

ALL THINGS ARE YOURS

Move beyond every barrier that is hindering you from receiving the fulness of all that God has made available for your development and blessing in the Body of Christ



ERNEST PAUL
Author of highly demanded *Unleashing the Sons of God*

Introduction

The story is told of two young men who boarded a ship and traveled for weeks on the high seas, surviving on nothing but crackers, molten bread and water when all the while they could have had the choicest of wines, eaten a buffet three times daily through their entire trip. They never read the ticket, never found out on time that they had access to everything on board. They assumed that the ticket only covered the expense for the travel. They needed somebody to tell them, 'boys, all things are yours!' Unfortunately that person told them too late, just at the close of the voyage. Don't wait until it's too late in life before you realize that all things are yours.

A spiritual generation is about reaching maturity. Soon they would be emancipated, out, released to outward profession of the Kingdom in power. They are the product of several years of spiritual impartation and divine processes. Their fathers, instructors and mentors are likewise the product of a Benetton of impartations. They've all drank from several pools. The children must learn on time that all things are theirs.

The Argument

News got to Apostle Paul, It was from brother Chloe: "The brethren are arguing, no, fighting among themselves. Some are saying 'I am of Peter, he's the greatest of them all. Check out how his shadow heals the sick. It was he that Jesus gave the keys of the Kingdom to. He is an apostle of the Lamb...' Others are saying, 'I am of Paul. Check out the depth of his revelations. Check out the span of his missionary endeavors, he's the most current as far as present truth is concerned. Peter represents the past move of the Spirit. The epicenter of

Kingdom thrust has shifted from Jerusalem to Antioch...'
Another group was saying 'Apollos is our man. Oh, he is such an orator! As for Paul his letters are weighty but his bodily presence is contemptible, he cannot speak in the same conference as Apollos...' Another group still was saying, "We are of Christ. He's more powerful than all your folks put together..."

On hearing this report Paul the apostle cried out, "What? You guys are so infested with carnality. When one says 'I'm of Paul, or Peter, or Apollos are you not carnal and walk as men? And who are these folks by the way? Is Christ divided? Did any of them die for you? Were you baptized in the name of any of them? Is it about ministers or about Christ? Are we to be gathered unto ministers or unto Christ? What has come over you all? Do you not realize that ALL THINGS ARE YOURS?' Therefore it is not either Paul or Peter or Apollos; you can have them all. They are all servants for your sakes, placed in the body for your good to equip you. In clinging only to one you lose all the others." Are we doing the same thing today?

The Plague of Division among God's People

One of the greatest diseases ever to plague the church of Christ is the division amongst us. One of the greatest atrocities perpetrated under heaven, even and mostly among those who are ministers of the gospel, is this fact of shredding the body of Christ in pieces. We are quick to accuse Judas of selling his Lord and yet we find nothing wrong in partitioning the body, and carving out empires for ourselves from the mutilated body of Christ. In every way in which we divide the body of Christ or profit from its division we sin against Him and we must repent and stop desecrating His body for all who do such

things are under a curse especially now that He is moving to close the ages so that He can usher in the age of righteousness.

Little do we realize that the body disunited is Satan's greatest ploy to deactivate and stop Christ from enforcing in the natural all that His death, resurrection, ascension and glorification have accomplished in the spirit. God is moving in these days to de-emphasize this unnatural division within His body, and to promote the spiritual body, which is one, whole organic reality. 'But how is it possible?' you immediately interject. Have you noticed how you tend to cringe within when we touch the subject of unity? This unnatural fear wells up, this sudden uneasiness erupts. It is almost as if we do not want anybody to touch our idols. We do not want our arrangement called to question. This blessed prospect should fill our souls with rapturous joy. A thousand bright pictures in full processed colors should immediately assault our imagination. We should gasp, 'halleluiah'... Why is that not our response? Why is our heart panting? Are we afraid? Are we threatened?

It seems impossible that we could ever be united. This is Satan's lie, his propaganda. Austin Sparks tells of reading a book by Adolph Keller, a man who traveled all over the world to visit all churches, to see what could be done along the line of church union. Keller says in this book: "I must admit, that oftentimes when I sat in magnificent church buildings, with their stained-glass windows and carved organs, I was less conscious of being in the Church of Christ than when, for instance, I was in one of those Ukrainian peasant-rooms crowded with men and women who had come barefoot from afar to hear the

Word of God. These poor little congregations and churches widely scattered in the hills of Yugoslavia, in the lonely villages of Wolhynia, in the coal-mining districts of Belgium, in the taverns and barns of Czechoslovakia, these churches truly humble us, because they show us again and again the true poverty and the true riches of Christ; and that in a way impossible in the securely established, self-sufficient church that we know today." Then he makes this statement: "The entire Church no longer represents its nature as originally intended, neither is it able to do so."

That last statement, "neither is it able to do so" is such a pathetic commentary. This is what Satan would have us to believe. Thank God, Satan does not call the shots.

Even though it seems that the church cannot be united what is more painful is that it seems that the unity of the faith or of the Body is undesirable. Many ministers are afraid that if the body gets united they would lose 'their' place. Well, this fear isn't new nor is its consequence. The scribes, Pharisees and rulers of the temple in Jesus' day reasoned among themselves that if they did not kill Jesus, if they allowed Him to have His way, the Romans would come and take over their land and soon they would have no place - they would lose relevance. Their fears and the wickedness it led them to commit did nothing but further strip them of their relevance, for where are the scribes today? Where are the Pharisees? And where is the temple for that matter? Yet this same Jesus has been made both Lord and Christ and is busy filling the universe with Himself.

