

Cyber Truths By E-mail

34. When Jesus Says 'GO', What Do YOU Do? (December 22, 2007)



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“Now that I’ve seen your brain waves and realize what you do for a living, I can see that you’re a person filled with tremendous sadness.”

Mike: These were the words spoken to me by a compassionate evaluator following a recent sleep study test at the Veterans Administration Hospital. Her statement was like hearing God explain to me why my heart has been growing increasingly heavy this past year.

We’ve written previously about the Holy Spirit’s assurance that the Hebraic foundations won’t be embraced in the United States until the **“dark days of chastisement”** come upon this nation. In my spirit I know with great sadness that these days aren’t too far off and that no mass repentance will occur to keep our Lord from chastising this nation.

Our hearts grieve over the burgeoning spiritual darkness that’s being entertained by so many who call themselves “Christian”. Many we know personally have grown dull, lulled into lethargy about serving the King in His Kingdom purposes.

Ask yourself if spiritual sloth describes you and/or your family:

- **Have you no heart burden for the salvation of your relatives, your neighbors, your co-workers, or folks you happen upon?**
- **Are you ignoring or missing so many opportunities because of your own laziness or tunnel-vision self-focus?**
- **Do you find that all too often you have no testimony of praise to our Father for divine encounters in which Jesus was lifted up in your midst?**

My heaviness of heart identifies with the sorrow I sense from the Holy Spirit within me — so many consider themselves “Christian” yet reject our Lord Jesus by ignoring His commands. *They’re into Christianity, but not into Christ.*

You may know from our previous writings that when the Holy Spirit directed us to Jerusalem in 1993, I earnestly sought Him to find out *why* He wanted us there. Early one morning I knelt down and prayed, allowing my Bible to fall open. This passage jumped out before me with the intensity the Spirit intended:

‘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.

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. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you,’ declares the LORD (Jeremiah 1:17-19).

“Stand up and say to them whatever I command you.”

The Christmas season is a difficult time of year to write the warning the Holy Spirit inspired me to share in this Teaching E-mail. Many of you are caught up in the hustle of gift purchasing, parties, home decoration. However, from our Father’s perspective this is possibly the saddest time of the entire year.

Greed, loneliness, unfulfilled expectations and even the spike in suicides underlay the shell of holiday celebration. Sadly, so few of His children recognize the pain of others or make themselves available to serve our Lord by coming alongside these needy ones of His.

From His vantage point, **so little** of this man-made, man-centered season has anything to do with our Lord Jesus, even though it’s called “Christmas”. His first coming indeed fulfills Hebrew

prophecy and can be a conversational starter among those who have yet to encounter Him. But it's all too easy for people to mix up *His* purpose for entering man's depraved world — to redeem and reconcile us — with humanist idealism that our earthly existence can be love-joy-peace but *without His Lordship*.

Even the sweet nativity scenes misrepresent the harsh reality of animal stench and a mocked yet faithful young woman who was despised by her fellow villagers because she conceived out of wedlock.

The Bible doesn't mention any annual celebration of His first coming because our Lord's victory was in His *death and resurrection*. The helpless, dependent baby grew up! He's the King of Kings Who is coming again to rule the earth!

Ironically, the word "Christmas" originated as a contraction of "Christ's *mass*" — a ritual ecclesiastical holiday established by Constantine in the 4th century. The date of December 25 was *intentional*, to coincide with the pagan festival of Saturnalia, the sun's "rebirth" on the winter solstice. This decree appeased those who were "Christian" in name only and insistently clung to their heathen festivals.

Please, be warned! **Compromise with the world always robs the truth of its power!** Do you get warm fuzzies from childhood memories by encouraging your children to mix trees, Santa and self-indulgent gift receiving with the reality of our Lord's Incarnation? Then you're setting the scene for relegating God's Word into humanism's scheme of the Bible as *mythology*.

