

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 62

THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA (continued)

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20).

The book of Revelation furnishes us with a sequential overview of the comings of the Lord. Its inspired title is found in the first verse — "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." The Greek word for "revelation" is *apokalupsis* meaning "unveiling, uncovering," and hence, "revealing." This is expressed in Revelation 1:7, **"Every eye shall see Him..."** The error of the unspiritual and unenlightened mind is that it immediately assumes that every eye must see Him at the same time and in the same manner. But the multitudinous ways in which the Lord comes and comes and continues to come throughout the illuminating pages of this wonderful book indicates to us the *progressive* revelation of Jesus Christ, the many-faceted and many-splendored appearing of the Lord from one degree of glory to another until, when all is finished, every creature in heaven, earth, and hell shall have had a revelation of the Son of God! (Rev. 5:13).

With what divine genius does the Holy Spirit on the pages of God's Word portray the living Son of God coming and standing in the midst of the seven churches! This is an earthly scene. The risen and glorified Christ was present in and among the churches. Jesus had promised to come back, and according to chapters two and three of the Revelation He *had* come back! Then follows swiftly the tragic scene of Jesus Christ, the blessed Head of the church, standing *completely outside* the Laodicean church!

It is not my purpose here to explore the present condition of the church systems, but when Jesus sent His message to the wealthy church of Laodicea, which boasted that she was rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing, He portrayed Himself as One standing *outside* the door. He was not within, as He should have been, but on the outside. Behind the doors that were locked against Him they were preaching *about Him*, and singing *about Him*, and working and building *for Him*, but He Himself they had left outside. The membership of the church of Laodicea is large and prestigious, its seats all engaged, its income assured, its organization perfected. Men of good business judgment manage its affairs, in the same shrewd way that they manage their business affairs. The services are made impressive with eloquence and music and well-appointed ritual. Its Sunday School prides itself on its thorough, up-to-date organization and large attendance. It may support some missionaries in the foreign field, for that is the modern thing to do.

Never in the history of the world has there been so much preaching and so much human effort, or so many multi-million dollar church buildings, Christian programs and concerts, so much church membership, or so many outreaches to convert the world; but the living Christ, locked out of their grandiose schemes, ***stands outside!*** The whole church system of our day is built on flesh-appeal programs and

promotions rather than the power and glory of the Holy Spirit. In spite of all the glib mention of His name, the truth is that Christ stands outside the church system and His Holy Spirit is not in its works. The thundering message of Christ to the Laodicean church will not even penetrate in to fall upon the already occupied ears of the masses who assemble there, but will be heard only by individual believers. Notice what He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: IF A-N-Y M-A-N hear my voice, and open the door, I will come IN TO HIM, and will sup with HIM, and HE with me." "If ANY MAN will hear!" "If any man WILL HEAR!"

You meet one that is religious, awed by the crowds, the buildings, the great meetings, the charismatic speakers, the beautiful television programs, the professional music, and the wonderful works supposedly being done. They exude the spirit that they are indeed "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." They can talk much of the milk of the Word, their spiritual gifts, and religious toys. But they know nothing of the present truth of Him gathering to Himself a remnant to bring them into His perfections. They are well versed in the traditional doctrines about the devil and the antichrist and the so-called rapture, but they know naught about the mighty move of God in the earth today to bring many sons to glory, a vast company of manifest sons to bring the kingdom of God in power upon all men and nations. You cannot begin to speak of the deep mysteries of the kingdom, of God's grand purpose to restore all men and the whole creation into God again, or of those divine quickenings which the Holy Spirit of truth has whispered into your being, for they have no ears to hear them. Were you to declare them in the churches of our day, they would cast you out! Their eyes are closed against the bright vision of that which lies before us at the manifestation of the sons of God and the consummation of God's great plan of the ages. They are dull to the keen-edge of the Spirit's working. Yet, blessed be God, there is a people whose ears have been touched by the finger of God, a holy race of king-priests who have been quickened to hear the voice of the great High

Priest who speaks from the MELCHIZEDEK REALM. There is a man, yes, a many-membered man, who ***has heard His voice, and has opened the door, and He has come in to them, and today sups with them, and they with Him!***

Christ, the Spirit, is completely without the camp! He is outside the camp of the systems of this world, including the political, economic, and religious systems of man; He is outside the camp of the denominations, churches, and fellowships; He is outside the camp of those who continue in the old ways of the dead, church order of the past; He is also outside the camp of anything that is of man, or that man's works have created. No longer is He dealing with the apostate systems of man, but knocking, knocking, knocking at the heart's door of ***individual men and women***, saying to them, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if ***any man*** hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to ***him***, and will sup with ***him***, and ***he*** with me." This passage can only refer to the spiritual presence of Christ coming to any ***individual***, to ***any man or woman*** who will open their heart's door to intimacy of fellowship and vital union with Christ.

As one has written concerning this significant passage, "The message is to 'any man,' a message that abandons the multitude to their religious play, to their church creeds and their church Christs. This is the church of the individual. It is the individual believer with a *personal relationship* to Christ. For the man who will forsake *all else* and sup with Christ this an age of glory, an hour of preparation such as we have never known. This is a time when the Spirit of God is speaking to you *as an individual*. He seeks to sup and dine and feast with you apart from all the religious confusion about us. It is a glorious day when we see the promise that is ours in this hour."