All things Are Yours

For over eleven years I was part of a Kingdom

community which was part of a global network. Decrying the ills perpetuated under the system of denominationalism, the division it has fostered among the band of believers and the limitations presented by this model of coordination within the body of Christ this network strived in the early days to be a post-denominational entity. The proposition was appealing. Many pastors, churches and ministries joined in. But soon it would appear that this network had itself become a denomination, not in the traditional definition of the word but for all practical purposes.

A wall was visible in our minds that defined us as being apart from others in the body of Christ. Of course we felt superior in some regards or is it 'more legitimate or favored'? Most folks I know in the network do not have friends in other churches who they truly respected and with whom they could share uninhibited fellowship. We kept to ourselves. We did not discern the body of Christ very accurately. I felt one or two other things were out of order also. At some point the Lord began talking to me about the next level of spiritual assignment He had for me; it was then that I came to realize just how much we had been denominated. I found myself battling with the thought, "If I were to leave this company how would I continue to have access to the powerful apostolic resource available here?" I admitted unconsciously that leaving would mean being cut-off from resources which I felt were vital to my spiritual development, just as several other people within the body have for several years been shut-off from resources even though like Paul the apostle said, 'All things are yours.'

I have moved on to obey God. Folks there think I have 'fallen' from accuracy. I have come to see that the

Lord our shepherd is the one who leads us into spiritual pastures. He is the source of provision for His sheep. What more? I have come to see that there are lots of people out there (actually, in here) in the body of Christ who have God's process, power, favor and approval on their lives in ways we did not have, and how complete we would have been had we been able to 'see' these brethren and forged alliances with them.

How much disservice we have done to ourselves in not realizing that all things are ours! In carving out part for ourselves we disqualify ourselves from possessing the whole. All things are yours.

Moving Beyond Definitions

Ordinarily definitions are good. They help us know things clearly. They cut clear shapes and delineate boundaries, yet one of the problems plaguing us in Christendom is definitions. This is especially so for people who care about words, for letters more than for spirit.

My Christian heritage is a very interesting one. I was born into the Baptist church and later attended a Baptist High School (even though at the time we were no longer Baptists). My parents later got saved in the revival following the civil war in Nigeria in an evangelistic/Pentecostal church my mom first and later my dad and soon we became Pentecostals. As a boy I followed my cousins from time to time to the Catholic Church they attended and later attended, for two years, a catholic High School were attending mass was compulsory for all students. As a young boy my mother would take me to Deeper Life meetings. She attended the meetings because of the fervent prayers they offered.

When I got into the university the Deeper Life

Students' Fellowship was the first fellowship I joined, making me a 'deeper-lifer' (Deeper Life is a Holiness/puritan group).

I later left deeper life and joined the Fellowship of Christian Students, which was later changed to Nigerian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (NIFES). Thus I became an evangelical. At about the time the word of Faith movement was on and teachings from Kenneth Hagin, Copeland, Fred Price and the others began infiltrating the Christian grapevine. I bought into this movement with all of my heart and was soon attending meetings with other charismatic folks who believed in those teachings. I was evicted from the NIFES on account of adhering strictly to charismatic positions. I was thus a charismatic.

In the late 1980s the prophetic move started in America (though unknown to us) and our company of charismatic boys and girls found through God's providence that a measure of prophetic experience had begun to occur amongst us. We soon morphed into somewhat of a prophetic company, proclaiming the coming of the apostolic, the Kingdom of God and sonship realities of the Latter Rain folks. The church around us did not understand us. Believing the church to have missed it, to have been stuck in its evolution, we soon separated ourselves and even began to live in communities, as we pressed into the fulfillment of those things we preached. I was thus a 'Come-outer'.

By the time our little group disbanded some years later the prophetic movement had reached full bloom and attained global recognition. I relocated to Lagos, Nigeria from the North of Nigeria and after being in Winners' Chapel (a charismatic denomination) for a while I found

and joined a church which was connected to the prophetic movement. This church soon embraced the apostolic and went on to be one of the major arbiters of the reformation move of God. Thus I became an Apostolic/Reformation believer. After over eleven years in this group the Lord spoke to me about moving on to the next level of ministry He had for me. In the process of my brief, though intense preparation for this task ahead the Lord began shifting my emphasis from doctrines, teachings, demonstrations and definitions to Christ. Does that mean that now I'm a Christian? But I've always been me (not a Baptist-Catholic-Pentecostal-Evangelical-Puritan-Charismatic-Prophetic-Apostolic-Kingdom reformer/Son). And what in the world is all that? I am just this poor boy with a hunger for God, seeking to know Him in greater measures and striving to be all that the Word of God says we could be.

Can't you see how absurd these definitions are?

