



**The**

**Church:**

**Triumphant**

**in Christ!**

**Living TRUTH Publications**

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The Church Triumphant in Christ

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# The CHURCH: TRIUMPHANT in CHRIST!

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*Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ephesians 3:8-11)*

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (Ephesians 1:18-23)*



# Authors Preface

The following pages of this booklet contain one viewpoint of a subject that has been studied and discussed for ages. For centuries, individuals and movements have attempted to recapture the glory and grace of the early church. This hunger and thirst after truth has spawned many diverse methods and concepts of what the adherents believed to be true New Testament Church life.

There is no question that many have risen to higher heights in the wonderful life of the Saviour, but we believe that the time has come for a more widespread advancement of His Kingdom in the earth.

It is therefore our hope that what you are about to read will not only inspire you, but also challenge you to find a deeper, richer experience of Christ in His Body for yourself. If anyone is offended after reading some of the controversial subject matter enclosed, we hope it will be only temporary. Perhaps in time, such a one will begin to hear His Voice in spite of the weaknesses of the vessel He uses.

In view of the urgency of the hour, we must risk the chance of misunderstanding, in order for important issues to be addressed. Therefore, I ask your forgiveness in advance, if by chance any pain is caused in the Body of Christ. It is not our intention to bring pain, but increased understanding. May we approach the following subject with great humility, but also in the boldness of the Living Word of God.

No one has the last word concerning the purposes of an All-knowing and infinitely wise Almighty God. By sharing in true love and communion, may we together come somewhat closer to His Perfect Truth, embracing the wonder of His Glorious Person.



## ***THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT!***

### ***Part 1: In the beginning...***

From the earliest days of recorded history, individuals have received glimpses from heaven of a powerful and Holy people. We have seen how Israel was chosen by God for His purposes and in many ways was used mightily by Him to demonstrate His glory to the world. While time has continued to march on, so the prophets of God have relentlessly spoke of even greater days to come! It was John the Baptist who became the final one to proclaim the coming of the Messiah, the anointed One of God, and a time when righteousness, peace and joy would reign in the earth.

When Jesus appeared on the public scene, John knew Who He was by the sign of the Holy Spirit lighting on Him as a dove. Immediately John proclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world!" That moment ushered in an era in which the mysteries that Holy men have spoken of for thousands of years would begin unfolding! Who could have forseen the events that would follow as Jesus the Christ would signal the end of the reign of sin over all humanity!

The greatest irony of all was that the Ever-living One must die! After having brought so many out of spiritual, emotional and physical death, it became His turn to plunge into its deepest depths. Why did He of all people have to suffer such a death? Even His captors admitted that He had done nothing to deserve it, but it was the will of God. By His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection He accomplished so many wonderful things. Time and space would not permit us to explore them all here, but for now we will consider the wonder of....

### ***THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH***

One day, some Greeks had approached His disciples that they might see Jesus. When this news came to Him, He made a strange statement: *"and Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal"* (John 12:23-25).

These words must have caused Philip and Andrew to shudder. Why must He leave us in order for these Greeks to see Him? Why must death always precede life? They were to learn the answers to these questions soon, after being plunged into the darkest hours of human history. This principle was to be permanently and unerasably engraved into every fiber of their beings, and they were also to witness it in its glorious operation. The death and resurrection of Jesus meant much more to them than a place and time when their sins were removed and eliminated. To them it would become a way of life. Every day they would begin to experientially understand more accurately the meaning of these words and the power they possessed. Then they would begin to realize that even *they* needed to **see Jesus!** Up until that time they saw a man who could walk on water and feed the multitude, but shortly after that time, fifty days after the coming Passover to be exact, they would see Him fully glorified!

When Jesus hung on the cross, He said "It is finished," and the Lamb of God completed His mission. But His work in humanity had just begun. Soon that mighty '*Corn of Wheat,*' would begin to multiply, that He might do even greater works! On the day of Pentecost, He the Spirit of Truth entered into the hundred and twenty and transformed these lowly followers of the humble Nazarene into the Living, Powerful Church of Jesus Christ, who would boldly trash the gates of hell in His Name!

