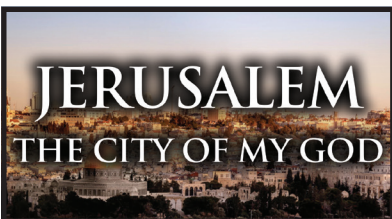




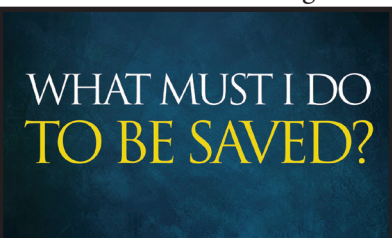
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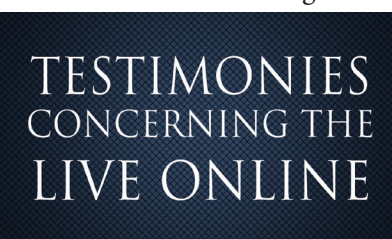
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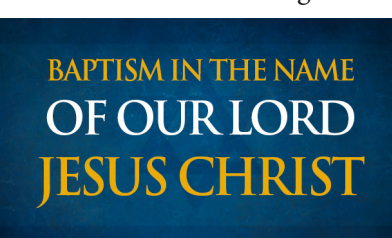
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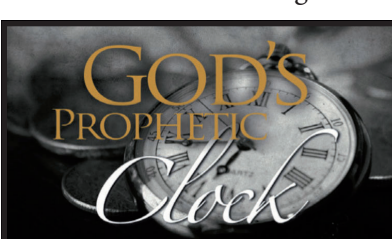
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EDITORIAL

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES

The Lord Jesus bless and keep all of His faithful followers who are awake to the reality of His imminent return.

The year 2020 came and went rapidly; ending with a great tumult which appears is just beginning. The years are passing as if they were months, the months as if they were weeks and the weeks as if they were days. With all certainty I can state that we are living in the last part of the "End Times." When 2019 was drawing to a close, who could have imagined what awaited us in 2020? Can we even begin to imagine what is in store for us in the year 2021? Only the Lord knows what lies ahead. Therefore (as is true at all times) we must be waiting for the Lord by being in His Word, by praying and by obeying His Word.

Do we truly believe and understand that we are living in the last moments of the last days? May the Lord help us so that we may be as *"the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the time, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment"* (1 Chron. 12:32). When the lists of the tribes and their attributes are given, nothing is mentioned about this tribe's physical abilities in war. As we read the list given in the book of Chronicles we see that they are a tribe with the least amount of members, but at the same time they are the most important. Because, although the other tribes had abilities suited for war, the children of Issachar had the spirit of discernment. They were aware of the times and they knew what Israel had to do. The wise have always been the least in number among the People of

God. God has called us to be counted among those that understand the times in which we are living. The signs are abundant around us, beginning with Israel and continuing with what is happening in the rest of the world. In the past few months I have pointed out the some of the principal signs and things that we have been experiencing in the last few years which announce to us that we are living in the last part of the "End Times." I have also mentioned some of the principal things we should be doing according to the Word of God. After all, it is not sufficient to simply know about what is happening around the world. There are many wicked people who do not walk with the Lord who have a greater understanding than us about both historic and present events, although for them these events are not prophetic, simply events of the past and of the present. The Word of God tells us that *"none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand"* (Dan. 12:10).

We must understand the times in which we are living, know what to do according to the Word of God and do it in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must fight against becoming paralyzed spiritually so that we might react and respond to what the Lord is speaking to us in these last days. That we might not be as the person who hears the alarm clock in the morning and who knows that it is time to get up, but whose sleep is so heavy that he does not react nor respond to what he is hearing and does not do what he knows he should do. Oh Lord, deliver us from heaviness and from that carnal and infernal sleep!

We who are pastors or a head of a household, and each child of God in general, need to be like the children of Issachar. Each one of us in our respective place should have an *"understanding of (these) times"* (1 Chron. 12:32). Now that we have entered into the year 2021, we who are pastors need to perceive and

understand the times in which we are living, so that we might teach the people of God what we must do according to the guidance of the Word of God. Now, more than ever, with all of the changes which we have experienced and with those that are still to come, the people of God need guidance, and the wise shall understand and will follow. It is not easy to lead when the majority does not want to do what they should. Nevertheless, we must do it and must not be negligent in teaching *"in season, and out of season"* (2 Tim. 4:2).

In this year, 2021, those of us who are the head of a household must be awake in these times that we are living, and we should know what we should be doing so that we can guide our "Israel" (our household), so that we might all be doing what needs to be done in these crucial times of great urgency. It is necessary and vital to build and attend to the spiritual altar in our homes *"preparing an ark to the saving of (our) house"* (Heb. 11:7). We must overcome the carnality, selfishness, apathy, slothfulness, conformity and spiritual lukewarmness which have cause a terrible negligence in the leaders of households among the people of God. We must feed those who are in our household with what the Word of God teaches about what to know and do during these times.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?" (Mt. 24:45). God is inciting us to be faithful and prudent in what we should be doing with those who are in our household. We must feed them in due season before the time comes when time shall be no more. *"I (we) must work the works of him that sent me (us), while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work (do what we must do)"* (Jn. 9:4). And God is inciting all of His children in general to have an understanding of the times, and to know what we should be doing

and to do it. *"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is"* (Eph. 5:14-17). We must awaken so that we can understand the times in which we are living, and we must arise so that we be enlightened to what we must be doing. It is essential that we be able to see how we are walking. We must be able to "see" if we are walking as fools or if we are truly walking as wise (understanding the times in which we are living). It is possible to be walking as fools and not truly see how we are walking because we are asleep spiritually. We need to be awake in order to understand the times we are living in. When we truly understand then we will seek to redeem the time and to not be foolish, but to be wise to what the will of God is (what we should be doing as pastors, heads of households and every child of God). Awaken, arise, examine how you are walking, redeem the time, don't be imprudent, and be wise to what the will of the Lord is.

Moses, having an understanding of the times in which he was living and of the brevity of human life, made this supplication: *"Teach us to number our days, that we apply our hearts unto wisdom"* (Ps. 90:12). In like manner, now we can urgently plead to the Lord, asking Him to teach us so that we may understand the days and times that we are living in, so that we might do what we must do with all of our heart. More than ever, in this year, 2021, we need to be *"wise."*

"None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12:10). *"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Church"* (Rev. 2:11).

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).

We are drawing very close to the fulfillment of all the things prophesied in the blessed Word of our God. Anti-Semitism is constantly increasing. Thousands of Jews around the world are seeking to move to Israel and others are expressing the urgent desire to return to Israel, something that the God of Israel has been stirring among His people who are scattered around the world. There are shake ups happening both within and without Israel. Our redemption is near!

Sept. 25, 2020-"Israel National News" published the following: the king of Bahrain, Hamad bin Isa Al Jalifa, said on Thursday that the establishment of relations with Israel is a "civilized message." He also asked that the efforts to end the Palestinian Arab-Israel conflict should be intensified in accordance with the "two state solution."