It is not that the definitions are something in themselves but that they create boundaries within our minds. When folks get into the reformation or salvation-of-the-soul paradigm, for example, they no longer do a lot of soul-winning or miracles. It seems that those things are now too low for them, too insignificant or quite unnecessary. Even though folks from time to time see the need for these 'other' things and wish to flow in them they find themselves unable to. It seems they are crossing a major boundary in doing so. It feels like *going back*. There may not be overt teachings against these positions yet there are covert understandings. Definitions guarantee the walls are there. I know folks who even feel guilty about doing stuff like healings in a 'perfection' circle. That guilt is the result of having crossed over a wall, a boundary within the mind. Some reformation folks feel odd about

attending meetings in a charismatic church. They may do it but would not allow leadership to know. Perhaps, because they'd branded those churches as miracle centers and the worshippers as 'miracle seekers', there seems to be a stigma with 'condescending low' to attend these meetings. Now, while I am not advocating folks running all over the place I am addressing the reason why folks cannot feel free to fellowship with other brethren as the need arises, or partake of the grace of God from others who are not part of their churches, denominations or movements. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

Have you heard folks saying stuff like 'We are prophetic, we do not believe in this or that'? That is the evil of definitions. It seems that if you are this or that you might not do this n' that. The succeeding movements of the Holy Spirit were never meant to divide us. They were and always are meant to move all of us into greater depths, more prevailing spiritual positions and greater glories. Yes, there are folks who always refuse to move with the Spirit of God but those who move on must not necessarily move away from previous positions secured and consolidated at great cost to the Lord. It does not have to be an either-or proposition. Let us learn integrative thinking. It is this and that and that.

Recently an old friend from the faith movement, one of those rare breeds who have managed to preserve the purity of the word of faith was invited to minister in a prophetic church. I was there. How refreshing was his teaching on faith and how blessed I was, I was ashamed to have left some of the very precious foundations that gave shape to our early Christian endeavor. After the teaching this young man began ministering to folks in this prophetic church by the Spirit. He called out people by the word of

Knowledge, prayed the prayer of faith for them, released healing, gave them the word of wisdom and even prophesied over the church. It would seem that he entered into the discerning of spirits while giving this prophetic word. It was all so rich at some point I was wondering what the prophetic guys in this church had more than this 'charismatic' preacher. Only one thing I think definitions. We must move away from these definitions and avail ourselves of all the resources and grace that the Holy Spirit has made available for us in the body whether they be truths, spiritual gifts or ministers. All things are yours.

Jesus attended synagogue. Did that make Him a *synagogueist*? We must rise beyond these definitions in our mind and see the big picture, which is that God is working on the body, the one and only body, to bring it into perfection. It's just like when a house is being built. The surveyors are the first to move in. They survey the land and then the caterpillars move in and begin clearing. Then the brick layers come in to dig and lay the foundations. The skills and tools required at this phase are appropriate to the task. At roofing level the carpenters move in. They have their own set of tools hammers, saws and etcetera. Then the electricians move in to wire the house. The folks doing the water and sewage also come on - different skills, different tools, different assignments, but all working on one big house. The house is at no point named after the tools or skills involved in its construction. It is not called: 'carpenterist' or 'brick-layist' or 'paintist' after the various processes it goes through. So why do we do that with the church of Christ, which is a spiritual building? Why do we give names to different aspects of the building? It is just a building. One building! Let us train our eyes to see it as such. If the division isn't in our minds it wouldn't be in the

physical.

Working Your Way Through Definitions

Earlier on I told of the young word-of-faith preacher who came to a prophetic church. He moved in the gift of Word of Knowledge, gave these guys Words of Wisdom to release his Gift of Healing and prophesied with elements of the gift of Discerning of spirits. He may have likewise moved in the gift of Faith who knows. If you were to ask him how he shifted gears from one gift to another he would probably be mesmerized as to the technicalities. Some folks are so into terms and definitions that they must know in which gifts Jesus said what and did what; or which office was in operation when He said what. These definitions only serve to confuse and create division.

I think the Corinthian church was caught in all these carnalities, which was why Paul the apostle wrote them letters. The definitions Paul gave them were not meant to divide but to clarify. And further instruct.

The Gifts of the Spirit

1 Corinthians 12 is not a section on the gifts of the spirit per se, but on the unity of the Spirit. The beloved apostle begins that chapter thus: *“Now concerning spiritual ‘gifts’, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.”* In the King James Version the word ‘gift’ is italicized, meaning that it is not there in the original. It would read something like, *“Now concerning the spiritual, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.”* The BBE translates it as: *“But about the things of the spirit, my brothers, it is not right for you to be without teaching.”* The DBY translates: *“But concerning spiritual [manifestations], brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant.”* Why? Why did the

apostle seek to enlighten them? Well, the next verse presents us with a window into his mind. “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.” (KJV)

As pagans they had several gods, idols or deities. The Greek and Roman cultures were fraught with much idolatry. It seems there is a god for everything: a god for fertility, a god for male children, another for female offspring; one god for sowing, another for reaping. There was a god for friendship, another for romance, another for sex, and so on. Each day of the week belonged to and was superintended by a different god. Do you see it? It is easy for Greek thinking to relate and categorize things according to the nature of god back of it. When these Gentiles newly became born again and were baptized in the Holy Spirit, the manifestations of the spirit were evident in their midst. But their unrenewed minds would relate each manifestation as though coming from a different source. They might even have had arguments as to which of the gifts was superior and therefore which god was more powerful.

Paul's point was to make them see that it is the same Spirit, the same Holy Spirit that is responsible for all these diverse manifestations. Hear what Paul tells them: “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the

working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” (Vv.4-11)

They gifts or manifestation of the Spirit come from one source and has but one purpose to edify (or build up) the body of Christ. He speaks of diverse operations emanating from the same God. Often in carrying out a spiritual ministry several gifts would play in, overlap, to get the job done. Like in the raising the dead, quite often the gift of special faith would initiate, the gift of miracles would come in to bring the dead back into time and quicken such a one, then the gift of healing might come in to deal with whatever it was that killed that person in the first place, otherwise she would die again of the same cause soon after. The minister is not conscious of shifting gears in the spirit, he just allows the Holy Spirit to get the job done through him, that's all. If we only cared about getting the body edified and reaching maturity, none of those artificial divisions would matter any.

