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PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

I PET.1:19

No.318

THE POWER OF THE INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.” (I Cor.9:24-25)

A crown, in the language of the Bible, has a very distinct meaning. It speaks of the “absolute, unabridged, unlimited ruling power of a king.” It is obvious that Paul was not speaking of salvation by faith here; Paul was addressing those who are striving to obtain the pure, incorruptible power of ruling with Christ in their lives, now and in the ages to come. This is an every day race between the Spirit within, and the flesh. *“And all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life...” (I Jn.2:16)*

We know that to be saved, one needs only to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul explains clearly that salvation is not by works. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph.2:8-10)* Whether we have a special calling or not, we are all saved by grace through faith.

And we are all HIS WORKMANSHIP. He is the one who molds us into who we are. No matter how near or far along we are on our walk toward perfection, or maturity in Christ, it is God who works in us to do of His good pleasure. *“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Phil.2:13)* We are not where we are spiritually by

any efforts of our own; it is God who has worked the will to please Him into us. Of our own selves, we would never think of pleasing God. There is nothing in our soulish man that desires God or the things of the Spirit.

Nevertheless, by His Spirit, He has quickened us, and made us to be creatures that desire, more than anything, the knowledge of truth and the purity of His holiness. From inside out, we are being re-born into totally new creatures. And as we grow stronger in our “new nature,” we overcome the old nature that we were first born into.

We have been on a walk of discipline with Him, learning to behave as the new creatures that we are becoming; this is our new life. Daily, this new life in Him, swallows up the death of the old, just as the brightness of the rising sun swallows up the shadowy darkness of the night.

The new man within us has been on a race against the works of the flesh, and the thoughts of our carnal minds. This is the constant striving that takes place daily, minute by minute. And so we run the race to receive a crown of absolute, infinite power over the lower, beastly nature of the first Adam, as well as the beastly natures that rise up to tempt us from the lust of the world we live in. *“In the world, but not of it.”*

Jesus wore the incorruptible crown as He demonstrated His power to cast out devils, speak to the literal stormy sea, heal the suffering lepers, and raise the dead from their tombs. In Christ, we have power over the devils that continually drop their disturbing thoughts into our minds, over the storms that arise in our souls and create fear, panic, confusion and frustration within. In Him, we have the power to overcome the sin and death within us. This is the incor-

ruptible crown we are striving for continually. While some remain on the milk of the Word, others have been running the race to *"...be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may GROW UP into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ..."* (Eph.2:14-15)

THERE IS POWER IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

Now we come to the heart of the Word that the Spirit wants to convey to us in this letter. The words of a song that often rise in my mind, rightly declare, "There is power, power, wonder working power in the blood of the Lamb...in the precious blood of the Lamb!" Indeed throughout the ages to come, the Lamb, the cross and the blood will ever remain the wondrous and astounding declaration and power to comfort, deliver and give life to all of creation.

THE LAMB IS THE TOTALLY OPPOSITE NATURE OF THE FIRST ADAM MAN. The Adam man is the nature that kills the Lamb. First, Cain killed Abel and it continued with the brothers of Joseph who left him as dead in the well. It was in King Saul who pursued after David with no mercy.

It was the Adam man in the Pharisees who crucified the Lord of glory. It was the devil in the old Adam man that compelled the Romans to throw Christians to the beasts for their entertainment. It was Adam in King Louis the 14th of France who took away the Huguenot's rights to worship God, without bowing down to the Catholic Church. This opened the way for their persecution unto torture and death. The Adam man is the nature that peeked in Hitler and set in motion the barbarous, brutal and inhumane exterminating of the Jewish race from the face of the earth.

By contrast, the Lamb nature was seen in Joseph who yielded himself under the hand of Pharaoh, yet kept the Word of His God safely in his heart. It was seen in the little virgin Mary who yielded her body to give birth to a child outside of wedlocks, under the

penalty of death by stoning. It is seen in Jesus Christ the Lamb, who uttered not a word, but let them nail Him to the cross when He could have called on legions of angels to deliver Him. How can something that looks so weak be so powerful? Simply said, it is because when we yield ourselves to the will of God, the power to accomplish the goal is only in God's hand.

When we decide of ourselves how to handle the powers that form against us because of our faith, we must let God Himself handle the foes. The Spirit will lead us on the path we need to take. We are called to resist evil, and we do, but when we are persecuted for the Word of God or for the decision to follow Him, we trust Him to take care of that situation. We are as defenseless lambs to the slaughter and our trust is in our God.