Sept. 30, 2020-"Israel National News" published: "Although they signed a peace agreement with Israel earlier this month, the United Arab Emirates will insist on a "two state solution" to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict based upon the pre-1967 borders," declared the UAE Foreign Relations Minister, Sheik Abdullah bin Zayed to the United Nations.

October 10, 2020-"ABC News reported: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia-The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has told his Ethiopian counterpart that his country plans to "immediately" bring 2,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel. Netanyahu's office stated that his decision is based on "his commitment to a continued Aliyah (the return of Jews to the land of Israel)."

October 11, 2020-"Israel National News" reported the anti-Semitic Democrats blame the Orthodox Jews for the corona virus. "I have something to say to the Orthodox community tomorrow morning: 'if they are willing to live with these rules, then I am going to shut down their synagogues,'" stated the governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo to the religious Jews.

October 15, 2020-The news agency,

GOD'S PROPHETIC CLOCK

Pastor Efraim Valverde III

"India Today," published the following: Facebook and Twitter both prohibit publications which deny the Holocaust. "We energetically condemn anti-Semitism and any hate based behavior has absolutely no place in our service," declared Twitter's spokesman.

October 16, 2020-"Israel National News" reported that U.N. envoy to the Middle East, Nickolay Mladenov, has condemned the Israeli constructions in Judea and Samaria.

October 23, 2020- The news agency, "The Jerusalem Post," announced that Guatemala designated all the branches of Hezbollah as terrorist organizations, according to the Foreign Relations ministry. This converts Guatemala into the eighth country which has designated Hezbollah as a terrorist organization in 2020.

October 23, 2020-The news agency "Fox News," announced the following: President Trump announced a peace agreement between Sudan and Israel and stated that more nations will normalize their relations with Israel. Sudan is the third Arab country to do so as part of negotiations led by the United States.

October 28, 2020-"Israel National News" reported that Israel welcomed their 16,000th oleh (immigrant) of the year 2020, who made Aliyah through the Zionist organization, Nefesh B'Nefesh as part of a group of 90 new Olim (new immigrants) who arrived in Israel today. The flights arrived at Ben Gurion airport with new immigrants coming from 14 different states of the United States and three Canadian provinces. They ranged from young students to retirees.

October 29, 2020-The news agency "The Times of Israel" reported that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) engaged in a massive exercise in the north as it is preparing for war on multiple fronts.

October 30, 2020-"Israel National

News" published the following: The United States' ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, presented the first United States passport that includes Jerusalem as part of Israel.

October 30, 2020- "Israel National News" announced the following: The European Union (EU) is trying to topple the Israeli government. The EU, its governments, and the Non-Governmental Organization are financing a coup against Benjamin Netanyahu.

November 7, 2020-"The Jerusalem Post" reported: The UN speaks of the Temple Mount exclusively as a Muslim site, ignoring the ties the Jews have to it. One UN resolution project concerning the Temple Mount which refers to it solely as a sacred Islamic site and only uses its Muslim name, Haram al Sharif, was approved by 138 members of the General Assembly last week. November 19, 2020-"The Jerusalem Post" reported that 156 nations of the UN affirm that the settlements in the West Bank east of Jerusalem are not part of Israel. UN resolution 2334 issued by the UN Security Council asked its member states to assure that they did not participate in de facto annexation.

December 2, 2020-The news agency, "Arutz Sheva 7," reported the following: The Czech Republic will open a diplomatic mission in Jerusalem. The Czech ambassador to Israel stated that the decision to open a diplomatic office in Jerusalem fulfills the promise made by their president, Milos Zeman, two years ago.

December 4, 2020-The news agency, "Arutz Sheva 7," published the following: "Iran plans to install hundreds of advanced centrifuges designed to enrich uranium in a subterranean plant, therefore breaking the agreement they had made with the major powers," reported Reuters on Friday, citing the latest report issued by the International Agency of Atomic Energy.

On December 9, 2020-"The Jerusalem Post" reported that the Russian ambassador to Israel, Anatoly Viktorov, declared on Tuesday: "Israel destabilizes the Middle East more than Iran. The problem in the region is not the Iranian activities."

December 10, 2020-The news agency, "Fox News," announced the following: Morocco normalized its relations with Israel and is the fourth nation to do so based on the Trump's Arab peace plan. This agreement will also grant the rights to direct flights to and from Israel, as well as over flights.

December 13, 2020-"The Jerusalem Post" published the following: Israel normalizes ties with Bhutan (its capital being Timphu). Israel's ambassador in India, Ron Malka, and his counterpart in Bhutan, Vetsop Namgyel, signed the final document on Saturday night which normalizes the relationship between the two nations.

December 13, 2020-"The Jerusalem Post" announced that Oman and Indonesia will most likely be the next two countries who will forge diplomatic ties with Israel.

December 17, 2020-"The Jerusalem Post" published: "There is space in Jerusalem for a Palestinian capital," stated Benny Gantz, who was interviewed in his office at the Ministry of Defense in Tel Aviv. He added that he doesn't foresee an integral peace in the Middle East until the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is resolved.

December 22, 2020-"The Washington Post" reported the following: The Israeli Parliament will be dissolved Tuesday at midnight, as the time expires for agreeing upon a new budget, in the midst of an interminable crisis between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his partner in government, Benny Gantz. Therefore, the nation will move to its fourth election in two years, which is scheduled to take place in March of 2021.

Another shakeup is occurring in the Israeli government with the fourth elections upcoming in March of this year. Let us continue to pray for our older brother. We must also remember that just as difficult days lie ahead for the Church, they also lie ahead for the Jewish people.

God bless you,
Pastor Efraim Valverde III.



EVERYTHING IS NORMAL

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

We are living a normal life..." This is a common expression made by people when they refer to their situation in which all of their family is in good health, and when they more or less possess all the things that are necessary in their daily lives. This expression is so common that even many children of God use it with all naturalness, without realizing that in reality they are saying something which is not correct.

If we are sincere Christians, when we take a more serious look at the term "normal," and go deeper into its meaning than most people are accustomed to doing, we will have to acknowledge that if we are possessors of the material and physical benefits I mentioned previously, this is not "normal" at all, but it is something miraculous. And for it to be possible that these blessings remain, this miracle has to continuously be in effect.

It is not necessary to be a person with a high level of education to understand that the things which produce human happiness are like the soap bubbles which a child blows into the air with his bubble maker. They look beautiful as they gracefully float, sometimes even changing colors. But suddenly, in a fraction of a second, they burst and disappear into nothing and it as if they had never existed.

There is no human being (from the time that he is a child who is already conscious of life, and as long as he lives) who has not had to undergo, in one way or another, to a greater or lesser degree, the experience of having the object of his happiness vanish before his eyes in an instant. That is why the Word of God tells us that *"man that is born of a woman is of a few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not"* (Job 14:1-2). To some this reasoning might appear to be simple and without great importance. But the undeniable truth is that it is vital and of utmost seriousness to each child of God. Because if a child of God uses this common expression, he is doing himself harm. He is unconsciously inducing himself to forget that it is because of God's continuous miracle that he is able

to enjoy the *"benefits"* (Ps. 103:2) of a so called "normal" life.

