This authority of the kingdom of God was delegated by our Lord to His disciples, and they, like their Master, manifested it by speech. This Article will seek to address the questions:

**What is the key to the delegation of this authority?**

**Why do we seldom see it manifested today?**

Reasonable questions will always discover a warm response from Scripture, and so we begin there. Acts chapter 6 introduces us to a problem. Administration within the Assembly of Believers was overloaded, and complaints were being voiced.

### **Acts 6:2-4**

**2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."**

Imagine a church leader today taking a similar position. What would most of the assembly say if he suggested that the ministry of the Word required all his time and energy? If one called to minister the Word today refused to chair the business meetings and distanced himself from all the executive responsibilities of the assembly, most malnourished members would consider him lazy and antisocial. The Apostles did not diminish the importance of the executive

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position. They insisted that the applicants must be "full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom". They did not resent this developing problem being brought to them. The Apostles' concern was that executive ministries would neutralize those called to minister the Word. If this should occur the spiritual power of the entire assembly would diminish, and the undernourished church would stumble and lose its way. DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

The Apostles (Special Messengers of Christ) must not permit anything to keep them from their primary function -- giving themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. The devil's quip that they could "be so heavenly minded that they would be of no earthly good" did not occur to them. Apparently, they didn't fear the *imbalance* that so concerned the local psychologist. **Continual dedication to prayer and the ministry of the word was the KEY to the wonderful power that accompanied the early Church.** We read about the practice of this early Church, but if someone today were to follow their example many would consider that person an extremist. We do not share their power/authority because we don't walk where they walked.

Jeremiah's contemporaries were proclaiming tidings of peace and Jeremiah was prophesying words of woe. Like ourselves, the Jewish people had the dubious option of selecting a preacher most to their liking -- and Jeremiah did not rate very high on the popularity chart. **Power/authority to speak in the Name of the Lord comes to a person who has had this Word given to them.**

From the following passage in Jeremiah another key is revealed -- STANDING IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD.

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### Jeremiah 23:16-18 & 21-23

16 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. 17 They keep saying to those who despise me, 'The LORD says:

You will have peace.' And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts they say, 'No harm will come to you.' 18 But which of them has stood in the council of the LORD to see or to hear his word? Who has listened and heard his word? 19 See, the storm of the LORD will burst out in wrath, a whirlwind swirling down on the heads of the wicked. 20 The anger of the LORD will not turn back until he fully accomplishes the purposes of his heart. In days to come you will understand it clearly. 21 I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied. 22 But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds. 23 "Am I only a God nearby," declares the LORD, "and not a God far away?"

Clearly, the choice of Jeremiah's contemporaries was to follow a prophet (so-called) who spoke a "vision" which originated with the human spirit, or heed a true prophet who proclaimed what he learned *while standing in the counsel of the Lord*. It was a fundamental requirement for a prophet: **HE MUST STAND IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD**. This, of course, required time, commitment, devotion, worship, obedience, and, to state it in Peter's words, *...giving themselves continually to prayer, and the ministry of the word*.

This is relevant now. Perhaps there have never been so many "helps" in sermon preparation and personal Bible study as exist today. Our shelves and tables are bulging with books and study guides from preschool to Master levels. But none

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of this is an adequate replacement for a Jeremiah, an Ezekiel, an Isaiah, or an Apostle Paul. The kingdom of darkness that surrounds the visible church of today is unimpressed with us and feels perfectly at ease to ignore or dismiss us. To that kingdom, we are a "religion" - not hugely different from any other "religion". We have little "power" with them. The "holiness" of our lives does not reprove them. Our "words" are falling to the ground all around them. We are like Scribes; we have no authority while we declare the counsel of God.

