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THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST

NO.231

MANY ARE CALLED

There came a day when Jesus was teaching His disciples about the kingdom of heaven and He said something that was hard for them to receive. This same teaching is hard for most of us to receive as well, and if it were not that these are the actual words of Jesus, we may want to argue the point.

This teaching has to do with God calling and choosing His people. We all believe that God is just and fair but when we hear of His dealings we find some things that are not according to what we call fair. So Jesus tells the story of a man who hired labourers to work in his vineyard. They discuss the fair wage that they should receive for their work. It would not be an hourly pay but a certain amount for the total work. They all come to an agreement and start to work.

But as the hours go by, other workers come by looking for work and the householder hires them and gives them the same deal as those who had been working from dawn. Then at the end of the day, the householder finds other men idle and offers them to come and work in the vineyard for the same wage as those who had worked from early morning. This causes an uproar. How could those who work only an hour receive the same pay as those who have been labouring hard all day long? This is not fair!!! They murmur against the goodman of the house explaining that they had borne the burden of the day.

But the householder insists that he is not unfair at all. He is paying them exactly what they had agreed

on. And with this teaching, Jesus declares, *many are called, but few are chosen.*” (Matt.20: 16)

This does not mean that the many that are called have failed and so they are not chosen. It means that many are called to fulfill their calling but in the end of time, some will be chosen to finish up the work and receive the same reward anyway.

It does not mean that those who have worked in the field all day will not receive their reward, they certainly receive the same reward. It means that at the end, some will not have to wait as long or labor as hard to receive the very same.

It does not mean that those who are chosen are selected because they are better; it means that someone has to come to that time and finish up the day. The true church, (the called out ones) in comparison to the churches that men have raised up, has been laboring in the field for a long time, but it is the few that are coming now to the end of the age, that will fill up the cup so that all may receive the same glory. I believe that the saints in the earth today are the ones who have come to this.

OUR CALLING To Obtain His Glory

Paul wrote, *“But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (II Thes.2: 13-14)

From the beginning God finished the works and all the laborers are determined from that time on. This does not mean that we will rest on our laurels and just watch things happen, it means that the things that we face and overcome have already been chosen by God. How we do them and overcome them is up to us; we learn this as we go. We can be obedient and be spared many rods, or we can be stubborn and need to be broken many times. We can even fulfill our calling on this side of the veil or have to go to the other side early.

Much depends on our willingness and obedience to the Lord. We know that none of us are born in this world “good.” *“There are none good but one, that is, God.”* (Mk.10: 18). We know that *“ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* (Rom.3: 23) Therefore with the calling comes the breaking and molding.

It is also good to remember that while all are called to believe unto salvation, some are chosen to fulfill certain purposes in God's plan. As children we did not need to know all this, but as we mature spiritually our vision is enlarged and we begin to be about our Father's business.

As we grow in the Spirit we find our place in Him and we understand that the things that have happened to us from our mother's womb have all been designed to bring us to our completeness or perfection- that is- to completely fulfill what God has purposed for us from the beginning.

Paul gave us an understanding of our “general calling” as the church when he wrote that we were “CALLED TO THE OBTAINING OF THE GLORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.” This is something that is **obtained** as we walk daily with Him and follow the gospel. This gospel is taught to us by His Spirit as we hear His voice and follow.

Jesus spoke of yet another calling that we fulfill as we grow in Him. Before God's Holy Spirit fell upon the gathered ones in the upper room, the Lord Himself explained what this was all about. *“But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both*

in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts.1: 8)

This was the last time that these disciples heard His voice with their natural ears. From that day forward, they would know Him only by His Spirit within. This was a large order for them and not only for them but for all who would receive His Holy Spirit after them.

As I pondered this, the Spirit took me back to the days of my beginning in the Lord and opened my understanding to what it really means to be a witness unto Him. The disciples who lived on earth at the time of Jesus of Nazareth, were witnesses of His works and His words as they walked with Him each day. They were witnesses of His life among them here on earth. They wrote the four Gospels as a witness of that life.