Throughout the course of my ministry I have seen multitudes of Christians fall into that subtle trap of the devil. The Lord has performed the miracle of granting them many long years filled with human happiness in many different ways. But with time they become so accustomed to being partakers of this miracle that they no longer see it as a miracle. Now, because of the permanence of these blessings, they consider it to be something "normal." In fact, they feel as if they deserve them and that, because of this right, God is obligated to give them everything they ask for. Counted among this type of Christian are the preachers who teach that if a Christian is not surrounded by material and physical blessings, it is because he or she does not have faith.

WHAT IS "NORMAL" IN REALITY

The faithful servants of our God to whom *"it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake"* (Phil. 1:29) perfectly understand my message. These, my brothers, who have passed or are currently going through situations and experiences which are far from being in agreement with the common idea of what is "normal" can ask the "normal" Christians: What does "normal" truly mean? For my part, I have witnessed throughout all the years of my life that many of these faithful children of God have never experienced a "normal" life, according to the definition of "normality" that is prevalent in our environments.

For this reason I now want to mention a particular case which occurred during a Bible conference: The preacher was a minister who was about 40 years old. His body, from the moment that he came forth from his mother's womb, has been one of a sadly disfigured

phenomenon. His testimony about the way that God called him into the ministry is truly unique and marvelously touching.

This minister who possessed a body that was completely out of the "normal" was asked the following by a "normal" minister: "Brother, would you like to have a normal body?" The disfigured brother responded to him with another question: "What do you consider to be normal?" He added: "If having a body such as yours is normal, and to then use it to serve the Lord in the lukewarm, frivolous and superficial manner that you and many 'normal' Christians are doing today, then I do not envy your normality. In fact, I believe that it would benefit you if the Lord would give you a 'normal' body like mine, so that knowing how He already demonstrated His love to us, you might learn to love and serve Him with the same passion with which I love and serve Him."

The testimony and message given by this minister who did not have a "normal" body made a tremendous impact on many of the "normal" people who were present at the Bible conference I previously mentioned. In fact, this also shook up some of the distinguished Christians who were present who had previously been distracted and yawning during the greater part of the conference, precisely as a result of the "normality" of their bodies.

That is why it is written: *"If He (our God) set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself His spirit and His breath; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust"* (Job 34:14-15). *"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you"* (1 Pet. 1:24-25). The messages the Lord declares to us in this and many other

Scriptures are for the purpose of helping us understand what the true normality is in the life of His children. He lets us know that the only true and firm normality that He has established is that there be an intense, profound love for Him in our hearts which provokes us to unconditionally and completely surrender our lives to His will. The life of the Lord *"in the days of His flesh"* (Heb. 5:7) is the proof par excellence and the supreme example of what I have explained here.

If you, my esteemed brother or sister who is reading this article, are one of the *"wise"* (Dan. 12:10), you will completely accept the reasoning that I have mentioned here. If you are one of those who God has pleased to surround with material and spiritual benefits and blessings, may this reasoning serve to help you never take for granted what you have. Always remember that everything depends on a continuous miracle which the Lord is performing. Be careful to not fall into the satanic trap that I previously mentioned, because there have been "normal" people who have fallen into and who continue to fall into this trap.

However, if you are counted among the children of God to who *"it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake"* (Phil. 1:29), don't complain and don't regret it: Glory in your afflictions! (Rom. 5:3). Because the fact that you have to this point travelled a road filled with pain and many afflictions, believe me (because I say it in the Name of the Lord) when I tell you that you are privileged. And, although what I am about to say to you might sound like foolishness, the truth is that because you have rarely or have never enjoyed the life which many call "normal," according to the Gospel, you are experiencing and living the true normality for the true child of God. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Cor. 1:18).

May the Lord bless you and keep you.



JERUSALEM

THE CITY OF MY GOD

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

God, by His absolute and divine will, chose a City from among all the earth to distinguish it and call it His City. That City is JERUSALEM. Although many have objected to the Creator's determination, but that does not matter because "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" (Rom. 9:20).

was fulfilled exactly 40 years later, when the City was besieged by the Roman general Titus and all the Roman army. It fell into their hands in the year 70 of the Christian era. And in this manner the Jewish people was scattered in fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the Scattering. This Scattering (Diaspora) would last 1878 years. It ended before the eyes of an astonished incredulous world on May, 14, 1948, when

Israel was once again declared to be an autonomous State among the nations of the earth. However, something was still missing. The walled Old City which previously contained the Temple of God (which is the one mentioned in the prophecies) was not yet in the hands of the Israeli people. But on June 7, 1967, in a miraculous lighting war which astonished the world, the Old City once again returned to the hands of its previous owners after almost 1897 years had passed. In this manner the last part of the prophetic verse was fulfilled and along with this the fulfillment of the Time of the Gentiles.

From that day forward the world has been living in a time that is no longer common. There are many signs and events which confirm this truth. It is not possible to mention them all here, but what we can say is that only the foolish can deny these signs, because they are all around us. Among these proofs we have the scenario described in the first verses we cited at the beginning of this article.

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." For I will gather all nations against

Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 12:2-3, 14:2). It is no secret that the great majority of the nations of the earth are presently against Jerusalem.

Notice that the prophecies contained in the first two cited verses could not be fulfilled until the prophecies contained in second verse were fulfilled. The fact that Israel had regained control of Jerusalem is directly related to this prophecy. For this reason I am inviting the Christians who are awake to join me in watching. And to those who in their foolishness want to remain in a spirit of slumberiness, I say. Go ahead and live carelessly but remember that the voice of the Eternal One is calling out to all of His people in these last days. Being that He does not want any of His children to perish, but His desire is that we will all go forth unto a faithful repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).

It is not the time to be looking at the religious denominations nor defending certain religious rubrics or seeking titles of greatness. It is not time for those of us who truly want to see the Lord to be involved in rivalries and seeking certain advantages. It is not the time to seek each other out and to love one another, and to live in the communion and fellowship that is a distinctive of the true Church of Jesus Christ. It is time to unite our strengths to do the work that the Master has called us to do. We must do this before He returns.

"MARANATHA" (the Lord cometh), our brother, the apostle Paul tells us (1 Cor. 16:22), and our brother, John the apostle, adds: *"And any man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself" (1 Jn. 3:3).*

May the Lord bless you.

Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it."

"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 12:2-3, 14:2).

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Lk. 21:24).

God, by His absolute and divine will, chose a City from among all the earth to distinguish it and call it His City. That City is JERUSALEM. Although many have objected to the Creator's determination, but that does not matter because *"O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" (Rom. 9:20).*

By the will of the Lord, Jerusalem became the capital of the Jewish state. Also by His will many centuries ago the true worship was established at Jerusalem. It was also God's will that at Jerusalem the price of redemption for the human race was paid when our Savior was crucified there. And, also by the will of the Eternal One, it was at Jerusalem that the Church was born.

It was precisely during the beginnings of the Church that the Lord prophesied what is recorded in the Scriptures: *"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Lk. 21:24).* The first part of this Scripture



"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:7-9).