To sup with Christ is to commune vitally with Him; it is to fellowship intimately with Him and freely partake of all that is proffered

by His Spirit. He comes in to dine! It is there, deep within — in the inner union of soul and spirit — as nowhere else, privately and alone, that spiritual edification and understanding and participation in heavenly things begins and continues and consummates. Multitudes of believers are weak and sickly in their spiritual lives simply because they depend only on external things — meetings, sermons, singing, ministry, public prayers, programs — and never come to truly know and experience the Lord FOR THEMSELVES. But all who have received the call to sonship have obtained this glorious experience of **Christ within**, it is now happening for others, and it shall yet happen for more who “hear His voice.” It is, first and foremost, an individual experiencing of Christ within ourselves.

Not many of the teeming millions of earth who profess to know the Lord are ready at this time for this high and holy calling! They still fill the pews of the church in Leodicea, and have failed to hear the Lord’s voice calling from without. But those who have heard His voice, and have opened the door, are feasting with the Lord in the third feast, the feast of Tabernacles! It is a blessed fact that the feast of Tabernacles is taking place now, but only those with spiritual understanding know it. The rest are busy “star gazing” — watching the clouds — waiting to go to a banquet in the sky. While they wait, snug and smug in their denominational beds, the Lord is calling a people to feast with Him. The Lord stands knocking at their door — but they sleep on.

The awesome scene is portrayed in the beautiful Song of Songs, the Song of Solomon. The believer (Shulamite, type of the church) speaks first and says, “I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the *voice* of my Beloved that *knocketh*, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night” (S. of S. 5:2-6). The word “voice” means “sound.” We have the same construction here as in Revelation 3:20. In both cases the terms “knock” and “voice” are synonymous in meaning —

“I stand at the door and *knock*,” “If any man hear my *voice*.” This reveals that the knock by which the Lord announces His presence is in reality His *voice*, and throughout the scriptures a voice is used to symbolize a *message*. The Lord’s voice is the Lord’s message, His present truth which He desires to convey to His people. The message goes out to many, just as the seed of the kingdom is sown in all kinds of soil, and the kingdom net catches a multitude of many kinds of fish. It is the sound of her Beloved that knocks at the door! Her Beloved (Christ, the Spirit) knocks, not only once, but He continues to knock; He calls her to arise and shake off the slumber that locks her in its embrace.

The sleeping believer replies, “I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?” How often when our Lord is calling us to a deeper revelation of Himself, He finds us asleep! We have washed our feet of all the dust of the day, we have cleansed our walk in all those areas He has dealt with previously, we have put off our garment, we have prepared a soft bed of ease, and we have said to our souls, “A little sleep, a little slumber, no need to press on any further at this time, let us rest in the experiences we have had and the truths we have learned.” You see, dear ones, she was not only His love and His dove, she was still His *undefiled*! This is one who has walked intimately with the Lord and experienced deep cleansings, separations, and dealings. This shows that her greatest failure was in lying down to rest and not watching with wide-open eyes for His coming and the further revelation of Himself! And when He came, she was slow to rise and let Him in, she had kept Him waiting throughout the night. She had not gone off into spiritual fornication with the systems of man, she had not mingled with the world, she had committed no gross sins of the flesh, she had not been flirting with those who hated Him, as many who are called by His name are doing today; she had not lost her chastity. She was just spiritually lazy, she simply did not seem to have the stamina *to go further*. She felt that she had reached a plateau; she had attained to a high place in Christ; but now she deserved to lie down

and rest, but not to go to sleep; but she was soon lulled into a half-slumber.

In desperate ardor her Beloved endeavors to enter her room, but the door is locked. She had not only closed, but had locked and bolted the door! When she locked the door, she did not mean to lock HIM out; she only desired that her rest might be undisturbed. She had no thought of refusing to get up and let HIM in, nor did she deliberately lock the door so HE could not get in. She only wanted a little rest! This is always the way slumber steals in upon those who have received the call to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth! Those who hear the call, but fall short of *following on all the way* — it is not their set purpose to reach the place of stagnation and loss where they finally find themselves. They just forget that it is through the avenue of sleep — indifference — that spiritual poverty comes and robs them of the glory of the fullness of Christ within themselves! Slumber does not prepare us for great attainment, it only paves the way for us to be defeated and robbed.

Then we read, “My Beloved put His hand in the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for Him. I rose up to open for my Beloved...but my Beloved had withdrawn Himself, and was gone: my soul failed when He spake: I sought Him, but could not find Him; I called Him but He gave me no answer.” While she was sleeping, He had knocked; while she was refusing, He had called; but by the time He had finally aroused her from her momentary lethargy, He had withdrawn. She little realized the gravity of her sleepy refusal to arise and open to Him! She thought He would wait until she had stirred herself. He had continued calling and knocking through the night, though she had treated Him as a stranger; though she had snuggled more deeply into her bed of ease, and left Him out in the darkness until His head was wet with the night dew, and His locks with the drops of the night.

