

THE LORD IS COMING
1 Corinthians 16:22



A translated version of the International Christian periodical
MARANATHA

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EDITORIAL

May the Peace and the Power of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon each one who seeks Him in truth. I am hoping that every person is seeking to draw closer to the Lord as His coming is drawing nearer. *“Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you” (Jam. 4:8).*

We are living in unique, unprecedented times. About three months ago it seemed that everything was going to return to “normal.” This has been what humanity hoped for and desired. Even the government and news agencies were announcing a return to “the normal life.” It appeared (and still appears) that employment, the economy and everyday life hustle and bustle was going to return to normal or even improve. But the reality is that we are about to enter into times that we could only imagine and even into times that we could never imagine would happen. For example, who would have ever imagined that we would live through what we experienced last year?

Today, more than ever, we must be *“looking unto the Lord Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12:2).* Oh how marvelous and glorious that day will be when *“our mouth will be filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing” (Psa. 126:2).* On that day we will “go forth, and grow up as the calves of the stall” (Mal. 4:2). *“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation” (Isa.*

25:9). It will be an expression of a greatly desired hope that has been fulfilled. Being inspired by the Spirit of God, the prophets announced that day and, being guided by that same inspiring Spirit, the apostles confirmed the coming of that day.

The remnant among the Jewish people throughout the ages have anxiously and with great expectancy awaited, even to the present, that great Coming of the Messiah of Israel. This has been the dream and hope that has sustained them from generation to generation. The Psalmist of Israel declared: *“I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Psa. 27:13).* He was alluding to the Coming of the Messiah and to the resurrection.

Among the Jewish people, those who believe and hope in the Messiah are praying daily for His Coming. This is a very important part of their prayer so that they can also keep their minds and their hearts very close to the supreme hope and desire of their souls. This supplication that they make for the Coming of the Messiah three times daily consists of the following: “Speedily cause the offspring of Your servant David to flourish, and let his stature be exalted by Your saving power, for WE WAIT ALL DAY for Your salvation. Blessed are You, Lord, who causes salvation to flourish.”

In addition to this prayer which they make three times daily, another part of the prayer is to declare the following: “I believe with complete faith in the COMING of the Messiah. And even He tarries I will WAIT, anticipating HIS COMING every day.” In **Psalm 73:25** we read the following: *“Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is*

none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.” May that be our desire for the Coming of the Lord!

In **Luke 2:25** we read that Simeon, had *“the Holy Spirit upon him.”* That is the only way he could have lived all of his life WAITING for the consolation of Israel. And, by the power of the Spirit he was able to be a *“just (holy, living righteously before God) and devout (prudent, devoted, fully surrendered, taking the things of God seriously) man,”* until the day that he exclaimed: *“Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy Word: For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation.”* His motive to be a just and devout man was the hope of seeing the Messiah in His First Coming. And the power that moved him to live for that day was the Holy Spirit of God.

In verse 26 we see that he received a revelation from the Holy Spirit and in verse 27 we read that he was moved by the Spirit. If Simeon lived all of his life waiting for the First Coming of the Messiah, then with all the more reason we should be living waiting for the Second Coming of the Messiah! We need for the Spirit of God to be upon us and in us so that we can live righteously and godly being moved by the desire to see and be partakers of His Glory on that marvelous day!

We need, just as Simeon needed, the Holy Spirit to be revealing to us our needs and the needs of those around us. We need God to be revealing His will daily through His Word and through prayer. We need for Him to reveal to us every day the strategies of our enemy so that we can resist and attack him. We need Him to reveal His Word to

us so that we can increase in our knowledge of Him. And just as Simeon did, we need to occupy ourselves in being moved by the Spirit of God to do those things He is revealing to us

If we are truly waiting on the Lord, we must truthfully and with all seriousness see the need to live righteously before Him. With His Spirit upon us we can live in the following manner: *“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God” (2 Pet. 3:12).* We must always keep in mind the Words of that Spirit that He has given us through the prophets and the apostles concerning the Coming of the Lord and how we can be prepared for that day. We must be building our faith, praying for the Holy Spirit, keeping ourselves in the love of God (our first love), desiring with expectation the Second Coming of the Lord, and hating evil. May God protect us and keep us. *“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (Jud. 1:24-25).*

Let us continue then to daily seek His Spirit, as we live, together with the people of Israel, waiting for the Messiah, doing God’s will. Let us not faint, be encouraged, soon *“we shall yet praise Him”* on that day (Psa. 42:5)! Very soon we will exclaim, together with our older brother: *“Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation” (Isa. 25:9).*

God bless you.

Pastor Efraim Valverde III. ■



“Seventy weeks are determined upon your people (the Jewish people) and upon your holy city (the Old City of Jerusalem)” (Dan. 9:24).

Shalom! Glory to God because He has not abandoned His people! We continue waiting, together with the faithful Jewish people, as they also continue awaiting the Coming of the Messiah. Every day and every hour that passes we draw nearer to the hope of our lifetime! “God’s clock” continues pointing toward the glorious and marvelous day of His Return.

We will now present some of the news from the last three months concerning Israel, Jerusalem and the Jewish people.

July 3, 2021. The “Times of Israel” reported that Israeli fighter jets attacked a missile launcher that belonged to Hamas and a weapons factory in the Gaza Strip last Saturday night in response to a wave of attacks with incendiary balloons launched against Israel from the coastal enclave last weekend.

July 7, 2021. The “Jerusalem Post” reported the following: Isaac Herzog was solemnly sworn in as the 11th president of Israel last Wednesday in the Knesset, thereby replacing Reuven Rivlin.

July 12, 2021. “The Jerusalem Post” published that a recent study shows that anti-Semitic content in the social website “TikTok” has increased 912%.

July 17, 2021. “The Jerusalem Post” reported the following: The Jerusalem Conference will debate about the increase in a “new form” of anti-Semitism. The speakers at the international conference warned that this new type of anti-Semitism masks itself as being anti-Zionism. Meanwhile the anti-Semitic incidents increased by 75% in the United States a by

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Pastor Efraim Valverde III

591% in the United Kingdom. After the 11 day war in Gaza, Jews were beaten by pro-Palestinian attackers in broad daylight in the center of Manhattan (this happened in part because of what is being published on social networks). Jews were assaulted by a riotous group in a sushi restaurant in Los Angeles a few hours later. Windows of several synagogues were broken in Arizona, Illinois and in some European cities. Several convoys of vehicles circulated throughout the streets of London using a loudspeaker to issue a threat that they were going to rape young Jewish girls.

July 21, 2021. “The Jerusalem Post” reported that a protest against vaccinations which took place in Glogow, Poland accused the Jews of being responsible for initiating the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the website “Notes from Poland.”

July 29, 2021. “The Jerusalem Post” published the following: Several nations in Central America celebrated an event showing their solidarity with Israel. Due to a recent worldwide wave of anti-Semitism, the Central American countries organized a virtual event showing the solidarity with Israel on Thursday in which they presented a united front against anti-Semitism.

August 4, 2021. “Israel National News” announced recently that the artillery forces of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) attacked locations in Lebanon in response to missiles that were launched from those positions into Israeli territory, according to an IDF spokesman. This is the third attack made by

the IDF in the last two hours.

August 5, 2021. The “Times of Israel” reported that the Israeli Defense Minister, Benny Gantz, stated that the nation is prepared to engage militarily with Iran in the midst of the growing tension in the region as Iran increases its nuclear capacities and while the uncompromising Ebrahim Raisi is set to take over the presidency in Iran. That same day Gantz, speaking to the diplomats representing the nations that are part of the United Nations Security Council, announced that Teheran could become a possessor of a nuclear weapon within ten weeks as the tensions between Iran and the international community increased due to its maritime attacks.