The Purpose of the Five-fold Ministry

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

Folks tend to read the first part of that scripture as though it read, “*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the REJECTING of the saints*” or “... for the DIVIDING of the

saints.” But that's not what it says.

The five-fold are the different administrations of Christ's grace meant to equip the saints and to bring us into perfection. We cannot do without any of them. All five are needed to have a body that is whole, entire, wanting nothing. Many ministers because of insecurity would not allow other ministry gifts to come and release impartation upon their people and church. They are usually too threatened and hold the people of God too tightly, thereby killing them. The great shepherd of the flock will soon come and reprimand them. May he not judge them too severely, amen. Beloved, let us repent of depriving the Lord's heritage of things that are rightfully theirs. All things are yours.

Apostles are meant to release an apostolic dimension in the church, bring them into breakthrough, boldness, wisdom, government, might and grace to reach the finish. Prophets ought to release the prophetic dimension upon the people, activate gifts, stir and inspire the people, release spiritual direction and enable them access the prophetic nature of Christ. Evangelists are likewise supposed to release the compassion of Christ and the heart for the lost upon the saints so that they are likewise aglow with the same passion for the unsaved. Their first ministry is in the church... “for the perfecting of the saints”. Let the children first be filled, Jesus said. Pastors and teachers are likewise to empty their cups, their spiritual impartation upon the saints. The result is that the saints are to be built up into Christ in all things. Do you see it?

Some ministers have locked down the people of God. They've held them in prison, either under ignorance, threats or spell of their persons. The Lord would have you

to set them free, ere He sets them free Himself and that not without harm to you.

We have to move to recover true covenant joining among ministers, not just business relationships. Men have so taken ownership of God's heritage that they run it like a business empire. Their first instinct is to protect their 'investment', next they think of how to grow their 'investment'. Thus they make friends only with folks who would either add to their ministry profile or invite them in return to minister in their own church. Do we care about the spiritual needs of the flock? God's eyes are watching and one day soon He will ask His servants to give account of their stewardship. We carry on as though He would not ask us. Let as many as are indicted repent before the Lord and love the little, ailing lambs once more with their Great Shepherd's love.

Christian Dialects and *Christianese*

We have several groups, denominations, movements and churches in Christendom, and these various groups in some way correspond to spiritual tribes. In much the same way we all speak different dialects and perhaps languages; and just as language was a basis for division in Babel, we have allowed these languages and dialects to divide us today.

By languages and dialects I am simply referring to the lingos and terminologies used within particular groups. The Bible offers us one language, and that is 'truth'. Truth is truth no matter in what dialect it is declared. It is based on revelation, and received through understanding. People may speak different dialects but if they are interested in truth they will find that they mean the same thing. For example, depending on whether you are an American,

English or Nigerian, you may say: penitentiary or prison or jail or guardroom or cell you'd still be saying the same thing, just different dialects. If you are not contentious, if you are seeking for truth and not just the usage of words you will see the point, you will get to the heart of things; you will know the speaker is referring to confinement, especially one imposed, maybe as punishment...

In the church different groups use words and phrases like: feast of tabernacle, the finish, perfection, maturity, sonship, and etcetera to define the culmination of all things. They may say 'end times' or 'last hour' or 'final hour' or 'close of the Age'. Then again different groups may say: 'end time army' or 'Joel's army' or 'Gideon's army' or 'Gideon's 300' or 'Joshua generation' or 'first fruits' or 'over-comers' band' or 'man-child company'... to refer to the same thing. Do you get it? If you are not seeking to be contentious or unnecessarily technical, if you are interested in spirit and not mere letters, you will get the point. Some folks just like arguing. It is not the spirit of Christ. Some folks seem always to be irritable. Irritability is not one of the fruits of the spirit. Love endures all things, bears all things, hopes all things, understands...

The reason we tend to hear the different dialects is because we are not listening to each other with love in our hearts. When we truly love, when love moves like intoxication within our hearts we would not notice the different accents, and even if we do we would find them interesting and joyously so. Oh, for a heart that knows how to love. Beloved let us love one another for love is of God and every one that loves is born of God and knows God.

Wrong on One Point, Wrong All the Way Through
Brother Hagin once told a story of how he sat listening to

this preacher. The preacher went on and on blasting the word of faith and all that Hagin stood for. Perhaps he even said some demeaning things about him. Brother Hagin just sat there listening to this man. He could have been offended and gotten angry but he said, "I'll give him the benefit of the doubts. Maybe he doesn't really understand and doesn't know any better." Just there after the man with the 'fowl mouth' spoke a revelation that was the answer to something Hagin had been seeking to know in the past 20 years. It came right out of this brother's mouth. Was he right in his previous allegations? No! But would Hagin have been right to get offended and walk off? No! Had he done that he'd have missed what God had for him. The fact that the man was wrong in one direction didn't mean he was a false brother, or that he is wrong through and through.

