



MARANATHA

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WHAT DOES IT
REALLY MEAN TO
SERVE GOD?

.....Page 07

WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?

.....Page 15

WE CONTINUE
WAITING FOR HIM!

.....Page 08

BAPTISM IN THE NAME
OF OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST

.....Page 14

GOD'S
PROPHETIC
Clock

.....Page 03



Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

THE LORD IS COMING
MARANATHA

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EDITORIAL

I greet you in the marvelous Name of the Almighty God, our beloved Lord Jesus Christ. I pray that each one of you would be extending yourself toward the “prize” (Phil. 3:14) and that you are pondering on the time in which we are living and understanding how near the Second Coming of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ is. As we end the year 2021 and enter into the year 2022, I pray that our focus will always be on the Author and Finisher of our faith, our Lord Jesus Christ. I desire that we can see the LOVE, the PLACE and the HOPE that God has given us, and that we strive to be PREPARED to obtain our hope.

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 Jn. 3:1-3).

God commands us as His children to attentively strive to know, to be unswerving, to consider and to have our eyes open to attend to the extraordinary LOVE that the Father has given us, so that we continue to be amazed by His glorious act of love that He demonstrated for us on Calvary. Oh how marvelous this action of love was! He commands us to “consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself...” (Heb. 12:3) who “endured the cross, despising the

shame...” (Heb. 12:2), so that we can force our minds to consider the price the Lord paid for us. When we neglect to see the love that the Father has given us we become blind and shortsighted, having forgotten the purification of our old sins (2 Pet. 1:9).

The Master commanded His disciples using heartfelt words on the special and intimate occasion when He ordered them to “do this in remembrance of Me” (1 Cor. 11:24). However, it is very sad and also very dangerous when His children no longer want to obey the Father and Master by remembering what He has done for them so that they can “retain (the love of) God in their knowledge...” (Rom. 1:28). It is then that we can be given over to a reprobate mind, and become blind to our spiritual condition and not see afar off, and then we can no longer see the goal that lies before us. Deliver us, my God!

Oh, that we might SEE that it is only through the great love with which He loved us that He reached us, and that through this love we are now sons of God. Oh, that we can SEE that He has given us the place of highest honor among all of His creation when He made us His children! It is this love that God has showed us that has given us our identity of “children of God”! We must be more diligent in protecting and honoring this special privilege. We must not forget Who paid the price of Blood so that we can be called children of God.

“And it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 Jn. 3:1-3). And as if it were not sufficiently awesome that we

are sons of God, the best is yet to come! He will soon appear “with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trump of God” (1 Thess. 4:16). We must be LOOKING forward each day for that “blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ” (Tit. 2:13). We should be “looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God” (2 Pet. 3:12).

We must not cease LOOKING toward the hope that the Lord has given us. It is the hope that we will see Him and be transformed to be like Him to reign with Him and be with Him for eternity. It is the hope the Lord has given to those whom He has shown His love to make us His children. It is the hope of the Glory which will be manifested in us on the day the He returns. On the day of the manifestation of the Lord, we the sons of God will also be revealed (1 Jn. 1:1-3). *“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God, for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:19-23).* Our body will be redeemed when our “Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” returns “who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself”

(Phil. 3:20-21).

Because of the love God has shown to us, we now have the most special place in the first, second and third heavens, for we are sons of God. We also have the supreme hope of seeing the Lord, to be like Him and to be with Him forever. *“And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure” (1 Jn. 3:3).* This hope should be the greatest motivation of every child of God. *“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness to the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1).* It is because of this hope that we are encouraged to “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14),

Each day it is necessary to take time to BEHOLD this great love that our Lord has given us, so that we may appreciate, value and love God because of the love He has set upon us. We must each day BEHOLD the special place the Lord has given us because of His love. We must continue BEHOLDING and pressing forward toward “the mark” (Phil. 3:14) of the hope of seeing Him, being like Him and being with Him forever. *“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (2 Pet. 3:14).*

Each day of our life we must be looking toward this *supreme hope*, so that when He returns He will find us being marveled at His love, keeping and honoring our place, pressing forward and preparing ourselves for the hope that He has given us.

God bless you.

Pastor Efraim Valverde III.



“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people (the Jewish People) and upon thy holy City (the Old City of Jerusalem)” (Dn. 9:24).

Shalom! Israel lives because the God of Israel lives! The time is fulfilled, and we will soon see the hope of Israel and the Church, as we are witnessing the fulfillment of the most portentous prophecies of the last days. What a privilege has been granted us to live during the time of these prophetic fulfillments. I pray that our eyes will be open and our hearts sensitive to react and respond in the way the God of Israel wants us to.

The following reports are some of the most outstanding events that have occurred in Israel, Jerusalem and with the Jewish people during the past three months.

September 29, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* announced the following: The Labor Party in the United Kingdom approved a motion in its annual conference in Brighton that would define Israel as an apartheid (separation) nation and that would impose sanctions upon Israel. The motion demands action against the “construction of settlements, reversal of any annexation and putting an end to the occupation of Judea and Samaria, and the Blockade of Gaza.”

October 10, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported the following: Iran claims that it has 80% of the uranium necessary to construct a nuclear bomb.

GOD'S PROPHETIC CLOCK

Pastor Efraim Valverde III

October 20, 2021. *“Israel National News”* reported that a didactic guide published by the Swiss National Agency for Education encourages professors to challenge the students to seek evidence that the Holocaust never occurred and to defend their point of view, according to the Swiss daily newspaper *“Aftonbladet.”*

October 26, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported the following: About 43% of the Jewish students in colleges and universities in the United States have personally experienced anti-Semitism or witnessed anti-Semitic activity on campus that was not directed directly to them, according to a new study conducted for the Anti-Defamation League and Hillel International.