Beloved reader of this message, have you heard your Lord's voice calling you to enter into a deeper relationship with Him? Have you heard Him bid you come apart with Him, to leave everything and everyone that hindered you and enter into a higher realm of revelation, separation, and reality in Him? Have you kept your Lord waiting while you pampered your flesh, or while you did something *you* wanted to do, or while you lingered in the old religious ways that could never lead you into the fullness of Himself? Did you have some "religious work" which you felt was very important? Did you have some association you felt you could not break? Did you tell the Lord to wait until you could leave them, or finish what you were doing? Have you heard Him chide you because you neglected Him, because you were not putting Him and His high purposes above all else, because you would not scale the heights with Him in the Spirit, to commune with Him in the secret place of His presence and glory, because you were not following on to **know Him** in deeper measures? Oh, yes! There are many in this hour who think to respond and obey, who desire to come out and go away with Him, who want to arise and commune with Him in the heights of mount Zion, and sup with Him in the feast of Tabernacles, who are going to explore the deeper measures of His wisdom, His love, His power, and His glory which He waits to disclose — but *not until some propitious moment when they have finished what they are doing!*

How glorious is the walk in the Spirit with Christ in this great day of His unveiling in His elect! I cannot imagine what life would be like in this fear-filled maniacal world of today if we knew nothing of God's great *plan of the ages*. How dark and uncertain everything would be! It is the truth, the truth of Christ's coming in us, the truth of sonship the hope of creation, the truth of the kingdom of God coming in power and great glory, the truth of the deliverance of creation from the bondage of corruption, the truth of the restoration of all men to God, the truth of His glory revealed in the manifest sons of God, the TRUTH THAT CHRIST HAS REVEALED TO US AND WITHIN US AS WE HAVE SUPPED WITH HIM

AND HE WITH US — this truth gives us hope for today and for tomorrow. What anticipation it stirs in our hearts!

Ah, the believer so accurately described in this moving drama had closed the door and locked it. In her snug bed of religious myths, folklore, and fairy tales and personal indifference she had disrobed and gone to sleep. Her Lover was up and had come to commune with her and ravish her heart with His love, revealing Himself to her on yet a higher plane, and to call her away with Him to the mountains of Bethel (separation), to the top of Amana and Shenir (the high places), and to the heights of Hermon (the mount of *transfiguration*). He came knocking and calling her to great and mighty things in the kingdom realm of God. When she, at her own time, opened the door, lo! He was gone. The hour of her visitation had passed!

In this midnight hour the lukewarm church of Laodicea has no room for Christ and His glory and has their door closed against Him. He has been standing outside and knocking at the door! He is not within, as He should be, but on the outside. Behind the door that is locked against Him they are loudly preaching about Him, earnestly working for Him, but He Himself they have left outside. We hear much about the great “revival” that is in the world today. But methinks that the revival is but the stirring of the Shulamite upon her bed as she endeavors to awaken herself out of her stupor to the call of her Beloved. I assure you that He will not remain in the place of a beggar at the door of His people forever! His voice will cease and you will be left in your bed of fairy tales and dreams and delusions! You can go on dreaming about a banquet beyond the stars, and continue to ignore His knocking at the door of your heart for entrance and love and union today. Many *individuals* have heard His voice and have opened their door, and He has come in, and is supping with them, and they with Him. The feast is now spread! A new kingdom day has dawned! Throughout this “evening time” as the kingdom of God has

dawned in the hearts of His called and chosen elect, the Lord has been standing at the door of the church in Laodicea knocking, and those who have had hearing ears have recognized His voice, have opened to Him, and together with Him they have been enjoying the great feast of truth and reality which has been spread before them. And now, now! He is turning from the door, His head is wet with the dew of the night, His locks are dripping with the night drops, and sadly He is departing from all the church systems of man, leaving them with their cherished traditions and the vanity of their fleshly pursuits. But for those who have opened the door and let HIM in, great and glorious things are prepared!

It is true that Christ stands outside the church systems of man, knocking, that he who hears may open the door. That is the sense of the meaning of Christ's message in its *corporate* application. There is, however, a further and deeper sense in this message on the *individual* and *personal* level. The Christ who knocks at the door of our individual heart is on the inside of each of us, in our spirit! There is a pure realm within man, an inner sanctum, an eternal dimension — the Holiest of all. Christ is in our spirit, and though we hear His voice as part of the corporate body of Christ, yet, is it not from *Christ within our spirit* that His voice comes to us? You see, my beloved, Christ is in our spirit, knocking on the door of our soul! He is in our spirit, knocking on the door of our body! He is saying, "If any (outer) man hear my voice, and open the door, I will not only be joined to your spirit and be one with you in spirit, but I will come into your soul and sup with you there, I will come into your soul and be fused with your soul; I will come into your body and sup with you there, I will come into your body and be fused with your body, and you will know in the totality of your being the fullness of my perfection, wisdom, power, life, and incorruptibility!"