A pastor friend of mine sat listening to one of his church members tell him stuff one would call 'trash'. She blasted him and told him things that were truly humiliating, and while he was struggling between the thought the thought of walking in love towards her and walking out on her she started saying something and the Lord said, 'Pay attention to what she is saying', for the voice of God came right through her and pure counsel issued, giving him direction on how to handle one or two things.' Phew! But that's how God does.

Because a minister has some excesses or has gone off the dip at some point does not mean that he has nothing to say to you, or that there is no way you can benefit from his ministry. Eli the High Priest may be missing it at some points but he still knows how to hear God and if young Samuel would care to listen to him he would receive mentoring along the lines of hearing God

and how to respond to God's voice. I am not encouraging spiritual recklessness but I am seeking to remove the obstacle on the path of many when the Holy Spirit leads you to go get resource from someone you do not quite agree with on certain points.

I know a man of God whom I consider to have some excesses in the area of the use of the anointing oil, yet this man has such boldness of faith and largeness of heart which if the apostolic folks got a hold of, would totally bless and give indescribable leverage to what they are doing, yet they wouldn't get within a mile of this man's meetings. Why? Oh, because his emphasis on the oil is too much and the likes.

Again, I am not encouraging spiritual recklessness. I do however know that the Bible leaves us room to 'prove all things; hold fast to what is right.' () This means spiritual discrimination of what we hear. This means we can judge what we hear. I judge things myself, but I also walk in wisdom. I was once interested in the teachings of a past general (of God). He had such signs, wonders and miracles as even Moses and Peter did not have in their days. I wished for this grace, favor and impartation, but heard that the man's death was a result of spiritual judgment from the Lord. What did he do? It is reported that the Lord said some of this man's teachings were hurting the body of Christ. I felt I had neither the wisdom nor the maturity at the time to know which of the man's teachings were clean and which had issues, and so I stayed off them completely. I knew that in time when I have grown enough I might be able to better discern. Well, I think that now I would be able to know, but the Lord hasn't led me that way. He's not led me across this man's books or materials, and I do not study just because I must have knowledge. I seek to be led.

I study into the area of my life or ministry that the Holy Spirit is dealing with and calling my attention to. The Lord is my shepherd. I do not desire to know everything in the Bible, just the things the Holy Spirit thinks are important to bring me into my spiritual inheritance.

Honoring the Fathers

I was once in a company of believers who spoke of the late arch Bishop Benson Idahosa in such a way that you would not want to associate with his memory. It is thought that not much could be said of the fidelity of his walk in the last hours of his ministry, yet his hay days had unmatched exploits of the boldness of faith and the raw demonstrations of the supernatural (to the glory of God), yet my brothers would have none of him. And they themselves do not have this level of authority in their midst.

I was greatly humbled when I read God's testimony of this man, Idahosa, from a prophetic experience the Lord gave to Bob Jones. Here is an excerpt of it:

“On Friday, March 24th, as Bob was preparing for prayer, he immediately went into an Acts 10:10 type of trance. Bob's highest revelations come in this way. In the visitation, Bob saw what appeared to be 12 ordinary "men" approaching him. Although they had the appearance of men he knew they were angels. The one in front seemed to be the most prominent, and he served as spokesman for
t h e g r o u p .

“He said, "My name is 'Breakthrough', and I have now been assigned to the United States." For about 30 minutes, the angel shared with Bob historical accounts of past revivals that transpired to God's glory that he had

been involved with. His job is to release breakthrough and awakening, and to initiate a wave of harvest by extracting all obstacles to God's plans while the other angels gather
t h e h a r v e s t .

“Most prominently, he shared his involvement in the life of Benson Idahosa from Nigeria. The angel had previously been intimately involved in the ministry of this great man of God throughout Nigeria and other African nations. Then the angel specifically articulated that after Nigeria, he had been assigned to the United States.

“Without Bob knowing the history beforehand, the angel shared with him great revivals that brought many souls into God's Kingdom that he was responsible for. The angel stated that he has been in the United States for approximately two years laying the groundwork for the next revival. A revival, he said, that present stadiums will not be adequate to hold, once it is fully manifested. This revelation is particularly significant for me, as it directly relates to a word that we have been sharing throughout the body of Christ since October of 2003...”

A friend of mine used to say things like, “We are going to be greater than the fathers. We will do what they could not do and bla bla bla. He said one day while saying those sorts of things the Lord asked him, “Do you know what the fathers did? Do you know the works you want to surpass? Go and study about my servant apostle Babalola of the CAC movement. So began a period of research. Needless to say when my friend was through he never again said the sort of things. He knew we'd be lucky, and most blessed, to come within miles of what this man and others like him did for God and the church.

Jesus said to honor our mother and father so that it may be well with us and so we would live long on earth (). This is one major key to longevity. Because of the parallel nature of truth this scripture is applicable on a natural level as well as on a spiritual level. It is applicable to individuals as well as churches, ministries and even movements. If we would honor our fathers it would release grace for things to proceed well. If however we would not honor our fathers (spiritual ancestry) we would experience plenty of hardship and eventually die prematurely. Several moves of God and revivals have died prematurely for this cause.

The Principle of Honoring

What does it mean to honor, but to recognize and appreciate the true worth of someone? The Lord Jesus gave us a classical window to understanding the principle of honor. Not too long after he returned from the wilderness in the power of the Spirit and His fame went abroad, He went about doing His mighty deeds and demonstrating the Kingdom until He came to His hometown. There it seems His power to work miracles and do mighty signs was arrested.