AN INFORMATIONAL INTRODUCTORY NOTE

By the time of the publication of this article my children have taken me to visit another cardiologist in Tucson, Arizona (who is a friend of the family of my daughter, Katie, who lives in Tucson). This doctor attended me in a very professional and correct manner. He gave us most of the information that we wanted to know, including the diagnosis concerning the condition of my heart. The diagnosis confirmed what we already knew, and that is that only by a miracle from God my arteries were still open. However, the left side of my heart was very weak. Therefore, I am at risk to suffer another heart attack. But I once again say *"that none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify of the Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24)*. In fact, I am once again using the testimony of my own life to give the following teaching.

PURELY HUMAN LIFE IS JUST VANITY

I, personally, have heard a *"voice that said": "Cry." I responded: What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth,*

THE VANITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the Word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isa. 40:6-8; 1 Pet. 1:24-25). The Maker of life Himself, Jesus Christ our God, makes this declaration. Then, the Holy Spirit through the apostle James confirms this when the latter asks: *"Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jam. 4:14).* This divine warning is directed (as is all of the Word of God) to the members of *"the people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7:27)*, comprised of Israel and the Church. However, according to the Word of the Lord in the "New Testament" (1 Cor. 11:25), the warning is primarily directed to us Christians as members of the Church among the Gentiles. After all, the calling of the integrants of the people of Israel is as a group, by inheritance, by lineage (Rom. 11:29), but our calling is individually.

It is certainly true that *"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14).* This means that for the rest of humanity, the warning we are focusing on here does not have great importance to them. However, for every one of the

faithful children of God it is of supreme importance, because we know that our spiritual life depends on applying it to all the aspects of our human life. If we neglect to do so, we neglect our walk with God and because of this we expose ourselves of falling *"into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim. 6:9).*

This carelessness is a very effective tool that our enemy has always used to ruin the spiritual lives of many among the people of the Lord, beginning with Israel and, in due time, continuing with multitudes of unwary Christians. As long as the people of Israel wandered through the desert, enduring many suffering and limitations, they continually sought the face of the Lord. But, God Himself warned them, that when they were finally living in the Promised Land, surrounded by happiness and riches, they would neglect the fact that life is fleeting and they would forget their God (Dt. 8:1-20). This is exactly what happened to them and the same thing has happened in the Church.

It is evident that the primary reason that God has placed His People (His children) among humanity (because as part of humanity, we are all His creatures, but we are not all His children, Ex. 4:22; Jn. 1:12-13) is

so that we will honor and glorify Him among all the nations of the earth. In our case, for each faithful child of God, this purpose should be the supreme priority among all of the other purposes, as long as he travels through this transitory life.

When the child of God forgets that happiness, blessings, as well as all the other human glories and benefits that we might enjoy in this life are like *"grass" (1 Pet. 1:24-25)*, he is exposing himself to the danger of dying spiritually, because, invariably, all is vanity. It lasts for only a certain period of time and without a doubt will end some day. therefore, if the supreme purpose of the child of God is not about focusing his love, time, strength and anything else that he possesses on honoring and serving the Lord, whenever he appears before the *"judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10)*, he is going to realize that he failed miserably concerning his calling.

The God of Israel, who is the same God of the Church, first declared on the *"mountain that cannot be touched" (Heb. 12:18): "And thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Dt. 6:5).* Also when He was here on earth *"in fashion as a man" (Phil. 2:8)*, He repeated this desire to receive our love, saying: *"He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Mt. 10:37).*

SOLOMON DECLARED, "ALL IS VANITY"

The negative expressions of disappointment made by king



Solomon which we read in the book of Ecclesiastes enclose tremendous, positive truths that are related to what we are discussing here. Among those expressions there is one which stands out: *"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun"* (Eccl. 2:11).

In this same chapter, Solomon tell us that as far as all the human glories and pleasures, he obtained all that his eyes desired, and at the end found it all to be vanity. The truth is that there is nothing wrong in a Christian enjoying the things of this life (those who can acquire them) which bring happiness and human satisfaction, including comforts and entertainment. What is wrong is when they fall into the same trap as Solomon. In the first part of his life he walked closely with the Lord, however the day came in which the abundance of the things that he possessed, and the glories and the pleasures that were strictly human, pulled him away and separated him from God's will.

Without fear of being wrong I declare that if Solomon had preserved his integrity as a servant of God and his personal communion with the God of his father, his expressions would have been positive ones. They would have been totally different than what we read in the book of Ecclesiastes. Throughout my walk with the Lord, I have seen only a few Christians who have been able to escape what I have called "the curse of human happiness." It causes me pain and sadness to say this, because among the

great number of the children of God that I have seen fall into this subtle, diabolical snare are many who I have loved and have had a close relationship with.

I have personally dealt with many who *"were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come"* (Heb. 6:4-5), but because of the abundance of human benefits that they received, "fell away." In fact, I ministered to many of them when during the times of affliction, sickness or profound poverty they were sincere, humble, spiritual Christians. But the day came in which they obtained what they had not obtained previously, they became what they were not previously, and "they fell away." They forgot that *"the glory of man (is) as the flower of grass"* (1 Pet. 1:24), and that as children of God we are warned that we should not put our eyes and our hearts on temporal things, such as is done by *"others who have no hope"* (1 Thes. 4:13). No matter what God gives us, we must always remember that everything is from Him, and to honor Him.

THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH MANY OF US CURRENTLY LIVE

The materialistic human environment in these parts of the world in which many of us children of God live lends itself so that the careless Christian can easily fall into the trap that we have previously mentioned. It is a socio-economic environment in which it is possible (although many times with much sacrifice) for the believer in the Lord to acquire the material things and

conveniences that the world around us offers. This means that he does not necessarily have to depart from the Lord or return to vices, or to throw himself openly into sin, and in that manner separate himself from the will of the Lord. All that he has to do is simply allow himself to be lulled by the level of human benefits and material comforts that he obtains. Thus, he can fall into the sleep such as *"they that sleep in the night...and with them that be drunken in night"* (1 Thess. 5:7). Moreover, they do not necessarily have to cease being a "Christian" or a "minister," because the spiritual environment which surrounds us is comprised of a very high percentage of Christians and ministers who have *"left their first love"* (Rev. 2:2-4). Therefore, they feel justified and even approved by the "majority." It is appropriate to mention here a vision that the God gave me many years ago, which impacted me greatly and about which I have written: "I saw the misery and hunger among our people in Latin America, and the bloody results of this situation. I also saw a huge dormitory which contained many beds. There were many persons asleep on the beds. I then heard a voice which shouted: Those in the north are asleep!" It was not difficult for me to understand the meaning of this vision. For that reason I have continued shouting, moved by a desperate desire of awakening many who are asleep around us who don't believe that they are asleep.

From the beginnings of the Church we see that there already existed this type of spiritual slumber and stupor, because the apostle James, directing himself not to an unconverted world, but to the careless Christians, states:

"Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Jam. 4:13-14). We know that everything that makes us happy today, beginning with our own existence, is not guaranteed for us tomorrow. Human life and all the happiness that we might have here is as fragile as a soap bubble. When it is floating it looks beautiful, but in a moment it disappears. The faithful children of the Lord who are *"sober"* (1 Thess. 5:6) will always live being aware of this reality. I repeat. It is correct for us to enjoy the human happiness that God chooses to give us here, but without forgetting that in all and for all, He should always be first.