November 9, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* announced the following: “The United Nations Security Council is united against the building of settlements,” according to a Palestinian envoy. “We encourage the Government of Israel to cease construction in the settlements on the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and that it not continue with its bids for building 1,300 more homes and its plans for the construction of an additional 3,000 homes,” stated the United States’ ambassador in Estonia, Sven Jurgenson.

November 21, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* published the following: One man died and four others were injured in a shooting attack carried out by a member of Hamas in the Old City of Jerusalem on Sunday morning.

November 24, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported that the city of Jerusalem advanced its plans for a project of constructing 9,000 homes in Atarot, an area of the city located beyond the previous border lines of 1967. The International Community and the Palestinian Authority has condemned the plan. They warn that it would help cement Israel’s presence in a part of the city that they have designated as the “future capital” of a Palestinian state.

December 2, 2021. *“The Jewish Chronicle”* reported the following: The Mossad (Israel’s Institute of Intelligence and Special Operations) recruited a team of Iranian nuclear scientists to carry out an undercover operation which caused an explosion in one of Iran’s most protected underground nuclear installations at the beginning of the year.

December 3, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported the following: The United Nations General Assembly on Wednesday approved resolution 129-11 which it denies the connection of the Jewish people

to the Temple Mount and which only recognizes this area only by its Muslim name, al-Haram al-Sharif.

December 8, 2021. *“The Washington Post”* announced the following: “A 14 year old Palestinian girl stabbed an Israeli woman on Wednesday morning in a neighborhood in East Jerusalem that is under dispute,” according to the police. “It is the fourth lone wolf attack in Jerusalem in the past three weeks sparking fears of a new wave of violence.”

December 10, 2021. *“The Washington Post”* reported that the U.N. General Assembly approved resolution 146-7 which condemns “the terrorist acts of various extremist Israelis settlers”. It also condemned the activity of the Israeli settlements and asked that Israel withdraw from the Golan Heights.

December 11, 2021. The news reporting agency *“WND”* published that Jewish university students throughout all of Europe are encountering an increase in anti-Semitism and that such problems in the United Kingdom increased 59% in just one year.

December 11, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported the following: In an official statement made by the state police that agency declared that “according to reports anti-Semitic hate crimes in New York increased almost 50% the past year.”

December 11, 2021. *“The Jerusalem Post”* reported the

Continues on page...7



“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Heb. 5:8-9).

Just as commonly happens with many Christians who read the Scriptures superficially without paying attention to the depth of the message contained in them, this Biblical portion is not the exception. There are multitudes today, both among ministers and members, who demonstrate with their erroneous actions that for them the tremendous message of “Obedience” is not of great importance. The reality is that if we closely and reverently examine the declaration made by the Holy Spirit in this verse, we will discover two things: God’s blessing if we give it its due importance or spiritual ruin and judgment from the Lord if we take it lightly.

We find the most outstanding Biblical example concerning this subject in the rebuke and sentence given by the prophet Samuel to King Saul after he disobeyed God on three consecutive occasions. *“And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, He hath also rejected thee from being king” (1 Sam. 15:22-23).* Saul lived during the time of the Law during which someone could rebelliously say: “God commands me to obey Him here on the Earth, but He does not

Many times the person who is ordering us to do something (especially in the case of our God) can be someone who we love and find pleasure obeying and serving them. However, this is not always the case. There are many occasions in which our God tests the obedience of His children, commanding us to obey even unjust people.

understand what He is asking of me because He is above in the heavens.” But what can we, the Christians of today who are living during the Time of Grace, say because we now know that *“God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16)*? How would we now be able to tell our God that He is demanding something from us that He Himself has not experienced and that He is only commanding us to do from

OBEDIENCE

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

above? Since we are living in the time after Calvary, we now know that it is said about our Lord Jesus Christ that: *“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:6-8).* If this declaration concerning the example left by the Lord does not provoke a careless Christian into being obedient, what else can bring him into obedience?

SPECIFICALLY WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE OBEDIENT?

Speaking specifically, obedience has to do with surrendering our will to someone who is greater than we are (unconditionally, when we are referring to the sovereign God). I want to make clear that I am not speaking about the type of obedience which anyone might like, in which a person does what someone asks or begs them to do since it is something that they like to do. The type of obedience the Lord is referring to in the initial Scripture is the type in which a person joyfully obeys what they are commanded to do, whether or not this command is given to them sweetly or harshly, because they recognize that someone superior is giving the order. This obedience manifests

itself especially in situations in which we are commanded to do things that we do not like to do, especially when this obedience implies sacrifice, pain and even death.

Many times the person who is ordering us to do something (especially in the case of our God) can be someone who we love and find pleasure obeying and serving them. However, this is not always the case. There are many occasions in which our God tests the obedience of His children, commanding us to obey even unjust people. For example, a Christian who constantly finds himself in a similar situation at his workplace can easily be tempted not to obey the unjust boss. But then he remembers what the Lord demands of him when He says: *“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ” (Eph. 6:5).* He adds: *“Not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward” (1 Pet. 2:18).* No one can deny that when we have to obey in this manner, it is difficult to do. This applies to all aspects of our life.

There is no one that can truly say that they have never had the least problem in obeying. At one time or another, we have all felt the desire to resist obeying a certain order. From the moment he begins to live, each human has within himself an inherent rebelliousness (an example of this is a baby being rebellious against its mother who is carrying it). What we call our own criteria or will, mixed with another very human element called *“the pride of life” (1 Jn. 2:16)*, invariably



causes a person (consciously or unconsciously) to rebel against everything that he considers to be a higher authority. We cannot truly say that someone can rebel against someone whom they consider to be an equal, much less against someone who is inferior to them. Invariably, the act of obedience has to operate from the bottom to the top lower. It cannot be applied horizontally and much less from top to bottom.