The person (man, woman, or youth) who stands in the counsel that Jeremiah stood in will not be ignored. The "holiness" of their life will reprove. That person's words will not fall to the ground but will penetrate like a double-edged sword. Like his master, *he will speak with authority, and not as the scribes.*

A person who would enter and stand in the counsel of the Lord, must do so by invitation. The motion must originate with God, not with us; but God has clearly spoken -- the door stands open. Perhaps we should be encouraged with the fact that the wonder of man speaking God's message with an otherworldly authority originates with God – not with us.

### **Revelation 4:1,2**

**1. After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."**

**2 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.**

### **Revelation 11**

**12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them,**

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**"Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.**

### **Revelation 17**

**1. One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters. 2 With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries." 3 Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns. Revelation 21**

**9. One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.**

Regardless of the differing interpretations of the Apocalypse (Revelation), there are spiritual principles uncovered here. The above passages contain the following: **an invitation** (Come Up Here. or, Come Here.); **a moving into the control of the Spirit** (...carried me away in the Spirit); **an opening to the human understanding of things that can only be seen from "up here" or "here"**. Is this not the message of our Lord in John 16:12-14? **12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear."**

**13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.**

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Without a vision people perish [Proverb 29:18]; however, the vision will come to the person who stands in the Lord's counsel. Only the one who responds to the invitation, "come up here" or, "come here", will be able to speak with the authority of the kingdom of Heaven. Carefully examine Jesus' words as He spoke to the religious leaders of the Jews:

### **John 8:38**

**38. I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father."**

Notice that the principle is the same, but the outcome is worlds apart. The Pharisees had spent time with their father and had been instructed by him. What they saw, they spoke. Jesus, also, spent considerable time with His Father and spoke the revelations He received. The difference is the distinction between day and night -- one is light while the other is darkness. Jesus' Father was and is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Pharisees, insisting that Abraham was their father, did not know that their father was the devil.

The Apostles were right when they insisted, "**we will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word**".

### **1 John 4:5,6a**

**5 They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us.**

The content and character of a person's speech reveals where they come from. Even as Peter's speech betrayed his Galilean roots (Matthew 26:73), so

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our speech indicates whether we are "of the world" or, "of God". There are, if you will, spiritual accents that give us away. If our words would penetrate the hearts of men and flush out the camouflaged demons lurking there, we must know from personal experience what it means to STAND IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD. Peter and John presented a profound principle with these words to the carnal chief priests and elders of Israel. **Acts 4:20**

**20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."**

Responsibility comes with the counsel of the Lord. When confronted with serious opposition, the Apostle Paul was admonished to speak.

### **Acts 18:9-11**

**9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no-one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.**

Read the following account from Ezekiel and see these spiritual principles applied here.

### **Ezekial 37:1-12**

**1. The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me to and fro among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. 3 He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "O Sovereign LORD, you alone know."**

**4 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, `Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5 This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath {The Hebrew for this word can also mean wind or**

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

spirit (see verses 6-14).} enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD." 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8 I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet--a vast army. 11 Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, `Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.' 12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: `This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel.

Here, again, we see:

**the invitation; the being carried away in the Spirit;**

**the revelation or vision that can only be seen from "here" or "up here"; the command to speak words that were given; the consequent impact upon material things, and their obedience to the word only.**

Perhaps the two questions at the beginning of this Article are the same question posed in two ways. Answer the first and the second is resolved also.

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

Could it be that the Lord has many more things to show us? Do we know, really know, the counsel of the Lord? Have we ever heard His word inviting us to the place of revelation? The Holy Spirit is dedicated to carrying us there. Speaking about the Holy Spirit, the Amplified Bible renders **John 16:15b** in this way: **He will take the things that are Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) them to you.**

Have the days of Signs and Wonders come to an end? OR, have we failed to STAND IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD?

The next Article (Article No.3) will focus on Samuel and Jeremiah and consider the operation of the Word of the Lord in and through them.

