

## Day 1: Unity, Maturity, Fullness

*“Until we all come to the unity of the Faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...” Ephesians 4:13*

The 10 Days movement is focused, obsessed really, with Jesus’ prayer in John 17. We speak about “John 17 Unity”, that followers of Jesus globally would be One as the Father is one with the Son. I often teach that “Jesus gets what He prays for” and that we can expect an answer to Jesus’ prayer in fullness!

However, apart from greater clarification, “unity” can become a fuzzy buzz-word with a cloudy definition. Some people have grown tired of hearing about unity because of this lack of clarity on what it even means. *Ephesians 4:13 uses three overlapping ideas to provide triangulation and clarification on the New Testament meaning of Unity.*

### Maturity is Unity

A common technique among Biblical writers is to use synonyms with overlapping ranges of meaning to fully flesh-out a concept. That’s what Paul does here, giving us a set of three synonyms:

- The Unity of the Faith (further defining “faith” as the “knowledge of the Son of God”)
- A Mature Man
- The Measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ

We see here that Biblical unity, John 17 unity, is nothing other than “maturity” or the “fullness of the stature of Christ”. In other words, our quest for John 17 Unity in the Body of Christ is the same as our quest for the (corporate) likeness of Jesus. These three ideas (Unity, Maturity, Fullness) are all triangulating on one reality, and it’s our corporate destination as the Body of Christ. This not only helps to clarify unity, but also clarifies our misunderstandings of “fullness” and “maturity”. Importantly, *fullness* and *maturity* are not places we can arrive *on our own* but can only be reached corporately, *in unity with other believers*.

### Keep Building *until*...

Ephesians 4:7-12 speaks about the grace, or gifts of God, that have been distributed to His followers. These gifts have a specific purpose: they’re for “edifying” or “building up” the Body of Christ. With any building project, no matter how large, there is an end goal, a finished structure. All of the meaningful work at the construction site must help achieve this ultimate goal.

Similarly, God’s gifts, working through people, are building up the Body of Christ *until* this incredible Temple is completed. And how do we know when this Temple is finished? What will the completed structure look like? Once again, it will be a Church that’s *perfected in unity* (John 17:23, Eph 4:13), a *mature church*, that *looks like Jesus*, and a *Body that has the fullness of Christ’s stature*.

## **Our Destination is Clear: Let's Go Low!**

We are moving irrevocably as the people of God to a single destination with a 3-fold name: *Unity*, *Maturity*, and *Fullness*.

As we see in Ephesians 4, the grace of God in all its forms and working through each person is the only fuel that can propel us on this journey. During 10 Days, let's humble ourselves before the Lord because "*God opposes the proud, but **gives grace to the humble.***" Humility attracts the grace of God! Together, let's go low and receive grace for the building up His Body through prayer, fasting, and repentance ***until we all reach the unity of the faith...***

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## Day 2: “Christ in you, the Hope of Glory”

*Colossians 1:15–18 (ESV), “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent”*

Our one central and all-consuming focus today is the unrivaled preeminence of the risen and living Christ!

During these 10 Days our desire is that Jesus would be pre-eminent! Jesus Christ FIRST in everything. The risen and living Christ is deserving of absolute and unchallenged preeminence in all things: in life, in work, in love, in marriage, in money, in business, in the halls of Congress, in the halls of universities and elementary schools, and most of all in the hearts of all people. All things were created through him and for him, meaning that our lives must exist for the spread of his *fame*, for the extension of his *reign*, for the increase of his *gain*, and for the honor of his *claim* of that which rightfully belongs to him!

**Our hope is found in Christ alone!** Hope is the anticipation of God’s goodness in every area of our lives. Our ultimate hope in the goodness of God is in seeing and savoring, recognizing and relishing the glory of God in the face of Christ. Christ is our HOPE! He is the summation of all the promises of God, the source of all the riches of God, now and forevermore. In Christ we have been given an inheritance of HOPE. Our Hope is in hearing the music of the future, and dancing to that music, by faith, NOW! The song being sung is the Beauty and Majesty of Christ.