They were true witnesses of His life here on earth because they walked with Him each day. They talked to Him and He talked to them. They touched Him and shared thoughts with Him. John wrote, *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and **bear witness**, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)”* (I Jn. 1: 1-2)

They were true witnesses indeed and from the time that the Holy Ghost came upon them in the upper room, they did not cease to be witnesses. Indeed they became WITNESSES OF HIS RESURRECTION! And this beloved is our calling! Because He is alive in us, we are witnesses of His life! Not of the written letter, but of His life manifested in us!

CREATION **Witness of God's Power**

One of the greatest witness of God's power is His mighty creation. I once watched a DVD of the universe and it was awesome to see how each planet, each star, each meteorite, each thing that moves in the vastness of space is sustained by the precise way

that God set for it. Each follows a law that cannot be broken. Gravity is the law that keeps us all on planet Earth and there are many such laws that keep things in their own space, moving in their assigned orbit.

Creation itself, in its undeniable and unfathomable perfection and precision, proclaims the very nature of our God. One of my favorite verses opens up the world of Spirit by comparison to the world of natural creation. *“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they (the creatures) are without excuse.”* (Rom.1:20)

THE PEOPLE OF THE BIBLE Witnesses of God's Being

The most fascinating witness that God gives of Himself is found in the lives of the people of the Old Testament. God raised up Israel as a witness to the nations of that day. Their order of life was witness to God's Law. We see what happens when they kept the Law and we see the result of their disobedience as well. God raised them as a people unto Himself, to show forth His glory to the world. They were witnesses of the true God.

*“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore **ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.**”* (Isa.43: 10-12)

All people have been in gross darkness. This means that they are not even aware that God is and that there is a spirit realm all around them. Israel and the people of the Bible were all chosen to show that indeed God is God and that He is real. God chose Israel to show forth His power. The world trembled because of them for they had seen how God dealt with their enemies. *“This day I will begin to put the dread and fear of thee upon the nations*

that are under heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.” (Deu.2: 25)

God once chose Pharaoh to show forth His glory. He hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would not let God's people go. As a result, God brought the plagues on the land of Egypt. This was to demonstrate that indeed God is God and He is very real. He told Pharaoh, *“And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”* (Ex.9: 16)

Is it any wonder that the world has sought to exterminate the Jewish seed? The spirit that rules the world is greatly threatened by this people even to this day. God deals with them in a way that the world understand- through the Law- Therefore it sees the power of God to keep their seed alive even in the most ominous and dire circumstances.

The Jews have been the witness of God's power in the world. The more the Pharaohs or rulers of nations have tried to annihilate them, the more they have multiplied over the face of all the earth.

GOD'S PROPHETS Witnesses of God's Righteousness

God's Old Testament prophets were devoted and selfless as they went about sounding the word of God to the kings and dignitaries of their times. Because of their faithful witness they found themselves in the middle of great persecutions which often ended in imprisonments and sometimes even death. Yet God sent them and they were fired up with the word of truth then went ahead without fear of losing their reputation or their lives.

They were true witnesses of God's righteousness. They were also faithful witnesses of His omniscience as they spoke of the things that were coming before they actually happened. This is the true calling of a prophet. Today, the church often confuses the gift of prophecy, which is a gift and manifestation of the Spirit, with the true calling of a prophet.

A prophet is a SEER. He or she SEES the Word through vision or dream. *“(Before time in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, thus he spake, Come, let us go to the seer: for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer.)”* (I Sam.9: 9)

This has not changed. Prophecy is a gift of the Spirit that speaks to the church as a whole. It is never meant to reveal the faults of individuals or to direct personal lives in any way. Paul writes, *“But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men for edification, and exhortation, and comfort.”* (I Cor.14: 3)

On the other hand a prophet is usually sent with God's Word to individuals especially those who are in the place of authority over the flock (they are the kings of today). Many have turned their ears away from the truth and have rejected God's true prophets and have often persecuted them. When God called Jeremiah, the young prophet said, *“Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child” for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.”* (Jer. 1:6-8)