- **Will your children regard His entire Word as absolute? Or will they choose by your example of syncretistic compromise to**

believe some of it and ignore either the "unpleasant" or the supernatural parts?

However, Christmas isn't the real issue in this Teaching E-mail. Rather, the Holy Spirit prompted us to address the spiritual darkness that's so readily embraced by people who call themselves "Christian" yet compromise with the world's ways and goals.

It's with impassioned spirit that we ask you to examine your heart for loving, obedient determination to walk in the Lordship of Jesus. Those who have allowed a religious veneer to cloak a heart that loves the world's ways will suffer the same chastisement as *unbelievers* — because that's how you appear to Him! Even worse, you defame the Name of Jesus by your worldliness that causes unbelievers to sneer at Him as your supposed Lord.

The warning the Holy Spirit gave us to share with you is difficult. It comes because God *loves* His people so much, yet is *so grieved* by the spiritual adultery that's so prevalent. *Out of His love* we write with the same sense of near-hopeless sorrow that was experienced by Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel as they prophesied to warn the compromising Israelites.

Did *they* respond by repenting and returning to the God Who loved them? You know the answer to that. Because so few would heed the call to repent, God forbade His grieving messenger to stand up for them:

Do not pray for this people nor offer any plea or petition for them; do not plead with Me, for I will not listen to you (Jeremiah 7:16).

Yet the prophetic voices were not silenced...

Even Floods Don't Change Man's Desire to Sin

The Bible cascades with evidence that our God is *longsuffering* toward mankind. A brief discussion of man's sojourn on earth makes this clear.

Sinful Adam and Eve never raised even one of their children in the Garden of Eden. Even their firstborn was a murderer! By Genesis chapter 6 we learn that "**every inclination of the thoughts of [man's] heart is only evil all the time**" (v.5). What a tragic commentary that pained our Lord over the state of His creation, but still He withheld judgment.

Yet not all was destined for deserved annihilation. Righteous Noah and his family, eight in all, were a tiny yet faithful remnant among the millions that were on Earth at that time. The rest of sinful mankind was destroyed in a cataclysmic flood by a holy and just God.

The *sin nature* of man did not disappear, however. The descendents of Noah were still bent on self-indulging disobedience, their hearts unchanged by the flood's horror. In fact, by Genesis chapter 11, man's arrogant rebellion and fearless disregard of God had made His commands irrelevant to them.

Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth (v.4).

You may not readily catch what's wrong with their intent: to establish a *proud reputation* for themselves and to *forestall God's plan* that they be dispersed over all the earth.

To understand the underlying nature of their sin, we must visit God's command to Adam:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion...over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth (Genesis 1:26,28).

God intended that mankind scatter over the earth and subdue it. On the plains of *Babylon* [which means "gate of the god(s)"] they presumptuously built a magnificent edifice to keep themselves unified and any enemies at bay. God's response? He scattered them by confounding their communication through different languages.

As we'll discuss, much of Christendom continues to serve the proud spirit of Babylon. And, our God, Who is true to His nature, continues to propel His children out of their man-made edifices to scatter them to serve in His Kingdom. But should He have to do this?

MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Revelation 17:5).

"Babylon" — A Sinister Force Dissuading God's Children From Trustful Obedience

The spirit of Babylon will continue to pressure and sway the people of God until it's destroyed as the closing chapters of the Book of Revelation reveal. How does the spirit of Babylon operate? It seduces people into *living contrary to the revealed will of God*.

This sinister spirit convinces self-proclaimed “Christians” that they’re pleasing to God even while they embrace pagan practices which they declare to be “holy”. In this manner the Israelites were willingly deceived, so that God raised up the Babylonians themselves to banish His children from their Promised Land.

Much of Christendom today is allowing itself to be similarly deceived in tolerated and even *pursued* unrighteousness, leading to painful chastisement.

The spirit of Babylon more than any other has lured millions in Christendom to forsake the commands of our Lord by *compromising His Word*. Do you recognize some of these heathen influences?