This is the *ecclesia*, that "called-out" assembly of Holy ones that Jesus purchased with His own blood! This is the army of God, that laughs at fear, defeat and death! This is the living, breathing Body of Jesus Christ that continues to walk the earth even today! This is the answer to the cry of those ancient Greeks as well as of all humanity -- "***We would see JESUS!***"

When Paul, the beloved New Testament apostle, first encountered Jesus, where do you think he found Him? As far as the records we have today can tell us, we don't know for sure if he ever met the man, Jesus of Nazareth. When he was struck blind on the road to Damascus by His Glory and heard His Voice, Paul, who was then called Saul, asked the Lord who He was. Then the answer came, and it became obvious that this was not Saul's first encounter with Christ. "***I am Jesus — whom you are persecuting,***" the voice thundered back. How could he have been persecuting the risen, ascended Christ? It was only His followers that Saul was persecuting -- **or was it?**



The undisputed fact that would later change Saul's life and mold him into one of the most powerful men in history was that *Jesus had always been there!* He has been wherever two or three are gathered in His Name. He fell to the ground to plant seeds of Himself in all of us, and now He is rising up in us all, just as He did in those early disciples who Saul was shutting up in prison and having murdered! Why do you persecute *Me*? Why do you inhibit *ME*? Why do you tie Me up and bind Me within centuries of religious ritual? **I am alive!** **I am among you!** I am ready to come forth in a mighty way if you will just release Me and **let Me be Lord!**

Why do you think Paul was so passionate for the church? Why did he labor to keep her a chaste virgin? Why did he emphasize over and over the need for *every individual* to realize his or her function in the Body of Christ? It was because HE WANTED TO SEE JESUS TOO! Oh, how he longed for the Lord to be seen in His Church more and more. This man spent his life traveling across Europe in pursuit of his mission from God. He was a man with a hunger, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled! Paul was used by the Lord to raise up this Ecclesia in every area that was ripe for it, and he relentlessly trained others to lay down their lives for this beautiful lady, the Bride of Christ. In his heart he could see the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, high on the mountain for all the world to see. Every threat to his life, every long strenuous day, seemed insignificant to the hope of seeing Christ fully revealed in this wonderful body of Jews and gentiles from every nation and culture. And this hope drove him to a full and powerful life and testimony for his Lord.

It is very important for us to realize in this day, that to Paul, Christ and His Body were inseparable. In many cases they were synonymous. Christ, the Messiah, or Anointed One, IS A MANY-MEMBERED BODY! His Body is THE CHURCH. The Church is HIS BRIDE, the Holy City, the fullness of HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL! (1 Cor. 12:12, Eph.1:22-23, 5:24-32, Rev. 21:9,10)

It is also important for us to see that Paul was not referring to what 20th century Americans normally picture when they think of "the church." We call many denominations "churches," and we speak of Pastor 'so and so's' "church," but Paul's reference was to something much greater and more glorious! Brick or wood buildings lined with pews and other furnishings can only provide a place for the church to meet, and not a very appropriate place at that!

The word for "church" is actually *ecclesia* in the original Greek (Strong's G1577), and it refers to **a people** that are "called out" together! This Church that Paul envisioned and labored for, is the very same Church that Jesus Himself is building upon a solid rock, against which the gates of Hell will not prevail!

The early Church was a people filled with power and life. They were not only baptized in the water and the Holy Spirit, but they were surrounded within and without by His Holy Fire! They were swimming in the same endless river that Ezekiel saw -- in over their heads -- baptized into the Living Body of Christ! Their lives were intertwined in ways no one could express or even imagine. When one suffered, they all felt the pain. When one was on the mountain top, they all rejoiced together! In this way they grew and grew and grew into an ever-increasing demonstration of God's Love in the earth!

The subject of this writing is really about a higher and deeper dimension of living. If you can hear what I am saying, the Christ as a people is truly an experience. It is a powerful and life changing experience. The Church of Jesus Christ is so far above the routine that most of us have known that there are almost no similarities. We are not at all speaking of a quiet, docile gathering of people that are out of touch with the turmoils of the world. Even though they have been translated into a dimension of unspeakable peace and joy, they have not in any way forgotten their mission! That mission has always been to give and love and even die for the cause of bringing resurrection life to all of humanity! And in this giving they continue to experience more and more of their Love for HIM!

Who would not hesitate to become lost in the Love our wonderful Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ? Is it not His all-consuming Love that engulfs us all? Is not knowing Him more desirable than anything that this world or religion have to offer? Have we not finally found the One for Whom our hearts have yearned?

