

Living In The Present “BUT NOW”

Message # 3

THAT’S IT ! NO MORE SPECIAL GIFTS !

What if we announced we had healing cloths available at the podium?

They would be provided FREE of course with a \$25.00 donation!

Acts 19:11,12 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:
12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

How disappointed people are to not get physical healing

when they sincerely try so hard to follow scripture ---

and God doesn’t make it work!

That happens because those folks aren’t established in right division.

**Today, we’ll find out how Complete Revelation prevails
over Personal Experiences.**

Each of these 5 messages are designed

to consider some of Paul’s ‘But Now’ statements.

Paul had a special commission from God.

The Mystery Revelation he wrote in the Bible (which WAS hidden

‘But Now’ is known) actually completed the canon of scripture:

Col 1:25,26 Whereof I am made a minister,
according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you,
to FULFIL the word of God;

26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations,
but now is made manifest to his saints:

The Original 12 & The 13th Replacement

Jesus called 12 disciples and sent them out as apostles in Matt 10:1-4.

After Christ was crucified, risen, and ascended,

just before Pentecost,

the 11 were in an upper room,

waiting for the baptism with the Holy Ghost.

In Acts 1:14-19, they were all with one accord in prayer and supplication,

when Peter stood up and quoted scripture that must be fulfilled,

concerning Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Lord and hanged himself:

Acts 1:20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

Some people think the 11 apostles made the wrong choice

that God really wanted to pick PAUL.

But they fail to see the REQUIREMENTS for the candidates,

for which PAUL did not even qualify:

Acts 1:21-26 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Paul had not traveled with the disciples any of the time of Jesus' earthly ministry
nor had he certified Christ's resurrection then.

In fact, Paul wasn't even saved then.

He could not even have been considered as a nominee.

The 'Other' Apostle

Paul was personally chosen and instructed by the Lord Himself

He didn't even see the other apostles until 3 years later (Gal 1:17-19):

Gal 1:11-16 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man.

12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it:

14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace.

16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

In this next passage concerning Christ's resurrection, let's notice 2 things:

1) God (through Paul) included Matthias when He numbered the 12 apostles.

Paul was not, and could not have been, one of the 12.

2) Paul was the last to see Christ Paul is the 'due time' testifier (1 Tim 2:5-7):

1 Cor 15:5-10 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.

8 And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

Paul made the Corinthian saints AWARE that the special gifts would STOP

They would 'fade away' in God's timing --- NOT by people FORCING others to QUIT.

Prophecy, tongues, and special knowledge would not be necessary

once God's revelation was complete:

1 Cor 13:8-12 Charity never faileth:

- but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;
- whether there be tongues, they shall cease;
- whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

He even explained to them WHY and WHEN the gifts would be discontinued.

Right then they only had partial knowledge because the scriptures were not complete:

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

What the 'perfect' is ... is misunderstood by people who don't know right division.

They think 'that which is perfect' is Christ,

and that the sign gifts will continue until He returns.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

The subject is plainly 'MATURITY' here in these verses.

11 When I was a child (with only partial knowledge), I spake as a child,
I understood as a child, I thought as a child:
but when I became a man (fully knowledgable and mature),
I put away childish (immature, incomplete) things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face:
now I know in part (partial knowledge);
but then shall I know even as also I am known. (I'll have complete, entire revelation.)

But 'that which is perfect' is the 'completed scriptures'

because it is the 'FULL revelation' from God

It is the entire word of God that 'perfects' a man:

2 Tim 3:16,17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 **That the man of God may be perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The sign gifts of PROPHECY TONGUES and KNOWLEDGE

were given for the purpose of speaking God's word

They were to	• authenticate	• validate	• verify	• confirm
	• identify	• compile	• copy	• distribute

the epistles that were scripture (God's word)

to make a Bible that would be both PURE and PRESERVED

through time and history.

Corinth was not the only church that 'copied and passed out' a letter from God.

Neither were they the only place that got a 'direct' letter from God.