# SPEAK THE WORD ONLY

## ARTICLE 3

It would be difficult to reduce the previous Articles (Article No.1 & Article No.2) to a couple of sentences, but if we did they might read like this:

**The authority of the kingdom of Heaven is manifested by words.**

**The one who would speak those words must first STAND IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD.**

The Scriptures that Jesus and the Apostles so often quoted are found in the "Old Testament" section of our Bibles. On the road to Emmaus, the "Scripture" that Jesus opened to the two travelers was the inspired text from Genesis to Malachi. The record in Acts 18:24 describes Apollos as "mighty in the scriptures". This again refers to the Old Testament of our Bibles. When Paul and Peter opened the scriptures on the Lord's Day, they opened and preached from the Old Testament. It is somewhere written concerning the relationship of the New and Old Testaments: **The New is in the Old contained; and the Old is by the New explained.**

In this Article I want to feature the operation of the Word of the Lord within the Old Testament prophets, and the subsequent power of that word when spoken by them.

**1 Samuel 3:1-10 1. The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions. 2 One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple {That is, tabernacle} of the LORD,**

## SPEAK THE WORD ONLY

where the ark of God was. 4 Then the LORD called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am."

5 And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. 6 Again the LORD called, "Samuel." And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. 8 The LORD called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realised that the LORD was calling the boy. 9 So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel. Samuel." Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

There were periods of time within the scope of the Old Testament within which a powerful demonstration of the "Word of the Lord" was rare (uncommon). Samuel was born into such a time. Although the hand of the Lord was upon him from the moment of his conception, he did not **know the word of the Lord** until one very eventful night. It is one thing (and a very essential thing) to know scripture and understand doctrine; but it is another dimension yet to **know** the word of the Lord. This kind of **knowing** may occur while one is reading or studying -- but it may not. This kind of knowledge must come as a gift; it can not be taken by an act of unassisted human decision. To put it another way:

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

*Standing in the Counsel of the Lord* may involve some *Standing* and *Waiting* upon the Lord before the *Counsel* begins.

Verse 10 is reminiscent of the passage in **Revelation 3:**

**20 Here I am. I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.**

### **1 Samuel 3:19-4:1a**

**19. The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognised that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD. 21 The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.**

**1 Samuel 4 1a. And Samuel's word came to all Israel.**

Notice the pattern again. The Word of the Lord came and instructed; the instructed person spoke those words; the spoken words carried authority and always brought results. All of Israel (from North to South) knew that Samuel was a prophet (spokesman) of the Lord. Israel's knowledge was from the outside to the inside, i.e. they knew he was a prophet because his *words* did not fail. Samuel's knowledge was from the inside to the outside, i.e. he knew he was a prophet because he knew the *word* of the Lord. Israel looked at the outside of the cup, Samuel, at what was inside.

### **1 Samuel 9:6**

**6 But the servant replied, "Look, in this town there is a man of God; he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true. Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take."**

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

While Saul (who would later become king) and his companion were looking for lost donkeys, they came near to Samuel's city. Samuel's reputation is revealed by their comment recorded above.

**The authority of the man of God is expressed in what he says.**

### **Jeremiah 1:4-14**

**4. The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew {Or chose} you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." 6 "Ah, Sovereign LORD," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child." 7 But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a child.'**

**You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. 8 Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. 9 Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put my words in your mouth. 10 See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant." 11. The word of the LORD came to me: "What do you see, Jeremiah?" "I see the branch of an almond tree," I replied. 12 The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching {The Hebrew for watching sounds like the Hebrew for almond tree.} to see that my word is fulfilled." 13 The word of the LORD came to me again: "What do you see?" "I see a boiling pot, tilting away from the north," I answered.**

**13 The LORD said to me, "From the north disaster will be poured out on all who live in the land.**

Jeremiah's flesh cringed at the call of God. The real key to the prophet's ministry and any consequent success was verse 9, **"I have put my words in your mouth"**.