- **The vast majority of “Christian” religious practices are pagan in origin—Christmas, Easter (to coincide with the spring equinox and fertility-goddess worship), infant baptism, spectator-filled pews.**
- **Edifices are erected as a rallying point for members (remember the Tower of Babel?). The building is referred to as a particular “church” where members gather comfortably for religious rituals.**
- **The clergy system that runs these gatherings emanates from pagan Hellenism and Romanism, replete with honorific titles condemned by Jesus in Matthew 23:5-10.**

The Babylonian “edifice complex” hinders the scattering of God’s people to penetrate and permeate those who have yet to encounter His grace in Jesus. Self-serving segregation among those within your own “edifice gathering” forestalls your obedience to the desire of our Father — the salvation of the lost. How few of these “Babylonian” gatherings fulfill our Lord’s command to “*Go and make disciples of all nations*”!

Are you grieved that Revelation 18 so clearly describes much of the self-serv-

ing, idolatrous religious system today? “*She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit...*” (v.2).

Jesus: “Wash Their Feet In Humble Service. Never Let Others ‘Kiss Your Bottom!’”

You know in your heart that Jesus never established an ecclesiastical religious structure with an organizational headquarters — nor did He ever intend for those who follow Him to do such a thing. Our Lord is well aware of man’s sinful propensity to seek position and power; even James and John hungered for acclaim at His right and left side!

Therefore Jesus specifically forbade those who would follow Him to bear



titles such as Teacher or Father or Leader that would lift them above others (see Matthew 23:8-12). Rather, they (and we today)

are to pour themselves out on others — to role model humility of heart and loving service in the steps of their Master.

Our Lord’s final command at His Ascension summarized His marching orders for His faithful ones: to go forth in His Spirit and be scattered around the world in service to others, bearing witness to the King as they went. Isn’t this the pattern He showed them (and us)?

How grievously His command and pattern of loving, humble service have been altered to suit man’s selfish desires! Centuries of ecclesiastical systems have brought about today’s man-centered religious practices that mimic worldly methods and goals. Just as in corporate America, to get to the top you must “kiss



butt” to get ahead, because those at the top lord it over those below (see Mark 10:42-45).

If you’re troubled by the graphic nature of this illustration, realize how offended *our God is* by the reality it depicts! Realize too that the Bible is filled with graphic illustrations intended by Him to warn His people against giving way to such practices. Do you doubt this? Read Ezekiel chapter 23 as an example of how detestable the spiritually adulterous practices of HIS PEOPLE are from His perspective. [Our Hebraic Article, *I Hate Nicolaitanism*, discusses at length our Father’s grief when His people are suppressed by others in His name.]

Please, heed the warning given to all who would be absolutely true to Jesus. Yearning for the world’s pleasures and approval brings only sorrow and regret:

Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues; for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities (Revelation 18:4,5).

Our Lord leaves no room for compromise for His people! Allowing your carnal nature to be gratified *deceives* you that your life can be dedicated to our Father’s interests and purpose at the same time. The world’s way says, “Schedule an appointment with me.” But if your walk with Jesus consists of scheduled services and programs run by others, you’re evidencing how much of the world — of “Babylon”— has crept into your regard for Him.

Our Lord allowed no such concession to invade His loving yieldedness to His Father’s will and purpose:

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify [set apart as holy] the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come (Hebrews 13:12-14).

The Newer Testament describes the true followers of Jesus who with Spirit-empowered hearts stay the course of obedient trust:

Pilgrims scattered all over the earth as they journey to their salvation, bringing with them as many as He has granted by grace. Those who lead continue to walk by example in fulfilling this purpose.

- **Does this describe your goal and purpose as one who loves and serves our Lord? If not, why not?**
- **Are you hiding out in a Babylonian edifice where you can be comfortable each week, fulfilling your religious duty so that you can then pursue your own goals and interests the rest of the week?**
- **From our Father’s perspective, are you a “follower of Jesus” or a “Babylonian”?**

One who leads God’s people His way does so by example. Much can be learned from the ways of bees about the need to *scatter*. Sue kept three hives of honeybees during our years at the retreat center. As each hive grew too large to be maintained by the colony, a new queen would be developed.