It is in this experience that the soul is truly saved and this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal puts on immortality, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. So you see, dear one, while

we are believing *into* and entering *into Christ* in one dimension of our experience, ***He is entering into us FROM WITHIN!*** In the typology of the tabernacle in the wilderness ***we*** begin ***our journey into Christ*** in the outer court, at the brazen altar, where the lamb is slain to take away our sins; that is the order in which the priest, in his redemptive ministry enters into the tabernacle. Then we progress onward through the holy place where we are filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit, feast upon the bread of the body of Christ, and worship at the golden altar where we are transformed by the fire upon the altar from a cold, hard substance (incense), into a spiritual fragrance that wafts its way through the veil into the very glory and majesty of God; finally, we awaken into the consciousness of the most holy place of His fullness! But in the ***outworking*** of Christ in our lives, ***He*** begins in the inner sanctuary (most holy place) of our spirit, breaks forth from behind the veil to live, walk, express and manifest Himself in our soul (holy place), and finally to show forth His life in our body (outer court) realm. As we go in, He comes out, and there is effected a perfect union, for in this commingling there is the formation of the God Man — Christ, Head and body. It is He in us, and we in Him! Herein lies the power and glory of sonship!

You can never in a million years transform your soul by imposing laws or demanding reformation. And there is nothing that you can do for the body that will deliver it from the law of sin and death and bestow immortality. The Holy Spirit could not have used a more descriptive term than “dust” in describing the natural man! “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return” (Gen. 3:19). A chemical analysis of the human body reveals that twenty of the ninety-six elements that comprise the universe are present in man — substances such as carbon, nitrogen, calcium, phosphorous, sulfur, chlorine, fluorine, potassium, sodium, magnesium, iron, etc. All the elements are those found on the surface of the earth! Health foods, vitamins, herbs, exercise — at best these can only slow down the process of corruption and disintegration, postponing for a little season the inevitable catastrophe. You can eat

bean sprouts and yogurt and drink teas and swallow supplements by the handful, all of which are themselves but corruptible substances of earth, and have not one whit of power to administer eternal life to a corruptible organism. It is merely adding corruption to corruption!

Immortality does not come through any natural, earthly, material, physical, or temporal element that can be added to the body. So Jesus says — “If you want a transformed soul and an immortal body — Behold, I stand at the door and knock! I’m knocking from the inside, at the door of your soul and your body; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in!” When He marches triumphantly through the corridors of your soul, and steps into the territory of your body; when His Lordship and the power of His Life are established there; when the Bridegroom (Christ, the Spirit) marries and is joined in union with the Bride (soul), and in this union of Life they fully and completely occupy their home (the body), there will be manifest the full and complete salvation and perfection of the WHOLE MAN! Aren’t you glad!

This is the Lord who has come to the door of your life and mine today. This is the Lord who claims the right to reign, and from whose patient, haunting pursuit we can never get free! Behold, He stands at the door and knocks. While the sands of time are running out and the hurrying days mold our destiny, He stands at the door and knocks. While the purposes of His kingdom march onward, and the hour for the manifestation of the sons of God draws nigh, He stands at the door and knocks. Tenderer than the kiss of a little child, mightier than the flashing lightnings of heaven, He stands at the door and knocks. The moment any man opens the door and permits the Christ of glory to emerge from his spirit to enter into soul and body, to sit down there, to take up residence there, to sup there, to be Himself, all that He is, there, that man enters an entirely new realm. He has passed from the limited knowledge of a distant Christ to CHRIST AS HIS LIFE. He has turned from the temples of carnal zeal and fleshly prosperity. Christ no longer stands

at the door of a vast multitude gathered within the Laodicean church of this dark age. He comes now to that “little flock” of footstep followers who have been set aside of the Lord for the most intimate and personal visitation. How wonderful it is when the Christ comes IN to sup with us and we with Him! How blessed we are to have that intimate and sacred communion with the Lord!

The very next words of the Lord, after saying that He stands at the door and knocks, beseeching an entrance to sup with us and we with Him, are these, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21). The great truth in this hour is that God is bringing us into union with Christ as *sons of God*. The wonderful work He is doing in us is part of that glorious purpose! The overcomer is the one who leaves the congregation of the Laodicean church to enter into union with Christ *within himself*. “I will come *in to Him, and sup with him.*” Father’s creative work within us is being fulfilled as He draws us out of the old and from all that relates to the past order of things. He may separate us from all outward fellowship until we learn to fellowship only with Him! “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (1 Jn. 1:3). He also may confine us and close all other doors to us, shutting us up to Himself, and silencing all other voices but His. We may feel lonely and restricted, but the real purpose of our loving Father is to continue His grand work of making us His kingdom firstfruits, a people in whom He has established *His Life* to be revealed to all creation in authority and power.

As we continue to sup with Him and walk with Him in this strange time, we are making a significant transition. The Laodicean church is not admitting Him, nor are they eating and communing with Him, nor are they listening to His voice that they might learn His will and do it in this great hour. But in those who hear His voice, and sup with Him, He is establishing His kingdom — His new administrative order for the new

kingdom day we are now entering. Just as there is a change of ages, so is there a change of orders! The first step is to let go of the old, for God can not establish the new in people who cling to the old. Without a doubt, many who read these lines have already been dealt with by Father and have left the old church order, coming out to wait in Father's presence to hear and learn the truths and principles and realities He would teach us and raise up in our lives in the power of Christ. We have progressed beyond the spiritual nakedness, lukewarmness, blindness, self-satisfaction, and spiritual poverty of the Laodicean church order. The Lord rebuked and chastened us so that we repented of our former ways. When the Lord knocked on the "door" of our hearts and lives and began to speak to us, we heard His still, small voice and invited Him in to sup and commune with us. And now we follow on to truly be an overcomer in the fullness of all that means!