SOME OF THE RELATIONSHIPS IN WHICH OBEDIENCE IS PROMINENTLY APPLIED

Let us now consider some of the important relationships, first of all as children of God, then in our human relations, in which our attitude of obedience or our acts of disobedience are prominently applied.

1. TOWARD GOD. In the first and foremost place is our unconditional and sacred obedience toward our God. This is fundamental because, as we clearly explained previously, our spiritual life or death depends on this. As children of God we have been called to be different than the rest of humanity in this unique aspect, in showing the world our obedience to the Word of the Lord. And we must do this *“not in word, neither in tongue* (as multitudes of professing Christians are addicted to doing); *but in deed and in truth”* (1 Jn. 3:18).

2. TOWARD PARENTS. Among the families of the children of God the commandment of children toward their parents is imperative.

It is a divine command. We are all aware that in our society, rebellion and disobedience of children toward their parents is presently causing tremendous destruction among our families. There is very little that we can do for families where neither the parents nor the children know the Word of the Lord. However, we can encourage the children in Christian families to obey their parents, especially when their parents are being obedient to God. The Christianity of a young man or young lady that does not obey his or her parents is a vain Christianity of outward appearance only.

3. TOWARD HUSBAND. This aspect of obedience is extremely delicate. It has so many different aspects and repercussions that it cannot be discussed in a light or superficial manner. When we are speaking about a marriage in which both spouses fear and serve the Lord, we can emphasize that the divine ordinance of obedience is in full effect. The wife must live in subjection and obedience to her husband. What is clear and without complications is that there are special promises made by God to a faithful wife who obeys and honors her faithful husband and that in doing so she is also honoring the Lord. She will thereby receive special blessings which she would not obtain in any other manner. Furthermore, not only she will benefit from these blessings, but her husband will also benefit. It will also benefit her children in a way that is so unique that otherwise they would be able unable to enjoy. It is said of this type of woman: *“Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also,*

and he praiseth her” (Prov. 31:28).

4. TOWARD THE PASTOR. The sacred Text tells us: *“Obey them that have rule over you, and submit yourselves”* (Heb. 13:17). Similar to the subjection of a wife, the obedience that children of God who are members of a congregation show to their pastor is directly linked to the exemplary behavior of the minister of God as an *“example to the flock”* (1 Pet. 5:3, Heb 13:7). After all, the life of a pastor is an example of obedience and subjection to the Lord and to His Word. The commandment of obedience and subjection of the Christian to his pastor is imperative. When it is done joyfully in order to please the Lord it produces many blessings. However, not doing so invariably brings ruin, judgment and even condemnation. In summary, a Christian who does not know how to obey is not truly a Christian. As I explained at the beginning, obedience is a distinctive of the children of God.

OBEDIENCE OPERATING AMONG CHRISTIANS AS BROTHERS AND AS MINISTERS

The sacred Text admonishes us, saying: *“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God”* (Eph. 5:21). I can say, with fear of being wrong, that this aspect of obedience is the most difficult. If obeying someone who is superior is not an easy thing to do for the human condition, it is even more difficult to submit to someone who you consider your

“equal.” In the environment of the natural man, the problem of “mutual subjection” has been the major cause of conflicts throughout centuries, precisely as a result of the pride of life. However, the Word of God cited here is directed to those *“who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”* (Rom. 8:1). It is directed to those children of God in whose lives resides the *“mind, which was also in Christ Jesus”* (Phil 2:5).

“This mind” is described in such an extremely clear and specific manner in that same Scriptural portion that it is impossible for a sincere Christian to say that he does not understand it: *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others”* (Phil. 2:3-4). This command given by the Holy Spirit which is so very well known, but which is usually ignored, says it all. It does not need any additional explanation or special interpretation.

Being in this “mindset” it is possible to live in obedience and subjection *“with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you”* (Heb.13:17). This obedience is the one demonstrated to those who are superior or higher, but it is also demonstrated in a mutual subjection. The Sacred Story bears witness that the men of God in ancient times, despite their human weaknesses, were able to live in an obedience of mutual subjection. Among the



Christians of the early Church this mutual subjection was the most prominent characteristic as they lived in a literal and exact fulfillment of the commandment given by the Lord Jesus (Jn. 13:34). It is certainly true that throughout the centuries of the life of the Church, the devil has taken advantage of human pride and has tried to “dismember” the Church. However, he has only been successful in doing this among the apostate Christianity, but has not been successful among the true Church.

Being that the Church is symbolized as *“a body,”* it is impossible for the members of this mystical Body to act in a way that is independent or separate one from another. The eye is never going to despise the toes, and the toes are never going to rebel against the eye. Due to the fact that they are members of the same Body, they, along with the other members of the Body, help and protect one another (1 Cor. 12:12-27). Rebellion, envy, intrigue and other similar things are not practiced among them. They are united and in a permanent coordination, being subject one to another.

Invariably, this mindset has been and should continue to be the supreme distinctive in the Church of the Lord. The communion and universal unity of this Body is purely spiritual and its principal foundation does not consist in the human element of politico-religious organizations or structures. It is founded on the marvelous love of Jesus Christ our God, on our deep love toward Him, and on a pure, sincere love among us. It is founded on our unconditional

surrender to the Lord and to His Word, which bears witnesses of the supreme example of obedience He Himself displayed. It also warns us that *“to obey is better than sacrifice”* (1 Sam. 15:22).