The old queen would leave the hive with a certain number of bees to go start a new colony. The younger queen would

remain to build up the old hive. Once that colony grew too large, the same process would take place: the now-older queen would leave with her following while a younger queen would stay behind in the original hive.

Isn't this the pattern established by Paul, Timothy, Titus, and others in the Newer Testament? They gathered together a faith community of new believers, trained and nurtured them to maturity, and then departed to start another. This is the way of Jesus — growing intimate, extended spiritual families who were being prepared to reach others. But this is definitely *not* the pattern of the Babylonian-influenced religious system!

From Jerusalem to the End of the World: The Followers of Jesus Must Be Scattered

Read Hebrews 11 with an eye on the *transitory nature* of our sojourn here on earth. As you read the testimony of our spiritual forefathers, consider if the nature of those who were commended for their faith describes *you*.

Our Father told us in Israel to call that which He is restoring, **“The Hebraic Restoration.”** We understand this to mean that He's restoring a Spirit-grounded lifestyle of the loving, obedient trust found in the Hebrew, Abraham.

What do we know about this Patriarch who found such intimate favor in the sight of God as *His friend*?

By trusting, Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

By trusting he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob,

fellow heirs of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God (Hebrews 11:8-10).

Abraham *trusted* God, and *obeyed* God as evidence of that trust! His trust-grounded journey led him from his familiar homeland of Ur of the Chaldees through the Promised Land all the way to Egypt. Note that Abraham didn't succumb to the spirit of Babylon and build a lasting edifice for himself. He *lived in tents*, as did his son and grandson after him, remaining mobile so that God could direct his life's journey.

Jesus described this “mobile availability” as an indicator for His followers of the life He might call them to emulate: *“Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head”* (Luke 9:58). In other words, don't sink your earthly anchor so deep that you can't set sail when His Spirit wind comes up to move you on!

Other character qualities shaped our Hebraic forefathers into the faithful sons and daughters of God that they were. Each demonstrated a heart willingness to *be about God's purpose* no matter what earthly discomfort they encountered.

- **They admitted they were aliens and strangers on earth.**
- **They longed for the country beyond — a heavenly home.**
- **They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground, prepared to face hardship according to the good purpose and will of their Father.**

Note that their earthly journey never found them enjoying the promise they pursued. *We in Jesus* are the factor that brings about their longed-for goal:

All of these gained approval because of their trusting. Nevertheless, they did not receive what had been promised, because God had provided something better that would involve us, so that only with us would they be brought to the goal, being made perfect (Hebrews 11:39,40).

May our Lord commend you in your trust as you set to free yourself from the spirit of Babylon.

Even Jerusalem Can Be A Babylon

The Jerusalem which Jesus mourned wallowed in corruption. The intense anger of our Lord erupted, however, not against the lost and sinning sheep but against the unloving, self-serving religious leaders. "Hypocrites!" he proclaimed in their hearing.

Be wary of anyone who romanticizes earthly Jerusalem, Israel or the present-day Jewish people. Misplaced sentimentality does the Word of God a great disservice. Know that He keeps His promises, not because the recipients nobly deserve it, but because He is *true to His Word!* Surely each of us as unworthy, redeemed sheep are well aware of our innate weakness that so depends on the grace of the Shepherd!

Revelation chapter 11 speaks of a time yet to come in which two prophesying witnesses of God will be killed in Jerusalem. The unrepentant occupants of the city from which King Jesus will reign rejoice when the two who decried evil are slaughtered. What a tragic testimony against the city God had specifically and uniquely chosen to "place His Name" (see 1 Kings 11:36; 2 Kings 21:7).

And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is

called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified (v.8).