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

But notice verse 10 -Look at the enormous authority which was given to Jeremiah:

**"See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant."**

Jeremiah was "set" or "appointed" over these nations or kingdoms. He (Jeremiah) was appointed to "tear down" and to "build up", all according to the word of the Lord. The scripture gives Jeremiah's role in all this a much greater place than we do. We perceive a prophet as little more than a megaphone, or a mouthpiece that speaks for information purposes only. But Jeremiah was "appointed" to "uproot" and to "plant", and he accomplished this by speech. He spoke it, and it would come to pass. Remember in Ezekiel's vision of the valley of bones, that the action occurred as he (Ezekiel) spoke **what he was commanded to speak**. Political systems would rise and fall as Jeremiah spoke **what he was commanded to speak**.

John the Baptist came preaching **"repent for the kingdom of heaven is near"** [Matthew 3:2]. Do you ever wonder why true repentance seems rare in our day? The answer is clear: repentance is not being commanded by those who have the authority of the kingdom of Heaven. One cannot graduate from Seminary and automatically proclaim repentance with authority. He can only offer it as a suggestion until he has heard the word of the Lord on the subject (as John the Baptist did). Then, he will proclaim it with power, and suddenly the ability and inclination to repent will abound. Jesus came into the towns and villages **preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness among the people** [Matthew 4:23 & 9:35]. He, more than any other, knew the word of the Lord and where He proclaimed it, there was immediate manifestation.

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

Those people were not vastly different from people today. People we rub shoulders with each day could receive healing or repentance as quickly as they did if the word of the Lord was spoken today with authority. Remember, the Word of the Lord may be spoken to effect deliverance, healing, repentance, instruction in righteousness, or, judgment.

### **Jeremiah 1:17**

**"Get yourself ready. Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them.**

Speaking the word of the Lord to a rebellious and apostate people can be a fearful thing from the human perspective. Every effort will be made by some to silence that voice -- even if it requires murder. The cultured will seek to murder the reputation or credentials, while others will attempt the murder in more conventional ways. But the prophet will be safe if he continues to speak. His words are stronger than any opposition.

**18 Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land--against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. 19 They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for**

**I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD. [Jeremiah 1]**

Jeremiah was safe while he continued to speak. Nothing could silence him because the power of his words was greater than that of his adversaries. **This is the authority of the kingdom of God which our Lord has given to His Church.**

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The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is not provided with tanks and guns with which to subdue the enemy. ...

### **2 Corinthians 10**

**4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.**

### **Jeremiah 5:13,14**

**14 The prophets are but wind and the word is not in them; so let what they say be done to them." 14 Therefore this is what the LORD God Almighty says: "Because the people have spoken these words, I will make my words in your mouth a fire and these people the wood it consumes.**

This scripture is a very graphic metaphor. The words that Jeremiah spoke consumed the adversaries (false prophets and those who followed them) as fire consumes wood. If Jeremiah had followed the fears of his flesh the opposition would have eaten him for lunch. His name would have been forgotten, or worse - remembered for dishonor.

### **Jeremiah 20:8-11**

**8 Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. 9 But if I say, "I will not mention him or speak any more in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot. 10 I hear many whispering, "Terror on every side. Report him. Let's report him." All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him." 11 But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so my persecutors will**

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**stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonour will never be forgotten.**

The one who receives the word of the Lord in this manner inherits an awesome responsibility. There were times when Jeremiah determined that he had said enough, but retirement was not an option. He thought he would explode if he kept silent. Woe to the person who speaks without having received, and woe to the person who remains silent after having received.

### **Amos 3**

**7 Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets. 8 The lion has roared--who will not fear? The Sovereign LORD has spoken--who can but prophesy?**

These words are indeed significant. The Sovereignty of God has determined these things. Small wonder that a mortal man would feel that **...his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.**

Oh, that many today would be enabled to know the word of the Lord in this way. In theology we always see the "shadow" in the Old Testament and view the "substance" in the New Testament.

The shadow is the "type", and the substance is the "antitype".