Let all of creation sing for joy with praise unto His Lovely Name, but most of all, let His Bride come to know Him ever so intimately! Let us embrace Him and receive His great Love for us. Let us together seek to satisfy His enormous Heart! Then and only then will we recover that which has been lost to us since the days when the Church was young.

## ***Part 2: THE 20th CENTURY CHURCH: ....IN THE UPPER ROOM***

The birth of the early church was preceded by many days of prayer and supplication to God by the 120 who assembled together. It is my conviction that the *rebirth of the Church* will also come as a result of this kind of spiritual activity. It is a fact that the Holy Spirit has always been at work in the earth to bring human hearts back to a relationship with their Heavenly Father. It is also evident that today He is drawing many into a deeper commitment to Him and the corporate expression that He desires in both the local and the universal Church. One of the most important tools to be used in this work is intense, focused, white hot and fervent prayer.

It is time for God's people to look around them and sense the urgency of the hour. These are days that require both a vision and the zeal to carry out that holy mission. As we all enter our prayer closets both privately and collectively, we will become touched by the heart of God. That touch will fill us with His fire to accomplish our cleansing as well as empower us to demonstrate His Truth in the earth. In this state of being, all of the earthly distractions that previously hindered us become powerless. What freedom is found in serving only Him! And what a joy it is to know that serving Him is something that actually comes very natural to us all, as we flow in the gifts He has planted in each of us!

Many Christians have become well versed in the Bible and many are learning to understand the workings of the human mind and personality. Knowledge is a wonderful thing, and should not be depreciated. It is possible, however, that it might get in the way of God's purpose if not surrendered to Him in a prayerful relationship. With all of the knowledge and organization the modern church possesses, it appears that the power it once had displayed is missing. I am convinced that His power can be restored **today**, as we humble ourselves before Him and hear what He is saying to His Church in this hour!

The Spirit of God is not going to breathe life into our old ways of doing things. He will not put NEW WINE into OLD BOTTLES! That is why we must submit more fully to His direction **and** correction, as we wait before Him in prayer. Changes are taking place both internally and externally as He molds and shapes our motives and character and redirects many of our habits and practices. The simplicity of Christ is replacing the centuries of complexity that man has heaped upon the Church. A flaming love and passion for Him and His people will consume the years of cold liturgy that has

preoccupied so many. He is reclaiming His Bride for Himself! He **will** present her to Himself -- a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, flawless in His eyes!

The change that is taking place among God's people has already begun. Many have already been in the crucible of His dealings and have been birthed into a new-found freedom in Him. They are communicating to others around the world who share similar experiences, and are laboring for a breakthrough in the Body of Christ at large. The following words are a result of much sharing with others and personal travail. They are by no means the final word on the subject, but by the grace of God I hope to share both the fire and the vision with you, as this is my function in His Body.

### ***Part 3: WRITE THE VISION DOWN, AND MAKE IT PLAIN....***

There are some very practical points that need to be made concerning the functioning of the Body of Christ. The fact that it is declared by Paul to be the fullness or completion of God, Who fills all in all, becomes meaningless as a mere doctrine. The reality of this fact needs to be experienced in us and expressed to the world. The importance of its purpose in the plan of God cannot be overemphasized enough, in a day when the Church of Jesus Christ appears to be impotent and weak against the forces of corruption and death that are at work every day. There must be some vital principles applied, that will lift these truths up from the academic and into the experiential. With His help we will attempt to expose some of these principles that have been largely neglected.

Just what is the vision? The vision is one of a world-wide family of believers who are connected to one another in their humanity and in their divinity. They are the offspring of God. They share with one another in an unreserved fashion. They have a completeness and a uniqueness as they come together to experience the Lord Jesus Christ collectively. They have His Life flowing among them for healing and strength. They practice the reality of His Love every day. In them, Jesus is revealed in both sensational and ordinary ways. They are individual parts of the Body of Christ, growing together unto the measure of the stature of His fullness.

All of these factors are present in groups of believers everywhere now, but the time has come for an overflowing of His Life that will in fact transform the nations! A number of concepts and practices must first be broken down for the 20th century church to reclaim her inheritance in Christ. The reality of what I am writing has already been experienced in what we sometimes refer to as heathen lands. Some of the churches in these countries are not so burdened with the handicaps of religious traditions. Many simply receive and live in the glory of Christ alone. Unfortunately, the "civilized" missionaries we have sent to them often bring more than the Gospel to the nations. Soon what transpires is merely a carbon copy of our own misconceptions. What a tragedy!