What do Babylon, Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem have in common? Each represents societies of people who lived *totally contrary to the will of God*. The first three, blatantly pagan to the core, made no pretense of serving the One True God. But Jerusalem, the "city of God" in which *their Lord* was crucified as their prophets had written, let herself be seduced by the spirit of Babylon.

Century upon century found the people God had set apart for Himself forsaking His commands and reveling in pagan practices acquired from the heathen nations around them. How grieved was God, their spiritual "Husband" (see Jeremiah 31:32)!

Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But My people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols (Jeremiah 2:11).

With this backdrop Jesus lamented how far the city had strayed from serving God as they butchered His messengers and rebuffed His loving heart toward them:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34).

Paul was a self-proclaimed "Pharisee of Pharisees". But, following his conversion, Jerusalem and its religious establishment were no longer the source of his proud identity. His heart was breaking that his beloved Galatians might be seduced by the same anti-Christ spirit that had enticed Jerusalem's leaders and

its citizens. In anguish the apostle warned them to forsake slavery and cling to the promise of freedom in Jesus:

*For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the **free woman through promise.***

*This is allegorically speaking: for these women are **two covenants**, one **proceeding from Mount Sinai** bearing children who are to **be slaves**; she is Hagar. Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and **corresponds to the present Jerusalem**, for she is **in slavery with her children.***

*But **the Jerusalem above is free**; she is our mother (Galatians 4:22-26).*

The “Jerusalem above” (see Revelation 21) is the city to which the people of faith in Hebrews 11 were looking forward. The freedom in Christ to lovingly serve our Lord on earth is our covenant of promise. But what is the *slavery* of Jerusalem about which Paul writes?

Using Paul’s allegory, the “slave master” was the Temple system whose leaders were persecuting those born of the Spirit (see Galatians 4:29). Herod had the “Babylonian” edifice rebuilt to give the Jews a rallying point for their identity. You need to remember that at this point the Ark of the Covenant was *no longer within its walls*. Nor was the *shekinah* glory of God in its midst.

At the time of Jesus the religious leaders dominated the people who were dependent on the Temple sacrificial system for reconciliation with God. Corruption at all levels permeated the Temple system, from haughty white-washed priests to greedy animal sellers. (see Matthew 21:12). The people who

were earnestly trying to obey God’s commands were instead enslaved by man-made rules (see Matthew 15:1-9).

The “Babylonian” Temple system prevented people from embracing the loving relationship with God as He had wanted and commanded (see Deuteronomy 6:5; Exodus 20:6). Standing in the way of the freedom of loving forgiveness and reconciliation were the rules and traditions heaped upon the common folk by hypocritical law-expanders (see Matthew 23:15). Just in case someone might inadvertently sin, ever-increasing rules were added to God’s instruction. No way could ANYONE fulfill all those decrees!

Many religious leaders exercise the same control today over their congregation. People within each “Babylonian temple” are compelled to embrace man-made creeds and to use the resources of God to build edifices in which they can spiritually and socially gratify themselves. While caring for the poor and needy is given token attention, tithes are more often used to maintain the edifice and the religious programs.

When Jesus Entered Babylon

If we as His followers are to walk in our Master’s steps, we need to recall His response to the Babylonian spirit in Jerusalem.

The Temple in Jerusalem was called the “house of God”. Do you think that Satan could have access to it? We’re told that the devil “**brought [Jesus] to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple.** ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down from here’” (Luke 4:9).

There was nothing holy about the Temple edifice that wicked Herod had built. Neither was sacred unto God the

Babylonian religious system that was fostered through it. The Temple building itself would be toppled just forty years after Jesus became the Risen Sacrifice. Its gleaming limestone walls would cease to exist.

Awed by its structural beauty, one of His disciples exclaimed, “*Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!*” (Mark 13:1). Yet Jesus, knowing that His Bride would be the *collective temple* in which His Spirit would abide, demonstrated no sense of mourning for what was to be: “*Do you see all these great buildings? Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down*” (Mark 13:2). The system that had become corrupted in its requirements was no longer needed upon His victory over sin and death.