Why, then, would the expression of the authority of the kingdom (government) of God be stronger in 627 BC than today? It is not intended to be so. We live on this side of the words, **"It is finished"**, and **"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,..."**

In the next Article (Article No.4) we will study **Mark 11:12-24**

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(the famous account of Jesus speaking to the leafy fig tree), and **Matthew 16:13-19** (the passage that records Jesus' statement to Peter concerning the "keys" of the kingdom).

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

### **ARTICLE 4**

Should someone conducting a survey ask you the following questions, how would you answer?

***Which of the following sources do you think offers the best explanation for the existence of the universe: Modern Science? Or, The Bible?***

***Do you accept the Biblical accounts of Noah, the Exodus, Samson, Jesus walking upon the water, and the resurrection of Christ as actual literal truth? or, as colorful fabrications intended to promote the authority of the writer's religion?***

***When you interpret the Scriptures which of the following best describes your state of mind: Subjective? or, Objective?***

***Would you describe yourself as a Deist? a Theist? or, an Atheist?***

There can be no doubt how an overwhelming majority of Evangelicals would respond to these questions. We would be a bulwark of orthodoxy. However, it remains obvious that the "soundness of faith" of the twentieth century is the "apostasy" of the first century. We have lost (or fallen away from) some of the fundamentals of the Faith.

A "Deist" believes in a Supreme power purely on the grounds of logic. To him, "Atheism" is unreasonable. He does not, however, accept the Bible as the authoritative word on this Supreme power. His credo is like that of Alcoholics Anonymous; it is god as I understand him to be. His *god* created the universe and left it to run on its own, much as a watchmaker governs his trade. Man,

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according to the Deist, is a product of the earth and is subject to the natural laws which govern him.

A "Theist" is quite different. He believes in God Who has revealed Himself as the "maker" and "maintainer" of the universe. He does not believe in "a god as one imagines him to be", but in "God as He has revealed Himself to be"; AND, that this revelation is in the inspired scriptures. A Theist also believes that the *final* word on the potential of man is dictated by the word of God and not by the impersonal laws of nature.

The gospel of the kingdom of Heaven as proclaimed by Jesus and His disciples, undeniably promotes the truth of "Theism". Jesus affirmed the authority of Scripture. He declared that God is a Person Who can be spoken to and heard. Jesus taught that "cause" is in the spiritual realm and is not primarily rooted in the natural order. He repeatedly demonstrated the authority of the kingdom of God over all spiritual dominions and over the natural order; AND, HE DEMONSTRATED THAT AUTHORITY THROUGH SPEECH.

Now think about this. We claim to be "Theists", but our speech and behavior identify us as "Deists". We are like a statue of yesterday's hero -- in perfect form and position, but incapable of a repeat performance. We look and sometimes act the part but have no real fire inside. We cannot heal the sick, raise the dead, or send out demons. Few are convinced of sin or instructed in righteousness by our preaching, and our assemblies are infected with the same kinds of moral rot as are the heathen around us. Counselors have become our prophets; the psychology manual has replaced the word of the Lord. We are "standing in the way of sinners" -- NOT STANDING IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD.

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Listen to the word of the Lord.

**Mark 11:12-14 12. The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. 13 Seeing in the distance a fig-tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. 14 Then he said to the tree, "May no-one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.**

This event occurred on Monday morning (day after Palm Sunday) during the week of the Crucifixion. Fig trees (like our apple trees) ripen at varying times. The leaves and the figs usually came at the same time, and even though the general time of figs had not yet come, the appearance of abundant leaves promised fruit also. Time is short now and Jesus is much more interested in teaching the disciples than he was in figs. With this in mind, He spoke to the tree, "**May no-one ever eat fruit from you again.**" Verses 15-19 tell us what happened in Jerusalem that day, and His return that evening to Bethany (the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus).

