

Which are you in: RELIGION – or RELATIONSHIP?

FREE the Holy Spirit to work in your fellowship



August 2016

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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

Summary: Did YHVH the living God ever create any religion? Or is He after an intimate relationship? Does any religion really allow the heart of God to be expressed? Who's leading your fellowship? Is it the Holy Spirit – or human leaders? Who sets the agenda or the "liturgy"?

Do you hear the Shepherd's voice (John 10:27)? Are you and your group actually being led by God's Holy Spirit? Do you see the gifts of the Spirit at work in every member? What are *your* gifts of the Spirit and are you allowed to use your gifts? Are you encouraged to use God's Spirit to edify your fellowship – or is that role exclusive to ordained ministers? This and much more in this intriguing message. Giving the Holy Spirit free reign to work in your life and fellowship requires faith – because you or other humans – are no longer directing things.

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Welcome to **our totally free website**, family of our heavenly father – from wherever you are. We never charge you a penny for using and listening and reading from our website. God's word was freely given to me and so I share it with you without asking you to pay anything. I do thank those of you who from time to time send offerings, as we do support a group of orphans and their pastor in Kenya – so now they are in school, have beds to sleep on, have running water, have food and medical supplies, and more – because of the contributions from some of you. SO thank you, but we never charge anything for using our site. IN fact, I hope you help spread the word.

Some of you may be from the USA or Israel or Britain or Russia or Switzerland or Kenya. Welcome to all of you. This site is about our Light and our Rock. It's all about HIM – and from the beginning this has been a faith based ministry that focuses on our relationships: first with our Father and Savior Yeshua (Jesus) and secondly with one another.

I have some questions for you today:

- **Which religion did God start – and it's therefore the true religion?**
- What religion are you a part of? Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism – or are you a sabbath-keeping Christian as your religion? What is it?

Webster's Dictionary says religion is "the belief in a god or group of gods; the organized system of beliefs, ceremonies and rules used to worship a god or group of gods." It also goes on to say "A personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs and practices".

Says WHO? On whose authority? James 1 says we can claim to be religious but if we don't bridle our tongue, our religion is in vain. Worthless.

Don't forget Yeshua (Jesus) himself told the religious Jewish leaders of his day that they made God's law, God's Torah, "of no effect" because of their TRADITIONS, or "commandments of men", as he called them. He was referring to the Jewish Oral law, which in practice seem to trump the written law of God! And that's nonsense to believe "commandments or traditions of men" can trump God's word!

(Example – open motel room for someone on sabbath; fridge lights; etc. Examples given in the audio about: "system of beliefs, ceremonies and rules" that are implemented.)

Are those ceremonies, rules and liturgy – the order of what happens when and by whom – set down *by God in His word* anywhere? Certainly there's some instruction in those things, especially in Timothy/Titus Pastoral Epistles, but not nearly like people think of "church" today.

Now to answer my own questions: I don't believe God started "religion". I believe all religions – including sabbath keeping ones – end up being a set of man-made rules and traditions and not what God started.

Don't confuse "religion" with your fellowship – though that could end up being religion too.

For example, religion gets into things such as what you have to wear at church services. What time services begin and end. Who does what. Who gets to speak and teach others? What the leader/pastor/preachers look like or dress like. What is done first, second and third? When do we do announcements? What is allowed and what is not allowed.

So I've even attended with groups that had guards at the door to keep the riff-raff out. Or those who were speaking had to wear a white shirt, tie and suit. And mostly, everyone goes to hear one or two speakers and then go home. Religion – "church" – becomes a routine so we can feel good about having done our worship and made our contact with God and his people for the week – until next time.

But God wants more than that.

I'm going to say some things that will shock some of you.

- **GOD IS NOT INTO RELIGION.**
- **God (YHVH Elohim) never started the Jewish religion of Judaism.** Nor did Moses. Nor did Ezra or any of the prophets. The religion called "Judaism" today – though it uses scriptures from the word of God – is not the religion Moses taught. I promise you, Moses did not pray from the Siddur (Their prayer book). He did not start or practice all the rules about which shoe you put on first, or what you should do to a flea that's biting you on the sabbath, or that you can't even open your fridge on the sabbath as a light would come on. Moses had nothing to do with all that. Moses was not about religion. Nor was God. And what we now know as Judaism is a far cry from the real teachings of scripture as I will show you.