The great signs of this present time are warning us that, without a doubt, the Second Coming of the Lord is imminent. *“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth”* (Lk. 18:8). In this mysterious question the Lord implies that on that day it will be difficult for Him to find a large group of people among those who claim to follow Him who are presently willing to live in obedience. It implies that it will be difficult for Him to find faithful children of God who are willing to *“deny ourselves”* (Mt. 16:24) in an unconditional surrender with the goal of obeying His voice in all forms, and to do so willingly and *“with joy, and not with grief”* (Heb. 13:17). This means being obedient, even in situations which are not pleasing to our flesh, and even in situations in which we have to pay a price of sacrifice, pain, martyrdom and even death.

The Supreme Example of submission and obedience was already given to us by our God Himself when He was *“manifest in the flesh”* (1 Tim. 3:16). If we are truly His faithful children, then we will not look for excuses or for ways of avoiding, but we will obey in any way we are required to do. We will submit ourselves one to another in the place that our Lord has placed each one of us in His Body, which is His Church. *“The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand”* (Dan. 12:10).

THOUGHTS ABOUT OBEDIENCE

Those who desire that their subordinates obey them should first have learned how to obey those who are their superiors.

Those who have not learned how to obey those above them should not be surprised if those who are below them do not obey them.

He who during his lifetime has not obeyed those he should obey, in reality does not deserve to be obeyed by those who are his subordinates.

Those who obey the persons they should obey should never think that they are that person a great benefit or favor. It is their duty and obligation to obey. The obedience that is rendered with joy and good will is the type of obedience that has a great reward. When obedience is rendered grudgingly or with a bad attitude it has only a few merits.

He who is exercising himself in the virtue of obedience not only makes his superiors happy, but also his equals and even his subordinates.

On the other hand, he who is disobedient makes those who he deals with unhappy and miserable. With his attitude he is bringing upon himself judgment from the Lord.

He who has truly learned how to obey will do so no matter with which tone of voice the order is given, whether it be with sweetness or with harshness.

It is easier to obey in the great, outstanding things than in the small things. However, he who

has the gift of obedience will do it in all things, great or small.

There are some people who only obey those they desire or choose to obey. However, true and just obedience is not a respecter of persons.

If the Lord gives His children the commandment for us to obey our superiors, our bosses at work, and even unjust authorities, with all the more reason we should obey those who are just!

The greatest treasure that a man of God can give his wife and children is his obedience to the Lord in all aspects of his life.

The wife of a faithful man who honors and obeys her husband is a blessing to him and is an excellent example and source of happiness for her children.

For just parents, humanly speaking, there is no treasure of happiness or honor greater than the obedience and submission rendered to them by their children.

Obedience is more than a good action. It is the foundation of our human relationships. We all owe obedience one to another.

He who claims to be a child of God and who takes lightly this truth about obedience, as well as other truths in God’s Word, will one day regret this attitude.

Our Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated to us the perfect type of obedience. He did not do this only do this with His Words, but He displayed it with His actions at Calvary.

God bless you.



WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO SERVE GOD?

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

"Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME" (Mt. 25:34-40).

God needs absolutely nothing does not need anything from us. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:24-25). However, when most Christians state: "I serve God," they usually mean that they are living a life separated from sin. Such an interpretation is completely outside of the reality of what the Word of God teaches about serving Him. By simply by living a life separated from sin does not mean that we are serving someone. After all, living apart from sin simply benefits the individual and keeps him from facing judgment. As an example to better understand my statement I say that no one is doing anyone a

great service by simply not throwing himself on to the railroad tracks in front of an oncoming train.

In the Scriptures I cited at the beginning of this article, the Lord declares to us what it truly means TO SERVE GOD. There are many Christians who on the day of the Lord are going to face a horrible truth surprise (Mt. 25:41). Presently they justify themselves because they are in fact living a life separated from sin. They declare: "I serve God in my house. It is There that In my house I pray, sing and read the Bible." But they are in no way serving the "least of the brethren."

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (Jas. 2:14-17). "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 Jn. 3:17-18).

Now is the time for us to wholeheartedly be living the "pure religion and undefiled" (Jas. 1:26-27). Which group do you belong to? Are you counted among those who are simply keeping themselves from doing evil, or are you counted among those who are truly serving others?

God bless you.

Comes from page...3 of the controversial "Law of Electricity."

following: The Minister of Defense, Benny Gantz, informed the United States emissaries that he has set a deadline for when the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) should complete its preparations for an attack against Iran. The U.S. emissaries did not express any opposition to the Israeli preparations when on Thursday Gantz informed them of the date. The following day a high ranking diplomatic source stated that there was "no veto" to the plans.

December 15, 2021. "The Jerusalem Post" published the following: An Iranian newspaper published a map on Wednesday threatening Israel with missile attacks. The map shows targets that claim are within Iran's reach.

December 16, 2021. The news agency "Breitbart" stated that the Ukrainian government has formally recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. The Ukrainian Ambassador to Israel also announced that Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky, is expected to visit Israel next year and that his government will open a branch of the embassy in the upcoming months.

December 21, 2021. "Israel National News" reported that the lawmakers from the United Arab League (Ra'am) warned that their party could topple the government of the Prime Minister of Israel, Naftali Bennett, if it cannot reach an agreement with the Minister of the Interior, Ayelet Shaked (Yamina), for the approval

December 21, 2021. "Israel National News" reported the following: Aliyah (immigration of Jews to Israel) increased during the year 2021 with 27,050 new Jewish arrivals from all around the world. This represents a 30% increase compared to the 21,820 olim (new immigrants) from the previous year, according to statistics published today by the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration, by the Jewish Agency for Israel and by Nefesh B'Nefesh. The past year also brought a record 4,000 olim from the United States. The number of immigrants who made Aliyah from Argentina, the United States and France increased by 50%, 34% and 41% respectively.