Let’s enter into the *power and pleasure of being obsessed with the magnificence of Jesus* today! As Paul wrote,

*“I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the overwhelming preciousness, the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord...[For my determined purpose is] that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly (Phil 3:8-9, AMP)]*

Too often, we fall woefully short of this glorious obsession. Therefore, Father we REPENT - - individually and on behalf of all your people:

- **We repent... for how we have *diminished your Son***, regarding Him more as our mascot than our Monarch.
- **We repent ... for how we have *manipulated your Son***, coming to Him to use Him. As far as we think we need Him – that far and no more.

- **We repent... for how we have *hoarded* your Son**, seeking His blessings for ourselves, with little thought about bringing those blessing to others. **We've assumed that He was there only for us.** We've acted as if He was not Lord of neighbors and nations.
- **We repent... for how we have *resisted* your Son**, withholding our affections from Him because we were afraid of what it would cost us to draw near to Him – and thus we denied His lordship over all.
- **We repent... for how we've *replaced* your Son...** with creeds and programs, and organizations, and causes performed in His name - **but without the consuming passion He deserves as the Lamb who was slain!**

To that end, Father, awaken us – **awaken us to see All that the Lord Jesus Christ is:** to see who He is as the Son of God ... **to see where He is leading in the Purposes of God...** to see how He imparts the Resources of God ... **and to see what He must receive from the People of God.**

Father, **Help us recover ALL the hope we are meant to have in our Sovereign Savior.** Do this for the revelation of Your glory in Him, throughout this nation – **and among all the nations!**  
**AMEN!**

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## Day 3: Biblical Hope for Lasting Financial Freedom

What is financial freedom?

Well, the world's idea is simple: lots of money. We are inundated in our culture with ads and marketing about retirement, income, investment, and planning, not to mention riches, goods, lifestyle, fame, and of course the "happiness" money buys.

But what does the Lord have to say about it?

Well firstly, that **we aren't to worry about our financial future**. Let's meditate on this:

*So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. - Matt 6:31-33*

God has many things to say about money and where to place our trust

- Riches are fleeting: Proverbs 23:5
- They can't be trusted (the bigger barns guy): Luke 12:18
- Following money causes us to wander from the faith: 1 Tim 6:10
- Seeking after money takes away life: Proverbs 1:19
- Doing God's will trumps making money: James 4:13
- You can't trust in two masters – it's either God or the money: Matthew 6:24

Let's debunk some of the mythology surrounding money:

First, money is not all-powerful. It has failed in the past and will most certainly fail again. So money is not as strong as we might imagine. Like a mighty kingdom that ultimately comes to ruin, so too, money is not such a strong tower in times of a storm.

Now, what is money anyway? It's just a convenience representing an exchange of value among people. So, *money is just a convenience tool that helps foster relationship*. We help each other through an exchange of value.

Really, what are these transactions? If there were no money, we would have to work with one another in community where each person provides part of what is needed for all. Hmm. Sounds a bit like the Kingdom of God and a unified body of Christ, doesn't it? Each body part has a unique contribution to the whole body functioning well. There indeed lies our future hope.

If money is simply a convenience tool to help foster relationship, how has it attained god-like status in our minds? A major culprit is **the depersonalization of finance**. It's a strategy from hell.

Perhaps the false "ideal" today is having enough money where you can sit in the privacy of your own home, pay bills, manage investment strategies, take care of business, defend the fort, and make more money. You can shop with anonymity, even on the internet - without much need for relationship - just shop and buy while paying with cards, phones and electronic transfers. It's

tragic if you think about it. Not the convenience or the technology, but the depersonalization. And what's worse is that by buying into these forms of depersonalized finance, we're being set-up.