August 10, 2021. “The Jerusalem Post” reported the following: The Palestinian Authority warmly received the decision announced by the Biden administration to send the director of the CIA, William Burns, to Israel. “This visit demonstrates that the Biden administration is taking seriously the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Washington and the Palestinians and also the strengthening of the Palestinian leadership currently controlled by Mahmoud Abbas,” stated a spokesman.

August 16, 2021. “Israel National News” reported that King Abdullah II of Jordan emphasized on Sunday the need to intensify the international efforts to reach a just and ample peace that would permit the Palestinian Arabs to establish their independent State.

August 18, 2021. “The Times of Israel” published that Iran increased its uranium enrichment to 60% according to the UN organism which controls that situation.

August 24, 2021. The news agency “DNYUZ.com” reported that Israel is allowing silent prayer to be made by Jews on the Temple Mount. For many years the Israeli government prohibited Jews to pray on the Temple Mount (due to the tensions with the Arabs), but Rabbi Yehuda Glick made little effort to hide his prayers. In fact, he was transmitting them live. In one of his prayers he stated: “Oh, Lord! Save my soul from false lips and deceiving tongues!”

August 25, 2021. “Israel National News” reported that in an open letter to Israel’s Prime Minister, Naftali Bennett published by the Forum for Defense and Security in Israel (HABithonistim) a group which represents 2,400 high ranking officers, commanders, retired soldiers and reservists asked Bennett to reconsider Israel’s dependence on the hegemony exerted upon Israel by the United States based on the recent Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. The letter was published one day before Prime Minister Bennett met with the President Joe Biden.

September 5, 2021. “The Jerusalem Post” reported the following: Just before Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, recent statistics published by the Jewish Agency demonstrated that there are 15.2 million Jews in the world, an increase over the 15.1 million reported last year. Of these 6.9 million Jews live in Israel (100,000 more than last year) and the other 8.3 million live in other parts of the world as part of the Jewish Diaspora.

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INFLUENCED BY GOD

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

Ever since I was a child attending school I began noticing that the moon revolves around the Earth, and that the Earth, together with the other planets, each in their respective orbits, revolve around the sun. By this time in my life, now having an ample understanding in my mind of the greatness of God's creation, I continue to be amazed about the INFLUENCE that different celestial bodies have over one another by way of something which is known as the "Force of Gravity." Among the scientific community (and those who study it) the force of gravity is considered to be a known and proven fact. Scientists can explain how it functions but in reality they don't know what it is. As scientific knowledge has increased it has been proven that the "Law of Gravity" as a whole controls the entire immense universe. Not one celestial body revolves being independent of any other. Everything is connected by the law of gravity.

I begin this article by pointing out the coordination that gravity exerts among the material creation as an example so that I can now speak about the "spiritual gravity" that influences the human mind, and particularly about its influence on the children of God. Just as the physical gravity inexorably links all the matter in the vast universe, in the spiritual realm (that which is not material) there also exists an inexorable law that links everything. We can describe this law by the term: INFLUENCE. The animal kingdom (in its totality) and the vegetable kingdom (although

to a lesser degree) are subject to the immutable law of influence. They are influenced by the climate, by the environment and by other beings, etc. Nothing or no one can escape the reality of INFLUENCE. Everything is either INFLUENCING or is BEING INFLUENCED.

This subject has many ramifications and they are all interesting, but our intent here is to apply it in a way that will benefit and help our spiritual lives. It is important for us to know how influence can help us and how it can affect us, not only in relation to our physical life, which is temporary and fleeting, but how it affects our eternal life. Logically, there has to exist both a positive influence and a negative influence, an INFLUENCE FOR GOOD and an INFLUENCE FOR EVIL. In the spiritual sense this means "being influenced by God or being influenced by the devil." The Word of God is very clear about this influence. It tells us that the human mind is either INFLUENCED by the Almighty God or it is INFLUENCED by the *"god of this world"* (please read **2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 4:20-23, 1 Corinthians 2:16 and 1 John 3:10**). Now that we are aware of the tremendous power that influence possesses, let us now consider the following.

If all of the animals in creation can be INFLUENCED in one way or another, even in their limited mental capacities, how much more can the human mind, which is made in the image of the Creator, also be INFLUENCED. From the precise moment in that God Himself, being the Omniscient, allows Himself to be INFLUENCED by the petitions and actions of His children, how much more can we be INFLUENCED in one way or another? The first proof of this can be found in the Garden of Eden where our first parents rejected being INFLUENCED by God and allowed themselves to be INFLUENCED by the devil. The human mind cannot exist without being INFLUENCED. It is this INFLUENCE which produces ideas and ideas are what control our bodies and our entire life. Everything that man has created and has made has been a product of his ideas. These ideas are a consequence of the corresponding INFLUENCE.

Therefore, not one human, including those of us who are Christians, can avoid the fact of being INFLUENCED or of INFLUENCING someone. Whether we want to or not, either directly or indirectly, we are INFLUENCING one another. The difference lies in the degree of INFLUENCE each person has among their family and in society. In the case of this commentary

what we are concerned about is the INFLUENCE that as believers in Christ operates in our environment. I have previously cited the two major INFLUENCES: the negative one that comes from the prince of the darkness, and the positive one that comes from our God, the King of Light. After all, it is God Himself who has permitted evil to exist in order that good can manifest itself (**Lam. 3:37-38, Amos 3:6**). It is He who has permitted sin to exist and to abound so that "Grace can abound," and so that the holiness of His people can be manifested (**Rom. 5:20**). It is also this DIVINE INFLUENCE that has produced the "new creatures" who are the children of God that Paul the apostle refers to when he declares: *"But we have the mind of Christ"* (**1 Cor. 2:16**).

For every one of us who now follow and serve the Lord, it was the Word of God that one memorable day INFLUENCED our mind, and our sentiments. He operated this marvelous change in us that no one else could have done. But there is something that we must not forget and that is that this same DIVINE INFLUENCE by design of the Eternal ONE came to us through the human element (**Heb. 2:3, 2 Pet. 1:21**). Not only the Law and the Prophets came to us through the human element, but also the message of the Gospel was brought to us by God, not directly through His Spirit, but because He Himself came to this world *"manifested in the flesh"* (**1 Tim. 3:16**). *"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto*



them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:19). Therefore, God did not only use His own Body in the aspect of Humanity while He was here on Earth during the *“days of His Flesh” (Heb. 5:7)*, so that He could come and influence His people, Israel, and the rest of humanity with His message of salvation, but He also wants to use us so that we can continue this ministry of “INFLUENCING.”

Abraham, having been INFLUENCED BY GOD, later INFLUENCED his son, Isaac, his grandson Jacob. Jacob then INFLUENCED his sons, who in time became the leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel. From among them Moses was born. His mother INFLUENCED him so that he would later understand that he was not an Egyptian, but an Israelite. In due time Moses was used by God to receive the Law and through it he INFLUENCED not only all of the Israelite nation, but also all of the nations of the Earth, including those of the modern civilization. Throughout the centuries God used the prophets in Israel to INFLUENCE the course of the history of Israel and also that of many other nations.

“But when the fulness of the time was come” (Gal. 4:4) according to the Scriptures, some which I have already mentioned, God Himself was manifested in the flesh and came to this world to INFLUENCE the entire course of human history. This INFLUENCE has been so powerful that to the present day Christ is acknowledged to be the center of the time of human

history, even by the secular world. But it has not only been the Lord who has exerted this INFLUENCE, but He has also willed that His apostles should exert this INFLUENCE, first through their personal ministry and now through their writings.

In summary, what we can understand here is that by God’s will He has always used a marvelous combination of His Spirit and the human element to INFLUENCE His people. When He has so desired God has made exceptions and He has directly INFLUENCED the understanding of the mind of one of His children, but the way He generally works is through the order that He has established. This being that He uses one human to INFLUENCE another human. We normally call this operation: “giving testimony.”