Together, with the faithful Israel, we continue to daily plead and wait for the Return of our Messiah. On that day the Jewish people will not only recognize Him as being their Messiah, but also as the God of Israel. Let us continue praying for and blessing our older brother, the Jewish people in Israel and in the Diaspora, the nation of Israel, the Land of Israel, and Jerusalem. *"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and my companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good" (Psa. 122:6-9).*

God bless you.
Pastor Efraim Valverde III.



WE CONTINUE WAITING FOR HIM!

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

and along with this, hunger and sicknesses. Climate changes and natural disasters have men deeply concerned. The world is one big deranged asylum.

But among all these tremendous signs that indicate that the end is imminent there is one sign that is unique; THE SIGN OF THE FIG TREE. This sign is the reestablishment of Israel as a nation and all the other things that have occurred since the birth of this nation. The existence of this nation has a unique place in God's plan. The fact that millions voluntarily or involuntarily deny this reality does not in any way minimize the relationship that the Jewish people have regarding the salvation of the Church and with the judgment of the nations.

It is so unsettling to see that there are many of our brothers who do not have their eyes focused on this great sign. They do not care about the daily occurrences happening in Israel or among the rest of the Jewish people who are scattered among the nations (something which the Jewish people call "the Diaspora"). Many things have occurred since the establishment of the Israeli nation. God has been calling the attention of the nations of the Earth to take notice of this tiny nation and the city that He chose more than three millennia ago, which will soon be the seat and the throne of the King of kings: JERUSALEM. But the most recent happenings which are a consequence of the

radical change which occurred in 1967 are speaking directly to us who are true disciples of the Lord Jesus about the imposing gravity of the things which are quickly coming.

The prophecies announced by Zechariah are in the process of being fulfilled right before our eyes: *"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"* (Zech. 12:2-3), and *"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and the half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city"* (Zech. 14:2). After all, these prophecies must be fulfilled before the prophecy foretold in Romans 11:25-26 can be fulfilled which declares: *"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."*

It is certainly true that presently there has been a partial awakening among the Jewish people and many are accepting the Lord Jesus as the Messiah of Israel as occurred during the time of the early Church. However, *"the veil"*

What has been prophesied has to be fulfilled and it is painful to see that the time is drawing near in which Israel will be abandoned by all nations, even by those few nations that it considers to be its friends. This will continue until the moment when, before the eyes of its enemies, it will appear that Israel is a humiliated, defenseless victim ready to be soon devoured. However, it is then that "the Lord shall go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem..." (Zech. 14:3-4)

remains upon the great majority of the nation. It will only be removed on the day the Lord appears in glory. On that day they will realize that He is the same One who was manifested in the

There are many things we need to consider and many topics that we could spend time discussing. However, there is something one topic that is more important than anything other. It is the most important topic matter related to the Christian faith: Our Lord Jesus Christ promised THAT HE WOULD RETURN! The apostle Paul described the exactly, the mindset of every true Christian when he declared that we live *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ"* (Tit. 2:13).

Time, carries on its daily course of the continual fulfillment of the prophecies which are unequivocally pointing to the time of the end foretold by our Lord Jesus (Mt. 24:14). Among the most emphatic recommendations made by the Master to His disciples is that they should watch. He gave them precise signs that would appear as a prelude to His Second Coming and consequently to the gathering up of His chosen people, which is His Church.

Therefore it is to our benefit to continue considering the signs that have already been fulfilled, the ones that are currently being fulfilled, and the ones which are soon to be fulfilled in our time. The increase in knowledge continues at its booming pace. The arsenals of conventional and nuclear weapons continue to multiply. Wars continue to rage in different parts of the world. Terrorism, crimes and similar types of violence continues to surge. Moral degradation and vices are out of control. The world's population continues scaling



flesh almost two thousand years ago (**2 Cor. 3:14-16**). However, before this occurs Israel must undergo great pain and suffering, and it is precisely this time of suffering that is drawing near.

The United States has supported Israel 100% since the time that the modern State of Israel was established. However, this support has been decreasing and it will continue doing so, although this is an unpleasant reality to those of us who are true Christians. It was in the year 1977 (Religion Online: Evangelicals and Israel: Theological Roots of a Political Alliance by Donald Wagner) that we began witnessing something that had never happened throughout the history of the Church. Christian groups around the world began having open demonstrations in favor of Israel and the Jewish people in support of their claim and right to retain and live in the parts of the Holy Land that they captured in the miraculous Six Day War of the year 1967.

What has been prophesied has to be fulfilled and it is painful to see that the time is drawing near in which Israel will be abandoned by all nations, even by those few nations that it considers to be its friends. This will continue until the moment when, before the eyes of its enemies, it will appear that Israel is a humiliated, defenseless victim ready to be soon devoured. However, it is then that *"the Lord shall go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem..."* (**Zech. 14:3-4**). Hallelujah! Hallelujah! This is the day the Church is waiting for.

It is the day in which the *"fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved"* (**Rom. 11:25-26**). It is the day on which what was foretold by the Lord shall be fulfilled: *"There shall be one fold and one Shepherd"* (Jn. 10:16). It will be the day in which these two flocks who for centuries and millennia have been *"accounted as sheep for the slaughter"* (**Psa. 44:22, Rom. 8:36**) will be one people and who will first judge the world and the fallen angels (**I Cor. 6:2, 3**), then will reign over the nations of the Earth according to the promise made to them by the King of kings and Lord of lords (**Rev. 20:6**).

It is the day that Abraham, Job, David and the other patriarchs and prophets saw. It is the day spoken of by our brothers, the apostles, and which talked about, the day that has inspired millions of Christians to give their lives as martyrs throughout all the past centuries. This is the marvelous day that we true Christians, the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who have been granted the marvelous privilege of living during the time when the great prophetic signs are being fulfilled right before our eyes, have been waiting for. What a great privilege we have been granted, but also what a great responsibility! Woe unto us if we do not take advantage of the time allotted to us so that we can do the job we have been called to do. Being that the Lord Himself said that the punishment would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, who having seen the signs did not believe or repent (**Lk. 10:12-13**).