God is in the process of preparing a new wineskin into which He can pour the last and best wine of His Spirit. In this new structure there will be discipline and order, but also a freedom and informality that expresses His Life. There

will be unity but also great diversity, and an appreciation for the varied expressions of His Life. This will require a strong commitment from all of those involved, but the benefits will be immeasurable. There will be no spectators here. Everyone has a place of importance and will enjoy the flowing of God's Life through them in their own unique way.

His Body is the fullness of Him that fills all things, and He will demonstrate this reality to all. The Church that Jesus is erecting is a 24 hour experience. No building or time frame designated by humans can contain it. As it naturally comes to full growth in Christ, all secular and religious kingdoms will be threatened. The heathen will rage, and imagine a vain thing, but any resistance to the mighty Church of God will be useless. What an adventure! May we all rise up to heed His Call!

**Part 4:**

**THE CHIEF SHEPHERD**

First and foremost, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of His Body. All direction comes from Him. He alone is the Chief Shepherd of His sheep and the Master Builder of His house. There are no overlords in God's Kingdom.

Over the years, when the different moves of God began to subside, men began to concern themselves with some of the problems that arose. In some cases, very complicated governmental structures evolved that were designed to keep order. In many cases they were effective, but the major flaw in this concept is in the frailty of the people themselves. When men and women are given this kind of power it almost always clouds their judgment. The history of Israel is full of examples of this principle. When the leaders walked with God, things were somewhat better, but we have today a *new covenant*, which stands on a much firmer foundation.

What do you do in a kingdom in which all of the subjects are of royal descent? What happens in a religion wherein all of the participators are priests? Well, Jesus laid out a principle in the Gospels according to Matthew and Luke that flies in the face of virtually every church organization in the world!

*And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that **exercise authority** upon them are called benefactors. But **ye shall not be so**: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serve {Luke 22:24-27}.*

*But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great **exercise authority** upon them. But it shall **not be so among you**: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many {Matthew 20:25-28}.*

There is a great need today for true servants to attend to the needs of the Royal Family. These have never been, and will never be their sheep. Those who are more mature and responsible are commanded to tend ***the flock of God!*** (Acts 20:17,28; 1 Peter 5:1-5). In the New Testament times there was no hierarchy of pastors and bishops that made the decisions for the people. There were only servants who submitted themselves to the dealings of God and won His approval. They had no earthly government but the trust that Christ would rule in their midst. They all submitted to one another in reverence to Him! As people who knew and prophesied in part, they made mistakes, but when God brought the solution through one whom we might have considered as from a lower rank, they recognized him.

Consider the example of Peter and Paul. From the beginning, Peter began to stand out as a great leader. Some today even consider him to be the first Pope! Then along comes Paul, who seemed to be playing by a totally different set of rules among the gentiles. Being a latecomer, not having been trained with the original twelve, nor trained by them, some might have not even taken him seriously. Peter was sensitive enough to recognize the hand of the Lord on the man's life, to the point that he even received correction from Paul. In many circles today, Paul would have been excommunicated for this lack of respect for authority, but Peter recognized the **service** rendered unto him (Galatians 2:11; 2 Peter 3:16).

Peter practiced the principle of obeying those who have the rule over you, ***who have spoken to you the Word of God!*** The authority of God does not issue out from an office, but from His Word that proceeds from an anointed and consecrated vessel! That individual may be of low stature among the well educated and aristocratic, but one who serves the Lord out of a meek and humble heart has the powers of heaven behind his or her words! Their very presence can emanate the authority of God Himself!

It is time for us to re-examine every present form of church government in the light of Jesus' words. Even those forms that we have derived from New Testament passages have been greatly contaminated by false conceptions we have had concerning spiritual authority. How could we have overlooked the fact that every believer in Christ has a unique relationship with Him and is a leader in his own right as he follows Christ? Where did we get the idea that a man could be the head of any local gathering, usurping the place of Christ Himself?