But the INFLUENCE does not end when we begin our walk with the Lord, but it continues for the rest of our lives as long as we live here on Earth. So, just as parents, the spouse, the children, the other family members, the friends and the neighbors have an INFLUENCE in the natural world, in the religious environment the ministry in the Church and the brothers that we deal with both near and far have great INFLUENCE on the believer. There are also those who INFLUENCE us even though we do not know them through the different means of communication, especially by what we read. I am aware of the great importance of this method of INFLUENCE which is the written word. For this reason

I am writing this article about INFLUENCE because I know that it will INFLUENCE someone who reads what I am writing here.

Throughout the years, many who have read what God has moved me to write have been INFLUENCED by what they read. In some this INFLUENCE has produced a favorable reaction, but in others it has produced an unfavorable reaction. This certainly happens to all of us. Many years ago a man who was called by God to INFLUENCE many people declared the following: *“For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor. 2:15-16).* I previously mentioned that each one of us in one way or another INFLUENCE others, but as ministers of Christ this operation is much more marked because the ministry in itself is an operation of INFLUENCE. There is not one man who has been called by God into the ministry who does not want to INFLUENCE, because that is precisely what he has been called to do: TO INFLUENCE OTHERS WITH THE MESSAGE THAT HE HAS RECEIVED FROM GOD.

I do not want to waste time here speaking about the inflated, deviated ministers whose INFLUENCE negatively affects the sheep in the Lord’s flock. God will deal with them (He has promised to deliver

His sheep, in due time, for the evil INFLUENCES). The INFLUENCE that I want to emphasize is the one that induces the Christian to live within that sacred mold that I have cited many times previously and that I will continue to mention: *“If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:1-5).* Also, *“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (Jam. 3:17-18).*

For my part as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, it has been this type of INFLUENCE that I have tried to have upon the lives of those people that I have dealt with and have ministered to. By this time in my life, I bless the God of the heavens whom I have served with all the power in my being because He has granted me the privilege of “INFLUENCING” many people. My message has had an “aroma of life” to them. The degree of INFLUENCE that the Lord has allowed me to exert is not one that I have appointed to myself, but it is God who



has decided what degree of INFLUENCE my ministry has had. No faithful minister will be daring enough to designate his own measure of INFLUENCE because *“we dare not make ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise”* (2 Cor. 10:12).

By this time there are a great number of my companion ministers with whom I have associated to and am currently connected. This number is not limited to those of my race or to one certain country or a particular religious group, but it covers all continents. One of the things which have always called my attention among my companion ministers is the degree and kind of POSITIVE INFLUENCE that the faithful ministers exert. It is something marvelous and pleasant to observe because it foments fruits and sentiments that please God and it is also pleasant to the persons whose lives are being INFLUENCED. It is certainly true that this degree of INFLUENCE in these vessels varies according to the calling each one has received from God. However, invariably this depends on the degree of INFLUENCE that God has had on them. The true ministers are under the INFLUENCE of the Word of God which exhorts us: *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves”* (Phil. 2:3).

The ministration originated among faithful ministers exerts,

a favorable INFLUENCE not only among the people of God, but it is also a mutual experience among themselves. This creates a trust, unity and communion that are true, close knit and based on good will. This produces a glorious environment in which rivalries, astuteness and feelings of superiority do not exist. Of course there are differences of opinions because humanly speaking only one Human has been perfect and that is the Lord. But these differences do not cause the true ministers and servants of Christ to separate or distance them one from another because they have been INFLUENCED BY GOD. Under the INFLUENCE of this environment there is a very solid unity in which there is no room for those who are fakers, hypocrites or pretenders. This is the type of life which has characterized the lives of the men and women, members and ministers, older people and younger people who have had the supreme privilege of having been INFLUENCED BY GOD.

Our desire is to continue exercising this type of INFLUENCE on the minds of the ministers and saints among the people of God. We will continue to preach the messages that the Lord has commissioned us to speak in order to POSITIVELY INFLUENCE our brothers, as well as all the other people that we can reach. In the Name of the Lord Jesus we will continue to use all the tools and all the means available to us. This is the supreme commission that God has given to His children here during this life. It is our joy to do it and we also consider it to be our supreme privilege to

INFLUENCE others so that they can also love the Lord. What a marvelous experience to be able to INFLUENCE others to love their brothers and to love their neighbor! There is no calling more sacred than this.

I remember that many years ago a brother who lived in a certain place I was visiting asked me: “Where are you coming from now, my brother?” I responded: *“From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”* That brother in astonishment proclaimed: “God, have mercy! Brother, that’s what the devil said!” (Job 1:7). I told him: “I know.” I then asked him: “Do you think that it is correct for the enemy to freely travel around the Earth INFLUENCING humanity and even many Christians, and for us to very tranquilly remain in our nest?” “Definitely not! It is imperative that the children of God should be actively walking to and fro around the Earth in order to INFLUENCE people with the message that our Father has commissioned to give to as many people possible.” I made that declaration many years ago but even to the present I still have that same opinion. What I said is not a “joke” but it is a tremendous truth. The Scriptures tell us that *“we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places”* (Eph. 6:12). The battle among the forces of good and evil to INFLUENCE the minds of men is a battle of life or death. It is the supreme battle of the King of kings against Satan in which we have the privilege of being called by the Lord to help

Him INFLUENCE FOR THE GOOD all those who we are able to reach.

It is very possible that there could be someone who reads this article and who takes it as a challenge. That would not surprise me in the least because I am aware of the fact that that is one of the reactions caused by “INFLUENCE.” I was called by the Lord many years ago to exercise this INFLUENCE in the lives of those whom I deal with. I had to learn by my own experiences many truths, both pleasant and unpleasant. I have mentioned some of them in this article. The greatest of these truths is the invariable fact that we cannot avoid INFLUENCING or BEING INFLUENCED. Knowing this, we must be alert so that we will know what course the reaction to this INFLUENCE will take. It can go in either direction. So if we know that we are INFLUENCING others, we must make sure that the INFLUENCE we exert is positive. Also, as we are being INFLUENCED, we must be aware of what kind of reaction this INFLUENCE is causing in us. When we know the Word of God it is not difficult to understand the difference between the good or bad INFLUENCE because God Himself declares this to us in His Word.

I continue to insist that as ministers of Christ we have a greater responsibility in the extremely important subject we are discussing here. The Lord Himself states this by saying: *“To whom much is given, much will be required”* (Lk. 12:48). Those who use their special place as teachers



among the people of God in order to provoke a negative INFLUENCE, such as in the case of the prideful Diotrephes (3 Jn. 9-10), can continue doing this and humanly speaking no one is going to stop them or convince them that they are doing wrong. But the warning still stands and in the end *“every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way”* (Rom. 14:12-13).

To finalize this commentary I declare that for my part, by this time in my life, I have a complete satisfaction and a good conscience before my God that I have sought to make sure that the INFLUENCE that I exert is as good as possible. When on certain occasions it has not been positive and that I have been made aware of this, the Lord knows that this has hurt me greatly and I have asked forgiveness. Additionally I have tried to correct if possible the negative thing I have caused. It is certainly true that as humans we are all susceptible to making mistakes. However, it is also true that as Christians, and especially as ministers of God, it is important that we acknowledge our faults and mistakes. The marvelous companionship that I now enjoy with a great number of my brothers around the world is based and the foundation of humility and sincerity. The INFLUENCE that these fruits produce among the ministry and among the people of God

in general is exactly what God not only desires, but demands from those of us who claim to be His children. This is the message of INFLUENCE that I preach.

How much INFLUENCE will this article have on people? I do not know, only God knows. How many will be INFLUENCED by what I say here? I do not know, only my God knows. But one thing I am sure about is that what I am writing will invariably cause some level of INFLUENCE and for this I am grateful to my God. Throughout the years as I have seen the testimony of my Master in favor of the ministry of INFLUENCE that has pleased Him to commend to me, I rejoice in it and I feel motivated and inspired to continue INFLUENCING all those who God permits me to reach.