How? If money failed tomorrow, all that would remain are our relationships with God and with people. If convenience collapses, banking collapses and corporations collapse, are we conditioned for thriving in Christ or setup for fear and failure? More importantly, have we been conditioned to trust our Lord with our daily needs, or are we used to trusting our bank balance. The words of Moses give us something to think about:

*He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every Word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. - Deuteronomy 8:3*

What is our future hope: The promises and promised-land of God. Of the increase of the Kingdom - ruled by King Jesus together with his Bride - there is no end. It is all about relationship. Love for God. Love for our neighbor. This is where the re-personalization of our finances comes in. Because it's not really finances we need but Jesus and one another. Jesus, His Kingdom, and the body of Christ are the only path to true financial freedom - now and in eternity. The Prince of Peace and the Bride of Christ. For God so loved the world that he gave His only son, such that we would not perish (even in the present - even when what we trusted in collapses). God will save us! He is worthy of our trust.

Let's pray.

*Father, thank you that you care for us more than the sparrow. Thank you that our lives are in your hands - every day. We repent for worrying about money or seeking it first. Help us understand your love for us transcends all things, even our earthly needs and our daily bread. Let us stick close to you. You will always provide and never forsake us. You will bring us into a wide and expansive space, even setting a table for us to eat before our enemies.*

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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## Day 4: America, Your only Hope is in Returning

*"For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts. "But you say, 'How shall we return?'"*  
Malachi 3:6-7 NASB

As I travel America, I often ask people: "How do you think America is doing?" The answer is always negative. Then I ask why. I listen respectfully, then I say: "I think it's because we have forgotten God." Many have agreed with me and we agree to pray for revival. Others, respond in different ways but it is always a great way to start an evangelism conversation. But what do you think? How is America doing? Could the problem be that we have we forgotten God?

### Four Great National Sins

America, like Israel, is a covenant nation with the Lord. Our forefathers entered into a covenant and dedicated America to God, seeking to follow His law, and established America upon His commands. However, like Israel in the past, we have committed the four great sins that lead to national destruction:

- **We have forsaken God** - turning our backs on God is the most heart-breaking thing to Him; we have committed spiritual adultery; we have stopped fashioning our laws and our national dependence upon Him.
- **We have shed innocent blood.** In addition to the crime in our streets, we have shed the blood of more than 50 million children in the womb, innocent beings given to us by God, made in His image, created to fulfill His purposes on the earth.
- **We have committed sexual immorality on a vast scale.** Only one kind of sex is permissible in God's eyes: sex between a man and a woman inside marriage. All other sex is illicit and illegal in God's eyes. *"Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."* I Peter 2:11 NASB
- **Greed:** The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was not only sexual sins, but that they did not have compassion on the poor. *"As I live," declares the Lord God, "Sodom, your sister and her daughters have not done as you and your daughters have done. Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me. Therefore I removed them when I saw it.* Ezekiel 16:48-50

The Lord sent many, many prophets to Israel before its collapse and destruction. Even its collapse and destruction were redemptive. God did promise redemption to His remnant. But even until the very day destruction and judgment comes, and I feel it will be soon without massive repentance, *it is possible for repentance to stay the hand of God.* After extensive prayer and with all my heart, I believe that God is saying, "America, return to me and I will return to you." Just as He did in the book of Malachi and just as He did in many of the other books of the Old Testament, this promise is for us as a nation: If we return to Him, He will surely return to us.

As He says in the New Testament: *"Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."* Luke 24:46-47.

The question is will we return to God? Will we turn from our sins and **seek God** with our whole heart, mind and soul?

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## Day 5 : Discovering Hope in Mourning a Wayward Nation

*12 Therefore in that day the Lord God of hosts called you to weeping, to wailing,  
To shaving the head and to wearing sackcloth.*

*13 Instead, there is gaiety and gladness,  
Killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep,  
Eating of meat and drinking of wine:  
“Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we may die.”*

*14 But the Lord of hosts revealed Himself to me,  
“Surely this iniquity shall not be forgiven you  
Until you die,” says the Lord God of hosts.*

*Isaiah 22:12-14, NASB*

Living in America with our high value on maintaining an upbeat attitude with a smile, I now realize that I have significantly underestimated God’s heart and purposes for mourning, especially national mourning.