**Mark 11:20-24 [NIV]**

**20 In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig-tree withered from the roots. 21 Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look. The fig tree you cursed has withered." 22 "Have {Some early manuscripts If you have} faith in God," Jesus answered.**

**23 "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. 24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.**

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The following morning (Tuesday) as Jesus and the disciples were walking to Jerusalem, they saw the same fig tree. It was "withered" from the roots (or including the roots), and Peter remembered. It had only been 24 hours since Jesus had **spoken** to it. This is the power/authority of the word of God. This is the authority of the kingdom of Heaven which is manifested by speech. Verse 22 is translated in several ways, which indicates the challenge the text presents. Here is verse 22 in three more translations. Read carefully.

**[KING JAMES] 22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.**

**{Have...: or, Have the faith of God}**

**[JOHN DARBY'S TRANSLATION] 22 And Jesus answering says to them, Have faith in God.**

**[YOUNG'S LITERAL TRANSLATION]**

**22 And Jesus answering saith to them, `Have faith of God;**

Jesus did not say to Peter, "I did this because I am the Son of God". He immediately recognizes a "teachable moment" and directs Peter (and the others) to the **kind** of faith necessary to speaking the authority of the kingdom of God. It is essential to have faith in God. BUT this is not exactly what Jesus is saying. The literal words (which tend to boggle our minds and tempt us to lighten up on the translation) are: **HAVE FAITH OF GOD**. This is the **kind** of "confidence" that God has. When God speaks, He does not then wonder "if" or "when" or "how" it will happen. God knows. God is supremely confident. His confidence, however, is founded upon His infinite knowledge and wisdom. It is this dimension that Jesus is bringing before His disciples -- and through them,

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before us also. "How", we might ask, "is it possible for finite man to experience this **kind** of faith"? There can be only one answer: **BY STANDING IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD AND LISTENING TO HIS WORDS; BY BEING INTRODUCED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO THE THINGS THAT "EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD"**.

As it is written:

### **1 Corinthians 2**

**9** However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"-- {Isaiah 64:4} **10** but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. Jesus continued to present this teaching in

### **Mark 11:23,24**

**23** "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. **24** Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

It matters not who the person is. Where or when they live is unimportant. Their age, sex or education is not an issue. What does matter is that the **speaker** has no doubt in his/her heart.

While this was being written the Olympic Winter Games were proceeding in Norway. The athletes were all struggling for confidence; it seemed so elusive. The Gold goes to the confident. But this confidence does not just show up by some accident. It is developed. It is based on what the athlete **knows** he/she can do, and this **knowledge** is gained in training.

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In a similar yet quite different way, the disciple of our Lord is called to spiritual training. Only the revelation of the Spirit of God can remove the paralyzing doubt from our hearts. While considering these scriptures it becomes increasingly clear that the *primary* issue is the experience of the heart (spirit), not the words alone. Jesus said,

**24 "God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth."**

### **John 4**

The realm of the spirit of God must become more familiar to the disciple. Jesus commanded a lack of doubt in matters most of us find impossible to believe. How can I have no misgivings when commanding that which defies all that I consider *normal*? My experience must be broadened. I must go with the Spirit and learn how to worship closer to the front in the school of Divine revelation. If we wait until the world to come, who will speak in power to this one?

Now we come to a very instructive scripture for this series of Articles.

### **Matthew 16:13-19 [niv]**

**13. When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" 14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"**

**16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, {Or Messiah; also in verse 20} the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you that you are Peter, {Peter means rock.} and on this rock I will**

## SPEAK THE WORD ONLY

**build my church, and the gates of Hades {Or hell} will not overcome it. {Or not prove stronger than it}**

**19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be {Or have been} bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be {Or have been} loosed in heaven."**

This location (today called "Banias") is in the extreme north of Israel. All forms of the Occult had been practiced in that region for many generations, and it was a perfect place for the revelation concerning Jesus' identity to be given to Peter. **"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"**, exclaimed Peter.