- I promise you – neither did **YHVH Elohim start Islam**. They claim it's from their moon god *Allah*, not that far removed grammatically from *Eloah* – one of the Hebrew titles of our God, the Strong One. But the one true living God is not at all a part of Islam or their Sharia laws.
- I also promise you that **Yehovah is not in the religions** of Buddhism, Hinduism or the many versions of many religions around the world.
- Now the really big shocker: Neither did **YESHUA – Jesus – found the Christian religion as we know it today**. I promise you, Peter never dressed up like the modern-day popes. The liturgy and rituals we see in **Catholicism** – and all their history of slaughtering scores of MILLIONS in their pogroms, inquisitions and crusades – were not of God. NEITHER was or is God behind all the thousands of sects of **Protestantism** – each one claiming to be “more right” than the next one.

I promise you, Christ and the early Christians never kept Easter or Christmas. They worshipped on the sabbath and had a very different kind of “church service” than we see going on today...

Please hear my sermon on

<http://www.lightontherock.org/index.php/message/paganism-in-christianity>

I DO need to do a sermon on “Paganism in Judaism” as well, to be fair. I am *not* saying that there are no Sunday-keeping Christians who are real children of God. Not saying that at all. *I'm saying the RELIGION called Protestant Christianity – or Catholic Christianity -- is not what God is really all about.* There are just too many things in our modern church practices that have their roots in paganism and liturgies and things that keep us away from having the closer walk we should have.

- Now a really big shocker to some of you: Neither is God in your religions, whatever it is. *I'm including even the sabbath-keeping religions in that statement.* I'm including Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventism in that. *God is NOT in religion* – at least as we see *religion* today.

All too often, religion keeps us from the kind of relationship God really wants with us.

MOST religion today is really a bunch of *man's traditions and rules and man's commandments*, and people go to hear a sermon, and then often forget about it after that. Religion is too often man's traditions, but which ends up keeping us from each other – and from the one we claim to worship

What I'm saying is what Father wants with us is what every father really wants: a close relationship. Religion all too often gets in the way of that. A fellowship that is focusing on the right things should result in a closer walk with God –***all day long, all 7 days a week, not just on the day we attend church services.***

Let me be sure I'm clear on a few points:

- ***I'm NOT advocating you quit “going to church”. Where possible, we are to meet with fellow believers and not forsake the assembling of ourselves***

Hebrews 10:24-25

"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

Matthew 18:20

"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

Be careful that attending a fellowship doesn't devolve into "playing church". Make sure you don't "go to church" mostly for the social interaction, especially when you have kids, and end up doing it for the kids. Remember, even just 2 or three gathering in Yeshua's name – is enough.

WHY is this even worth talking about?

- **As you'll see, the CORRECT worship of God will result in you HEARING HIS LEADING. Yeshua said "My sheep HEAR MY VOICE".** John 10:27. Much more on that later.
- Worship that is based on the leading of the Holy Spirit will result in even more active involvement of God's spirit in the fellowship.
- You'll be witnessing the flowing of the spirit in miracles, healings, even speaking in tongues that the person never learned. There will gifts – and I mean gifts and abilities that were not there before (or else it couldn't be a "gift") clearly evident and being used to serve the brethren – and this flowing of the spirit will not be just from the ministers, but from everyone who has God's spirit.

***But what we too often see is a dead service, no flowing of the spirit, even pre-planned, everything choreographed. There's NO perception of being led by God's leading and God's voice though everyone claims to be seeking the leading of the Spirit. Instead we have what men say we need to hear or do or say.

- **Yeshua says it's possible to worship HIM in vain. "IN VAIN do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of MEN." Matthew 15:9**

Jesus was already dealing with this way back then. Let's read it.

Matthew 15:1-9

Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, 2 "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread."

3 He answered and said to them, **"Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?"** 4 For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' 5 But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God" — 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.' **Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.** 7 Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying:

8 "These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. **9 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**"

Your religion, I'd dare say, and every religion – is full of "commandments of men" and "traditions" that take us away from a closeness with our father.

- Yeshua also said he's going to tell some people (and we always apply this to "those folks in that church over there", and not to ourselves), that it's possible to hear him tell me and you "I never knew you".

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

That's an interesting verse because elsewhere Jesus said not to forbid someone who was casting out demons in His name, "for he who is not against us is on our side" (Luke 9:49-50). Here's a more complete account:

Mark 9:38-41

Now John answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us."