Paul told them to realize that HIS letter was scripture.

1 Cor 14:36-40 What? came the word of God out from you?
or came it unto you only?

37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.

Because ALL letters that were written then to the churches were NOT scripture, the 'apostles and prophets' had to verify which ones were, and which were not:

2 Thes 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter ***as from us***, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

The forgeries and counterfeits had to be weeded out by the specialty-gifted men.

Notice the TIME that Christ gave these special gifts to men.

He gave them 'WHEN He ascended up on high' --- THEN not NOW.

Looking at it from today's standpoint it was an event that happened in the PAST:

Eph 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

What gifts did He give

to certain men -- who were alive on earth at the time He went up to Heaven?

Eph 4:11-13 And he gave

- some, **apostles**;
- and some, **prophets**;
- and some, **evangelists**;
- and some, **pastors**
- and **teachers**;

WHY did He give those gifts?

- 12
- For the perfecting of the saints,
 - for the work of the ministry,
 - for the edifying of the body of Christ:

HOW LONG were the gifts going to function?

- 13 **TILL** we all come in the unity of the faith, (unity in Eph 4:3, one faith in Eph 4:5) and of the knowledge of the Son of God, (Eph 3:4,19; Col 1:9; 1 Tim 2:4) unto a perfect man, (Phil 3:15-17; Col 1:26-28; 2 Tim 3:16,17) unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (Eph 1:22,23; 3:19; Col 1:19; 2:9) (This list has been fulfilled through the revelation God gave to Paul.)

There were other apostles alive then besides the 12 and Paul ---

but after they died out there were no more given:

1 Cor 12:28-30 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

In Acts 14:14, Barnabas is called an apostle.

In 1 Thess 1:1 and 2:6, Silvanus and Timotheus are named and called apostles.

In the 'But Now', God named the church The Body of Christ:

1 Cor 12:18-20 **But now** hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 **But now** are they many members, yet but one body.

Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

The gifts were active in the Body until the scriptures were completed:

Rom 12:4-8 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,

- whether **prophecy**, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 • Or **ministry**, let us wait on our ministering:

- or he that **teacheth**, on teaching;

8 • Or he that **exhorteth**, on exhortation:

- he that **giveth**, let him do it with simplicity;

- he that **ruleth**, with diligence;

- he that **sheweth mercy**, with cheerfulness.

Paul himself had ability to work miracles --- but the gifts obviously left him also.

By the latter part of his ministry, he was unable to heal his friends:

Phil 2:26,27 For he (**Epaphroditus**) longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

1 Tim 5:23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

2 Tim 4:20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

In the dispensation of grace

and in English ONLY in the Authorized King James Version

if someone tells you they saw an angel --- you have a verse that says they didn't:

Col 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath NOT seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

So, **WHATEVER they THINK they saw - or visualized - or dreamed - or hallucinated - or experienced**

the BIBLE says it was NOT an angel.

We can't and don't see angels

but they watch and observe us (Ref. 1 Cor 11:10, 1 Tim 5:21):

1 Cor 4:9 For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.

... and angels learn the mystery program of God's hidden wisdom from us:

Eph 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

Satan's plan for victory was the cross

but that was the very thing that God used to defeat him.

1 Cor 2:7-8 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

When God revealed it through Paul

the Devil and his co-horts were publically disgraced:

Col 2:15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (that is, the cross, from vs. 14).

Yes, God embarrassed Satan by keeping a SECRET (Ezek 28:1-19):

1 Cor 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

Let's be careful that we don't fall prey to their wicked, religious schemes:

1 Tim 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Christ distributed special gifts to men when He ascended on high

So now with the completed word of God:

Eph 4:14-15 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

The Devil's arena of deception is religion. Let us not be party to it:

2 Cor 4:1-2 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

May we who know that God's word is the final authority

and that His revelation to man is complete in the scriptures

have the courage to speak up

when someone says "God told me thus and so."

We know He didn't and we understand why.