LIVING WHAT WE BELIEVE AND TEACH

I feel a strong need to once again speak about this impetuous current of appearance which prevails among the Christian circles in which we move. I am not referring to something that someone else told me or to something that I have learned from other sources of information, but from personal experience since I have had to suffer this through the lives of many preachers and believers, to whom I have ministered for more than half a century. I stated previously that I am here "to bear witness" and to present this message by using personal experience. I am personally aware of many who speak God's truths, but whose lives do not match up to what they are preaching. And, concerning this truth that we are speaking about, there are



relatively only a few Christians, believers and teachers, who live this truth. Of the many who have had the ability of acquiring material benefits and happiness, there are only a few who have preferred to sacrifice all in order to spend themselves entirely in giving service to the Lord. By the way, those of us who have done so (by the Grace of God I am counted in that number), let us not forget that we have not done more than is expected of us (**Lk. 17:10**), and that there was ONE better than us who already did this before we did.

At different times and places throughout my ministry, I have known and dealt with many ministers whose mindset was not to serve the people of God according to the mold set forth by the Lord in **Matthew 20:28**. Many of them have used the sacred ministerial calling as a front in order to acquire recognition, fame, titles, honor, authority and other similar things. Also to obtain material benefits, such as properties, money and anything else they are able to obtain. Many times I have heard these puffed up men boast about their expensive cars or fancy wardrobes, a behavior which has always caused a deep sense of disgust in my spirit.

For many of them their glory is not the Lord, but their expensive, elegant temples, their large congregations and their elegant choirs, also, their beautiful furniture and modern equipment and sound systems. Although it is true that none of these things are evil unto themselves. In fact, the contrary is true. However, what is wrong is that they glory in these things and put their hearts

in them, thereby displeasing God, and forgetting that all this is temporal and that the Lord can take it away from them in an instant. The truth is that it is the Divine virtues that should always have preeminence in the life and ministry of every faithful and true servant of the Lord, whether this minister possesses those things that produce human happiness or not. It does not matter if he has and abundance or a lack of the material things in this life. As I am writing this I am overcome with emotion as I remember those humble men of God I have known who, throughout my walk with the Lord, live with the Lord's life reflected in their own lives.

THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATIONS

From the beginning of my walk with the Lord it has caused me pain as I have observed multitudes of members of congregations, both men and women, young and old, from my race and from other races, whose lives reflect the words of the apostle Paul: *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep"* (**1 Cor. 11:30**). Here the apostle is not referring to those people who at one time served the Lord, but who have departed from His will and are once again living according to the ways of the sinful world. He is directing his words to the many of professing Christians who continue to form part of multitudes of congregations around the world. These are Christians who have forgotten that human life is *"as grass"* (**1 Pet. 1:24-25**) and they live their lives worrying more about the vanity of the temporal things than of their walk with

the Lord. As a consequence of this way of living, many of them through the passing of time have become prideful, boastful people whose behavior dishonors the Lord who they profess to serve. Their actions and attitudes are far from reflecting the Divine mold that we encounter in the Word of God. Many of these careless Christians are sincere in their hearts, but are not aware of their error, yet they do not have a bad conscience about it because they have been taught incorrectly.

The message of the erroneous teaching is well known and popular in these regions of the world in which we live. I have ironically called it: "The American Gospel." This message (well known by many) teaches that the Christian is called to live in this world surrounded by happiness, benefits and blessings, because as a Christian, he is not called "to suffer any type of tribulation." This message also claims that if a Christian does not have all these benefits, it is because he lacks faith or because something is wrong in his walk with God. This false gospel has been powerfully used by the devil to cause thousands upon thousands of children of God, many whom I have known and know presently, to fall into "slumber and drunkenness" because they possess this human happiness and benefits. It is frustrating for us Christians who are awake to see that a great majority of those who are imprisoned by this spiritual stupor claim to be awake. They believe that they are fine; therefore they do not heed nor receive the warnings given by the Spirit of God. In one sense I believe that I can say, without fear

of being wrong, that it is a waste of time to try to awaken them from the lethargy of this spiritual death. And they live in this manner, forgetting the simple, yet tremendous, Divine warning that we are discussing in this article. I am sure that many among those multitudes would be able to be delivered from the path of death which they are unconsciously headed down if only they had the help of a faithful minister who could guide them by words and by example.

SPECIFIC TEMPORAL BLESSINGS

I will now mention as many of the blessings and temporal things that I possibly can in this limited space. These are things that we need humanly speaking and which make us happy if we possess them. Cases, situations and things we can rightfully and legally enjoy before our Lord Jesus Christ and before those who surround us. But we must always remember that they are temporary, so that we might live *"looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ"* (**Tit. 2:13**). In every situation that I mention I will include my own experiences, so that in this manner I can prove, with the Lord's testimony in my favor, that I am living what I teach.

OUR HUMAN LIFE. The foundation of this entire subject is precisely our human life. I have heard many Christians who thank God for being alive, but at the same time I have heard them express words of fear when it comes to speak about death. This demonstrates that they are not truly awake nor are they sure



about what the Word of the Lord tells us. After all, as children of God we are of the understanding that this life is fleeting and that we should not become too enamored with it, because what truly matters is eternal life. For my part I am totally aware that if I am alive it is solely by a miracle of God (as I mentioned at the beginning of this article). But, I repeat that *“neither count I my life dear unto myself” (Acts 20:24), “because for me to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21)*. I know that for all the saints which are in this same mind, “the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:16), we do not desire the natural human life without our Lord Jesus Christ.

PHYSICAL HEALTH. To possess physical health is a very special human blessing and to have it is certainly a privilege and treasure which cannot be given a monetary value. If the child of God is healthy he can do great things in the service of the Lord, many of which he would not be able to do if he were sick. However, physical health is also temporal, and if during the years of our youth it does not fail us, certainly in the days of our old age it will fail. Also, the Divine healings are not permanent, because when God heals someone today, He does not guarantee that he will not become ill once again or even die. A very special example of this is the resurrection of Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-44).

God granted me to be healthy during the years of my youth and during the prime strength of my life. He knows that I took advantage of my health to the maximum to use it to do His will. Now, during these years that I have not had my physical

health, I have been limited in what I can do, but I have a sense of satisfaction that I did not squander my health by occupying it in temporal things. Now, as an old man, my advice to the young, healthy, strong Christian youth is that they take good advantage of their health so that may use it to the maximum limit in the service of the Lord. After all, physical health is also temporary.

MARRIAGE. Of all the human relationships the one which not only stands out from the others, but is also fundamental is marriage. Families exist because of marriage. Also the different races, nations and humanity itself is based on marriage. The core of the People of God (Israel and the Church) is marriage, because that is how God established it. When they reach young adulthood, humans begin searching for someone with whom they can form their own family with the illusion of being happy. This is completely natural. But even this fundamental happiness is also temporal and extremely fragile, even among the people of God.