It is certainly true that the negative INFLUENCE is strong and it will never cease during the time that the people of God walks here on Earth. But if the devil, who is sentenced to eternal condemnation, is stubborn and does not decrease in his efforts to exert negative INFLUENCES, what can we, as faithful children and ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ our God do? Our “stubbornness” in the INFLUENCING for good should be greater than that of our enemy because it does not matter how many things can come against us, *“in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us”* (Rom. 8:37).

Have I already INFLUENCED

many people? Yes this is true and it brings me great joy! However, with God’s help, with the guidance of His Holy Word and through the inspiration of His Holy Spirit, I intend to continue INFLUENCING many other people. I have determined myself to INFLUENCE others until the day that I have the privilege of *“departing, to be with Christ; which is far better”* (Phil. 1:23) when I *“put off my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me”* (2 Pet. 1:14).

As long as I am alive I will continue trying to INFLUENCE all those who I can by telling them: (1) God is One; He is *“love,”* but He is also a *“consuming fire”* (1 Jn. 4:8; Heb. 12:29). His Supreme Name is THE LORD JESUS (Phil. 2:9-10) and in that Name resides salvation (Acts 4:10-12). (2) That Israel and the Jewish people in the Diaspora is and will always be the chosen people of God from whom cometh our salvation (Jn. 4:22, Rom. 9:4, Rom. 11:1-2). (3) That the Church is One and it is a “body,” not a political-religious denomination, whose members are those who *“love and do righteousness”* (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Col. 1:18; 1 Jn. 3:10). I want to continue being counted among those who are INFLUENCED BY GOD, INFLUENCING OTHERS for the Lord.

God bless you. ■

Comes from page...3

September 14, 2021. *“Ynet News”* published the following: On Tuesday Israel’s Prime Minister, Naftali Bennett, declined to meet with the president of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, to discuss the possibility of a two state solution. “I am opposed to a Palestinian state and I believe that it would be a serious mistake to import the failed model of Hamas in the Gaza Strip from where they constantly fire missiles at us. I don’t want to convert all of Judea and Samaria into this same thing.”

September 17, 2021. *“Ynet News”* reported that on Friday the United States Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, during his hosting of a virtual conference with his Israeli and Arab counterparts designed to commemorate the first anniversary of a series of historic diplomatic accords, committed himself to encourage more Arab nations to normalize relations with Israel

September 21, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported that on Tuesday the leadership of the Democratic Party in the United States House of Representatives eliminated approximately one billion dollars which were destined to be given to Israel to help fund its system of defense known as “The Iron Dome.” This change came as a result of the progressive members of that party rejected voting on a more ample budget which included the financing of the Iron Dome system.

We continue daily with the convocation. One of the petitions we have is to pray for and bless the Jewish people three times a day: In the morning, at noon and at 7 p.m. in the evening. For Zion’s Sake I Will Not Hold My Peace, and For Jerusalem’s Sake I Will Not Rest until the coming of He who is Israel’s and the Church’s Messiah. Be encouraged! The Messiah is coming to Israel!

Pastor Efraim Valverde III. ■



“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1).

THE PHYSICAL PRISONS MULTIPLIED

By this date the number of jails, prisons and penitentiaries in the United States has multiplied as never before and as a logical consequence has brought about the multiplication of wickedness. The violence which covers the Earth has overwhelmingly surpassed that found in the days of Noah (Read **Gen. 6:11** and **Mat. 24:7**) as a logical result of the multiplication of humanity on the face of earth, as well as the increase in knowledge (**Dan. 12:4**).

Violence has invaded the streets of our cities and not only in the large densely populated cities, but also in small towns and rural communities. We are not only witnesses of this violence, but it has affected our families which have suffered the painful death of their children victimized by drugs and gangs. Others are incarcerated. Some of them have prison sentences lasting for a few years and others have lifetime sentences.

Vices, tobacco, alcohol, narcotics and the countless variety of drugs which can be obtained on every street corner have all contributed to the fact that young people, even at an early age, have been swept away by this gigantic wave of violence and perversity. Another factor that has contributed directly to the increasing of this infernal wave is the influence of the modern methods of communication, which were originally invented for the good of man, but which the devil has utilized for evil purposes.

Publications and printed material

PRISONS...PRISONS...PRISONS

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

that are filled with perversion can be found in abundance. Television has played a special role in the hands of the devil, not only perverting the minds of young people and children, but also the minds of adults. Presently, the amazing new method of communication known as the internet has also been used “marvelously” by the *“god of this world”* (**2 Cor. 4:4**) to corrupt the minds of not only those people who do not serve God, but also the minds of many Christians.

The perversion and sexual deviation in all imaginable forms (the saddest and most painful being the abuse of children) has increased drastically worldwide, even to the point that the persons who commit such depravities, instead of being ashamed about it, take pride in their sexual deviations, and the multitudes celebrate them for it.

Governments at all levels have desperately tried to impede this wickedness by making laws prohibiting such actions, but they have not been able to stem the tide. In fact, in some cases those who make laws and who govern have directly contributed to the spread of corruption in different forms. Therefore, since humanity has not been able to control this increase in corruption, the human justice system has tried to correct the problem by building hundreds of jail, prisons and penitentiaries.

THE MORAL RESULTS OF THESE PRISONS

For those who have never spent time in jail (which is the great majority of the people) it is difficult

for them to understand the mental trauma that is caused by being deprived of liberty (I personally experienced this situation briefly during the days of my youth, when I did not yet know my Lord Jesus). In addition to the mental trauma caused by this experience, especially for the young man who is experiencing incarceration for the first time, there exists the tremendous experience of being surrounded by different types of criminals.

In fact, there have been many times that a new prisoner has chosen to take his own life (commit suicide) instead of falling into the hands of hardened, depraved criminals. The general rule is that those who have been sentenced to serve several years are forced to adapt to the “mold” of the internal life of the prison, becoming the same or worse as their fellow prisoners. Many of them have learned to do things inside of prison that they never did when they were free.

These prisons, jails and penitentiaries are called “correctional” facilities, but the reality is that they are schools in which the inmates “refine” their perversities and when they are released they have “graduated” and are experts in different forms of evil and guile. This negative influence of these “correctional” institutions is so strong that it is a proven fact that more than half of those who are released from prison return to the same or even worse behavior as before. They end up going in and out of prison for the rest of their lives.

Those of us who serve the Lord with all of our hearts are witnesses to this truth. There was a marvelous day in our lives, whether it be recently or many years ago, that the marvelous power of the Redeeming Grace of Christ the Lord through His Word, through His Blood, through His Holy Spirit and through His Name changed us into “new creatures” (2 Cor. 5:17). We were freed, not only from physical prisons, but also from prisons that are worse, which are the spiritual and mental prisons.

There are very few who are truly reformed because it is an undeniable fact that the prisons cannot change the human mind. Whenever a person’s life is reduced to living in a steel cage, if his mentality outside was that of being evil, then the trauma of living behind bars as a caged animal, unconsciously changes him into a beast who does not stop doing evil, even if he is in prison.

Through our “Ministry of Service” we have tried to help many



prisoners throughout the years. Some of them have genuinely been transformed by the Word of God (I say “genuinely” because we have dealt with many who simply pretend they are changed so that they can receive help). The truth is that only the power of God can truly transform the mind and natural sentiments of human beings.

Those of us who serve the Lord with all of our hearts are witnesses to this truth. There was a marvelous day in our lives, whether it be recently or many years ago, that the marvelous power of the Redeeming Grace of Christ the Lord through His Word, through His Blood, through His Holy Spirit and through His Name changed us into “*new creatures*” (2 Cor. 5:17). We were freed, not only from physical prisons, but also from prisons that are worse, which are the spiritual and mental prisons.