When men and women begin to truly experience Jesus Christ as Lord and King, the Master and Maker of the universe, their hearts become filled with a tremendous sense of awe. We first learned that He loved us so, and forgave us of our sins, but now we understand that He is **everything** to us! No man-made religious system could ever satisfy us again, for He has come to us **Himself!** Lord Jesus, send us messengers who have spent time with **You**, who rejoice only in Your union with Your precious bride! Bring back those who can bear witness to the truth of Your resurrection Life mightily, in both **word and deed!**

It is true, Christ did give gifts unto men (not titles). These gifts are important and are for a specific purpose. That purpose is not to exercise authority over people, but to equip the Holy Ones to serve others for the glory of God. These gifted leaders are not to do all of the work themselves. But by holy example, they encourage servanthood in all of us, activating all of the gifts mentioned in Paul's writings (and also the myriad of gifts not mentioned). Then together we can all come unto the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, as each joint supplies nourishment to the next (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Believe me, this concept really works. Holy men and women and children can come together under Christ's Headship. Those from different lifestyles and backgrounds can be joined together as members of His Body with His Life flowing in and through and among them. Out of this environment will come an expression of the Living Christ that the world has not seen since the first century. In this fertile ground, the 30, 60, and 100 fold increase mentioned in the parable of the sower will be produced, and the Heart of God Himself will rejoice in His great Harvest!

### ***THE HARVEST IS RIPE!***

There is a great need for laborers in the kingdom of God. That is exactly why the prevailing church structure needs to change. The clergy-laity concept is still with us all these years after the reformation, whether we care to admit it or not. Church meetings continue to be filled with spectators and the preachers continue to perform for them. Sure, God has used these methods in the past, but He is now at work to open the ministry to every member. Jesus commanded us to **make disciples** of all nations -- not pew warmers! The work that God intends to do in the earth requires total participation. The excitement and adventure that a minority have been enjoying is to be shared by all, as each of us functions in our holy calling in Christ!

Those who are called to leadership in the Body of Christ have a tremendous responsibility. To become an example to the flock does not require ordination from a man, but one does need a relationship with the Lord that is working in your everyday life. Be assured that people will be inspired by a life that is totally given over to the Holy Spirit and His dealings. Your congregation is wherever you happen to be, and your life and testimony being more powerful than any sermon or song. Don't misunderstand me, these things are also important and have their place. The only problem is that they have become more important to us in many cases than true Body Life.

There is a new song to be sung in this new day! It can only be heard in Zion, the City of the Living God! The inhabitants of the captivity cannot understand the words, but soon all will hear and share its verses together! Oh, heavenly Jerusalem! Oh, City of Peace and freedom! May we never forget you and your beauty after having been away for so long! May our hearts be filled with the vision of your glory. May the nations bask in His Light that shines through you!

**Part 5:**

***NO MORE LABORING IN VAIN!***

Have you ever become weary of your labors in the Lord? Maybe it is time you entered into His Rest. His yoke is easy and His burden is light, but it is definitely not a boring one. The Lord Himself is building this house, and we are laborers together with Him. That is, we participate in the growth of His ever-expanding Kingdom, as we flow in His purpose for us.

Every one of you has a spiritual gift and a purpose in His household. The exercise of that gift will life others and bless you as it flows through you. In this way we contribute to the growth of that living organism known as the Body of Christ. The need in this hour is for us to abandon many of our old concepts of ministry and simply abide in the flow of His life. It may be necessary to question, challenge, prove or disprove the validity of all of our present church concepts and practices. Then perhaps we will be liberated from the traditional thinking that has limited us and drained us of life and energy.

Building in the wrong house is both frustrating and wasteful. Building in God's kingdom may be challenging, but nothing could be more fulfilling. In Haggai 1:1-14 the story is told of a group of people who left off of building God's House in order to pursue their own goals and desires. Because of this, not only was God's purpose neglected, but the efforts the people made on their own projects failed as well. The principle of seeking first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness was not adhered to. Therefore the necessities and blessings of life were not later added unto them.

Many of us have expended a lot of energy building religious and secular houses that have not prospered. When will we see that no true spiritual contribution made towards the building up of Christ's Living Body will ever be in vain? Out here patching up one leak will not prevent another leak from springing up somewhere else. But God's House is a sure thing, and the prosperity we find in it will enhance not only our lives but also many of those about us.

Fortunately, in this story God sent some prophets to speak His Word and stir up the people. They all recommitted themselves to the House of God. In modern terms, the Lord is stirring us up to begin working on more important

and relevant goals. Somehow the fire of this Word and vision from God consumes us and releases us from the useless and meaningless pursuits unto which we might have given ourselves. Then we begin to realize exactly the what, the where, and the how of God's plan for our lives and we become highly motivated. This motivation is the Zeal of the Lord that energizes us in the glorious quest of giving, loving and serving others on behalf of Christ. The end result is a kingdom that cannot be moved, which is crushing death in every form. In this kingdom, no one has time for envy, strife, boredom, and worldly vices. Their lives are filled with meaning, purpose, and the joy and satisfaction of activities in which the Lord Himself is involved.