God spoke to young Ezekiel, *“And he said to me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day. For they are impudent children and stiffhearted. I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God. And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them. And thou Son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.”* (Eze. 2: 3-6)

Ezekiel began his ministry during the Jews' 70 year captivity in Babylon. God told him to go and

live among them and indeed they were as briers and scorpions to him and very rebellious against God's word. Ezekiel was just thirty years old when he was sent to face those in high places and speak to them, and he must have felt terribly unqualified and incompetent but God told him, *“Be not afraid of their words or of their looks.”*

Some of us who have been sent to some of the rulers of the church felt very much like Jeremiah or Ezekiel, but because the fear of God was greater than the fear and intimidation of man, we went ahead and presented ourselves even though we were as welcome as a dog with fleas. I remember the first ruler I faced with God's word. It was the dear Pastor of the Community Church that I loved. God gave me a dream and it was a strong word. I personally did not understand all that it entailed at the time and I certainly was not prepared for the wrath that it stirred in that dear man. Both my husband and I were shocked at his reaction.

But God had sent the dream to me and He had sent me to tell my Pastor. The dream did not mention him or anyone by name but evidently the spirit that ruled him “got the message!”

I have written this dream before but just to remind you, *“I was standing with a few others by a river of swift moving waters. A long high bridge spanned the river. On top of the bridge were two professional dancers. They were dancing away when the woman's diamond ring slipped out of her finger and fell below in the river. The man dove to retrieve it and looked everywhere but could not find it. At the same time I am standing with a few people on the banks of the river, baking an apple pie out of the river as if it were an oven. I take the beautiful pie and hand it up to the couple on the bridge. They became furious at my offer.”* (End of dream)-

At the time, I knew from my dreaming experience that this dream was very significant but I did not really understand it. However, when I told the Pastor, he became furious. So it is that the Lord was saying that the churches (including that one) had become professional entertainers. As a result they have lost their union with the Lord (ring) and as much as they

try to find it again they are not able. The Lord also showed that there are some who stand in the lower places and are able to bring forth God's words ready to eat (apple pie), but this infuriates those who are called to be a bridge between God and man (pastors and such) but have lost their connection with the Holy Spirit (true Husband)-

I had had many significant dreams already, but this was my first experience with God's word to His leaders and in the years to come it was repeated in different ways but always with the same result. Each time, God's word came to pass as stated in His word.

God's true prophets are set apart to receive the word that few care to hear. They are witnesses of God's righteousness (right way) and not man's.

THE WITNESS BY WATER AND BLOOD

God has always had His witnesses in the earth. In the Old Testament, THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS were God's witnesses. But when the Son came in the flesh He became the true and faithful witness of the Father.

John writes, *"Who is it that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came **by water and blood**, even Jesus Christ; **not by water only, but by water and blood**. And it is the Spirit that **beareth witness**, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son." (I Jn. 5: 5-10)

Jesus, the Son of God is the Word made flesh. He came to bear witness of the Father. The Word is, has been and always will be one with the Father. As John writes, He is the Word that bears record in heaven. But He came by water and blood and these two elements are of the earth.

What is the meaning of this water that is spoken of in this verse? We find a better understanding of it in the book of Revelation. *"And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; AND HIS VOICE AS THE SOUND OF MANY WATERS."* (Rev.1: 15) This is the way John saw and heard the resurrected Lord as He appeared in the vision.

In this verse, WATER speaks of the sound of His voice as heard through many souls. The Spirit is as "air" and the Soul is as "water." The soul and the body are one. The life of the flesh is the blood and water is also part of the blood. When we hear a "voice" we hear it through the soul. In Bible terminology, It comes as the sound of "water." The sea represents the troubled souls of humanity.

The Word of God is the "River of life" that flows in the earth. There are many rivers and streams in the earth. They represent the souls that are heard from that stream. The carnal mind has polluted some of these streams, but by the Spirit and the work of the cross, all are beginning to flow as God's pure water of life.