39 But Jesus said, "Do not forbid him, for no one who works a miracle in My name can soon afterward speak evil of Me. 40 For he who is not against us is on our side. 41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.

So there can be people who are not part of your fellowship who will receive a reward and be allowed to do great miracles in Jesus' name. But if they teach a way of lawlessness (Matt 7:23), they could be in trouble with the Messiah.

So it's possible to worship in vain. It's possible to hear him say "I never knew you" – even to people who were doing marvelous works in his name. But this should not discourage us from letting the Spirit flow in us and witness the Spirit performing great miracles and leading the ekklesia actively.

So what God wants is a strong and close relationship with us. Like any FATHER – he wants to hear from his children and wants his children to hear HIM.

So let's contrast and compare 'RELIGION' with the kind of worship that is SPIRIT-centered, seeking the leading of God the Father and Yeshua the Messiah through the spirit.

FIRST LET'S LOOK AT EARLY SERVICES OF THE EARLY BELIEVERS

1. RELATIONSHIP-BASED SPIRITUAL LIFE – LED by GOD through His Spirit

Religions are led by a man – the Pope, the Dalai Lama, the senior pastor of your church – and the people respond to that.

In the audio of this sermon, I have the story of what happened at a wedding. I was asked, "what CHURCH do you go to? WHO's your leader?" (Hear the audio)

From the beginning, God intended his people to hear his voice. Adam and Eve certainly did. Enoch and Noah certainly did. Abraham had dinner with the One who became Messiah (Genesis 18) – and he referred to him as Adonai as well as YHVH (see Genesis 21:33 for one example).

Many of the prophets heard "the Voice" or even saw the God of Israel, though not in his bright glory. Even the child Samuel saw Him, though we're clearly told that "the word of YHVH was rare in those days" (**1 Samuel 3:1**). **V 10- "Now YHVH came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel, Samuel".** Then in v 21:

1 Samuel 3:21

"Then YHVH appeared again in Shiloh. For **YHVH revealed Himself to Samuel** in Shiloh by the word of YHVH".

And we all know who the WORD was, right? He was the One who created all things and was God, and was with God, and became flesh as the Son of God (John 1:1-3; 14).

And it was commonplace for prophets and even ordinary people at times – to hear from God. The "Word of the LORD came and said..."

What's happened since then? Does Yah still speak? Of course. But if we have too much NOISE going on and distractions, and if you're not keenly listening for Him or seeking him – you'll miss it.

Peter, James and John heard the voice from the bright cloud on the Mt of Transfiguration – "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, **hear him**" (**Matthew 17:5**). "Hear HIM". Hear HIM. He's our focus – not any man or set dogmas of men. Ask Him to speak to you. Ask him to reveal himself and to guide and lead you.

All through the Bible we're admonished to be careful to listen, to hear. The Shema in fact is "HEAR, O Israel, YHVH our Elohim is one God. (**Deuteronomy 6:4**). It refers to hearing His voice.

The **Laodiceans** are warned to **HEAR HIS VOICE** and open the door they've shut in his face, leaving him outside their fellowship!. He's outside calling out to us. THAT PROVES he still speaks – as that is END TIME prophecy. (**Revelation 3:20-21**).

The early believers heard or received – together—clear messages from God's spirit. When and where can a group today claim something like this? But it IS happening, but not that often. What we're about to read is said so matter of factly:

Acts 13:1-3

"Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord and

fasted, **the Holy Spirit said**, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

HOW did they hear it? How did they all hear and know the same message? This is what I'm talking about! We need to be hearing the leading and guiding and teaching of the Holy Spirit! God changes not! "Jesus Christ -- the same yesterday, today and forever". (**Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6** – "I change not")

Hebrews 3:7 warns us – "Therefore as the Holy spirit says, 'Today if you will HEAR HIS VOICE and not harden your hearts as in the rebellion...'"

I believe God speaks to us today in many ways. We have to be tuned in. Sometimes he speaks to us in very clear strong thoughts – that you often realize came out of nowhere and are not your thoughts. "Call someone" – just happened in the past 2 days. Neighbor lady had been trying to reach us – needed help. It was Clear as a bell – "call Janice, she needs help"

For more on this hear my sermons on **"Hearing God's Voice"** and **"Experiencing the Almighty."**

Other times he speaks to us via our spouses, or friends, or even strangers. Sometimes it's by events taking place. Or sometimes even in sermons or Bible studies done by others. But I'm especially looking for the direct personal words you will start hearing in strong thoughts in your head – if you will tune in!