It is certainly true that there are countless multitudes of

Christians who speak with their lips that the Lord is returning soon, but in reality not many of them are truly waiting for Him. Ultimately, what matters most is not what someone can say with their mouth but how they live their lives. Our actions speak much louder than our words. After all, we cannot truly believe that a lukewarm Christian who lives in the same manner as those who do not know the Lord is truly waiting for the Lord's return. A faithful Christian walks with the Beloved of his soul every step of his life, and since he loves his Savior, he serves Him with a complete surrender and not halfheartedly. His delight is to behave, to dress, to deal with others and to feel in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. He lives a life of holiness inwardly and outwardly. He does so, not to please or to judge others nor out of fear of commandments given by his religious leaders, but he does so because of his passion for his God. Therefore he is always trying to prove his love and gratitude.

The Scriptures tell us that the Christians of the early Church lived in holiness and humility. There was a true communion between them. Oh how different this is than the attitudes of thousands of Christians of today who, being deceived by the antichrist (the true antichrist, who is the devil, not the imaginary one), live a worldly and a carnal life, saying that nothing is wrong and that it is all about the conscience. Others, on the other hand, live a semi-perfect moral life. In fact, they obey all the ceremonies and traditions of their "honorable

religious denomination," but they are expert boasters, impulsed by the arrogance of their religious hearts. They point out, curse, judge, despise, discriminate and even condemn and kill with their tongues. They do all this in the name of "their Church," in the same manner that the mother of these denominations and religious organizations has done for the past 16 centuries.

Throughout all the ages there have always been true followers of the Lord because God has never been without witnesses on the Earth. This is precisely what our Lord Jesus Christ meant when He declared: *"Upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"* (**Mt. 16:18**). During these last days, which are a prelude to His Second Coming, the Lord Himself is beginning to call His chosen people out of the confusion (which is *"Babylon,"* **Rev. 18:1-4**) so that we can live in the same manner that our beloved brothers who were members of the primitive Church lived, who without religious chiefs, nor traditions, nor religious organizations served the Lord *"in spirit and in truth"* (**Jn. 4:24**), in holiness, in love, in communion and in sincerity. Today there are many more Christians who live in the other manner and no one can stop them from doing so or can convince them that they are wrong. However, there is also a *"little flock"* (**Lk. 12:32**) who want to live in the way set forth by our PASTOR, and who CONTINUE WAITING FOR HIM!

God bless you.



The service that we had on December 18, 2021, was a great blessing to us. During the first part of the day Bro. Phillip Nava responded to questions in order to clarify certain doctrinal points. The varied understanding about these points has created confusion among the people of God.

Some of the questions that were answered were: “Is it a correct to celebrate Mother’s Day?” “Is it

correct to celebrate Christmas?” “Is it a sin to celebrate a young girl’s fifteenth birthday?” “Is it a sin to wear a wedding ring?” “Is it correct for young people who have already fornicated to have a wedding in which they are honored before the congregation, although the bride does not wear a white dress?” As I stated earlier it was a

great blessing to hear the response given to these and other questions by our beloved brother, Phillip Nava. In the afternoon session our brother Arturo Rios, the pastor in King City, shared his testimony with us and how God connected him with Pastor Efraim Valverde Sr. and with his ministry. Although the weather was cold God warmed our hearts through His Word.

The Lord Jesus Christ bless you.
Pastor Carlos de Jesus.

REPORT OF FELLOWSHIP SERVICE IN GREENFIELD, CA

Pastor Carlos de Jesus

I want to first thank God for permitting me to write these few lines to give a brief report about the meeting for pastors and ministers conference that was held in Guadalajara, Jalisco in the month of September of the year 2021.

It was a great blessing for God to count me among the pastors that attended this conference and to be a partaker of His Presence and to hear His voice. Pastor Efraim Valverde III spoke to us about the Hope of the Resurrection. It is something marvelous. I also want to mention this detail. In the month of April of this same year Pastor Efraim Valverde III issued convocation for us to meet and on that occasion we also heard about the Hope of the Resurrection. The fact that two consecutive meetings were called in which in both meetings the focus was on

this mystery called my attention. It means that this is something significant. Is it not something tremendous that God would insist again and again to unite pastors, I repeat, pastors, to speak to us about this great mystery? My brothers, you who are a pastor, a minister,

a member of the congregation, or you my sisters, what else can I tell you about this meeting? To give details would require many lines but I believe that what I have briefly described highlights the importance of this medullar message. Let us occupy ourselves in this. Let us meditate on this hope: “[Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ](#)” (Tit. 2:13).

May God bless and continue to guide our pastor, Efraim Valverde III, so that he can continue to provoke us to love and to good works. God bless all the readers of this publication “Maranatha.”

May God speak well of you.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Alfredo Corcoles.

REPORT ABOUT THE PASTORS AND MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN GUADALAJAR, JALISCO

Pastor Alfredo Corcoles



We want to thank our Lord Jesus Christ for giving us the opportunity of gathering together and for the privilege of partaking in this activity which took place on October 23rd and 24th of 2021. This was a great blessing to us and it is always a blessing to see each one of the young people who visit us from different places.

On this occasion God allowed us to hear His Word through our brother, Pastor Fidel Resendiz, who encouraged us to continue striving to be grateful and to appreciate

REPORT OF YOUTH SERVICE IN VICENTE GUERRERO, B.C

Pastor Eladio López



all that we have received from our Lord. He told us that even in difficult times and through various problems which we face, we should never forget that the Lord is with us and with His help we can overcome.