This is the only way to slay the giants in the world. We see this in our world today. The voices of hatred and animosity against God's ways are rumbling loudly through the land. It seems that they have the upper hand, and they do. But when God makes His move, He shuts them down and they turn as defeated dogs with their tails tucked between their legs. Just watch them!

In Christ, we have been given a higher vision. Through the prophets of the past and the visionaries of the future, we have seen the plan of God for His creation now and in the ages to come. The kingdom of God in earth as it is in heaven is our goal. The ways of the old Adam hold nothing for us.

Through the works of the Holy Spirit, we have come to the place where nothing that is of this world satisfies or even tempts us anymore. We are of those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. This means that we are led by the same mind as His and our desire is to do the Father's will only.

Jesus gave us the key example, *"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."* (Jn.14:10) This is the nature of the Lamb. It lays its life down and yields all power to the Father.

BLOOD SACRIFICES

Abel was the first to offer God, an acceptable blood sacrifice. Later, God established blood sacrifices as the service of the Levitical priesthood. Before the priests could enter the Holy Place, it was essential that they serve at the Altar of Burnt Offering in the Outer Court. It was there that the bulls, the goats or the doves were brought in to be slaughtered. Their blood was gathered and offered to atone for the sins of the people, including the priests.

God's law declares, "*Behold, all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; THE SOUL THAT SINNETH, IT SHALL DIE.*" (Eze.18:4). To atone for sins, God requires a life for a life. A man that sins must pay with his life. However, under the Old Covenant, God in His love and mercy provided that a bull or a goat be offered up for the sins of the people, so the people's lives were spared. These sacrifices had to be repeated continually; they could not change the nature of the sinner.

Because the life of the flesh is in the blood, blood, which is the life, is the only acceptable sacrifice for sins. "*For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*" (Lev.17:11)

The "soul life" is what we experience in our bodies of flesh and blood. The soul is our consciousness and identity; it is who we are in the flesh. The soul is not immortal, when the flesh dies, our Savior Jesus Christ offers immortality and eternal life to the soul. He is the only way to life. In our old nature, the soul keeps on sinning. Some of us, who have repented and continued in the faith may be quick to judge others and cut them off. Paul dealt with that also, "*And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance?*" (Rom.2:3-4) Repentance is the only way to eternal life and it was the GOODNESS OF GOD that lead us all there. Therefore, it is not for us to judge the rest of humanity, thinking that God who

will not that any perish, will not extend His goodness to all of them. If any should tremble in fear of "hell", it is those whom Jesus said were of their father, the devil. It is those who stand cloaked in the spirit of the Pharisees, and judge others into hell, who reject the goodness of God for themselves, by rejecting it for others.

Faith in Jesus Christ and repentance toward God are required for the soul to be saved. The goodness of God brought us to where we are now. Our natural, temporal life began when the Lord God blew His breath of life into our nostrils, and we became souls in bodies of flesh and blood. John explains, "*It is the spirit that quickeneth, (gives life); the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.*" (Jn.6:63)

Through the words that God's Spirit speaks to our understanding, our consciousness, our soul, He imparts new life in us. The life of the Spirit is eternal and comes through the words that the Spirit of God speaks to us. This life has blood too, but it is not the corruptible blood of the life of the flesh.

Jesus said, "*...Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.*" (Jn.6:53-58)

Jesus was not talking about the corruptible blood of our flesh; He was talking about His blood, the blood where sin and death never entered, the blood that was tempted in all ways, and never sinned. This new and precious, (totally rare and new), blood, is the new wine that Jesus told us about. It has its origin in His eternal life, and streams down to our spirit, soul and body. Even though it was Eve who accepted the lie of the serpent, Adam partook of the same from Eve and thus corrupted his blood and the blood of all

humanity. Jesus was born of His Father's incorruptible seed; His blood had no sin, this is why He was the only acceptable sacrifice for sins.

Jesus overcame all the wiles and temptations that the devil set up in His way yet without sin. *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling or our infirmities, but was in all ways tempted as we are, yet without sin."* (Heb.4:15)

The blood who was in Jesus was pure when He was born of Mary, and REMAINED pure through every temptation and trial that He ever faced. It is of this blood that we must partake for life. The power of this blood in our lives, separates us from the love of the world and of self and unites us as one with the Overcomer. It will ultimately change us from mortal to immortality.