THE SPIRITUAL PRISONS

In general terms, we can say that the spiritual prisons are the myriad amount of operations in which the “*god of this world*” (2 Cor. 4:4) controls the minds of humanity, according to what was written by the apostle John who stated that “*the world lies in wickedness*” (1 Jn. 5:19). These operations function in the sinful human condition from one extreme to the other. In other words, they operate in the most educated, sophisticated, elegant and respectful unredeemed person, as well as in the most corrupt sinner.

The Word of God can not lie when it declares: “*There in none righteousness, no, not one*” (Rom. 3:10). Therefore no human being can claim to be spiritually free on his own or by his own good works. If this was the case then the Divine

Word proclaimed by the Lord Jesus would be false, when He declared: “*You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free*” (Jn. 8:32). He also proclaimed: “*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life*” (Jn. 14:6). The Lord did not only “teach” us how to live. He is our Life. He is the Resurrection. He is the Light...He is Everything!

The unmovable basis that I have to make this declaration is the irrefutable truth that the Lord Jesus is the Almighty God (Rev. 1:8). The God of Israel, Who has not yet revealed His hidden Name to His chosen people, but revealed it to His Church during the time of Grace, will reveal it on the day of His manifestation in glory when Israel and the Church will be consolidated by the Lord into “*One fold*” (Jn. 10:16).

It is appropriate to mention here that there is an immense number of persons to which the declarations made in the Holy Book (the Bible) do not have absolutely any value. They place value on the books and writings made by other authors. But this does not in any way minimize the truth of the Book of books. For this reason, those of us who are faithful believers in the Lord firmly sustain that no one can be set free spiritually if it is not through the Truth of God.

In honor of the Divine truths we sustain that the aforementioned freedom cannot be obtained simply by saying: “I am free because I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,” but by living these truths before the Lord in a complete and unconditional surrender to Him. In this case the Divine invitation is clear, concise and profound: “*If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me*” (Mt. 16:24).

It is easy to teach, repeat and

even preach about this, but there has always been only a few who throughout the Age of Grace have heard the truth and have been set free. Most people have heard it but have rejected it, preferring to remain imprisoned in “this” or “that” religion or in a Christianity marked by outward appearance, frivolity and superficiality.

THE MENTAL PRISONS

It is easy to distinguish Christianity that is of an outward appearance only because the Word of God gives a concise and specific description about this. It would be impossible to transcribe in this brief article all the different Scripture passages, beginning from Genesis until Revelation, in which the Lord Himself directly, then through His prophets in the Old Testament and through His apostles in the New Testament, speaks to us about humility, sincerity and the other fruits of the Spirit.

However, it is not as easy to distinguish mental prisons, because it is possible to live “*having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof*” (2 Tim. 3:5). This cannot be fulfilled in the multitudes who profess to believe and follow pagan and false religions, because the Truth only resides in our God and Savior Jesus Christ, as I have previously explained.

But the satanic astuteness has searched for and found, ever since the beginning of the Church, the way in which to imprison the minds of even those who believe in the Lord. One of the most common ways that the devil has used has been through a Christianity which has organized itself in the same manner as the political systems of the secular world. Using this system astute men use their minds to twist the Divine Truths so that

they can control the minds of Christians who are sincere, but gullible.

This type of deceit has been used effectively by the “god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4) to place multitudes of those Christians that God has called to “*stand fast therefore in the liberty in which Christ hath made us free*” (Gal. 5:1) in prisons. No one can deny that presently there are millions of Christians whose religious organization is in reality their god. They even teach about the divine virtues and the fruits of the Spirit but they do not live them. On the other hand, they blindly and unconditionally obey the ordinances, laws and traditions of their “respective religion.”

Another of the snares that have been very effective for the enemy, especially during the last 100 years, has been the use of the operations of the Spirit in His multiple manifestations to “dazzle” the multitudes, convincing them that they are messengers and spokesmen of the Truths of God. I am personally aware that thousands of these “messengers” know and understand everything, except how to be humble and sincere. They use their exhibitions of “power” to justify their deviation and disobedience to the Lord.

They themselves are in mental prisons, but are being used as instruments to imprison the people who hear, follow and obey them. However, the Truth of God stands firm as an eternal Rock and continues sustaining that humility, sincerity and the other fruits of the Holy Spirit are the divine requirements necessary for us to remain free and to obtain “*the wisdom that comes from Above*” (Jam. 3:17).

God bless you my brethren. ■



Beloved brothers, may the Lord bless you. The activity began on Friday morning as Bro. Daniel Ybarra incited us to prayer. After this I was given the opportunity to share some words. I encouraged my brothers to pay attention and to put all of their hearts into receiving the Word of the Lord with humility and simplicity of heart (**Deut. 5:1-2**).

Later that afternoon Pastor Efraim Arreola spoke to us about preparing ourselves before each gathering by spending time in prayer and fasting, asking the Lord to touch us, and that we might feel His Presence. In the afternoon Pastor Alfredo Tienda shared a message concerning the connection that we should have with the Lord and that we should not place limits on our time spent seeking the Lord.

On Saturday morning our brother, Pastor Efraim Valverde III, shared a message about how our Lord found us and that we did not find

REPORT OF FELLOWSHIP SERVICE IN VICENTE GUERRERO

Bro. Nestor Quintanar



Him and that we are saved by Grace (**Eph. 2:1-10**) and how the Scripture has been misinterpreted to teach that “it is not necessary to do anything to keep our salvation,” but that we understand that it is necessary to work on our holiness, be careful to please God, because we know that we can lose our salvation (**Eph. 4:1-2**). In the

afternoon Pastor Efraim Valverde III met with the pastors to speak to us about several points and he encouraged us to keep pressing forward. In the evening service he again encouraged us to seek the Lord and told us that we must understand that we are not from here, that we are pilgrims and that we should make strive and desire

being near to God with all of our soul.

We began Sunday morning with a prayer led by bro. Daniel Ybarra. Then the activity continued with Pastor Fidel Resendiz sharing a message concerning the baptism and repentance preached by the apostles. Next there were baptisms in which Pastor Alfredo Tienda was the Baptist. At the end I had the opportunity to exhort my brothers to give value and importance to the Word of God, everything in its place, so that we can take advantage of the time.

In this manner we ended the fellowship meeting. I encourage you to make an effort to attend the fellowship meetings in order to hear the Word of the Lord which is beneficial to our life as a Christian. May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you all.

Bro. Nestor Quintanar. ■

By the Grace of God we gathered in Lockwood, California, on the 10th and 11th of September of this year to celebrate a camp for young people. I can bear witness that the Presence of God was with us in this meeting. It was a great pleasure to see our brothers from northern and southern California, as well as those from Washington, Oregon, Arizona and Nevada that were able to attend this event. *“How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity”* (**Psa. 133:1**)!

On Friday afternoon we began the service by praising and worshipping God through prayer and singing. Next, our beloved brother, Pastor Efraim Valverde III, took the place. God used him to explain to us about “the days of repentance,” one of the strong convictions that sustains the Jewish people, and that it was not a coincidence that we were gathered together during those precise days. He explained to us that it was in the first 10 days of the Jewish New Year

REPORT ABOUT THE YOUTH CAMP IN LOCKWOOD, CA

Pastor Fred Griffith



that God pronounced judgments for the upcoming year. For this reason this time is also known as the “Days of Awe.” All of this is connected with **Isaiah 55:1-8** and he explained to us

that the Jewish people believe that Isaiah wrote these words during the days of repentance. The sixth verse of this chapter tells us: *“Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him*

while He is near.” We were moved to repentance and we ended the evening at the altar, seeking the face of the Lord by calling upon Him with tears, as we humbled ourselves before Him.

The following morning we began the day with prayer. Once again the pastor took the place and spoke to us about idleness, using the Scripture found in **Proverbs 31:27**. He told us that the past 16 months lent themselves for the people of God to practice idleness. He exhorted us and we were rebuked by God’s Word. We were also instructed that we should occupy ourselves in our salvation with fear and trembling.