God bless you. We ask you to continue praying for all of our brothers, both young and old, from this region, so that the Lord will continue helping us to press forward.

Pastor Eladio López.



My beloved brothers, I greet you in the powerful Name of our Lord Jesus. I thank Him greatly for giving us the opportunity and the privilege of once again hosting our annual youth service. (Psa. 133:1).

I was amazed at what the Almighty God did in this meeting. The sanctuary was at full capacity and we had to accommodate some of our brothers in a dining room that adjoins the church.

Once again I thank our Lord Jesus Christ for our pastor, Efraim Valverde III, because the Lord used him on Saturday morning, November 6, 2021, to share with us a message concerning *"the pillar and ground of the truth"* (1 Tim. 3:15). During the afternoon service he shared another message with us and gave counsel to the young people (Heb. 5:14). He told us that we must seek the Lord Jesus Christ with all of our

REPORT ON YOUTH SERVICE IN MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON

Pastor Feliciano López.



hearts (Mt. 6:33), because the Lord tells us in His blessed Word: *"For them that honour Me I will honour; and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed"* (1 Sam. 2:30).

In conclusion I want to say that I feel privileged and blessed by the *"KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS"* (Rev. 19:16), for our elder pastor, Efraim Valverde, Sr., and for the revelation that he shared and for the treasure of the marvelous Supreme Name of God (Isa. 45:23, Phil. 2:10, Rev. 1:8).

I ask your prayers, my beloved brothers wherever you may live, for the congregation in Mount Vernon, Washington. The Lord Jesus Christ bless you and keep you.

Your brother in Christ Jesus who loves you,
Pastor Feliciano López.

We gathered together on December 4, 2021, to attend the first fellowship service in Madera, California, after the departure of Pastor Efraim Arreola to be with the Lord. It was surprising to see the vast attendance of young people to this activity.

Many young people arrived from different places, as well as pastors from the surrounding areas. The participation of several youth groups was a blessing. Brother Pablo Gamez from Salinas, brother Lorenzo Mendoza, Jr., from Forest Grove, Oregon, and brother Francisco Segovia from Madera gave exclusive counsel to the young people concerning the subjects: The Oneness in the Godhead, Israel and the Church, and the way that God demands His children to live. It was impressive to see how the young people eagerly received this counsel. In the afternoon, after partaking of a delicious meal

REPORT OF YOUTH SERVICE IN MADERA, CA

Brother, Phillip M. Nava.



prepared by the local congregation, we returned to the sanctuary and continued to rejoice in the worship songs and in the greetings given by the pastors who were in attendance. Before the service ended we prayed for brother Bernardino Garcia, who was anointed to continue with the pastoral work left vacant by Pastor Efraim Arreola. Our pastor, Efraim Valverde III, by phone and together with the pastors who were present, presented our brother Bernardino before the Lord so that He would bear witness of the life and work of this brother who has been a faithful companion in the ministry with brother Arreola.

We ended the gathering with great joy and satisfaction due to the testimony the Lord gave in this youth service.

Attentively, your brother,
Phillip M. Nava.



YOUTH SECTION

Bro. Cipriano Gregorio López.



brother Abelino departed to be in the Presence of the Lord. His departure was very hard for us. It was something that marked the life of my family and the hearts of each and every one of the brothers and young people who knew him. We all miss him very much. My brother was my best friend in all things. I personally have missed his company as a companion, as a mentor and as an example to follow.

After this happened, and in the midst of many other things that have happened, we have understood that the Lord does all things with perfection. We understood that His thoughts are not our thoughts (Isa. 55:8). That is why we trust in our Lord Jesus Christ and we give Him thanks for the great friend we had among us. We thank Him for giving us someone who provoked us to seek the treasures that are found in the heavens and who taught us that surrendering is not an option for the children of God and that we must fight until the end.

My fellow young brothers and sisters, let us strive to please God every day, although at times this can be difficult and tiring. I know that discouragement is always stalking us. In fact, I myself have experienced it on many occasions. Sometimes we can become frustrated because we want to do what is right, but at times cannot do this in the way that we would like. Let us fight to return home because the great day of the Lord is near. Very soon the heavens will open and we will see the Beloved of our souls and will be with Him forever. (1 **Thess. 4:17**).

As long as we continue waiting let us be encouraged and let us run the short distance that remains. Let us demonstrate that among God's army there are young people who, despite our defects and flaws, are willing to fight to reach the end!

God bless each and every one of you. Shalom.

Bro. Cipriano Gregorio López.

God bless every one. First of all I want to thank the Lord for the privilege He has given me of being His son, and for the privilege of sharing these few words with you.

A few years ago in the congregation in Maneadero, Ensenada, B.C., my brother, Abelino Gregorio Lopez, who was a great young man *"of a ready mind"* (1 **Pet. 5:2**), departed to be with the Lord. When he began walking with the Lord he began getting together with the young people who were attending the congregation. The Lord gave him a great burden for us, but I did not understand why he was so insistent. A few years later, on October 23, 2016, I was baptized in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. From that day on I began to understand his insistence, his desire to work for the Lord, his desire to seek God, his desire to help the young people and to serve in any way he could.

In the days that I began walking with the Lord I began developing a strong friendship with my brother. We both had the same desire to seek the Lord. He also desired that we and the members of the congregation could have our own temple. I bless the Lord and give Him thanks with all my soul because my brother was able to see this particular desire fulfilled.

Eleven months passed after the construction of the temple was finished and then on October 26, 2018, my

WOMEN OF GOD

Sis. Imelda Núñez-Luna



God bless you. I would like to share a bit of my testimony and I hope that it can be a blessing to you.