*"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but WITH THE **PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST**, as a LAMB WITHOUT BLEMISH AND WITHOUT SPOT; who verily was foreordained BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, but was manifest in these last times for you."* (I Pet.1:18-20). The blood of the Lamb is the life of our new body and soul.

The blood of animals that the Old Testament priests offered up for their own sins, and for the sins of the people, covered them for a year and no more. Animals had to be offered over and over again to atone for sins, but once a year, God required that the high priest take the blood of the sacrifices, and carry it through the tabernacle, to be sprinkled on every piece of furnishing, all the way into the Holy of Holies.

The high priest alone was to enter the Most Holy place, and that not without blood. *"But into the second, (the Most Holy Place), went the high priest alone once every year, NOT WITHOUT BLOOD, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people."* (Heb.9:7)

This is what it means for us now, *"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was*

not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." (Heb.9:8) As long as the old established ways of sacrificing animals was still in use, there was no way of entering the true Holy of Holies. By the same token, offering our own works to appease or please God, is as offering the blood of our carnal, beastly nature. We cannot with these enter into the presence of God.

ENTERING WITHIN THE VEIL FIRST RESURRECTION

Before leaving to go to the cross, Jesus promised His disciples, *"I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am in my Father's house, there you may be also."* Jesus was not speaking of setting up a "heaven" like a great picnic area where the saints gather after death; Jesus was talking about bringing His disciples into the realm of Spirit where the Father dwells. How is He accomplishing that?

The flesh is the thick veil that separates us and keeps us from understanding and seeing beyond the natural realm. Not the meat on our bones, but the carnal nature of our minds, is the thick veil that separates us from the eternal realm where all the things that God has prepared for are stored. It was impossible to enter past our carnality to see and understand, until Jesus gave up the ghost, *"And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."* (Mk.15:38) Through His death, (and ours with Him), Jesus Christ opened the way into the eternal realm of the Father. Through His ascension and resurrection, He sent us His Holy Spirit to lead us into all truths and to open our understanding of all things spiritual.

Now, our greatest hope is to enter the Holy of Holies, the realm that is illuminated by the Shekinah glory of God, or the illumination of the divine presence. The realm where the Father dwells.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb.6:19). And again, *"Having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."* (Heb.10:19-20) The veil that separated the Holy place from the Holy of Holies was very

thick and impenetrable. The veil of the temple that was rent when Jesus died on the cross, was the veil of His flesh. Through death and resurrection Jesus became the first of God's new creation man in the earth. It is through death and resurrection that He leads us until we become the new creation of God.

One may ask, "How about the mystery that Paul writes about?" *"Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."* (I Cor.15:51-53)

Indeed, this is the first resurrection, when first those who have gone through the grave appear in their new bodies. At the same time, those who have come to the perfection of Christ here on earth, will be changed and will join those who are now raised from death to life. The verses speaking of this first resurrection have been literally and ignorantly interpreted as "the rapture."

It was AT THE LAST TRUMP that Paul said that the dead are raised incorruptible. It is at the LAST TRUMP, (the trump of God), that *"...the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then WE WHICH ARE ALIVE and remain shall be CAUGHT UP with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."* (I Thes.4:16-17)

This is the mystery that Paul was writing about. We which are alive will be changed and clothed with the clouds. Clouds sometimes denote heavenly garments or new bodies. Those who were dead in Christ are first to be raised in these new garments and we (whoever "we" are at the time) are changed from earthly to heavenly in a twinkling of an eye. This is the next great event in Christ.

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus became the LAST ADAM, THE SECOND MAN FROM

HEAVEN. Jesus is not the second Adam, He is the last Adam. If He was the second Adam, there could be a third and a fourth...Jesus is the FIRST AND THE LAST too. Selah!

Therefore, Jesus became the firstborn among many brethren, denoting that there are to be others just like Him. He is this new creation man, this Christ man, who is represented by the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle. There is a time, when the priests of the new priesthood will have finished their service in the Holy Place, (learning to worship in Spirit and in truth), and will enter IN the High Priest, Jesus Christ, to take their place as the new Ark of the Covenant in the world.

Men may, or may not find the physical little Ark of the Covenant that Israel carried everywhere with them on their wilderness journey, but it is certain that the sons, who are the true Ark of God, will be made manifest when the Holy of Holies, not made with hands, will be fully revealed in the world.

When Jesus walked this earth, The Father was in Him, but He could not enter into the Father. That's why, before His death, He told His disciples that He was returning to the Father. When He poured out His blood as a sacrifice, He laid Himself down in death, and the veil that was His flesh was no longer an obstacle. He fully entered back into the Godhead and opened up a place for His brethren as the new creation of God in Christ.