Whether we look at the declining influence of Christianity, the humanistic pervasiveness in our education system, the mainstreaming of sexual perversion, the national debt approaching 20 trillion dollars, or other indicators, it is clear that a deeply troubling shift, with severe consequences, is in full swing. In other words, *when we look at the trajectory of our nation there are plenty of reasons to mourn.*

Reflecting on the Valley of Vision chapter found in Isaiah 22 (see above), the Lord had already called Judah (the southern kingdom of Israel) to turn from its festivities to mourn over their national apostasy (v. 12). But the people continued to focus on what would make them feel good in the moment (v. 13) and it had become too late for them to turn back (v. 14). Clearly the sobering realities identified in this passage concerning ancient Israel have implications for us today.

This passage also reveals that the people were capable of seeing their declension and the natural response should have been to mourn. In summary, *if we observe a cultural departure from God and His will and ways, we are to mourn while maintaining the hope of sanctifying repentance for believers and saving repentance for the lost.*

### Mourning Brings Hope?

But what about the heart of God related to mourning, especially as we focus today on mourning over our nation? To my surprise, whenever I seek God and enter into mourning for our nation, I do not find that I become depressed. In fact, I often feel CLOSER to God and even feel HOPE rising! What is this about?!

I believe that when we enter into the heart of God, we come to understand that He is grieved by the lost who reject Him, the lukewarm temperature of His people, and the misuse of his blessings for selfish purposes. It is at this point, using our spiritual vision,

that we began to see what He sees and feel what He feels. How could such prayers not connect with God?

While the Lord has not shown me that our nation will change its trajectory, nor avert further and greater judgments, He has given me the HOPE that comes from drawing near to His presence in a posture of mourning.

*Father, I humble myself to see what you see in my family, neighborhood, church, and nation. Let me feel what you feel. Help me to mourn over those that have rejected your love, and within that love, have rejected your perfect plan and purposes. Jesus, I feel You grieving over Your perfect sacrifice, and the hope therein, because so few have responded. I feel Your concern over all those in Your body who are doing their best to live a good life, rather than abide in Your presence. Father, lead me into your understanding of this nation. Show me what brings joy to Your heart and tears to Your eyes. Amen.*

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**Day 6: Chains of Hope**

*"Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear." Philippians 1:12-14*

In nations across the globe, Christians endure persecution by horrific acts of violence, imprisonment, and oppression. Though it pales in comparison, *persecution in America today exists in the form of **heightened societal pressure***. Christian business owners who refuse to operate in violation of their faith and state legislators who boldly endeavor to protect religious freedom have been recent targets of anti-faith measures.

Societal pressure impacts us on a personal level too, in the familiar form of **rejection**. When we are criticized, judged, mocked, and ignored for our faith, it stings, especially when it comes from people we love. Even if we're not rejected outright, our witness can suffer for fear of what others might think or say or do. I'm not suggesting that what we experience from rejection is even the slightest bit comparable to the physical and emotional torment endured by Jesus, his disciples, and modern day sufferers and martyrs. It's not the same thing, but there are parallels.

In Matthew 5:11,12, Jesus expands a little on what "persecution" means, saying "blessed are you when people *insult* you and persecute you and *falsely say all kinds of evil against you* because of me...Rejoice....!"

When conversation at the summer family reunion goes in the taboo direction of faith, and it doesn't go well, *rejoicing is probably not our first thought*. We long for our family, and everyone we know, to honor Jesus and experience him in the way that we do; but oftentimes it feels as though we lose more ground than we gain. *We can easily take offense, give in to fear and intimidation, and make a vow to keep quiet next time*. It can wrap our heart in chains. But rejection is nothing more than a push back tactic of the enemy and we can resist it. Peter told us that if we are insulted because of the name of Christ, we are blessed, because the Spirit of God rests upon us (1 Peter 4:14-16). When we notice the Spirit of God resting on us, we are able to look beyond ourselves and focus on our loved one who is lost.