The pure stream of God's Word proceeds directly from His throne, Christ within. It is disconnected from the ways of men. *"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."* (Rev. 22: 1)

This river of pure water is the Word of God coming through the souls of the redeemed. The voice of the many waters that John heard are the souls of the redeemed, whose source is the Holy Spirit. They are singing a new song (message from God) in the earth. It is in that water that the tree of life is rooted. *...On either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.(heathens)." (Vs.3b)*

Jesus Christ came by water. He came with a soul and a flesh and blood body. The source of His soul was not the tree of good and evil; it was the tree of life. The river of His soul was fed by the pure Spirit

of His Father. And His river (Word) flowed in the earth and gave life wherever He went. He was the true and faithful witness because the Word that He spoke was the Word of His Father.

When we are washed in His blood and redeemed from the earth, His Spirit comes within and our soul begins to take its source from the pure Spirit of God. Jesus told the Samaritan woman, *“If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water...whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”* (Jn.4: 10, 14)

And again, *“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”* (Jn.7: 38) Jesus was not speaking of a literal belly. He was speaking of the depth of the soul that becomes this pure river of life flowing with God's mighty Word through the earth.

Jesus Christ is the Word and His voice in the earth comes as the sound of water through the souls of His redeemed. Therefore in scriptural language, water speaks of the word that flows in the earth. The pure Word of God is clear as the pure water of a mountain spring.

When our soul is caught up into the Spirit, (this is our rapture) the soul becomes a well of living water that springs up from within. The water or the soul that is fed by the Spirit is His voice heard in the earth. These are His witnesses in the earth.

*“Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold he cometh with **clouds**, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.* (Rev.1: 5-7)

This same Word who bears record in heaven is the One who came by water (soul) and blood (flesh). He is the Lamb who laid His life down for the redemption of the world and who calls each of us by our name that we may follow in His steps.

By His death and resurrection, He became the faithful witness of God's power and took His place as the King of kings and Lord of lords in the earth. Then He called us and filled us with the same Spirit that we also may be faithful witnesses of His resurrection.

THE BODY OF CHRIST Witness of His resurrection

There came a day when the resurrected Lord told His disciple to *“...wait for the promise of the Father, which saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”* (Acts 1: 4b)

Then He gave them these important instructions, *“...It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”* (Vs.7-8)

So they received the Holy Ghost and went about in His power witnessing that the Lord Jesus was indeed raised from the dead and that He had come to show forth His glory through them.

The witness of the Holy Spirit is not always in how well we behave throughout the events of life; it is meant to show that He is alive in us and that He speaks to us and through us. When Peter received the Holy Ghost, he became a new man. He was on fire with the Word of God and he went about telling how *“...those things which God had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer; he hath so fulfilled.”* (Act.3: 18)

Then Peter explained about this Christ *“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution*

of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (Vs.21)

Until the time when Christ appears in His body to begin God's final restitution, we are His witnesses through His Holy Spirit within. We are AS HE IS IN THIS WORLD. *“Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: BECAUSE AS HE IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD.”* (I Jn.4: 17)

Because we have been baptized and are daily baptized in His Holy Spirit, we are as He is in this world. Until the restitutions of all things as spoken by the mouth of all God's prophets, the Body of Christ is Christ in THIS world. Paul says it this way, *“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”* (Phil. 2: 15)

The church does not consist of the worldly organizations that are sprung all over the world; the church consists of all who have been “called out” of these places. The word “church” means “called out.” Since His resurrection, Jesus has been building this church upon the Rock of the revelation of who He really is. Jesus did not build a single one of the buildings that are called churches today. His church is not visible. He has been separating His people unto Himself and building them up in faith and knowledge of Him.

His church is impregnated with His pure Word and is ready to give birth to the new creation of sons in the earth. God has foreknown and foreordained those whom He has called for this divine purpose.