Let's get practical here. It is not enough to be excited and motivated. We must be able to see in at least some way, how our participation contributes to the building up of Christ's glorious Church, the Household of God. How many times have we been stirred up by an inspiring message to move out in the work of the Lord, but no specific direction is given? Often we might picture ourselves doing what others are doing, but we become frustrated upon finding that type of function to be unnatural for us. In many circles most of the traditional roles are already filled, leaving the rest to become passive observers. This follows with a sense of guilt from missing God's best or even jealousy towards the one who is in the limelight. Let's be honest. Do we really need one more pulpit preacher or teacher? The harvest is truly great, and laborers are needed, but God has a work for you to do that no one else can do!

The placing of more importance on one individual in the Body of Christ over another is clearly condemned by Christ and the apostles, but this mentality is found everywhere in the Christian world. If this message accomplishes only one thing, I hope it will be to impart a vision of Christ and His glorious Body, and how **important you are** to the growth of it! If I could literally baptize, immerse, and saturate you into the Body of Christ, I believe you would find how needed you really are! No, none of us should think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. This is not about human vanity and pride, it is about fulfilling your destiny!

The whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for you and I to come together, strong and united in Christ! The preparations are being made at this very moment for a party and a celebration to which everyone is invited! The table is being set and the decorations are nearly in place. The theme of this party is **THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN**

OF GOD! Of course, none of this could take place without the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, from Whom are all things! He is at the center, but He appears to be sharing the spotlight with another! Wow! Would you take a good look at her! Behold her beautiful wedding gown! She is a sight that takes your breath away -- the lovely Bride of Christ! The reason for our celebration is her union with Him, and the consequent fulfillment of so many wonderful things!

Behold the City of the Living God! In her is found the sound of laughter and of children playing. In her there is closeness and intimacy. All hearts are warm and affectionate, and bound together with an unbreakable cord! At the same time she demonstrates the power and security she draws from her Husband, Who is always by her side. She is the mother of us all, imparting life and tenderness, yet possessing all the fierceness of a lioness protecting her cubs from harm. This City, this House, is not like those temporal ones that are constructed by men. The House of the Lord dwells in a heavenly station, where all the nations can see it, and run into it for safety and peace.

At the sight of her all the worldly systems will fall, for she is irresistible to everyone. She bears the likeness of her Wonderful Husband, with Whom she is forever one. Out of her womb will spring forth an abundance of life and blessings such as the world has never known. The Seed that has been planted in her originated from *The Source of All Life* -- The Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

Every eye shall see Him, as He is fully revealed through His glorious Body! Have you caught the vision yet? Are you now becoming transformed into one who is sold out to His will and the fulfilling of this magnificent purpose? As the remembrance of the Heavenly Jerusalem begins to fill our hearts and minds, may we all be released to pursue the great quest of her restoration unto the full satisfaction of the Heart of God! As we begin to hear the cries and the groaning of humanity, may the fires of compassion be ignited in us to respond. Then, the fire of God's love in our hearts and our passion for Him will empower His Church to finally break down the gates of hell, liberating the wounded and bound! Oh yes! That is what this is all about! Freedom for all! Freedom from every kind of oppression is ours to share as we find our place in His glorious Church! The last and final enemy -- that which is

at the heart of every problem -- is **death!** Those who are **in Christ** -- as members of His Body in particular -- are free from death! Because of this truth they possess deliverance for all of humanity! (Romans 8:18-21).

Let us never forget this: As we carefully learn to flow together in Christ -- as we let go of our vain traditions -- as we find ourselves painfully growing to be one -- we must never forget what is at stake! Christ is the answer to the needs of every man, woman and child, and He is bringing that answer through you, His many-membered Body! No religious order or doctrine must be permitted to inhibit the flowing of God's Life through the parts of His body! In the areas where we misunderstand each other, we must trust in the workmanship of God to correct us. We belong to Him, and no other! Let us worship and adore only Him, as we bind together in deep and true relationships. Let us shed the garments of religious form, to simply and purely behold Him in one another. Let our hearts and minds and our entire lives be filled with the wonder of our Almighty Lord and Saviour, who lives and breathes and walks the earth today in a people known as ... **THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT!**

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