Yeshua likened himself to a shepherd and notice the things he says in John 10. He enters by the door to the fold – v 3- - the sheep hear His voice, and he calls out his own sheep by name and leads them out. (He knows you!). v. 4- the sheep know his voice and follow him. Follow HIM.

John 10:16 –

"Other sheep I have who are not part of this fold; them I must also bring, and they will hear my voice; and there will be ONE FLOCK and ONE shepherd (Christ)."

John 10:27—"MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE".

Are you hearing his voice? You're supposed to be if you're part of his flock. If you ignore the strong thoughts and ideas that come from God, the voice will become ever fainter. LISTEN for it and check it against God's word and then HEAR HIM. (In the audio I recount the "go check your email" story)

Story – how my sermon ideas kept being about a different topic. Finally let the Spirit lead me, and that's what I spoke on. The comments of the lady in the audience afterwards.

Let me say point #1 again: THE RELATIONSHIP based worship is one LED BY GOD, not by man. God ordains and calls elders and leaders and pastors, sure. But the ultimate shepherd is Christ. The Sheep HEAR HIS voice. The sheep – EACH of them, ALL of them – hear his voice, not just the voice of their pastor.

In a relationship of any loving and functional family, the children hear their Dad's voice and obey. They follow what their Dad says. Sometimes it should just be a gesture, a look, and

we know what Dad wants. It's the same with our heavenly Father. We should be looking for his leading and guiding.

Romans 8:14

"For as many as **are led by** the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

DO you experience a life that is LED by God's spirit...or is that an ephemeral concept?

Pray for his leading when there are decisions or even feelings at stake. PRAY FOR it. Ask for him to show you himself. Ask him to speak to you and that you'll hear his voice.

STORY on the audio: My brother Loren- - story at Panera Bread in Ventura, CA. I believe we experienced an angel that day.

Not quite sure what it means? Or is it something you are living by, day by day – you hear God's voice, you see where He's leading you – or not? IF not, make that a prayer request that he opens your eyes to see where He is, where he's going, where he wants you to be and then follow. And ask him to speak to you, and to show you how to hear his voice.

SEEK his voice. SEEK his leading.

Now for the next point, let's say it a different way.

2. RELATIONSHIP BASED WORSHIP LETS THE HOLY SPIRIT DO ITS WORK THROUGH EACH OF THE BRETHREN.

This is why Paul likened the ekklesia to a body where each member (leg, arm, tongue, etc) does its part. It seems we take our body parts for granted – until we hurt one of the parts. I pulled my hamstring a few weeks ago and little did I know how much I rely on that part of my leg and muscle. We need ALL the body parts doing each one's part.

Too many congregations seem to want only the mouth or tongue to do all the work – the speaker, the minister. It's much more. There are dozens of other body parts!

Don't forget: the pastors were to work "for the equipping of the SAINTS for the work of ministry, for the **edifying of the body of Christ**" (Eph 4:12). The brethren are also to edify the body; the brethren are also in ministry – in service, in other words, not just the ordained ministers. Where do you see that happening? And then we wonder why we aren't experiencing the flowing of the Spirit?

Ephesians 4:15-16

"but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by **what every joint supplies**, according to the effective working by **which every part** does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love."

Part of letting the Holy Spirit use the ENTIRE BODY for the good of the body is that each one is supposed to come ready to GIVE and SHARE something to everyone. I don't see that happening much. It's supposed to be happening. We should come ready to GIVE and share something – not just coming to receive and hear, but we have a part too.

1 Corinthians 14:26-31 CJB

“What is our conclusion, brothers? Whenever you come together, let everyone be ready with a psalm or a teaching or a revelation, or ready to use his gift of tongues or give an interpretation; but let everything be for edification. 27 If the gift of tongues is exercised, let it be by two or at most three, and each in turn; and let someone interpret. 28 And if there is no one present who can interpret, let the people who speak in tongues keep silent when the congregation meets — they can speak to themselves and to God. 29 Let two or three prophets speak, while the others weigh what is said. 30 And if something is revealed to a prophet who is sitting down, let the first one be silent.”