The people of Jerusalem who served the spirit of Babylon were the deluded who wanted to kill Jesus. While they proclaimed (and believed!) that their Father was God Himself (John 8:41), Jesus sharply confronted them with the painful truth of their spiritual heritage:

If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies (John 8:42,44).

At the moment of Jesus’ death, the curtain of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). There are several ways we could understand this miracle. Personally, we believe that

Jesus was announcing freedom from the spiritual captivity of Babylon. From Pentecost onward the followers of Jesus would be His temple as they are scattered over the earth in service to Him. The ripped curtain marked the *end of separation* between “priest” and “others”.

The Scattered Followers of Jesus Mark the Way to the Heavenly Jerusalem

For some reason the Apostles were reluctant to *hear the intensity* of Jesus’ command to scatter themselves beyond the confines of Jerusalem, even after the Holy Spirit had empowered them to go forth as His witnesses!

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19,20).

That command to **go** is an ongoing imperative: *as you go; keep going; do go*. At any rate, it’s a lifestyle of availability wherever you are and wherever you go, freed from any complacent prison of hanging around only those who are friendly and familiar! Finding *your own* “all nations” means determining from the Spirit how to make the most of your next encounter outside your comfort zone of those who are “like you”.

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

It seems strange that the apostles didn’t get hold sooner of the *intent* of Jesus to scatter them as His Spirit-filled King-

dom ambassadors. However, before long, God used the martyrdom of Stephen to begin to propel disciples beyond “Babylon” walls: *“On that day a great persecution broke out against the called-out at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria”* (Acts 8:1).

Perhaps you don’t take seriously the command of Jesus to be scattered. You don’t see your job or neighborhood or “chance” encounters as divine opportunity to represent the interests of Jesus. Without Kingdom motivation, you live as a Babylonian. You prostitute yourself so that you can live comfortably like the pagans around you. That’s the *spiritual adultery* of the Israelites which so grieved God’s heart.

We’ve heard from a number of you in the home church movement who have made your fellowship a Babylon. Perhaps you’ve succumbed to the comfort of **“us four, no more.”** Think about this: If you have no burden for those who are heading for a Christ-less eternity, how can you call yourself a “Christ-ian”?

Jesus commands His disciples— those who love and obey Him— *“Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.”* Our God has always been interested in the salvation of ALL mankind. To accomplish His purpose to reach the world with His good and just ways, He initially recruited the Israelites to reveal His holy commands. They were to be His light of wisdom in the pagan world of darkness.

During the Exodus God commanded the descendents of Israel:

Observe [My commands] carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely

this great nation is a wise and understanding people (Deuteronomy 4:6).

God’s desire for the salvation of all people was proclaimed by the psalmist: *“Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples”*; and, *“The LORD has made His salvation known and revealed His righteousness to the nations”* (Psalms 96:3; 98:2). God even sent reluctant Jonah to the decadent Gentile city of Nineveh to get them to repent.

The *way of God* is the crucial glue in His plan to bring salvation to all mankind. He specifically chose the Patriarch Abraham because of the man’s intergenerational concern for a relationship of obedient trust with their God: *“He will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just”* (Genesis 18:19).

To prepare for the coming of Messiah Jesus, many from all walks of life went out to the Jordan River to receive a baptism of repentance by John. Their repentant hearts stirred them to want to know how God’s commands applied to them. They asked the Baptizer:

“What should we do then?” the crowd asked. He answered and said to them, “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.”

Tax collectors also came to be baptized. “Teacher,” they asked, “what should we do?” “Collect no more than what you have been ordered to,” He told them.

Then some soldiers asked Him, “And what should we do?” He replied, “Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages” (Luke 3:10-14).

Each of these categories of people knew a *changed response of godliness* was needed in order to fill in the ruts of their old disobedient attitudes and actions. Each of us needs that kind of forceful determination to be changed as well.