Now the great significance of Peter's response was this: he had not learned the answer from man; it was revealed to him by God. I do not think it would be stretching the text to say that Jesus was trilled. **"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven"**, Jesus said. The literal Greek is "happy" are you Simon. Now verses 18 & 19 have been misunderstood by many for centuries. I will present these two verses from the **New International Version, Young's Literal Translation, and The Amplified Bible:**

### **Matthew 16:18,19 [NIV]**

**18 And I tell you that you are Peter, {Peter means rock.} and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades {Or hell} will not overcome it. {Or not prove stronger than it} 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be {Or have been} bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be {Or have been} loosed in heaven."**

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### Verses 18,19 [YLT]

18 `And I also say to thee, that thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build my assembly, and gates of Hades shall not prevail against it; 19 and I will give to thee the keys of the reign of the heavens, and whatever thou mayest bind upon the earth shall be having been bound in the heavens, and whatever thou mayest loose upon the earth shall be having been loosed in the heavens.'

### Verses 18,19 [AMPLIFIED]

18 And I tell you, you are Peter [Petros, masculine, a large piece of rock], and on this rock [Petra, feminine, a huge rock like Gibraltar] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (the powers of the infernal region) shall not overpower it -- or be strong to its detriment, or hold out against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind -- that is, declare to be improper and unlawful -on earth must be already bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth -- declare lawful -- must be what is already loosed in heaven. [Isa. 22:22]

It is important to see that Jesus was not promising to build His church on Peter. The name Peter (Petros) means "a large rock". But Jesus said that He would build His church on "Petra" which means "a gigantic sized rock". We would recognize this as something like the difference between a "large stone" and a "huge boulder".

The immovable foundation upon which Jesus is promising to build His church (assembly) is the thrilling dynamic which Peter had just demonstrated -- **revelation from God and not from man**. The church is built upon divine revelation. The universal assembly of disciples is founded upon the principle that its members are "taught of God" and not simply "converts of men". No one becomes a part of this assembly by simply following someone's "steps to

## **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY**

salvation". Both entrance into the church and effective service within it, require this heavenly tutoring.

### **John 6**

**45 It is written in the Prophets: `They will all be taught by God.' {Isaiah 54:13} Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.**

### **Hebrews 8**

**11 No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, `Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.**

### **1 John 2**

**27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit--just as it has taught you, remain in him.**

It is this God-taught church that triumphs over Hades. Read the scriptures again. This church is not primarily in a defensive mode but an offensive one. The word picture is not that of a besieged church hanging on with its fingernails until it is rescued at the second advent. The text is clearly saying that the gates of Hades (the infernal region) can not successfully repel the advancing church. The gates of Hades will fall, and evil will be put to flight. This is the picture, AND WHAT A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT IT IS.

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Now, the one who is "taught of God", and not just an adherent to man-made convention, is the person who holds the keys of the kingdom of heaven. This is not a carnal display of human aggression. It is far from the fancy, fast talking, power personality that so easily commands the attention of undiscerning evangelicals today. The person who holds the keys of the kingdom of heaven and is enabled to "bind" (declare unlawful) and "loose" (declare lawful), is the person who has heard these declarations in the heavens. This means that this person has **"BEEN TAUGHT OF GOD", "HE HAS HEARD A VOICE SAYING `COME UP HITHER"', HE HAS STOOD IN THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD.**

Do not be puffed up by those who would "pep-talk" you into thinking that you are "really something special" in Christ. All of this "raw, raw" from the human side has not benefited the church much, and it certainly has not dented the gates of Hades.

**NOW, our position IS in Christ.** He is our life. He is the only way to the Father. **My caution here is simply this: authority to command in the name of Jesus is the consequence of hearing those declarations from heaven, not the result of human motivation.**

I will close this Article with this thought. It is possible, of course, to read and study these things and be unchanged by them. It might be likened to viewing an inviting garden from your living room window and then turning back to the usual demands of daily chores. A time-out from the routine is necessary to walk in the garden and enjoy its sights and sounds. So too, a dedicated time to "Practice the Presence" of God is essential if we would enjoy the "sights" and the "sounds" there. "To whom much is given, much is required", Jesus said. **How much has been given to you?**