- Paul said don't forbid the speaking in tongues (1 Cor. 14:39)
- **Study 1 Cor 14. It gives us a peek into the early services. There was not necessarily a set format.** If someone was speaking and the Spirit speaks to someone else, that speaker is to let the other speak now. WHERE IS THAT happening? Some pastors hearing this would fear there would be utter chaos! So Paul teaches that everything must be done decently and in order. So Paul said, one at a time, maximum 3, if it was a matter of speaking in tongues. (1 Cor. 14:39-40)

EVERYONE in the congregation should be helping cause growth in the Body. That includes you. Everyone. There is no more male or female in Christ (**Galatians 3:28**), and certainly the women are also members of the body of Christ and have a HUGE contribution of their gifts with which they can share! The early believers had no problem recognizing that Philip had 4 four virgin daughters who were prophetesses and had revelations from God (**Acts 21:9**). The early church had no problem with that! Would *your* fellowship today let them utter a single prophetic word? Paul spoke of women who prophesied with their head uncovered (1 Cor. 11:4-5) and that it should be well covered with long hair.

Certainly in **Acts 2:17-18**, Peter used the occasion to point out that daughters also would have the Spirit poured out on them and he likened it to the prophecy of Joel 2. Peter says sons and daughter and menservants and maid servants would all prophesy!

EVERYONE who is led by God's spirit is supposed to be demonstrating FRUIT and GIFTS of the Holy Spirit. Everyone. But we've gotten away from that, haven't we? Who among us can even say with certainty what their GIFTS of the Spirit are? But if we're being LED by the Spirit, we will have those gifts and we will be using them.

A GIFT is something you didn't have before. Obvious, isn't it? A GIFT of the spirit is something you didn't have before you had the Holy Spirit – so it's not referring to talents and abilities you “were gifted” with at birth (art, music, math, public speaking, etc.)

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. 8 for to one is given the word of **wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of **knowledge** through the same Spirit, 9 to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another gifts of **healings** by the same Spirit, 10 to another the**

working of **miracles**, to another **prophecy**, to another **discerning of spirits**, to another **different kinds of tongues**, to another the **interpretation of tongues**. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, **distributing to each one individually as He wills**".

There's a lot there. In Spirit-led services, EACH ONE comes to contribute something to the body - -not just feed off of a sermon by one man. Re-read Verse 7. Pastors, it's time to encourage your brethren to be asking God to show them their gifts, and for you to LET your congregation manifest the Holy spirit in each of them by and in those gifts. Are you willing to let the Spirit lead and guide your services?

And again, I don't believe a gift of the spirit is something you already had as a talent or ability. Sure, at birth Yah may have gifted you with musical ability, art ability or ability with numbers or public speaking. But then later – you receive another gift of the spirit which is clearly a gift of God's spirit --something – like any gift – you did not have before.

IN a righteous functional family, even the children are allowed to say what is on their minds, to voice concerns, to give ideas. (**Story – our weekly FAMILY NIGHT** while children were little).

When Yeshua sent out the disciples, he said there would be SIGNS that would surely follow those who believe; ALL those who believe -- such as casting out demons in his name, they would not be hurt by deadly vipers, etc. Let's read it:

Mark 16:17-18

"And these signs will follow those who believe [not just ministers and pastors! But even then, do we see these signs working in the pastors?]: In My name they will cast out **demons; they **will speak with new tongues**; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.**"**

Are we seeing people being healed instantly? Are we seeing demons being cast out? Are we seeing people speaking in new tongues? The Bible speaks of "tongues of men and of angels" (1 Cor. 13:1).

So in the early church, there were prophets who were daughters of Philip. Other prophets included Agabus and possibly Ananias in Damascus. There was Stephen – a deacon – did great signs and wonders, as did the deacon Philip (Acts 6:5), who later was called "the evangelist" (Acts 21:8).

Acts 6:8-10

And Stephen [the deacon – Acts 6:5], full of faith and power, **did great wonders and signs among the people**. Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke

Acts 8:4-8

Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. 5 Then Philip [the deacon] went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and **seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.** And there was great joy in that city.

And we realize that everyone who is called of God is to let the Spirit flow out of them and bring life to more people – to disciple more people. Discipling was not just for pastors. When the Jerusalem congregation was forced to flee for their lives in the persecution that rabbi Shaul (Paul) started, it was the brethren who went everywhere preaching the word. The apostles stayed in Jerusalem! That's all in Acts 8:1-5.