For our part, my wife and I recently celebrated our “Golden Anniversary,” 50 years of marriage. Therefore, I believe I can speak out of experience. My counsel to all the young Christian marriages is that they should not ignore the Divine warning that everything is temporal, and that they should not place more focus on enjoying the happiness that they can receive in their married life, than on their relationship with God. I have known many Christians who, because they were negligent in this aspect, have converted their marriage life into an infernal

torment. And, these marriages are in the congregations and behind pulpits, giving an appearance of happiness and joy, but who in reality are miserable.

THE FAMILY (CHILDREN).

For human beings the experience of being able to perpetuate oneself is something unspeakably marvelous, because it is a miracle granted by God (in fact, it is something painful for those who have not experienced this and many stories in the Bible bear witness to this). It is something truly rare for a married couple to not want to have children. For Christian marriages, to be parents is a very special human blessing, but we must always remember that this is also temporal. In fact, when there are illnesses or problems with our children, when they have ceased to be little children, this can bring us anguish and pain. By a miracle from the Lord, God granted my wife and I to bear one son and one daughter. Now, we are parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. But I never allow myself to forget that even this privilege is temporal. I have known many Christian fathers and mother who have forgotten this reality, and out of love for their children, they have sinned, relegating the Lord to a second or third place in their lives, and converting their own seed into idols.

VITAL NECESSETIES.

In addition to the previous fundamental things we have previously mentioned there are other things which are indispensable to our lives such as FOOD, CLOTHING, and SHELTER. It is appropriate to

mention here what the Scriptures say: *“And having food and raiment let us therewith be content” (1 Tim. 6:7-9)*. But what has happened in the Christian environment that surrounds us? I continue “stubbornly” insisting: There are very few believers and ministers who are “content” with having the basic necessities. The great majority covet money, luxuries, comforts, entertainment and many other similar things. However the price they pay the world in order to obtain these things is falling into spiritual lukewarmness, and they do not fear being “vomited” out of the Lord’s mouth (Rev. 3:16).

For my part, throughout all my years in the service of the Lord many times I have had the opportunity to obtain material benefits and blessings. But I have the satisfaction before my God to say that just as I have done in relation to the other basic human benefits, I have done with these as well. That is, I have sacrificed them in order to carry out the ministry of service that the Lord Jesus Christ has called me to do. Presently I do not own savings accounts, nor properties, nor any other things that have a material value. But at the same time I have everything and am lacking in nothing, because God has given me my natural children and also children in the faith who take care of my wife and me. I possess spiritual treasures that cannot be bought with money. I have always been aware that everything in this life is temporary and will fade away. Only the divine is eternal.

God bless you.



TESTIMONIES CONCERNING THE LIVE ONLINE SERVICES

It has been a blessing to hear the daily live services during this difficult time of the pandemic in our country. Honduras has not only been ravaged by the pandemic but also by the Hurricanes Eta and Iota. The churches were closed for security reasons. However, we are always anxiously waiting to hear the messages given by the elder preacher, Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr., and by Pastor Efraim Valverde III, which in these days have been a balm to our lives as we listen to the counsel and the live Word of God through the lips of the pastor. For quite some time now, when I have been going through difficult times in my life, listening to the elder pastor and now to Pastor Efraim Valverde III has been my motivation and my provocation to press forward. I ask God to bless the life of Pastor Efraim Valverde III, so that God will continue using him to awaken and provoke the children of God.

With much love and affection, I write to you from Honduras. I ask your prayers on our behalf. We are praying for you. May the link of love and truth keep us always united. Thank you God. **Numbers 6:24-26.**

Brother Henry Noe Flores
Rivera.
Santa Cruz, Honduras.

First of all I want to thank God for all that He has done. The live services have helped me realize that God is always with me. Each time I hear the messages I feel blessed. I remember the first time I entered a church and I began to cry. God has been a blessing for me. It has been four months since my father "fought the good fight and obtained victory." When it

happened I became very ill. I did not want to eat nor leave my home. I just wanted to cry and weep. I felt so badly that I made up my mind that I was no longer going to attend church. But I began receiving the notifications from "Efraim Valverde, Sr. Ministries" about the live transmissions. When I clicked on the link and began to watch the service, I began to cry. The Lord placed in my mind and my heart that He had never left me, and had always been with me. I understood that if my father passed away it was because his time had come to depart from this world, because no one has their life guaranteed. Thanks to God I encountered this blessing of being able to watch the live transmissions. It is a blessing. It encourages us to press forward. "I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living" (Psa. 142:1-5). May the Lord always bless you, my brothers. Shalom and blessings.

Sister Veronica Feliciano
Hernandez.
San Quentin, Baja California,
Mexico.

First of all I thank our Lord Jesus Christ for the virtual services, and I also thank the ministry for transmitting them. For me it has been a great benefit to see the daily virtual services. On some occasions I am not able to connect during the time of the initial transmission because here in Florida, due to the time

difference, they are transmitted a bit late. But this is not an excuse, because I can always listen to them the next day on YouTube. It has been a privilege to receive the messages from the Word of God via these virtual services. I thank my Lord Jesus Christ for Pastor Efraim Valverde III, and for the great work He has done in him. I continue to pray for him asking our Lord to continue to fill him with His wisdom, and that he will not grow weary in doing the work of the Lord. Blessings.

Brother Antonio Garcia.
Dover, Florida.

I remember very well the day that our pastor during the live transmissions was motivating us to remember the special day on which the blessed Name of our Lord Jesus Christ was invoked over us in the waters of baptism for the forgiveness of our sins (Acts 2:38). At that moment my mind travelled to that day and I began to weep tears of thanksgiving and felt the Presence of God. I ask the Lord to help me continue in His ways during these difficult times, because we know that we are not alone. "The Lord of hosts is with us" (Ps. 46:11). And as our pastor tells us: we do not walk by what we feel, but by what we know. Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ! I am very grateful to You for being so good to me. And I also thank the Lord for Pastor Efraim Valverde III for motivating me to continue on this glorious path

that God has shown us. May our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and keep you. Let us not ever forget our First Love.

Sister Luvi Enriquez Arreola.
Durango, Durango, Mexico.

It has been a great blessing to hear each message that is given which has been a great blessing to my life and spirit. Hearing the Word of God daily has greatly strengthened me. Thank you, brothers, for every message which have been a great blessing and strength to my spirit. Amen.

Sister Gladis Maldonado.
Atlanta, Georgia.

For me it has been a great privilege and a great blessing to hear the services which are transmitted daily. It has become a very special time each day for my children and me. For us to gather together to hear the Word of God has been a great blessing. Not only do we spend time together as a family, but for the greater reason of being able to study the Word of God together, depending on the message that is being shared. For this reason I thank God for Pastor Efraim Valverde III. He is a servant of God who does not grow tired in bringing us spiritual bread each day. May God eternally bless Him.

Sister Maria Esther Sanchez.
Palmdale, California.

These daily transmissions are a special blessing, because through them we receive instruction and valuable counsel for our daily lives. We thank God greatly for the mind He has placed in the heart of our pastor, Efraim Valverde III, to be



consistent in this important work and for the physical strength he has received from the Most High.