Our flesh is the veil that keeps us from entering fully into that place in Christ, but our HOPE has already entered. This is why we are able to say that we are already there, when actually we are still in the flesh. It is our HOPE that declares that we are already there, and hope abides and continues. Hope cannot be destroyed. *"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as I also am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest is charity."* (I Cor.13:12-13) These things abide until He arises fully in us, and we behold the perfect Christ man who has been completely formed within. This is the first resurrection.

"Blessed and holy is HE that hath part in the first

resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but THEY shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”(Rev.20:6) Notice that it is HE that has part in the first resurrection who is blessed and holy, and that the “HE” becomes the “THEY”, the priests in the same sentence. In other words, Christ the Overcomer is the same One who is also the priests. Remember that the Levitical Priesthood was made up of the “sons” of the High Priests. Therefore, the priesthood of Christ is made up of the sons of God.

It is important to note that a thousand in the language of scriptures is not a literal thousand years. The verse explains that these priests will no longer die, (no second death). The Melchizedek priesthood is an eternal priesthood. So the thousand years span speaks of the time needed for the sons of God to bring in the next part of God’s creation into the Kingdom.

Consider these words carefully, *“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. BUT every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; AFTERWARD they that are Christ’s at his coming. THEN COMETH THE END, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he (Christ) must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.”* (I Cor.15:21-26)

John Joseph, a brother in the Lord, sent me the following vision and revelation that He received from the Spirit. It is in line with what the Spirit gave me for this study that I felt to share it with you.

THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB IS THE LAMB NATURE WHICH OVERCOMES

by John Joseph Curtin

“Revelation 12.11: And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. This Word was unlocked by the Holy Spirit who gave with it a vision.

The vision first: Before me was the blackness of

space stretching on forever. All the millions of worlds were out there. Then coming up from the bottom of the picture rising up and going out into all the universe was a kind of network, a matrix that resembled a large-mesh fishing net. But it wasn’t a fishing net. It was a living thing. It was dark in colour but then I saw that inside of it there was a red colour. It was a network of veins. And it spread more and more, and I knew that it would go out to all the universe and to every world. It was the Blood of the Lamb. The diffusiveness of a Nature that would expand and permeate every part of Creation.

The Word: *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.* The orthodox view is something like: They got the victory through the blood shed at Calvary taking away sins, and by preaching the gospel even if they were martyred for doing so. As the Word opened before me it was all about the Blood of the Lamb.

The Lamb is that nature of Jesus. That nature is in the Christ – head and body. The Life is in the blood. Because that Blood of the Lord – Lamb’s Blood – was poured out, it comes back to us and in our veins, so to speak, now flows Lamb’s blood. “Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no life in you.”. They overcame him, the savage hostile one – the fierce dragon – by having in them the Nature of the Lamb.

It was one Man who had, or rather was, the Nature of the Lamb, and by that He overcame. Now, it is He, the Overcomer, who infuses that Nature into us His children. He is the Overcomer in us. The Head and the Body of Christ is the Lamb. This Lamb principle, Lamb nature is now extended out more and more, and that Nature overcomes all hatred and violence and evil. “...and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives even unto death.” Here is the outworking of the Lamb Nature – in word and in deed. The testimony (witness) of the Lamb does not cry aloud in the street nor argue; it simply tells what it knows and what it has seen (see John 3.11).

The Lamb if threatened gives in. It does not resist evil, even unto death. But how is it that something as

weak as a lamb can overcome something as powerful as a dragon?

To the natural mind it is surely foolishness. But herein is power because the Lamb Nature moves the hand of God. Martyrs aren't just people who die physically. Some are martyrs almost every day. "For thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as lambs to the slaughter." (Romans 8.36). The Lord Jesus said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The Lamb Nature is the nature of God in Jesus. From the beginning God Himself laid down His life for the Creation. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

An enlargement on the Word given:

The issue of the rulership of the universe is all about the nature of things. Whether you see the dragon as Satan or the fallen carnal mind or the Adam man makes little difference here. Wrap them all up and what you get is a particular nature – a fierce, self-centred malignant Nature. We are saved from what we were by the infusion in us of a Nature that is contrary to what we were, and this new nature gaining the ascendancy. This world and all worlds will be governed by the Lamb Nature. That is God's will and purpose and He will not fail. He will surely bring it to pass. The Lamb Nature is our calling, our destiny. That Nature typified by the Lamb is the sure way, the only way that allows the free hand, the full hand of God to be laid bare in a person's life and on behalf of a person.