I WILL SUP WITH HIM AND HE WITH ME

"If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and *will sup with him, and he with me*" (Rev. 3:20).

I speak the truth when I say that the hour has come, and now is, when all the elect of the Lord have begun to KNOW THE LORD FOR THEMSELVES. All who have received the call to sonship have come out from all the promotions of man to seek God, walk with God, hear His voice, know God intimately and powerfully, that *God Himself* might be *our Father* and sup with us and we with Him. We opened the door reverently and joyfully, and before we realized it we found ourselves digging deep in the storehouse of God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge and sitting with Him at His banqueting table. He has spread a table before us in the presence of our enemies, He has led us through green pastures, He has revealed to us fountains of living water flowing unceasingly *from within*; He has caused us to rest beside cool, still streams; and HE, the Great Shepherd of the sheep and Bishop of our

souls has come to abide with us and our cup overflows with the unspeakable riches of His grace and the wonder of His glorious and eternal reality. Isn't it wonderful!

How precious the knowledge that we have a God who hungers, thirsts, deeply desires, to feast with His people — a God who from the beginning has tried to show us that His greatest delight is not in showing His authority, but in enjoying intimate and close fellowship with His own. He set a feast of fruits before Adam and Eve, the likes of which man has never been able to reproduce, and then He walked with them in the garden in the spirit of the day and communed with them face to face. He ate with Abraham in his tent at noonday. He spread a table in the wilderness for the entire nation of His chosen, and He gave them the very bread of heaven. Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding feast. He fed five thousand on a hillside. He did not hesitate to attend feasts, and ate and drank with men until He was called a glutton and a wine-bibber. He went up to Jerusalem to celebrate the feasts of Yahweh. And He has established the new covenant with a feast, the great spiritual feast, wherein He has given the redeemed His own body (word) for their meat and His own blood (spirit) for their drink, that death might be swallowed up of life. He has promised through the prophet Isaiah that in the latter days He will make a great feast of spiritual blessings and benefits for ***all nations*** upon His holy Mount (Isa. 25:6). And the greatest feast of all — the marriage supper of the Lamb — ushers a people into the most intimate relationship with their Lord! It is not in meetings, preachings, teachings, prophesyings, singing, or any outward exercise that we enjoy the marriage supper of the Lamb; it is at the marriage union of our “soul bride” with our “spirit bridegroom” that we discover *within ourselves* the glorious marriage feast provided by our Father!

We are commanded to feed upon Christ, to eat His flesh and drink His blood, “for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed” (Jn. 6:55). No longer are we to feed off the husks of man's sustenance,

no more are we to feed off the putrefaction spread upon Babylon's polluted tables, but we are invited to feast on the bounties of the fullness of Christ in an exceedingly rich and intimate manner, thereby drawing our sustenance from Him. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (Jn. 6:57). "I am the bread of life..." (Jn. 6:35).

There is an old song of the church that has a profound meaning. It says, "Jesus has a table spread, where the saints of God are fed; He invites His chosen people, Come and dine!" That table is in the heavens of God's Spirit, and in the Spirit and by the Spirit we are seated there. Paul confirms that we have been "raised up, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). There is a table of the Lord spread for us in the heavenlies! Jesus said to His disciples, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me; that ye may *eat and drink* at my table in my kingdom" (Lk. 22:29-30). Moses, Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and the elders of Israel ate at the Lord's table on mount Sinai. "And they saw the God of Israel: and there were under His feet as it were a paved work as a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And...the nobles of the children of Israel...saw God, and *did eat and drink*" (Ex. 24:9-11).

What an awesome picture! Seventy-four men of God, seated with Him in the height of a mountain peak, eating and drinking! What a supernatural table! What glory was there! It seems from the record that it was so overwhelming that none but Moses could take it in. Can we not see by this that the one thing the Lord seeks above all else from His chosen ones is COMMUNION AT HIS TABLE! Oneness around His heavenly table! A continual abiding in Him as our food, our strength, our enjoyment, and our *life*!

A sister in the Lord sent us the following beautiful testimony. "I had a marvelous vision while alone in a secluded cabin atop the

mountains by Lake Arrowhead. It was in this very place that I stayed for seven days, snowbound in 1981, when God began this miracle transformation in me. The flood gates were opened; scripture has come alive; I hear the *voice* clearly now from God Himself and all things are being made known to me from the Word who became flesh and now dwells among men, including me. On this occasion, however, it was a balmy day atop the mountains as I watched the squirrels scampering across the balcony and the sassy bluejays compete for the corn and nuts on the railing. My husband had gone for a hike in the woods and I felt a strange kind of listlessness that one often experiences in saying final farewells to things they know shall never return. Somehow I knew that every stage of my walk with Christ and the experiences of my life in general, were being buried in the past forever. I wasn't sad about it, but I was certain about the finality of it all, and I wondered what was happening to me and where it all would lead.

"I began to talk with the Lord about it, and I *do* mean talk *with*, for I hear His voice now whenever I take the time to converse with Him personally and I no longer pray 'at' Him or sort of hope I will 'hit' something out there that hears and answers; but I have conversations and hear Him as clearly as any human on this earth. I don't remember the first part of our conversation, for it was only the Father talking with me by His Spirit. Then I looked at where we were. We were sitting at a table! At first it seemed like it was just a cozy little table where we were about to sup together. There were wine goblets in front of us, and I had a flash of, 'What would the church world think if they knew Jesus drank wine!' But, He read my thoughts and only smiled at the foolish ideas and values of humans in their doctrinal treadmill. There was a loaf of bread on the table and meat, a roasted fowl of some kind, a platter of fish, and huge bowls of fresh juicy fruit.