The folks questioned among themselves, 'is this not that carpenter boy who lived a stone throw from here? Is this not Mary's boy; brother to Judas, Joses, James and Salome? They said, 'yea, he is.' And so were offended in Him. Now, here is the point. They were right about the facts. But they could not see Jesus' true worth. They did not recognize His glory and certainly did not appreciate it. Jesus struggled to heal a few minor ailments and walked away saying 'a prophet is not without honor save in his home town.' What Jesus meant was that the people had dishonored Him. How? In not recognizing Him according

to the spirit! In not connecting to His true spiritual worth. No wonder apostle Paul said, "Henceforth no we no man after the flesh... not even Christ." (2Cor. 5:16) Because the folks could not connect to Jesus on the level of truth they could not receive the prophet's reward. You will recall the scripture, "Whoever receives a prophet IN THE NAME OF A PROPHET (meaning, as a prophet) will receive a prophet's reward.

If we would see folks as God sees them and especially connect to this revelation of them oh, the level of spiritual release that we would see in our midst. Gifts would be activated and the body would be animated and edified, for the command to honor is not just towards fathers. Scriptures say we should honor one another. This goes beyond tolerating each other to celebrating one another. Our joyful feasts would never end. Our vats would continually overflow with new wine. The house of God would be a place of delight and life.

After Saul died David did not gloat over him. Rather he mourned him and composed the song of the bow in memory of him. He cried, 'how are they mighty fallen?' He called him mighty. Had he been a lesser man than he was, had he been very petty he would have sung, 'how are they perished that troubled me?' But not David. Let that serve as an example for us, the fall of any of these is the fall of us all.

Do We Pray for Our *Fallen* heroes?

Do we rejoice when we hear that a minister has done something unexpected like adultery or had a divorce? Do we protect our own or do we shoot our wounded soldiers? Do you know the level of spiritual attack these men face daily? Do you know what they are exposed to?

We've no right to talk about them until we are praying for them. Do you pray for other ministers within the body of Christ? Or is it just your pastor or the pastors in your denomination? Do you even pray for your pastor? Do you know you have a responsibility to pray for all men, for kings and all those in authority? Do you not think God would hold you responsible for praying only for your pastor? Well, God thinks all things are yours, whether Rev. Kumuyi, Bishop Oyedepo or Rev. Oyakhilome, Dr. Noel Woodroffe, Juanita Bynum, Benny Hinn or your pastor.

I earlier told of a group I was part of in the late 80s that lived in communities. We shared genuine church life and pressed into great things in God, but we held a couple of understandings that were somewhat inaccurate. Years later Satan exploited these inaccurate positions and the grace of God ceased in our midst. We got dispersed, and many people were hurt. They were deeply wounded. They felt betrayed by God and let down by the leader of this commune. I was badly hurt myself, but carried on by the grace of God to redefine my life. Painful years followed. Many of my brothers cursed the day they met this man. Some hated him and do so still. They would have nothing to do with him any longer. But I later got reconciled to him. I still relate with him and in fact God has used him to be such a blessing to me in recent times. So, how did we get reconciled?

Quite simply: during those painful years I would sometimes think of him and what a gift he was and could yet be to the body of Christ. He was 'too loaded' like we say, too gifted. Heaven's endowment on this man was simply extraordinary. I knew that if God could correct the excesses in this man and fix him again the whole body of Christ stands to benefit and if otherwise, it is all our loss.

And so I used to pray for him, to ask God for his restoration. When I finally ran into him in a meeting in which we were both guest ministers, I had all these negative emotions and past memories running through me, but I had been praying for his restoration. Would I not be glad that my prayers had been answered?

Hey, do not laugh at Samson for you do not know when his hair would grow back.

Discerning the Body

Paul the apostle noted that for lack of discerning the body some people are weak and some have even died. Once again, applying the parallel nature of truth, this scripture is applicable on several levels. Individuals who fail to discern the body are prone to this condition. Likewise, churches, ministries and even movements who would not discern the body would be feeble and maybe eventually die. How die? Life would go out of them. They would become a carcass of what they once were. They would become 'ichabod' the glory has departed. Many churches are presently in this place. They are diminishing, wilting, withering, and fading away. They are much like a museum of anthropology, nothing more than the taxidermy of a prehistoric way of life that has not existed in a long time.

What is discerning the body? Very simply, it means understanding that though the body is one it has many members, and that all the members though different, are all part of the body, and then according appropriate respect to each member whether the member be persons or local churches. It means 'judging' each part correctly. It means being able to 'see' the body as it truly is. Some folks can only see their group or denomination, church, or movement. They do not see others and do not even care. Some people

see other groups, but see them as being inferior to themselves. Some folks see everyone else as having missed it and only they have it right. In fact any way we 'see' the body that is not accurate, not in honor, not in love, is not acceptable to God, no matter how much we think we are accurate.

My ministry in the University of Ilorin is mainly among Anglican students and they are more receptive to the things of the Spirit than a good number of Pentecostal/charismatic churches I know around. Yet it is quite easy to think, 'Anglicans? Oops!'

How well do you see the body of Christ? Do you despise folks from other groups who do not have as much revelation as you do? Do you know that it places a responsibility upon you to bear with them, and love them? Have you considered that many of the folks in church are babies because they ought to be babies? You cannot force growth. I do not want my four-year old son behaving like a man of thirty, no way. Let him have his time and enjoy his childhood. In time, as he eats his vegetables and does his exercises he would grow into a strong man after many years.