At of 13 of age I was baptized in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, but after a while a thought entered my mind that did not allow me to have peace. I began to think that I was not a daughter of God and that God did not love me. I didn't have the courage to share this with anyone because I was afraid of "what they might say."

The years passed and I continued being tormented by this thought until one day at Camp Sugar Pine a change began in me when Pastor Efraim Valverde III stated: "If you are here it is because you belong to God." I was able to understand that I was God's daughter. Speaking to my children I have discovered that this way of thinking that I had is something common among those who get baptized when they are adolescents. My prayer is that the Lord would reveal His love and deliver anyone who is struggling with these thoughts, so that they can see that salvation is a gift from God because He loves us, not because we "deserve it." I thank God for His mercy and compassion.

I also want to thank the Lord for my family (my husband and my children) who have been very patient toward me. In these past few months I have faced many trials. In the month of September I began to feel physically ill but I tried to ignore it. I did not worry too much about it until the 9th of October when

I suddenly lost my voice and I began feeling a sharp pain in my neck and shoulders. The next day my left arm felt very weak. The day after that I could not get up from my bed on my own strength. My left leg felt very heavy. My husband helped me to get up and he took me to the emergency department at the hospital.

After a few days I was told that my body had suffered a heart attack and several brain hemorrhages. But at that moment, in a perfectly coordinated manner that only God can do, I received a call from my sister and friend, Enoy Guevara. My daughter told her what had happened and at that moment she prayed for us. I could instantly feel the Lord's strength. It is a blessing to cultivate friendship with women who fear God so that we might lift each other up in prayer.

I was in the hospital three days. The cardiologist told me that I would not be able to move my arm for another two weeks. But thanks to the Lord I was able to move my fingers and clap my hands only two days after I was released from the hospital. All the honor and glory be to my Lord Jesus! His mercies are new every morning and the Lord has helped me to this day. I do not want to take for granted the miracle that the Lord has done in me, because I realize that the damage I suffered could have been worse. I am still struggling but little by little the Lord is restoring my strength and my health.

My sisters, if you are passing through a trial, whether it be due to an illness or because of a petition that has not yet been answered, I encourage you to patiently continue to wait on the Lord. If we completely trust in Him, He will not fail. At His time He will answer our prayers according to His will. Let us not grow weary. The Lord is coming soon.

Please keep my family and me in prayer, as well as the congregation in Lone Pine, Ca.

Your sister in Christ,

Imelda Núñez-Luna.



I greet you in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving Him thanks for allowing us the privilege of gathering despite the times in which we are living and despite all the restrictions that have not allowed us to meet as we once did. But our God, in His love and mercy permitted us to meet and once again we could see the fulfillment of His Word: *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"* (Psa. 133:1). We always want to be in this mindset that the Lord desires from us.

We had the privilege of receiving our brothers from different places who honored us with their presence. The Lord used our brother, Pastor Eladio Lopez, who shared the Word of God with us and who reminded us about the importance of knowing and understanding the Name which is above every name, Jesus Christ the Lord! It is a subject that we should never take for granted and we should always be reaffirming our minds with this truth.

REPORT OF FELLOWSHIP SERVICE IN MEXICALI, B.C.N.

Pastor Pablo Ojeda



We also heard the voice of the Lord through our brother, Pastor Alfredo Tienda, who spoke to us about loving the Lord in the manner He tells us to do in His Word: *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all of thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might"* (Dt. 6:5). We also heard how prayer is necessary and indispensable in the life of each and every one of His children so that we may know God. Prayer is the bridge which connects us with Him and that we must be consistent in cultivating daily our relationship with God, in order for us to love Him as He requires from us.

We ask that you keep us in your prayers so that we may continue pressing forward in our service to the Lord and so that we may continue walking steadfastly in His path. Let us pray one for another as we await the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastor Pablo Ojeda.

First of all I thank God that He is worthy of all honor and praise. Recently God permitted us to host this activity which was a great blessing in which the Lord spoke to us through our pastor, Efraim Valverde III. He spoke to us about the "premarital foundation" and that we should put our relationship and communication with God as our first priority. This will lead us to be aware of our behavior and decisions.

He shared with us various tips that will strengthen our mind and our behavior. 1. Strengthen our relationship with God. 2. Communication with God. 3. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of God. 4. Place our trust in the Lord. 5. Take our relationship with our God seriously. 6. Work on our character. 7. Have a biblical foundation. 8. What kind of young man or women are you? Are you a helpmate for the other person? 9. Prepare our lives. 10. Know that courtship is a preparation for marriage.

We were also told that today is the time for all young people to strive

REPORT OF YOUTH SERVICE IN SANTA MARIA, CA

Pastor Justino Flores



to be prepared and founded in the Lord. We must also maintain a relationship with Him so that when problems arise in the marriage we can find quick solace in the Word of God and support from pastors and ministers.

I thank God for connecting us with this ministry which was commended to our pastor, Efraim Valverde, Sr., and which continue to be carried forth by his grandson, Pastor Efraim Valverde III. This has been a great blessing for my life and I believe that it has also been a blessing for all who read this publication "Maranatha." I also thank God for all our brothers in the United States, Mexico and in Central and South America who have expressed their joy and pleasure in hearing the Word of God through the sermons which are broadcast live.

I send you a cordial greeting and may God bless you and keep you.

Pastor Justino Flores and the congregation in Santa Maria, California.



BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Pastor Efraim Valverde, Sr.

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

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF WATER BAPTISM?

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

HOW SHOULD WATER BAPTISM BE ADMINISTERED?

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

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

WHAT NAME SHOULD BE INVOKED DURING BAPTISM?

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

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

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

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



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

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." ■

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

PASTOR EFRAIM VALVERDE, SR.

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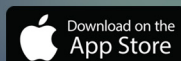
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The LORD our God is one
LORD (Dt.6:4)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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