"Then I looked around and realized there was no floor under me. I mean — no floor at all! Nothing. I was suspended, yet my feet were on something that felt solid, but I saw nothing there. I was sort of up in the

sky; yet when I looked directly at Jesus, it was more like I was in a romantic little private café with just Him and me there. I had a strange feeling of a very, very personal, but totally pure and holy love between Jesus and me that is unlike any love or any relationship I have ever had. I can compare this with nothing I have known before. Deep and pure and wonderful beyond words and His face, that face so very kind and so penetrating with healing in His very glance as if His eyes were able to look deep into my soul and love away every disappointment and sorrow and tear I've ever shed. He seemed to convey to me that He was there with me through all those and He had taken them all upon Himself back into the past to that tree at Calvary and they were buried there. All I was experiencing were phantoms, lies that haunt and torment when one doesn't know they are not real and have been buried in the tomb with the crucified Christ.

"After this I noticed that we really were not in a tiny room together, but as I looked around in the heavens, more light was shed on the table and I saw that it was instead a very, very long table. In fact, it was extended as far as the eye could see, and only then disappeared because of distance. It was simply in space, suspended in the heavens, though I did not see the earth below, at least not at first, and then not the earth I've always known. It was very exciting and a wonderfully breathtaking view.

"I was aware that I was sitting at the head of the table as if I was being treated like a queen, and Jesus was there to serve me. That embarrassed me, and I did not think it was right; but I didn't want to offend Him. So I asked, 'Who prepared *all this food!*' He said that He had done it Himself...that He had prepared it just for me, even in the presence of my enemies. But I didn't see anyone around, and didn't have any personal enemies anyway, though I grieved at the enemies of the cross that I knew about. He smiled. I was getting more and more uncomfortable sitting at the head of the table though, and He said, 'Say

what you are thinking, N—, because I can see your thoughts anyway, you know.’ ‘Well,’ I said, ‘since you know what I am thinking, I must say that I do not feel right about sitting at the head of the table. I will stay here if it is what *you* want, Lord, but I really believe I would feel better if *you* sat in the head seat and I sat at the side.’ He agreed and we traded seats. He seemed pleased with that and said that it was an act of proving I no longer wanted to control my life but had come to prefer HIS headship to my own, or anyone else’s. I didn’t know about all that; but I did feel better with HIM at the head of the table and me at the side!

“During our meal, we did eat. While we ate, famous men came up to the table and without really noticing the Lord or myself, grabbed a platter of food from off the table and disappeared with it. I recognized Jimmy Swaggart, and Billy Graham as a young man with galoshes and an overcoat, and some others still in public ministry today, including Oral Roberts, and some others I did not know. I asked, ‘Who are these men?’ The Lord said, ‘They are ones who were given a heaping serving of Truth at one time, but they settled for just that and never returned for more, or to sit with me and sup until I bade them go back out and serve others.’ ‘Then don’t they know they need to do that?’ I asked. ‘No,’ said Jesus, ‘they have had that food devoured long ago, and now they pass around an empty plate, too busy still taking glory for that first meal that they don’t even know they no longer have anything of value to offer.’ He seemed very sad at this, and I wanted to comfort Him for a change. Isn’t that a strange thought! He said, ‘All those characteristics, even of divine compassion, are from the heart of the Father, which is why ***we are getting to look more alike all the time.***’

“Jesus smiled even more broadly at me. ‘After all,’ He confirmed, ‘*we are* family now. We have the same Father, don’t we?’ His eyes twinkled with merriment and I quickly forgot His sad look as I took a big bite of the drumstick in front of me. In fact, I had plenty of everything which was, by far, the most delicious food I had ever tasted and I was

quite satisfied. But even after I was full and content with the enormous feast set before me, I looked down and it was all still there as though I had never touched it! I was very puzzled by this. The Lord answered my thoughts and told me, 'No matter how much you eat, and how tasty and nourishing, it is beyond compare; it will always still be there for more and more and more.' I knew He was talking to me about the Word of God! No matter how much I feast, it is *always* a gigantic banquet and we still haven't even made a dent in it. I have come to feed off of it as a source of very real life, and it continues to feed me as it unfolds within me and I get my fill; yet I never get my fill! I am always satisfied, yet I continue to look forward to more of my daily bread.