Like the chains of longing around our heart, Paul knew that his chains would either be *a precursor to discouragement or a source of inspiration and empowerment* for his beloved Philippians (Philippians 1:20). It could go either way. But Paul recognized what was happening around him (Philippians 1:12-20). It was a crucial moment for leadership, and he grabbed his pen and seized it. His steadfast commitment to Christ in the midst of trouble had been a testimony to the unbelievers who were watching him (v. 13). And his willingness to endure prison for the gospel had provided tangible proof to the believers around him that its message was indeed true. As a result, their confidence in the Lord escalated so high that it produced in them a momentous surge of courage and zeal (v.14). *Like the refinement of crude oil into gasoline, the fear they must have felt from the threat of persecution was transformed into something useful and powerful*.

Persecution advances the gospel. It happened in biblical times, and it's happening now. It's counterintuitive, and we don't understand how it works but, as Samuel Zwemer observed in the face of persecution, we "must not think that the gospel is being defeated. It is conquering. What

we see under such circumstances is only the dust in the wake of the plowman. God is turning the world upside down that it may be right side up when Jesus comes.”

Now, this is where the rejoicing part comes in for us. If we can get better at recognizing the truth that opposition to our faith isn't personal but spiritual, we can get excited about the fact that God is going to take our chains of longing and, in Holy Spirit style, use them to gain more sons and daughters. In short, God turns our longing into hope; our hope ignites our intercession; and our intercession propels the gospel, which generates *joy* (Philippians 1:18,19).

So...how do we respond?

To those family members at the reunion picnic who believe they won the debate: Most importantly, we pray. Jesus told us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44). When we pray for those who oppose our faith, we become invested in them, and our hearts are repositioned to genuinely care for them and long for their salvation.

When our faith is challenged, we're vulnerable to the temptation to throw in the towel. Instead, we can go to the Lord with that towel and ask him to wash our feet. He will take that towel from us and wrap it around his waist, and draw us into a time of intimacy with him (John 13:3-5). And afterwards, after we receive his comfort and encouragement and peace, after our feet are readied and refreshed and re-energized to carry the gospel again (Ephesians 6:15), we become confident to share with others all of its goodness that we ourselves have received (2 Corinthians 1:3-7; Matthew 5:4).

The 10 Days of Prayer is, among many other great things, an opportunity to ask the Lord to wash our feet. It's also an opportunity for us to wash each other's feet (John 13:14). In this way, we can stand firm in one Spirit, striving together as one for the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose us (Philippians 1:27,28).

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## Day 7: Substantial Hope

Heb 12:1 *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"*

JB Phillips translates the first few words of Romans 12 as *"having our eyes wide-open to the mercies of God..."* It is this kind of open-eyed vision of God's activity, His love and providence, His supply and intervention, His faithfulness and patience that gives us the Faith that becomes the stuff hope is made of.

It's easy to lose hope in the face of overwhelming circumstances. Like Peter out on the waves with Jesus we are called into places that require us to move away from the safety and moorings we so desire! Jesus isn't at all concerned with what we can provide for our security. He's not even worried when we sink and go under. He knows where he is and we need to know right where he is as well. Like Peter, if we call for help and go under, the Lord is right there. With our open-eyed vision we can begin to see the patterns of his faithfulness and extend ourselves, on his say so and under His leadership!

## The Three-Fold Cord

Here in Hebrews 12, we see the interconnection between faith and hope. I would add a third strand to the three-fold cord, and that is love. Paul makes these the Big Three in 1 Cor 13:13:.. *"Now these three remain: faith, hope and love..."* Like the proverbial three-fold cord of Scripture, these three intertwine to form the rope that sustains and binds our life in Christ and our life with one another.

Wide-eyed faith sees the love of God on display in the everyday ways that God shows us his mercy and sustaining presence! That same experience of God's faithful presence, - his love in the littlest things, his provision in the biggest things - are the stuff, the substance, of our hope! But hope that is seen (here's the catch - the paradox), is no longer hope - it is realized. Hope is faith aimed at the future! Gene Peterson captures this amazingly in his paraphrase of Romans 8:24-25,

*" .... Waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother! We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy!"* Pregnant faith is HOPE!