Brother Phillip Nava
Salinas, California.

God bless you brothers. Thank God that through this technology we can be fed by the Word of God. It has been of a great help to me to participate in the daily live services. Especially during these times we are living in these, services have strengthened us and encouraged us to continue in our walk with the Lord. We continue going forward with God's help and with the help of the vessels He continues to use.

Sister Gabriela Gaytan.
Mexico City, Mexico.

First of all I would like to thank God because He has kept us at all times. To Him be glory and honor! The live services have been a blessing to my family and me. They exhort us and encourage us to seek more of God. I ask your prayers so that my family and I can continue going forward in these difficult times. May God greatly bless Pastor Efraim Valverde III and his family. Blessings.

Santiago family
Fredonia, New York.

I thank God for being to be able to listen to the preaching of the blessed Word of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ which are being transmitted daily are a blessing to our lives. They help to affirm us in our walk with our Lord Jesus Christ. Shalom!

Brother Jose Lucio Gonzalez
Pena.

Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico.

I thank the Lord for His Word. It is a great blessing to hear the daily services that are being transmitted live. We can see the videos of our elder pastor, Efraim Valverde, Sr. We have fond memories of him. Thank you very much for the motivation you all give us. Let us keep going forward.

Brother Esteban Romero.



First of all I want to thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for allowing me to share these words. On the 6th of April of 2020, the Lord decided to place me in a hospital due to lack of respiration. After a few brief tests, the doctors told me that the possible cause was pulmonary cancer. They detected a spot on my left lung. I, who am a son of Christian parents and who also have siblings who are Christians, was the only one who had rejected the Word of the Lord. Although I had heard His Word since I was a child, I never gave it much importance. But in that moment as I was in the hospital, God awakened me spiritually and I asked the Lord for another opportunity to live and I asked my father, Manuel Gallegos, to pray for me. Without my knowledge he contacted my

brothers, Pastor Fidel Resendiz, Pastor Alfredo Tienda and minister, Nazario Romero, and other brothers, so that they could lift me up in prayer.

About an hour or two passed, then the doctors did another more intensive test to determine the possibility of cancer. When they received the results of this test, they could not find anything on my lung. I was able to see how the Lord heard the prayers of my brothers in Christ Jesus. At that moment I realized that the Lord had granted me a new opportunity. I also understood that I had to live this new life for Him. Therefore, on the 10th of April of 2020, my wife and I accepted the Lord and made a covenant with Him. We accepted Him our beloved God, the Lord Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior.

During those days Pastor Efraim Valverde III was preaching and teaching during the live daily transmissions about the people of Israel. He was teaching about how during Passover the people of Israel would sacrifice and eat a lamb, something that symbolically my wife and I participated in. These teachings helped me grow closer to the Lord and helped me remember that I need to always firmly grab a hold of Him.

I thank God that now, through His Grace, He took notice of me, although I was the most filthy, despicable, dirty person on earth. By His Holy love He removed me from the road to perdition that I was walking on. I also confess that I have been a selfish, arrogant ingrate before the Lord. But, although I am full of faults before my God, as I have acknowledged these faults I have sought more of the Lord, and He

has allowed me to find Him. I am striving forward, not on my own strength, but through the strength the Lord has permitted me to have, so that I might have more and more of Him in my life. Despite my condition and faults, up to this moment the Lord has confirmed that He is with me, although I don't deserve this. I realize I am nothing. What do I deserve? However, my God's mercy is incomparable.

As I have been tuning in to the preaching of my brother, Pastor Efraim Valverde III, or that of my pastor, Fidel Resendiz in the congregation, I have heard them say the exact same thing that has been on my mind or I have heard them read and cite verses that I had been reading. It is as if they had been reading or meditating on the exact things I was meditating on. I now know that in God there are no coincidences. He demonstrates His love and Presence to us in clear and powerful ways.

Once again, I thank the Lord for all that He has done in my life and in the life of my family. Being in great need of God, I ask that you keep us in your prayers. Let us remember that the Lord Jesus is at the doors. For this reason I beseech you my brothers, that we must not cease seeking the Lord (**Isa. 55:6**).

Let us not surrender. Our goal is within sight. Let us press forward in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us be conquerors, without doubting and without hesitating. After all, He who promised to be with us until the end is faithful (**Heb. 10:27**). If He promised to do this, He will fulfill His promise! Amen.!

Brother Edgar Elias Gallegos.
Escondido, California.



God bless everyone. It is a privilege for me to share these words with you, my fellow youth.

First of all, I give my God much thanks for having kept my family and me until the present. My name is Anaís Juárez Ortiz. By the grace of God I grew up in a Christian home. My parents were the first persons to plant the seed of the Word of God in me. I was baptized when I was 12 years old. The primary reason I did so was I would imagine how sad it would be if I died without giving my life to the Lord. I told my parents that I wanted to be baptized and they spoke to our pastor, Martimiano Ortiz. He told us that there were going to be some baptisms in Maneadero. I felt the call of God strongly on my life and I begged my parents to take me to be baptized. I was baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ on September 5, 2010. I was extremely aware of what I was doing when I was baptized, although I was only still attending an elementary school.

I attended public schools all of my life. When I began attending middle school, little by little I began allowing the negative influence to enter into my life. In my second year of middle school things got worse, because I let the pressure of being accepted by others become my priority. In fact, I began to lie to my parents so that I

YOUTH SECTION

Sis. Anaís Juárez Ortiz

On that day our pastor, Efraim Valverde III, touched on many topics, but what most impacted me was when he said that there are many young ladies who behave differently outside of the church. He said that at church we can dress modestly, but outside of the church and outside of the protection of our parents, how do we act? The pastor told us young ladies that we are precious jewels before God and that our true value lies in Him (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

could go out with the young people who at that time I called "my friends."

Many things happened which prompted my parents to decide to move since they saw that the enemy was throwing me around like a dirty rag. I, however, did not realize what was happening to me. In 2013 we moved. My parents registered me into a new school and at that time I thought that they hated me because I had to go to a new school and

make new friends. I felt alone. In my first year at the new school I made friends with some people who did not have the fear of the Lord in their lives. Once again I had gotten mixed up with the wrong people. But by the extremely great and marvelous Grace of God some of the youth from the church also attended this school. I felt embarrassed that they would see me do things that are not pleasing before God.

The new community into which we moved was also the home of some of the brothers and sisters from the congregation and now I began attending church more and also youth services because I did not have an excuse not to go. My desire and heart to serve my God had begun to slowly grow colder, and at that time in my life I only attended church because my family attended. I no longer had a personal relationship with my Lord. Although I grew up in the pews of the church and was baptized, but the influence of this world was overpowering me. My parents never stopped praying for me and God in His mercy made a radical change in my life. I had never attended the family camps at Sugar Pine, but in 2015 the youth from the church encouraged me to go with them. We arrived at the camp early Saturday morning. I arrived there with great need because I felt like I had a great emptiness in my life.