Brothers, there is not enough space to describe all that we experienced, but what I can say is that without a doubt God was with us and we were edified by the teachings from His Word. He allowed us to draw closer to Him. Glory to God!

Pastor Fred Griffith. ■



LIVESTREAM TESTIMONIALS

I give many thanks to God for His Word that we receive through the services that are transmitted through the internet. They help me to be awake and alert to all that is happening in both the secular and Christian environments. It also helps me to keep the flame of the fire of the Holy Spirit lit in my life. The Lord truly touches my heart as I participate in the services even from a distance. I thank God that we can unite through this medium to praise Him and to hear His Word with all liberty. Hallelujah! Let us continue praying one for another and for the lost souls. Amen.

Sis. Laura Gutierrez.
Imperial, CA

May the Peace of Christ be with each and every one of you, my esteemed brothers and sisters. I thank my God for His great mercies, because He has kept me standing until this day, even though we are living through great trials. I also thank my God for this medium called the internet and for this ministry which has been of great blessings and of great help so that I remain firm in my walk with my Lord Jesus Christ. Just as His Word declares: *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”* (Gal. 5:1). I encourage my dear brothers to continue pressing forward, always seeking the face of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we will not be easily moved from our conviction (2 Thess. 2:2) and so that we will not be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. As I was listening to a teaching given by Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr., I had a unique experience. The Presence of God touched me. It was something unique

and inexplicable for me. As I acknowledge that without Him I am nothing, and that if He does not protect us in this walk, it is very easy for us to be careless in our walk due to everything that is happening around us. I beseech you to pray for my family and me so that we may continue going forward. We know that it will only be a short time before we return home to be with our Lord Jesus Christ forever. Hallelujah! (1 Thess. 4:17). Shalom!
Bro. Adalberto Hernández.
Chambersburg, PA.

It is a blessing that through the radio I was able to hear the preaching given by Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr. After three years of hearing the Word of God through this medium I began receiving the Maranatha publication through which I learned about Pastor Jose Covarrubias in Tijuana. He invited me to the service and to this day I am still congregating with him by the mercy of God. God also revealed to me through His Word that He is One and that His Supreme Name is the Lord Jesus Christ and He granted me the privilege of being baptized in His Name, because previously I had believed in the Trinitarian doctrine. I also thank the Eternal Father for making it possible for me to hear the truth of His Word through the live transmissions that are transmitted through the internet. I simply ask God to help me to be faithful. I ask Him to guard my mind and to help me be obedient to His Word, I ask for

our prayer support on behalf of my husband and me. Also for my sons and daughters and the rest of our family. Thank you. God bless you.

Sis. Carmen Conde Enríquez.
Tijuana, Baja California.

I thank God for the transmission of the live services through the internet and also for the videos that were transmitted of Camp Sugar Pine. It all seems very fine to me, especially for all the young people, since we see that each day the young people are being lost to the world. I am grateful that these camps are held so that they can learn more of His Word. May the Lord protect them!

Sis. Gloria González.
California.

It has been a blessing for me to hear the Word of God through the services that are transmitted through the internet, since they help us know more about God, how to live better, how to have His love in our hearts and so that we will not forget who He is. May God help me to worship in spirit and in truth and so that I may be filled with His blessed love so that I can be a better person every day. Blessed be the Lord for His Word! I do not want to forget all that He has done for my family and me. May God help us to please Him.

God bless you.
Sis. Juana Montejano Cendejas.
Purépero, Michoacán.

May the peace of Christ be with each one of you. For me the live services have been a great blessing since I am not able to attend service on Sunday due to my job. However, thanks to the streamed services I can rejoice wherever I am. The teachings are of utmost joy for my life and are of great edification. These past few months have been a great struggle. I ask for your prayers.

I send you a warm greeting. May God bless you greatly.

Sis. Sandra Liliana Roa Belmonte.
Ziquitaro, Michoacán.

I thank God for His Word that we can hear through the services that are transmitted through the internet. I also thank the Lord Jesus Christ for Pastor Efraim Valverde III and his family. My desire is that God will bless them and that He will also bless those of us who have the privilege of hearing the Word of God through this medium.

May God bless you.
Bro. Manuel Torres Mendoza.

Thanks to the teachings of the elder pastor, Efraim Valverde, Sr. and to the live services that are transmitted through the internet I learned the truth about the political-religious system which my family being that I was previously subject to one. I now know why so many congregations have followed this erroneous teaching. The system propagated by the whore has infected the systems of man which are presented as being “of God.” I give honor and glory to Jesus Christ our Lord for having awakened us to this truth. Amen.
Bro. Omar Camacho Espinoza.
Ciudad Constitución, Baja California Sur.



YOUTH SECTION

Sis. Judith Cervantes Chavez



trials and pain. This hinders him or her from *“walking by faith”* (2 Cor. 5:7), *“as seeing Him who is invisible”* (Heb. 11:27). This past October 11th marked twenty years since my beloved mom passed away. All I can exclaim is EBENEZER! Our Lord Jesus Christ has helped us to this point. (1 Sam. 7:12).

Now that I am an adult I am more aware of the discouragement that can separate from the will of our Father and which can blinds us spiritually (Psa. 30:5, Rom. 13:12).

My fellow young people, if you are going through periods of discouragement, don't be ashamed to confess this and to ask for help. Don't stray away from God. Ask some godly brothers and sisters to pray for you. Do not allow this spirit to control your life (Heb. 10:22-24). Let us be reciprocal to our Father's love for us by loving Him back (1 Jn. 4:19). May His love constrain us every moment (2 Cor. 5:14) so that our “me” can die so that in this manner we can be able to do His will.

“What doth the Lord thy God require of thee (us), but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deut. 10:12). *“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God”* (Mic. 6:8).

I thank God for my sisters in the Lord who have given me words of encouragement and a warm motherly hug. I ask that you keep my family, me and the congregation in Juxtlahuaca, Oaxaca, in your prayers.

Sincerely,

Sis. Judith Cervantes Chavez. ■

WOMEN OF GOD

Sis. Katie Valverde



written: *“For by Grace ye are saved”* (Eph. 2:8).

When we have fully understood this marvelous truth, then we will not consider it a heavy burden to serve the Lord or to do what He commands us to do. On the contrary, we will want to please our God, showing Him our appreciation and gratitude. We will do everything we can to obey the commandments He has given to His children through His Word, especially what He commands us to do as women.

I invite my dear sisters to meditate on the fact that as women God has called us to be His daughters, He demands more from us than from men in different aspects. First of all, let us consider the place that the Word of God has given us as the *“more fragile vessel”* (1 Pet. 3:7). Being “more delicate” implies that we must have a greater care with what is in our minds, as well as with our bodies. This applies in all the different areas. It applies to how we speak, how we dress and how we care for our face and hair. It involves how we treat our children and all those who surround us, but especially how we treat our husband.

I repeat that it is a marvelous, divine privilege that the Spirit of God would dwell within us. Being aware of this, we should ask ourselves continually: “Am I honoring my Lord with my mind, but also with my body since I am the temple of God?” “Are my conversations and my words pleasing before Him?” The Word of God commands that our conversations should be made in the fear of God (1 Pet. 3:2, 10). “Are the clothes we use to honorably cover our bodies modest?” Every time that we dress ourselves do we stand before our mirror and ask the Lord: “My Lord Jesus, is the way I am dressed fine. Is

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you” (1 Cor. 3:16). *“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”* (1 Cor. 6:19).

At the request of my husband and with the help of my God, I am once again directing myself to my sisters in Christ the Lord through these few lines. I am writing, with reverence and fear before the Lord and before His people, these words that will be published in the publication “Maranatha.” I ask my Lord that what I will say here can be a blessing and of a spiritual help to some of my sisters, who, just as I do, want to please our Lord Jesus Christ. Our desire is that at the end of our journey here we can see His face in glory on the day of His Second Coming.