**If you are earnestly following Jesus
as Lord of your life,
then in His divine foreknowledge
He has placed you among people
who need to come to repentance
and enter our Father's Covenant.
It's your privilege and responsibility
to make known to them
the way of the Lord.
To choose NOT to do this
is sin for you.**

If you're familiar with the Bible then you'll probably recognize readily that you can choose to be either a Kingdom person who loves the King, or a Babylonian who compromises by loving the world.

To dedicate yourself to service in the Kingdom, His call is as clear as it is precise: *"Deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Me"* (Matthew 16:24). As difficult as this command is, the Holy Spirit within you ignites your motivation to be bouyed on your love for Jesus. He empowers you to fulfill this command so that our Father is praised!

If you're in Babylon, flee it! Go out and make disciples as you encounter willing hearts. Teach them the way of the Lord through His Word as it's made alive through your testimony and life.

If You *Don't* Leave Babylon

***"For it is time for judgment
to begin with the family of God;
and if it begins with us,
what will the outcome be for those
who do not obey the gospel of God?"***
(1 Peter 4:17).

Our Lord uses timeless truths to restore us to His fruitful path. This morning we realized a reading from Oswald Chambers penned nearly a hundred years ago was just such a reminder. We quote from *My Utmost For His Highest*:

"The golden rule for understanding spiritually is not intellect, but *obedience*. If a man wants scientific knowledge, intellectual curiosity is his guide; but if he wants insight into what Jesus teaches, he can *only get it by obedience*. If things are dark to me, then I may be sure that there is something I *will not do*. Intellectual darkness comes through ignorance; spiritual darkness comes because of something I *do not intend to obey*."

"No man ever receives a word from God without instantly being *put to the test* over it. We disobey and then wonder why we don't go on spiritually...When Jesus brings a thing home by His word, don't shirk it... First GO,— at the risk of being thought fanatical you must *obey what God tells you*." (emphasis added)

It pains us to do this, but we must end this Teaching E-mail with a specific warning the Holy Spirit gave us for those who like to think they're "Christians" but whose lives are a Babylonian abomination. Please prayerfully read and discuss the next page with those close to you.

“Your worthless form of man-made religion has made you worthless in His Kingdom. You have exchanged your opportunity to lovingly serve and bring glory to your Father for religious ease and self-fulfillment. My Name is on your lips, but I am far from your heart.

“You have forsaken the freedom He’s offered to you to be a follower of Jesus who is scattered as fruitful seed in service to Him. Instead, you choose servitude to man-made religious practices that bring about no change or spiritual maturity.

“Your lazy wickedness will result in chastisement. Consider then and realize how bitter it will be for you if you forsake the Lord your God as He has revealed Himself in His Word and by His Spirit.

“You have turned your back to Me and not your face. In vain I have tried to correct you, but you would not respond. Don’t believe that I do nothing about the sins of My people. I will pass judgment on you because you say, “I have not sinned,” even though My Word warns against this very deceit.

“Your religion is filled with practices that are an abomination to Me. You worship the spirit of lawlessness who now has dominion among those who should be Mine. Your worship is not acceptable to Me. You do it for your own soulish pleasure, so you can feel good about yourself. You do not ask how I feel about your religion.

“You have no fear of Me. If you truly feared Me you would repent and I could forgive you. Instead, your confession is only pretense. You acknowledge your sin but do not turn from it to live according to My commands in the power of My Spirit.

“Don’t trust in the deceptive words of your clergy. I never ordained for such people to lead My flock. They practice deceit so people will esteem them. They lean on their own understanding and do not inquire of Me. You like it this way so that you too can live a lie of your own making.

“I encourage you: circumcise your heart or I will break out against you because of the evil you practice. Wash the evil from your heart and fulfill your journey to My salvation. Love Me! Learn and live by My holy commands. Be a Kingdom of priests for Me, revealing to the world the way of salvation.”