## Darkness Increases our Dependency

Interestingly, that three-fold cord is needed most in the darkest times. The times we are mourning and have sunk into the depths of being "under the circumstances!" The faith-hope-love rope is what those in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 12 clung to during the times that they were falling, flailing, and struggling to find God. The rule, not the exception, is that God's people struggle (and try to get out of it!). We need the hope that is bound together with our faith in and experience of the love of God. It is so easy to divorce these three and then we are left groping in the darkness or trying to create our own light. Instead hope waits! Faith waits! Love waits!

Isaiah warns Israel against lighting their own torches in the midst of the darkness. Is. 50:10-11 provides a grim warning to Israel for kindling its own fires rather than trusting God in the dark! These are dark times for America, morally, politically, financially, spiritually. In many ways we are being prepared as Israel was for a final act in the sweep of redemption's story! The

rope – our three-fold cord - is what we must hold onto through these times, staying in a place of trust, of faith , and of hope in the dark.

Our prayers during the 10 Days of Prayer constitute the exercise of our faith in the darkest of times. Our prayers together give the work of prayer its greatest power and have the potential of welcoming God's light into our darkness. We welcome God's light, His answers, His solutions, in HOPE because we know the faithful love of our Father. We are faith-filled in a wide-eyed response to all He has done in history and for us personally!

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## Day 8: The Hope of Israel's Salvation

*"...Have they stumbled beyond recovery? Not at all! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles." Romans 11:11*

As we draw close to the end days before *Yeshua*/Jesus returns, Israel's salvation becomes paramount in God's plan to glorify His Son upon the earth (Ezekiel 36:22-27).

When we read Romans 11 carefully, we can see that the Apostle Paul asks 3 separate questions relating to Israel's plight and journey. In the 3rd question he asks rhetorically: "Did they stumble beyond recovery? Not at all!" He goes on to explain how the Gentile part of the family has a significant role to play in Israel's salvation experience, to help draw them to jealousy and release God's mercy back to them (Romans 11:11; 30,31).

In fact, I believe that the whole purpose of Romans chapters 9 and 10 is to lay a foundation to help unravel *the great complexity of Israel's salvation experience*, which apart from The Remnant of Jewish believers (Question 1 - Romans 11:1-6), would come down at the end.

This salvation experience has already begun in a number of ways: in the natural realm through the re-establishment of Israel as a nation, with over 7 million Jews already being drawn back to her from over 100 nations. Spiritually, we have witnessed the beginning of Israel's awakening through the Messianic Movement, which began *en masse* in the late 1960's after Israel took back the physical domain of Jerusalem.

These Jewish Messianic believers and those in the Church now make up the modern Remnant of Israel. It's paramount for Gentile believers to reconnect with Messianic believers as one family to help re-unite the Kingdom between Jew and Gentile (See Ephesians 2:19). Gentile believers have a role to fully encourage and bless them into their Jewish identity, so they may reflect *Yeshua* back to their own people as a distinctly Jewish faith.

## Restoration and Reconnection

If you are willing to accept it, Israel's restoration has begun. But God needs our help to complete it, and *we have a most crucial role to play*. So, we must be willing to make adjustments for this time, just as the Jewish believers did when the Gentiles first started to come in. "*Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved.*" "*As it is written: The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins*" (Romans 11:25-27; Deuteronomy 30:4-6 and Ezekiel 36:22-27).

As this happens, God will not take anything away from the Gentile church but rather bring us into the fullness of the harvest through the unveiling of this mystery that is happening before our very eyes, as His covenants towards Israel are fulfilled. This is a key element here to our understanding in God's end time glory plan and the two are intricately linked together.