Has it ever occurred to you that each time you do not seem to like other folks who are not in your group it is because you are carnal? If you look closely in your heart you might find pride, arrogance, deception, fear, envy, jealousy, love for pre-eminence and position, insecurity and the likes. Look closely.

Is the Body Divided?

Before we go ahead to answer this question let us first of all define what we mean by 'the body'. In Eph. 1 Apostle Paul uses the phrase, 'the church which is His

body.' And elsewhere, 'there is one body'. When we say 'the body' we are referring to two separate things: the first is a temporal, cultural institution that occurs in time, and is spread across geographies in the earth. The second is a mystical entity which is eternal and transcends time, geographies and even worlds; it is spiritual and cannot be understood for it is the Lord's body. The first is meant to grow around the second and to represent the second in the visible realm.

When the Lord asks us to discern the body it is this second entity He is really focusing on. Whatever we do we must have the interest of the body at heart. Will it hurt the body; will it bless and edify it? Will it uphold and magnify it?

There is one body. The first may be hundreds of thousands, but the mystical body is one. It is in unity, it cannot be divided. It is the earthly counterpart that needs to come into greater harmony and coordination. We have got to love the body of Christ. God bless us as we do so, amen.

Feed my Lambs

Jesus' disciples had left everything to follow Him. They had hoped that he would finally redeem from Rome's oppression, but suddenly He had been crucified and all their hopes for a better future as well as a means of livelihood had just gone with the winds.

Discouraged Peter said to his crew, "I go a fishing." They all went with Him. Having toiled all night and caught nothing a stranger on the sea shore asked them to cast their net in the right side. It was now morning. They did and now they couldn't draw out the catch for the net had begun to break. John told Peter, "It is the Lord!" Peter dived into

the water and swarm to his Lord. Soon the others joined them and there was a feast.

As they ate Jesus solemnly asked Peter, “Simon, lovest thou me more than all these?” he said, “Yes, Lord”. And Jesus said “Feed my lambs”. Oh, those lambs, those innocent, little things that Jesus died for. They are cold, they are naked, they are hungry, and need to be fed. “Feed my lambs.” Oh how He loves his lambs, helpless as they are. Oh how He loves His lambs, for they're His only joy. “Feed my lambs.” But see, the lambs are for prey. Wolves, lions, hyenas all prey on them, yes, even their shepherds prey on them. See, they are wounded, hurt, unprotected. Yet the Great Shepherd loves them. “Feed my lambs.” Some folks would sell the lambs for 'all these things', yet the master's question is, “Lovest thou me more than all these things?”

Do we truly love the Lord? How do we know we love Him? “Feed my lambs.” Many have fed them on secular humanism, pagan philosophies, worldly wisdom, superstition and several other poisonous things, but the Great Shepherd of the flock will take account. He loves His flock. He will come to them; he has heard their cry. “Lovest thou me more than all these things?”

I was told of a minister who sold his church and all the flocks, after he won a visa lottery to travel to America. The poor lambs came to church on Sunday only to meet their new *owner*. All sins committed against the Lord's body would be rewarded. Lovest thou the flock of God? I charge the elders who are among you to feed the flock of Christ, which He has purchased with his own blood.

The Wisdom of Building

In the declaration of His intent in relation to the

Church Jesus said, "I will build my church." The word, 'built' implies strategic efforts in development based on the principle of consolidation. What does this mean? Simply this: you put one stone cleverly, deliberately, upon another in an orderly fashion. You do not keep removing the previous stones each time a new one is brought. You will build nothing this way. That is how many have built their lives in the church. Once they hear of a new development within the church they discard everything they held dear previously and hold on to the new piece of revelation.

In Hebrews 6:1 Paul the apostle admonishes us to 'leave' the elemental principles of the doctrines of Christ and go on to perfection. 'Leave' as used there does not mean 'throw away', 'discard', or 'abandon'. It means to 'advance beyond.' It gives a sense of that which is incremental. Let us not always think in terms of either-or. The wisdom of building is knowing exactly how and where to lay each stone.

' But what about mixing old and new wine?' someone might ask. Wine is often symbolic of the action of the Holy Spirit. It is corn that speaks of the word of God, in that connection. The present endeavors of the Spirit is moving us in two opposite directions: forward towards greater sophistication, forward to embrace more advance development in the shape of the church and Kingdom, yet at the same time it is moving us backwards into more ancient, pathways and values in God. Every wise scribe instructed in the things of the Kingdom is able to bring from his treasury things old and new.

There are things to abandon though: things that have become worn with use, things that are no longer relevant, things that have aged and corruption that has

come into spiritual practices in time. Some things are the product of necessity. Certain cultures come up in time. They serve a purpose; and then times change and they are no longer relevant, so we discard them. The principles of God's word are however eternal and consistent. Only application may vary.

Corporate Responsibility for Throne Interests (Excerpted from *David's Mighty Men* by T. Austin Sparks)

There was a sense in which David had to be saved and succored by his mighty men. In 2Sam. 21: 16-17, a giant, in a set of new armor, marked out David and made him his object of destruction, and David was involved in very great peril. The man who had slain the original giant was now in peril from one of that giant's offspring, and one of the mighty men came to David's rescue and succored him and slew the giant. Then David's men said to him, 'We cannot afford to lose you; you keep back and let us deal with this; we will come between you and this sort of thing.' You will say it is a wrong interpretation to put the Lord Jesus in David's place there - 'Lord Jesus, You keep out of this, we are going to look after You!' Yet there is a sense in which that is right where the Church is concerned; the very interests and honor and glory and throne of the Lord Jesus are bound up with the Church. The matter is no longer His alone, and there is a sense in which He stands to lose if the Church fails - in which God would say about His Son, 'This is not the time for you to come out personally; you have done that; this is the time for the Church to take up your interests.'