The Scriptures that I mention at the beginning of this article have caused me to think seriously about my life, because the fact that we are the temple of God is not a light matter. It is the greatest privilege that we could have in this world. It is the privilege of privileges which we have not obtained by our own merits or because we have obtained it on our own. It is something we have only by the Grace of God. That is why it is



it pleasing to You?” I am totally sure that the Lord will always respond to us. Do we do the same with our face and our hair? As I previously stated. As “special vessels” we must accept that we have a greater responsibility in this sense, then our brothers in the Lord.

To conclude this part of my commentary relating to our outward aspect, I must say that I believe in holiness and modesty in the Christian woman. But I also believe that this should come from a willing heart that loves and fears God. It should not be done simply because someone is commanding us to do it, whether that is our husband, our pastor or our father. It should come from within us. It should be done out of gratitude to Him who has given the supreme privilege of being a temple of His Holy Spirit.

Let us now focus on the most important aspect concerning daughters of God, who are also wives. Just as we have cited Scriptures that tells us that we are the temple of God, there are also Scriptures that point out that as wives *“the wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband”* (1 Cor. 7:4). The Word of God also speaks about the *“adorning of the hidden man of the heart”* (1 Pet. 3:5). These verses speak to us about the responsibility that we have as wives to be subject to our husband.

Here, we see once again that God demands more from the woman than from the man. Our husband, as head of the marriage, does not have to give account to his wife (in the human sense) of the power of subjection, because he is the one who has the God given right to command and decide. If he decides to allow his wife to take part in the decisions it is out of love and not because he is obliged to do so. But we, as wives, do have God’s command to subject ourselves to our husbands, no matter what kind of man he is. The Word of God states: *“Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands IN EVERY THING”* (Eph.

5:24). Our subjection is a specific command given by God. If we agree with it, fine. But, if we do not agree with it, this does not change what God commanded. If we take this commandment lightly, we will not only bring problems to our marriage life here, but we are also putting ourselves in danger of losing our salvation. The truth is, my dear sisters who are wives such as I am, that God is not asking us to do something that is impossible to do. He knows how much we can truly do and to what degree we can and should be subject. If at times it can seem difficult or impossible for us to subject ourselves, we must believe that our God, who is the One asking us to do this, will help us so that we can obey. When we keep our place as Christian wives we honor our God, who lives within us, and we also honor our husband, but we also honor ourselves. This does not end here. If we keep our place our children will also be blessed, and I know that as mothers this is something that is of supreme importance to us. Likewise, this obedience will cause the Church to be blessed and also it will bring a blessing to those around us. I speak in this manner, my beloved sisters, because I myself have experienced this in my life. It has been my privilege to live in this manner during the past 50 years of my married life at my husband’s side.

I have previously stated that in a certain manner God demands more from women than he does from men. But I also explained what I mean by this statement and I believe that my sisters have understood what I mean.

Now, to finalize, I want to mention something that is also very important and that is an undeniable fact. From the precise moment that the man, as the husband, occupies the “higher place” in the marriage, it is indispensably necessary for his wife to be willing to “lift him up” by being subject to him. If the wife is not willing to keep her place, no matter what the husband says or does she can easily “bring him down.” She does not need for him to do anything for her to be “below,” but

invariably he does need his wife so that he can keep his place as the head in the marriage and in the family. I have seen many wives who, consciously or unconsciously, have brought and are bringing great harm to themselves by ignoring this important place that God has designated for us.

In conclusion I want to mention an expression that a wife jokingly stated to the pastor of the congregation: “Sure brother, I agree that my husband is the head of our household, but I am the neck. Just like the neck moves the head, my husband knows that he will have to move where I tell him to move.” If we say this just as a joke, it can be overlooked. But if we try to take advantage of the advantageous situation we can exert upon our husband, things will never come out right, because *“God cannot be mocked”* (Gal. 6:7). We must remember that this subject, which is one of the aspects of our holiness as temples of the Holy Spirit, did not originate in the mind of our husband, but that it is an imperative commandment given by God Himself.

May God bless and help in a special way all of my sisters who are wives of men who do not serve the Lord. Many times God has allowed me to help some of them in their affliction. I have not been able to say much more than “May our God help you and sustain you, my sister.” But for those of who have the privilege of having a husband who fears the Lord (and especially those of us who are wives of ministers of God), let us appreciate this blessing since it is not something common. Let us always ask the Lord for wisdom so that we can honor Him who has made us “temples of God,” by always living in holiness as His daughters, and as wives who are subject to our own husband. The Christian woman who is a wife and who thinks that she can please God without taking into account the part of her husband, one day will be convinced that she was extremely mistaken. I love my God with all the strength of my soul, and I also love my husband. It is an honor for me to be in subjection to my

husband. My prayer to the Lord on this occasion is that He would bless all the Christian wives. May He help us to always remember that in a certain form God demands more from us than from our brothers for the simple fact that we are temple of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, as wives, our life is subject to our husband. It is difficult to fulfill both of these things and it is even impossible to do them on our own strength. But the Lord, who has given this commandment, is the One who has promised to help us so that we can please Him, and so that each one of us can please our own husband.

In the pages of God’s Book which is a mirror for us to see our reflection in it, we have a very special Scripture for us wives who are believers in the Messiah of Israel. We find it in Proverbs 31:10-31. I invite, my sister, to open your Bible right now and to read that passage. See yourself in that mirror which reflects the image of *“the woman who fears the Lord.”* Consider that it is our special privilege to live in the way that is described in that passage.

For my part, my God has given me the privilege of being the wife of a man who has served and who continues serving the Lord Jesus with all of the strength of his being. God has given him a very special ministry. I love my husband very much. He is my honor here on earth. I bless my God and give Him thanks because He has allowed me to understand this truth which is a mystery that many Christian wives have not yet uncovered: Through our subjection there is a great treasure of blessing, both in the human aspect, as well as in the spiritual aspect. In the spiritual we thank the Lord and we have eternal life. In the human aspect we gain the love of our husband who has been commanded by the Lord to *“love his wife as his own body”* (Eph. 5:25-29).

God bless you. ■



BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

discussing the subject of water baptism with the purpose of obtaining members for a certain religious denomination or organization. Rather, my goal is that the obedient Christian, whoever and wherever he is, will receive from God the fullness of His salvation. Now that we are aware of these basic truths, let us now continue in our discussion by considering the following questions.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF WATER BAPTISM?

The Lord stated that “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (**Mark 16:16**). On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit, through Peter’s lips, declared: “Repent and be baptized, every one of you...for the remission of your sins...” (**Acts 2:38**). Paul, referring to the Lord’s sacrifice, declares that the Lord gave Himself for His Church “that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water (baptism) by the Word” (**Eph. 5:26**). Peter, referencing the fact that Noah was saved by water in the ark, states: “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now SAVE US...” (**1 Peter 3:21**).

HOW SHOULD WATER BAPTISM BE ADMINISTERED?

Paul explains to us that baptism is a symbol of the burial of one who has died. For this reason he poses the following question: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were

baptized into His death? Therefore we are BURIED with Him by baptism into death” (**Rom. 6:3**). On another occasion he explains to us that we are “BURIED with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him” (**Col. 2:12**). According to these Scriptures, baptism is a symbolic burial through which the believer, now dead to the world (repented) is buried in the waters of baptism and emerges from them, ready to live a new life in Christ. For this reason, baptism should be administered through immersion, submerging the body of the penitent completely in water, according to the example given by the Lord Himself when He entered into the Jordan River to be baptized: “And Jesus, when he was baptized, WENT UP STRAIGHTWAY OUT OF THE WATER” (**Matt. 3:16**). Likewise, when Phillip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch, the Scriptures tell us that “THEY WENT DOWN BOTH into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when THEY WERE COME UP OUT OF THE WATER...” (**Acts 8:38-39**).