This is why we must now spiritually reconnect to our roots and heritage, as we will never fulfill our end time call as a Church operating as a separate entity away from Israel. Nor have we replaced them, but rather are a part of them (Ephesian 2:19,20). It may have been permissible to act this way during the "time of the Gentiles", but as we move into this season of fulfillment, we need to reconnect spiritually as family in order for this spiritual transaction to properly work

through us.

## **Unity Through Diversity**

When the apostle Paul wrote about the unity of The One New Man (Galatians 3:28,29), he never meant to eliminate the distinction between Jew and Gentile.

When the Church was first formed, the Gentiles coming in were naturally associated to its Jewish roots and expression without having to follow the law. However, when Rome took over the Church it looked to eliminate this influence and set it apart and so its link to Israel was severed. The unfortunate influence of these supersessionist teachings have affected the Church for some 1600 years and now need to be broken off of us.

Just look how Paul behaved when he returned to Jerusalem and how apparent it was that the Apostles living there were still following Jewish customs (Acts 20:20-26). This is why he used the example of a man and a woman in the same text. As Jewish and Gentile believers, and as men and women, we are now one through Messiah/Christ in the Spirit through our salvation and are now co-heirs; however, we still perform different roles and have different expressions.

This has become apparent through the Messianic movement and their differing expressions of the faith. Gentiles were not called to practice exactly the same way Jews do, which was seen through the Church in Jerusalem but also now in the way in which Messianic believers worship and celebrate. Yet we are called to be one in Spirit with Israel's Remnant; to love one another as Messiah loves His Church. Especially now so our Lord can return to us, we must be reunited as one family; to be able to freely bless each other from within the unity of The One New Man. Our Father in heaven is longing for this reconnection. It is His design and footprint for this time and the very heart of Jesus' prayer in John 17, that His end time power would be unleashed upon His Church through the unity of Jew and Gentile.

We are entering a new day in the Spirit and He is beginning to draw His body together back into the fullness of The One New Man, so greater unity and power will flow through us to reach a lost and dying world. In this light, there is a huge need for prayer and intercession to help bring this about, not only for Israel's salvation, but also to awaken the Church into this end time role.

## **Praying For The Peace of Jerusalem**

In this light, when we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, it is not just about blessing and protecting Israel, although these are important, but rather praying for God's will to take place. Please understand that there will never be a real peace in Jerusalem until the Lord returns there to establish His throne upon the earth. So when we pray for Jerusalem's peace, let us remind God of His own word and all that is still to take place in order for this to happen.

In addition, if the Church is the chosen vessel for Israel's salvation and the last great harvest of souls and that the two are intricately linked. Shouldn't we adjust our focus to pray for the Church to fully awaken her to this call, until she is moving in it, as she should be? That when we pray through The Reconnection for the salvation of Israel, the natural outflow of this is God's outpouring to the nations.

Please pray for the following:



- The Reconnection in God's family to take place spiritually amongst us.
- For the Church to recognize and embrace the Remnant of Israel and the Messianic body to embrace their Gentile family.
- For the body of Messiah/Christ to re-unite in The One New Man.
- For the Church and Messianic bodies to move into their end time roles, for prayer, supplication, and evangelism.
- For Israel's spiritual awakening and for the Last great Harvest of souls, which are intricately linked together in this final push for the Kingdom of God.

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## Day 9: The Hope of a P.U.R.E. Heart

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

***Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.***

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*(The Beatitudes, Matthew 5:3-10, NIV)

As millions of others, I've mediated on these words many times and listened to several outstanding sermons on "The Beatitudes." **Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God** (Matthew 5:8) has stood out in my reading of this incredible chapter for many years. Recently, I've focused on the word "pure" and thought of an acronym that describes what it means to be pure in heart as a way to help apply this verse to my life. I've found it helpful and hope that it may also inspire your walk with the Lord.