That man or woman in so being (a Lamb) is at once the Lion, just as the Lord Jesus is both the Lamb and Lion. But He, as we, is only the Lion because He is the Lamb – and not the other way round. We see in Rev.5.5,6: "...behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, hath prevailed to open the book ...and I beheld and lo in the midst of the throne ...stood a Lamb as it had been slain.." The Lamb that becomes a Lion is still a Lamb. Yea, more, it is only a Lion because it is yet a Lamb.

This is the secret of God and of His Christ. The Lamb releasing the power of God and in this is the Lion. "The Son can do nothing of Himself", but

equally, the Father does nothing by Himself except through the Son. "All things were made by Him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (Jn 1.3).

The Lord Jesus, God's Lamb from the foundation of the world while on earth had all of God's power to raise the dead, heal the sick, cast out devils. He did none of it out from Himself. The Lion shall lie down with the Lamb. The Lion is always WITH the Lamb. The two sides of the one coin: the Lamb and the Lion. God's Christ.

We see now clearly that had the principalities and powers of this world known this hidden wisdom of God, they never would have crucified the Lord of Glory. Because the lamb-principle always overcomes evil in its principle. We need eyes to see this. Every time evil would crucify the Lamb, the Lion lies not down.

So you firstfruit Sons, fear not! Though you be living sacrifices as lambs, you shall reign with Him in power. "If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him". (2Tim2.12). The corollary of this is: If we do not suffer, we do not reign. No Lamb, no Lion. It is a high calling and a hard road, but keep it in perspective. "For all things are for your sake, that the grace may superabound...Because of this, we do not faint, but if indeed our outward man is being decayed, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For the lightness of our present affliction works out for us an eternal weight of glory, surpassing moment by surpassing moment; we not considering the things being seen, but the things not being seen; for the things being seen are not lasting but the things not being seen are everlasting.(2Cor 4:15-18-Literal Gk.)." (End of John Joseph writing).

HEARING BY THE SPIRIT

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." (Jn.16:13) As children in the Lord, we learned about God by studying the Bible, and this was good. But when we become mature, we begin to rely on the

Holy Spirit and the things that trained us become secondary. We learn to follow Him who is alive and speaks. If we follow a book when we have a living Lord, then we are still children. *"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."* (I Cor.13:11)

We cannot stress this enough: It is the Holy Spirit who leads us and guides us into the truths, not the book. His Spirit speaks to us from within, and the verses of the Bible confirm that what we hear is from the right Spirit, but it is HE who guides and leads us. Otherwise, we are as the Pharisees who searched the Scriptures and did not come to Jesus for life. *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."* (Jn.5:39-40)

When we search truth from the scriptures, we are telling the Living Holy Spirit within to wait while we read the verses and then ask Him what they mean; this is backwards. We can be so careful about not being deceived, that we are fearful to believe the truth. We consider truth only that which we were taught in the churches of man.

I believe that as sons, we must first examine the motives of our hearts, and trust our Father explicitly and without reservation. The apostle John was teaching the church, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* (I Jn.4:1)

Then he gave them the key to test these false prophets. *"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is in the world."* (Vs.2-3)

John is saying that it is "Jesus Christ come in the flesh" who is the true Spirit of God. It is not the dead letter religion. He was saying, "Christ is alive and He lives in you! Hear ye Him!" Then he continued, "Ye

are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." (I Jn.4:4)

The one in the world is the antichrist. He is the counterfeit of Christ. The word "antichrist" means, "Instead of Christ." We can never by-pass the voice of the Spirit of "Jesus Christ come in the flesh," in us. *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that JESUS CHRIST IS IN YOU, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates."* (II Cor.13:5-6) The dictionary defines a reprobate as a person who is rejected for being wicked beyond help. Strong's dictionary translates it "worthless." Paul is really using a strong language to make the point that it is absolutely vital that we acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, first in the man Jesus, and now in Jesus in many brethren.

Jesus Christ alive in us is our strong foundation. We may build upon that foundation, but we cannot change it. *"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."*

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (I Cor.3:10-13)

The fire of the Day of fire is the brightness of the Sun or Son of God that makes ashes of all that is man-made, even though it is on the right foundation. This work has already begun and will continue, until only Christ remains. Jesus declares, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."* (Matt.24:35) Amen, Lord Jesus. Let it be according to your Word.

Because of His love, *Jackie Caporaso*