The Old Testament prophet Zechariah saw the church in a vision. She appeared as the golden candlestick that was in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of God and later in the Temple. John saw her the same way in his Patmos vision. She is the one that speaks with the voice of many waters. *“And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.”*

(priestly garment covers the entire body) (Rev.1: 13)

The candlestick that Zechariah saw was fed directly through seven pipes that went to the seven lamps. We know that the Bible calls this golden lamp holder a candlestick but it did not hold candles. Each branch held an oil lamp that had to be refilled with wicks that had to be trimmed. A picture of the church who has to be continually filled with the oil of the Spirit and whose wicks have to be continually trimmed lest the place becomes filled with smoke (The word is not clear).

Zechariah asks, *“What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again and said to him, What are these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”* (Zech.4: 11b-14)

The explanation is as follows, *“And I will give power unto my two witnesses and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”* (Rev.11: 3-4) His two witnesses are the two olive trees. The TWO candlesticks represent the full witness of the called out ones- Old and New Covenant.

Let us be reminded that His witnesses of the last days are not just ministries who carry messages from the Lord. There have been many messages over the years and centuries from His apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and they have brought us to where we are today. But this is another kind of “witnesses;” They are His two olive trees.

They are the ones that have been slain in the “streets” or “streams” of organized religions. Their connection has not been with the ways of men but with the anointing of God's Spirit. With the Christ of God. They have not been recognized in the

churches of men. They have been working so to speak “underground.” They have not been seen but their oil of life has been flowing freely to the true church of the Lamb. They have been laying dead in the streets of men, but they have been very much alive in that city whose maker and builder is God.

They have been standing before the God of the earth and they are about to arise in full power with the fire of God's word proceeding out of their mouth to devour their enemies. *“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.”* (Rev.11: 5)

These do not represent 'two people' as some may believe; they represent a company of people who have found union with the two (designating witness) olive trees. Paul speaks of true Israel as the good olive tree. The tree represents the embodiment of the Law and the Prophets fulfilled in the flesh by God's grace and truth (Jesus Christ).

The two witnesses are a company of people in whose hearts and minds the Law of God is written. They have gone through the fire and have come out pure. They have washed their garments (covering) in the blood of the Lamb. They are totally cleansed from their sins.

Do you see yourself in this company? Do you see how you have walked through the fire with the Lord and how He has been purifying you from the love of the world? Do you see how He has opened a new realm of understanding to you and then found that what He has shown you did not fit with what your church was doing?

We may not have been persecuted as some in past history that stood for the faith, but we were persecuted in a way as we found ourselves so alone surrounded with those who do not understand us. I have been reading a book about the history of the Huguenots in France. The Huguenots followed a wave of the Spirit led by John Calvin out of the Roman Catholic Church.

It was at the time of King Louis XIV that the per-

secution became fierce. He ordered their estates burnt to the ground. Many of the women were raped and the men imprisoned and abused until they died of Tuberculosis or starvation.

Their sons were taken from them to be raised in the Catholic faith. Their daughters were entered into convents. Their families devastated. Yet they stood strong for the faith.

Their leader was John Calvin who fled to Switzerland and made his headquarters in Geneva. Many Huguenots were able to flee and relocated in countries who accepted Protestantism such as England, Switzerland, Germany and many came to the States to find refuge and freedom to worship. Their teachings of God's predestination and His absolute sovereignty found a niche in some of the branches of Presbyterianism.

As God pulled His witnesses out of the clutches of men's religions, there has always been a form of persecution and out of these, new groups have been formed. However the sign of the very last times is that the witnesses will no longer be able to regroup. They are as an underground network, linked together by the power of the Holy Spirit. The logo of this church is “NOT BY MIGHT, NOT BY POWER BUT BY MY SPIRIT SAITH THE LORD.”

Indeed, if we look back to the way we have been brought to this, we will find that we have unknowingly been His true witnesses in the earth. The anointing oil of the two olive trees has been flowing freely into our Spirit, anointing our souls and renewing our minds so that our bodies will be raised in the image of His wonderful resurrected Life. Hallelujah, the Lord God reigneth!

Because of His love, *Jackie Caporaso*