### P.U.R.E.

**P = Prayer**, meaning primarily to know the Father's **Presence** and love of our Savior as Jesus spoke of in John 15:9. *"As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in my love."*

**U = Unity** with the Lord and fellow members of the Body of Christ as Jesus prayed in John 17:21. *"that they may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You; that they may be one in Us..."*

**R = Repentance** as a life style in response to the Father's kindness as Jesus admonished in John 8:11. *"And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.'"*

**E = Evangelism** of proclaiming and demonstrating the Gospel as Jesus commissioned us in John 20:21. *"Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."*

During this 10 Days of Prayer and beyond, let us encounter God's Holy Presence with one another, forsake our dependency upon the kingdoms and systems of this world, and share the abundant life of Christ in us with the lost sheep all around us. Let us embrace Heaven's revelation of the pure heart, see our God as He really is, and worship Him in spirit and in truth. The Holy Spirit in us is poised to guide our journey together of personal transformation that would lead the way of city-wide and even national/global transformation.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will heed the voice of the King of Israel and the Ancient of Days: *Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations.* (Isaiah 62:10, NIV)

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## Day 10: Praying for Revival with Biblical Hope

*"The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it...they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God.*

*"Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; ...He will come with vengeance; with divine retribution He will come to save you.'*

*"Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.*

*"Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.*

*"And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away" (Isaiah 35).*

Many Christians are praying for revival without understanding what the end result might be if their prayers are truly answered. What might revival look like? God's Word speaks much of revival and spiritual awakening. In Isaiah 35, the entire chapter gives us a wonderful picture of the hope toward which we are praying.

As you read the text above, please ask the Lord to point out to you these characteristics of revival: new life, the presence of God, strength, healing, outpouring of the Spirit, a lifestyle marked by holiness, and resulting joy.

One of the first signs of revival is **new life**. Whether it is an individual or a church, when revival begins, there is evidence of life and growth. The very word, "revive," means to bring back to life. Isaiah draws a picture of a dry desert that appears to be lacking in life. But when it begins to rain, the buried seed bursts into the glorious color of life.

This new life is marked by a **fresh vision of God**: *"they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God."* What older writers have often called, "the manifest presence of God" is spoken of here. In times of revival, God's presence is manifested in such a way that believers are often overwhelmed by the experience.

**Renewed strength** is often an indicator that God is moving in a new way in our life. The natural tendency is to wear down and burn out in service and ministry. The fresh awareness of Christ working within us through His Spirit often calls forth new levels of energy and productivity among Kingdom workers.

The outpouring of God's precious Holy Spirit is many times accompanied by **physical healing**. The deep work of God within the spirit of an individual often spills over to touch the body as well. Isaiah speaks of the blind, deaf, lame and mute experiencing a healing touch from the Lord. What will happen universally for the people of God in eternity, happens in the Lord's timing and choosing in the midst of revival.

Water is often a symbol for the Holy Spirit. In the seventh chapter of the Gospel of John, Jesus poured out water in Jerusalem on the greatest day of the Feast of Tabernacles. The Apostle John interpreted this accurately for us by saying that Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit who would become a gushing stream coming forth from within us. In this, he echoes the imagery of Isaiah who described water gushing forth in the wilderness...a dry place, and streams in the midst of the wilderness. When we pray for revival, one of the clearest results will be **an outpouring of the Holy Spirit** upon believers.

Revival always produces a **change in lifestyle**. We ought to view with suspicion any supposed move of God that does not result in a life of increased holiness. If the Spirit of holiness has been poured out in fresh waves, we will see a new passion to live lives that please the Lord in every way.

It will not surprise us to see that **overwhelming joy** is one of the most visible marks of revival. What other response could there be for the believer who has suddenly been made aware of the loving presence of Christ in a fresh new way? As our lives experience His life, the fullness of His Spirit produces joy that absolutely overwhelms any tendency toward sighing or crying.

What are you expecting to see when revival comes? Let the prophet Isaiah keep you focused on what God desires to happen in the midst of this next great awakening. **May this great vision of a holy, healed, strong and joyful people keep you praying fervently for revival in our day!**

*Dave Butts is an author, speaker, and the founder of Harvest Prayer Ministries (harvestprayer.com). Among many other roles, he serves the chairman of America's National Prayer Committee. He resides in Terre Haute, IN.*