WHAT NAME SHOULD BE INVOKED DURING BAPTISM?

The Lord commanded His disciples to baptize the Gentiles “in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (**Matt. 28:19**), and when the apostles carried out the Master’s commandment, they baptized thousands upon thousands of

believers in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. They did not disobey the Lord, as some have had the audacity to say. On the contrary, they faithfully executed His commandment, because they had understood that the “Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” is JESUS the Lord, and that He is ONE. They understood when the Lord told them: “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father” (**John 14:9**). They understood that “God was manifest in the flesh” (**1 Tim. 3:16**). They understood that the Lord Jesus was Israel’s Messiah, and that He could be none other than God Himself, because there is only one God (**Deut. 6:4, Isa. 44:6**). They understood that only the God, YHWH, can save, and they were given revelation to understand that the Lord Jesus is that same God, because the Name of God given to men that they might be saved is JESUS the Lord (**Acts 4:12**). This is the Name “which is above every other name” that Joel mentioned when he prophesied: “That whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered (saved)” (**Phil. 2:9, Joel 2:32**). The following Scripture verses bear witness that the original believers in the Church were all baptized calling upon the Name of Jesus Christ, and never with the titles Father, Son and Holy Spirit: **Acts 2:38, Acts 8:16, Acts 10:48, Acts 19:5, Acts 22:16, Rom. 6:3, Gal. 3:27, 1 Pet. 3:21**. The baptism invoking the titles of Father, Son and Holy Spirit was not utilized in the apostolic era or in the first centuries of the Church. It was an interpretation which came later as part of the package of many other false doctrines, fruit of the apostasy, which were accepted and confirmed by the Council of Nicea in the year 325 A.D.

The doctrine of baptism is a subject of supreme importance, and has been considered to be so throughout the centuries which have passed since the Church was founded by our Lord Jesus Christ. He himself demonstrated the prominence of this sacrament when he issued the following command: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (**Mark 16:16**). He also commanded His apostles to: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (**Matthew 28:19**). He also emphasized the importance of being baptized, when He traveled to the Jordan River where John was baptizing, and asked John to be baptize Him, saying: “Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” (**Matthew 3:15**).

Many present-day religious leaders teach that baptism is not truly important; thereby contradicting the same Lord they claim to obey and serve. They are following the example of the Pharisees and lawyers who “rejected the counsel of God against themselves” by refusing to be baptized by John (**Luke 7:30**). Nevertheless, this tract is not directed to those who oppose the Word of God, but to the sincere Christians, who, having a pure and sincere heart, want to obey the Word of God. These Christians are willing to obey God’s commandments, whether they come directly from the Lord or through His apostles, since the Lord bestowed upon them His authority when He declared: “He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me” (**Matthew 10:40**). I must clarify here, that I am not



TO WHOM DOES THE BAPTISM BY IMMERSION, INVOKING THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS, APPLY?

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

PASTOR EFRAIM VALVERDE, SR.

You, the reader, can find the answer in the Word of God. It is for the Jews (**Acts 2:36-38**). It is for the Samaritans (**Acts 8:14-16**). It is for the Gentiles (**Acts 10:45-48**). It is for believers who have already been baptized with other baptisms (**Acts 19:1-5**). “For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, EVEN AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD SHALL CALL” (**Acts 2:39**).

In conclusion: My beloved brethren and friends, if you love the Lord and are one of those who are interested in being sure of the salvation of your soul, we sincerely invite you in the love of Christ to meditate on this important doctrinal subject. The message contained within this tract is not merely a denominational point of view, but is a very specific commandment given by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who declared: “He who believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

Note: If you were enlightened by reading this brief tract or if it awakened an interest in you to know more about this fundamental doctrine in the process of salvation, we invite you to visit your brethren at the address listed on this tract or write to the editor of Publicaciones “Maranatha.” ■

“Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (**Acts 16:29-31**).

I must inform you that this message is not for everyone. It is only for those who are convinced of the fact that none of the many things that this world has to offer can give the peace that their soul desires.

Neither is it written with the intent of obtaining followers by attempting to convince someone to leave their religion to accept a different one. On the contrary, it is for those who have already experienced the fact that no religion can change their lives. This message is intended to help those who, because of the miserable circumstances in which they presently live, whether it is a sickness, marital or family problems, addictions, traumas, prisons or similar situations, have arrived at the conclusion that only God can deliver them.

It is for those who have come to the point in their lives in which they are compelled to ask the same question that the jailer at Philippi asked Paul and Silas: *“What must I do to be saved?”* If you find yourself in this category, through the love of Christ the Lord, I will explain to you God’s plan of salvation precisely as it is described in the Holy Bible.

FIRST STEP: You must acknowledge and confess your misery and need before God, and you must sincerely repent from your sins. Without this fundamental step, everything else you do will be in vain (**Acts 3:19**).

SECOND STEP: You must now accept the Lord Jesus as the Savior of your soul. You must believe that by His Grace and His Blood that He shed on the cross, He is able to cleanse all your sins, no matter how filthy they might be (Isaias 1:18).

THIRD STEP: You must believe that by doing the previous step, this is proof that you have become a partaker of the miracle of having been *“born again”* (John 3:3), which is the same miracle as having been *“born of God”* or *“begotten of God”* (**1 John 5:18**).

FOURTH STEP: It is now imperative for you to be immersed in the waters of baptism just as the Lord was, making certain that when you do so, the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ is invoked upon you (**Acts 2:28 and 4:12**).

FIFTH STEP: Being now a *“child of God”* (**1 John 1:12**), a *“new creature in Christ”* (**2 Corinthians 5:17**), allow the Lord—who now lives within you—to direct you in how you must live, what you must do and what things are not beneficial to you.

SIXTH STEP: The Lord has promised to give each of His

children the power of His Holy Spirit to help us to overcome and to give forth the *“fruit of the Spirit”* (**Galatians 5:22**). Ask the Lord to give you this gift together with the evidence of *“speaking with other tongues”* (**Acts 2:4**).

SEVENTH STEP: Exercise yourself in reading the Word of God so that you might grow spiritually and become grounded in your faith. Occupy yourself as much as possible in serving others, thereby doing God’s work.

FINAL STEP: now try to live the rest of your life in peace and in holiness, loving everyone, and being in communion with those who love the Lord as you love Him now. Seek out as much as you can the fellowship of those who live *“looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ”* (**Titus 2:13**).

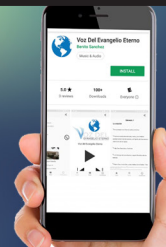
CONCLUSION: Even though we may not know you, the Lord knows who you are, and our prayer is that He will bless you. We also ask our Lord Jesus that He will work in your life, praying that the plan described in this tract will bring the change in your life that you greatly desire. If the Lord places in your heart the desire to receive help from us in any way that we can, please contact us. We are here to serve you ■

*Tune in to the daily broadcasts of Pastor Efraim Valverde, III and Pastor Efraim Valverde Sr. **Monday through Saturday** at 7:00 pm and Sunday at 12:00 noon. On Youtube and Facebook under the name of "Efraim Valverde live"*



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The LORD our God is one LORD (Dt.6:4)

God is not a Trinity (John 1:1, Col. 1:15)

The Supreme Name of our God Is the LORD Jesus Christ (Phil. 2:9)

Baptism is by immersion (Rom. 6:4)
 In the name of the LORD Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38)

The Holy Spirit of God manifests itself by means of the fruits (Gal. 5:22-26)
 The gift of the Holy Ghost by the evidence of speaking in tongues.

Seeking to live a sanctified life is an imperative requirement (Heb. 12:14)

The Church is ONE and it belongs to the LORD (Matthew 16:18, Acts 20:28)

The Church of the LORD is not a religious organization, It is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27, 2 Tim. 2:19)

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