"What a banqueting table the Lord Jesus sets before me, and I praise Him for this miracle food. I cannot do justice or rightly describe to anyone what has happened inside me, but it is a glorious and never-ending supper with the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, that is exactly what it is — THE LORD'S SUPPER! It is the Lord's supper in the final, heavenly way that He has told us about in the Word and now by His precious loving Spirit, 'I will not drink wine again until I can drink it *new with you* in my Father's kingdom.' He drank wine with me that day, and ate with me, and I with Him, and He said, 'I HAVE BEEN KNOCKING ON THE DOOR FOR SO LONG, and I continue to knock on the doors of other's hearts, and if they will open the door, I will go in and sup with them as well.' *But the chairs at that endless table were empty at that hour.*

"I remember that the practical side of me arose within and I wondered if the food might not spoil awaiting the arrival of the wedding guests; for I realized this intimate loving meal with my Jesus was the marriage supper. He said, 'It won't spoil. It will wait till they arrive.' Then I wondered if I couldn't take (are you ready for this awful humanness) a *doggie bag* of some of the food back with me. I knew it was *of the Spirit* and thought perhaps it might give others a taste of the Truth of this wondrous living meal. But Jesus smiled again and said to

me, 'You have been taking great heapings of my Word to others in the prophetic revelations I have given you for them; but as you well know, it hasn't triggered anyone's taste buds for more of the Truth thus far!' We both were grieved at this dreadful fact. 'But then, child, *it is not yet time*. Be not dismayed. No matter what you do, it is the work of my Spirit that alone can enable others to *see Truth* even as you now see it.' So I didn't feel like such a failure after that. He was pleased with me, in our supping together, so I wanted to rest in that.

"Then I became aware that crumbs fell off both His plate and mine, yet there was no floor to pick them off of, and I was concerned about cluttering (the practical me again). Jesus said to let them go for the dogs. 'Dogs?' 'Yes,' said the Lord, 'these are morsels of Truth that they clamor for and yet settle for on earth and believe they have the full course dinner! They have nothing to compare it with, so they believe they have it all.' 'How sad,' I replied. 'Only the crumbs I now spill are available to the weak and hungry lambs, for the famine grows worse and worse in this terrible time.' That is why I was saying, 'I'm starving to death in this place!' referring to church meetings before God dragged me out of them to be taught by Him. 'You were hungry,' the Lord replied, 'so I feed you now myself.'" — end quote.

There is a great law of life revealed in the Lord's invitation for us to *sup with Him*. It is in the fellowship, the communion of supping intimately with the Lord that His life, His mind, His nature, His will, His ways, His very self is communicated to us, yea, imparted to us. Let me give you an illustration. All the communications of men with one another lie as it were in two strata — two stories with a floor between them; one story is deeper than the other. In the upper, superficial story, men tell each other what they know. All schools, all books, belong in this superficial realm of companionship. In the deeper story men give each other what they are. All true communion, all merging of wills and lives, belong in the profounder realm. Do you know the difference? You go to

a man's school, or read his book, and there are great and precious things that pass from him to you. The facts which he has gathered in his industrious study, the ideas that have come forth like stars out of the darkness of his concentrated thought — these he can give you and he does, and you are richer for them. He has only to teach; you have only to attend and understand. But by and by you come to *know the man*, to fellowship intimately with him, to love him, and to count his will better than your own. You absorb his spirit into your life. Then, is there not a new kind of communication birthed between your life and his? Does he not give you things that he could not give before — not only facts, ideas, and information — but motives, hopes, fears, loves, emotions, inspirations? You have passed from the upper to the deeper story of communication, and the passage took place when you passed over from listening and learning to loving and communing!

There are many today who have met Christ in the upper, superficial story. We once met Him there in meetings, sermons, teachings, prophesyings, scriptures, programs, activities, and as we listened, He told us things we never could have known without Him. The teachers we met were inChristed men called apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Our classroom was the church. The lessons we learned were truths, precepts, and principles of the kingdom of God. But now, thank God! We have met the Christ in the deeper chamber where, as we sup with Him, and He with us, He reveals to us His heart and the very secret of His being and in the union of our life *He makes us like Himself!*

Oh, the blessedness of private, personal, intimate communion with Christ! I would rather spend one day alone in communion with Christ, than a whole week with all the precious ministers I know in this word of the kingdom. Yea, I would rather spend a day in communion with Christ alone, than in the company of the twelve apostles even, were it possible for them to pay me a visit. If we have the joy of intimate fellowship and vital communion with Christ the Lord, what can add to it? It is Christ

who constitutes heaven! The presence of Him, the flame of His love, the rays of His glory are heaven indeed! If there is any other heaven beside the glorious presence of Christ, I shall not covet it. If I have Christ, Christ is enough for me, as says the Psalmist when he makes Christ his habitation, his portion, his strength, his life, and the ultimate end of all his desire. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul. And again, "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." And, "When I awake with Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied." "For me to live, is Christ."

Though we find deep satisfaction in the sweet communion we have with Christ, the secret converse we have together as He journeys with us through this wilderness, how oft our hearts yearn for HIS FULLNESS, when all veils and limitations of earth shall forever pass away! There are times when He makes Himself so real that our small capacity can hardly stand the strain of such revelations. It is as though we were bringing a pint cup to receive the waters of Niagara; even the earthen vessel is almost carried away! But the day is coming when our capacity shall be so enlarged, that we can receive the full unveiling of our Lord and the glories that are His; and He will give us such revelations of the Father that we shall enter into His joy and glory, for all that is His is ours in Him. Then we shall see Him as He is, and shall behold all things clearly, with nothing between to obscure the vision. This corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality. The Father's name shall be written in our forehead. The nations shall walk in the light of that city which we are, where the Lamb is the Light and the throne of God is in the midst of her.