On that day our pastor, Efraim Valverde III, touched on many topics, but what most impacted me was when he said that there are many young ladies who behave differently outside of the church. He said that at church we can dress

modestly, but outside of the church and outside of the protection of our parents, how do we act? The pastor told us young ladies that we are precious jewels before God and that our true value lies in Him (1 Pet. 3:1-4).

The pastor challenged all of us young people who were in attendance to continue seeking the Lord as we were doing at camp. Although we only attended camp one day, God moved greatly, placing an intense desire in me to seek Him. When we arrived back home the spiritual heaviness began, wanting to control me again but my spirit desired more of God (Psa. 42:1-6). I then began reading, praying, fasting and focusing my attention more on the things of God. My family was surprised to see the changes I was making. My mindset (Rom. 12:2) began changing and my cup was running over (Psa. 23:5). I began waking up early to seek God and on one marvelous morning I felt His Spirit strongly. I felt a warmth that covered me from my head to my feet. In that moment, as I was there in my room crying, I asked God to forgive me because I had allowed the things of this world to become my priority. I was blaming everyone else without realizing that I had been walking in sin.

Dear young people, the Lord loves us! He gave His life and shed His precious Blood for us on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins (Gal. 1:4). He wants and desires to be a part of our lives, but we must allow Him to enter (Rev. 3:20). I ask you to pray for me, because as has been the case for many, this past year has not been an easy one. But by the Grace of God we are still standing! I also ask prayers for my family and for the congregation in Poway, Ca.

May the Lord bless you all.
Sis. Anaís Juárez Ortiz.



WOMEN OF GOD

Sis. Katie Valverde



responsibility because the Word of God exhorts us to be examples to the younger women (**Tit. 2:3-5**). We must be an example at all times knowing that there are those who are observing us without us even knowing. They are seeing our actions, watching how we treat our husband and our children. They are seeing if we are treating them with love or not. Also, our modest way of dressing is another way in which we can glorify our Lord Jesus Christ (**1 Pet. 3:1-6**).

We all know what a drama is and when it is done in person it calls our attention even more. That is how I think that we are before the world which watches us. It is as if we were on a high platform and that everything we do can be seen. Those who are watching a drama are attentive to what the actors do and say. That is how we as Christians are before the unbelieving world every day. We are being watched even though at times we are not aware of this. *"For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men"* (**1 Cor. 4:9**).

If the play is a sad one, then the influence it will have over the audience is that it will make them cry. If it is a comedy, they will be influenced to laugh. At the end of the drama, one of two things will happen. Either the audience will return home sad or happy depending on what the drama was about. We are playing a part in a serious real life drama. The role that we play before the world will have one of two effects. It will have an effect of bringing life or death. We are pilgrims in this life but are here to play the important role of symbolizing Christ and His Church in our lives as Christian marriages (**Eph. 5:23-33**).

Each one of us, who have the privilege of being the wife in a Christian marriage, must say to ourselves: "In

my marriage my husband symbolizes Christ, and I, as his wife, symbolize the Church." We must also ask the following questions. Would it be correct for Christ the Lord to tell His Church: "Do what you want to do. I am fed up with you. I am not going to take care of you any longer?" Or, would it be correct for the Church to tell our Lord Jesus Christ: "I am no longer in agreement with You and am no longer going to submit myself to You?" Absolutely not! On the contrary, the Scripture tells us that *"Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself (on the cross) for it"* (**Eph. 5:25**). This is why "the Church should be subject to Christ."

The truth is that our lives are not only exposed to all men, but also to the angels, as the previously cited Scripture tells us. This is why it is indispensable for us to take this seriously, because if we do not do so we are bringing condemnation upon ourselves.

Although it is true that our names are not literally mentioned in the pages of the Holy Bible, they are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. But the women of God whose names are registered in the Holy Book, it is for the purpose of providing an example to us. There is something interesting here that I want to draw the attention of my sisters to. This is the fact that the women of the Bible were just as human as we are. The second thing is that as they were living their lives, they never imagined that their names and lives would be recorded and become part of the Holy Book that we call the Bible.

I am sure that they never imagined that their lives and actions would influence multitudes of people throughout the centuries. Likewise, we do not truly know how much of an influence our actions and our life can have on others. That is why I continue to insist on the great necessity for us

to be awake to this truth we are discussing here. We find two types of women mentioned in the Bible: Those whose actions were positive and those whose actions were negative. My purpose on this occasion is to focus our attention on those women who exerted a positive influence on others. It does not make sense to dwell too much on those who had a negative influence. After all, what is important for us is to follow the example of the wives and women of God who did what was pleasing before the eyes of the Lord.

Once again, we must remember that it is a great privilege to occupy the place that the Lord has given us. For me it is something very glorious to have the privilege of taking part, as a child of God, of the sacred symbolic ministry.

In conclusion, I would like to tell my sisters who are wives but who have husbands that do not serve the Lord that God help them and give them of His Grace to be able to fulfill what the Scriptures say (1 Pet. 3:1-2). My desire is that God bless them, that He would give them wisdom in all things, and that He might answer their prayers by converting the hearts of their husbands. I know that it is not easy for our sisters who are living in this situation. Therefore, we must always pray for them. And, those of us who have the great blessing of being part of a Christian marriage must always strive to not take it for granted. May we always honor our husbands, remembering what we symbolize.

I, for my part, will always give thanks to God for having a faithful husband at my side. Having being called by God to carry out a special ministry, serving and helping many people throughout his life, with all the more reason he has been a great help to me, his wife. I want my husband to continue typifying Christ and I want to continue typifying the Church!

God bless you.
Sis. Katie Valverde.

One night as I was lying on my bed meditating on the Word of my Lord a thought came to my mind on how in a marriage the husband and the wife typify Christ and the Church here on the Earth. I then considered how we, both the husband and the wife as part of a Christian marriage, have a great responsibility before an unbelieving world that surrounds us to reflect this symbolism in our lives. It is painful to see how easy it is for us to forget this, but even more, how dangerous it is when a Christian marriage takes this for granted or completely forgets it! Therefore, if we are aware of this we must always remember that our attitude will influence someone else for good, if we keep our place, or for evil, if we become careless. This applies to all Christian marriages, whether they are young or old. The truth is that the Christian husband typifies Christ and the Christian wife typifies the Church, and the world is watching us.

Now, focusing on our part as wives, I once again state that this is a serious, important responsibility, both for the older women who have understood this, as well as for the young wives, and even for the young women who are planning on getting married. We must think: What a great privilege and what a great responsibility we, the Christian wives, have to be a symbol of the Church of the Lord! And this responsibility is ours among our local congregations, with our neighbors and before all who surround us. We who are older have even a greater



BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

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

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.



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**).

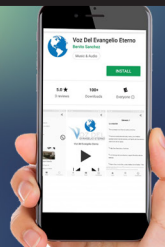
CONCLUSION: Even though we may not know you, the Lord knows who you are, and our prayer is that He will bless you. We also ask our Lord Jesus that He will work in your life, praying that the plan described in this tract will bring the change in your life that you greatly desire. If the Lord places in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

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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
 (I Cor. 12:27, 2 Tim. 2:19)

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