David's life, David's throne, were put into the

hands of these men, and they saw their responsibility, and how great it was, and what David stood to lose if they did not take definite action about it. There must be a company of the Lord's people who rise to that level, who see that the tremendous significance of the throne of the Lord Jesus is in their hands. In one way it sounds a presumptuous thing to say, but you see what I mean. If we do not take responsibility over this matter of these evil forces in their assailing, if we are not strong in the Lord and do not move out against the principalities and powers, it is not only ourselves who are going to lose, but our Lord also. His throne is going to be affected. He has now, in a sense, made us responsible for the final issue, which is not personal but collective and corporate. So there must be a people (actual numbers are mentioned in David's case but we must not take that literally: they represent a specific inner company) who have seen the mighty issues of what is presented in the Letter to the Ephesians - those eternal counsels of God concerning Jesus Christ, and the place of the Church in those counsels as instrumental for their full realization - and have got through all personal interest in the matter of blessings, and are now committed to their Lord and to God's intention concerning Him, and realize that the responsibility is with them. That is what I feel is the Lord's word to us at this time - not to be just 'ordinary' Christians, but to realize that God must have a company of His Own, in the midst of the general rank and file, who answer to David's mighty men, to take up the ultimate issues of Christ's Lordship on His behalf.

The Lord is involved in these battles, into which we are precipitated, and they are not just our battles, they are

the battles of the Lord. There are situations and propositions which present themselves which are gigantic; they are paralyzing if you can be paralyzed. When Goliath started to shout, the people were literally paralyzed - if that is in keeping with being able to run away! But all their strength went in the presence of this man's showing of himself. You can be petrified by some of the situations that the enemy brings about as tests of faith. And then what is it going to be? Well, one deciding factor will be whether we consider ourselves or our Lord; whether at once we begin to feel sorry for ourselves, get down on to our own ground - which is just what the enemy wants to bring about - or whether we say, 'Well, the Lord's name and honor are involved in this; the real issue here is the Lordship, the Sovereignty, the Ascendancy of the Lord' - and, as they did, meet the situation on that ground. They did not always wait for these enemies to come and start the thing. When the enemies loomed up before them, these men took the initiative. I am the last to suggest that we should be careless and frivolous over attacking spiritual forces. We can do that to our undoing; and I also remind you that this is a thing which it is very dangerous to do individually. This is the business for the Church - the corporate assault upon situations which loom up and which could literally paralyze and put out of action. The Lord must have people like this in whom there is the initiative of His Lordship.

Suffering For the Body's Sake

There must be some to meet the situation in a vicarious way. There are all the others, there is all Israel; but so many cannot stand up, they have not got the spiritual

position, the spiritual measure; they are in spiritual weakness, and for them anything in the way of severe or extra trial or difficulty finds them at once paralyzed and helpless. Is the enemy going to create a universal situation like that? No, for the sake of the Church there must be those who take this position of the mighty men vicariously for the sake of others, the strong to bear the burdens of the weak, to take the initiative on behalf of the Church for the Church's sake. I am sure that amongst the mighty men of the Lord Jesus the Apostle Paul has "attained unto the first three," and he was one who said "for His body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1:24). He filled up that which was lacking of the sufferings of Christ for His Body's sake - vicarious suffering, not for sin, which is Christ's alone, but for the Church's victory. You are not unfamiliar with the large place in the New Testament given to the matter of spiritual strength and courage. I think that these stories are written in the Old Testament about David and his mighty men not as nice little picture book stories for the children, but as typifying what God means by courage, spiritual boldness, being strong in the Lord. There they are as great illustrations of these very passages which we have read from Ephesians. The message of the Lord to us is that He needs a company who, having seen what is involved in the spiritual warfare, will graduate out of the position of personal interests and personal blessing, and for the Lord's sake and for His people's sake take up the matter of the warfare with spiritual forces, and break a way through for the Church.

All things are yours.

The Interest of Christ

I got to know that a brother whom I trusted was compromising me in some way. I felt betrayed and deeply hurt. I thought within me that I would just cut him off, and keep a distance between us. I wouldn't retaliate; just cut him off. I woke up the following morning with a spiritual transaction already going on within me. When my mind became intelligent about the meditations within my spirit it was the Holy Spirit readjusting me on the inside.

He said, "So you will put a distance between you two... And Satan will put his foot in that gap. Soon there'll be these tensions when you meet, this uneasiness among both of you, then death would begin to fester: the coldness, the lack of trust, malice and etcetera. You would have made your point; you would have won, but the Lord would have lost out. Remember, your duty is to secure the interest of the Lord in every situation. You are to look out for the divine interest, not yours." I repented.

This is glorifying the Lord, it is sanctifying the Lord. It is a demand to conduct myself in such a way that the devil does not come in to compromise our order and unity. In the meantime it meant my suffering. I spoke to the brother later, but from a standpoint of redemption and reconciliation. We must always ask ourselves, "When I make this move, who stands to benefit, or what does the Lord stand to benefit?"

Remember, all things are yours.