We come to know Christ in His presence and fellowship when there is fulfilled within us the words of the prophet: "The Lord is in His holy temple; ***let all the earth keep silence before Him***" (Hab. 2:20). It is not the earth of mountains and valleys, of streams and forests, but THIS EARTH WHICH WE ARE that must learn to keep silence before God, for it is ***this earth*** of our body which ***is the temple*** of God, bought with His

precious blood and consecrated to be the habitation of God through the spirit. This earth, with all its carnal desires and ambitions, with all its fleshly wisdom and zeal, must be brought to holy silence and reverence before the King of Glory; and we must come to know Him, not in the abundance of words by which we constantly clatter in prayers, entreating God for this thing, and that blessing; but in waiting patiently before Him and listening ***until He speaks to us.*** It is in holy quietness before God that the deepest witness of the Spirit comes, testifying to our spirits that we are the sons of God, and there the Father draws nigh and delights in us and we enter into the full enjoyment of the Father's love.

It was at the commencement of Jesus' public ministry that an event happened which so attracted the attention of His disciples that they wrote it down. After a day full of wonders and works at Capernaum, the crowd in the evening became still greater. The whole town was before the door; sick were healed, devils were cast out. It was late before they got to sleep and in the throng there had been little time for quiet or for secret prayer and communion. And lo, when they rose early in the morning they found the Master gone! "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a *desert place*, and there prayed" (Mk. 1:35). In the silence of the night He had gone out to seek a place of solitude in the wilderness; and when they found Him there, He was still communing with the Father.

Oh, my beloved! If you and I would be manifest sons of God, we must especially contemplate Jesus praying alone in the wilderness. There is the secret of His marvelous life! What He did and spoke to man, was first SPOKEN AND LIVED THROUGH WITH THE FATHER. He who would be like Him in His walk with the Father in sonship may simply begin here — to follow Jesus into solitude. Even though it cost the sacrifice of night rest, of business, of intercourse with friends, or ministry to desperate needs, the time must be found to be

alone with the Father. This is the path of sonship! The sermon on the mount was not a message to babes teaching them how to act to be good little children of God; it is the very essence of the ***principles of the kingdom of God and the life of sonship***, teaching ***sons of God*** how to be sons of their Father, in what nature to live and reign in the kingdom. And in that wonderful kingdom teaching the firstborn Son of God reveals the great truth that it is in the closet, in the secret chamber, with closed door, or in the solitude of the wilderness, that the Father must be fellowshiped every day in the communion of His life. If Jesus, the firstborn among many brethren, needed it, how much more we! What it was to Him it will be for us. While we greatly appreciate the blessed fellowship with other saints of like mind and spirit, and there is a time for that, yet it is quickened to our hearts that it is ***from heaven alone*** that the power to walk in ***a heavenly life*** can come!

I have known saints who were embarrassed because of the frustrating failure of being able to pray in public. Now, while there is an occasional place for public prayer, the God-ordained place of prayer is in the enclosed privacy where there is no other motivational influence than the fellowship of a son with his Father. I do not hesitate to tell you that I do not enjoy public prayer. I would rather ***never*** pray in public! It is unnatural to me. Why do others need to hear the words that are addressed to my Father alone? I cannot pour out my deepest heart or express my most intimate thoughts, desires, concerns, and confessions in the ears of the listening multitude, or even in the hearing of my most intimate friend, or even my beloved wife. Not one word of my prayer is meant for any but my Father, not one word of my prayer is directed toward any but my God. It is this being with the Father, and the Father alone, that is the essence of sonship prayer. And that brings to mind again the solitary nights of clear starlight which Jesus spent on the hills of Galilee, when the holiest events that ever occurred in a human soul took place in His, when marvelous discourse with the Father unfolded within His consciousness the reality of His sonship to God, when it must

have seemed as if a quite unique tone released itself from our earth and made its way to the farthest expanses of the heavenlies above. And now — in the secret place of the Most High His younger brethren, the sons of God, are bidden to live this over again!

The life of sonship is a hidden, inner life, having to do with the spiritual and invisible One who sees in secret. It is a secluded life, hid with Christ in God. The life in Christ neither strives nor shouts, nor does one hear its voice in the streets. It shrinks from all outward displays, whether showy public almsgiving, conspicuous religious exercises, oratorical prayers, ceremonious fastings, broadened phylacteries, processional parades, clerical costume, titles, or degrees, or holy tones. Like a planet around the sun, it rolls in its orbit of obedience to the Father without fanfare or advertisement; like the sun itself, it shines without noise.

We live in a Laodicean day of much feverish running to and fro, and Martha-like preoccupation about much serving; a day of organizations, conventions, gatherings, seminars, television shows, public meetings, and programs of all sorts. It has almost come to be understood, even in “sonship” and “kingdom” circles that we can do nothing for God unless we organize, promote, and hold a public meeting. The secret life of aloneness with God has largely given way to the public life of gatherings, meetings, and activities. The closet has given way to the synagogue. And that is not sonship! There is indeed a time for corporate expression, but first and foremost let our watchword be: ***Alone with God.*** We need to *hide* ourselves with God before we *show* ourselves for God. And many who call themselves sons of God have not hidden themselves with God long enough to have much to show for God! That is the truth. All true sons are coming to intimately and fully know the Father in the secret place, to be prepared and equipped by Him there, before they are shown to the world in the long-awaited manifestation of the sons of God!