Acts 8:1-6

Now Saul was consenting to his death.

At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; **and they were all scattered throughout the regions** of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. 5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them."

Have YOU preached the word to anyone? Why NOT? You're supposed to be! I was speaking with a prospect recently who was only 42 or so and already had stage 4 cancer – in her breast, liver, pancreas and brain, and she had a toddler. Short story: I told her Jesus still heals and how he healed me of cancer. She's a Catholic but believed in Jesus – so I prayed with her over the phone with her permission. Nobody Jesus healed in his lifetime was a spirit-led believer, remember. Nobody!

3. RELATIONSHIP-BASED WORSHIP IS ABOUT YESHUA. HE's your anchor, your Leader, your base, your ROCK. It's not about you; it's not about your star preacher pastor. It's about you!

The 2 men on the road to Emmaus. What did Yeshua show them in the scriptures? How everything pointed to HIM. **Luke 24:13-27.** (Explain story –then read what Yeshua says)

Luke 24:25-27

"Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the **Scriptures the things concerning Himself**"

As we grow in this, we begin to see ***that everything does point to Yeshua***, the Messiah. A spirit-led congregation will be pointing everything to HIM.

- The tabernacle and all the furniture of the tabernacle – all picture Christ.
- The various animal sacrifices – all picture him.
- The armor of God – every single piece is picture of Christ. HE is our helmet of salvation, that's his name. HE is our belt of truth. HE is our righteousness. He is the

sword of the spirit, which IS the word of God. And WHO is the Word of God? He is the good news we shod our feet with and talk about him wherever our feet go.

And Yeshua also leads us to understand we should be looking most of all for the spiritual intent of all scripture. We so often get lost in the physical statements and miss the bigger points.

- What we teach and say should not be based so much on our group's published statements of belief as much as the leading and guiding of God's spirit. God's spirit will guide us into ALL truth, Yeshua said (John 16:13). Look more for the SPIRIT of the word, what is intended and what lessons can be learned as you read.

For example:

- "Don't muzzle an ox" – Deut 25:4; 1 Cor. 9:9-12. (hear the audio)
- Don't curse the deaf. **Lev 19:14** --Don't say bad things about people who can't hear what you're saying or know what you're saying.
- Don't put stumbling blocks in front of the blind (don't delight in showing how wrong someone else's teaching is).

4. RELATIONSHIP –BASED WORSHIP IS NEVER STATIC. All relationships need to be tended.

Relationships – husband-wife, boss/employee, classmates, friends – all need attention or they die a slow death.

Are we seeking first the kingdom of God and HIS righteousness? **Matthew 6:33**. First thing, every day? I have a full sermon on this if you need some incentive to be putting this first ("Most important time and place each day" – April 16, 2016)

<http://www.lightontherock.org/index.php/message/most-important-time-and-place-each-day>

Unrepented, casual sin – or refusing to FIGHT the temptations we face daily -- will ruin your relationship and will keep you from hearing His voice – at least until you deeply repent and seek him with all your heart again. **If you love Christ, you will keep his commands (John 14:15)**. If we say we know him and do not walk as he walked (obediently), we are liars and do not know him (**1 John 2:3-6**).

All good relationships are based on TRUSTING the other; on having faith in, each other. Without Faith it's impossible to please God (**Hebrews 11:6**). And God must know that we're growing in our ability to rest in him, to trust him, to believe him, to relax and not panic so much in all our trials

STORY -- As a child, you learned to trust in your dad and his driving, or that he could save you (**time I was stuck in some sticky mud as a child**). One time our fishing boat capsized in Philippines – but dad was there, and calm – and so I felt no fear.

We have to come to see God in our trials and learn to trust him, no matter how dire it seemed.

Families love each other. Father and Yeshua must know you love them as well as they loving you.

Yeshua said "if you love me, keep my commandments" – John 14:15, and that we will abide in His love as we obey and keep his commands (John 15:10).

(**Story: my daughter Rachel as a young child** – had to correct her, she apologized saying “I love you daddy” – and in exasperation I muttered out, “Well then, if you love me, do what I tell you to do!” And John 14:15 came roaring back in my head. That’s what Jesus said too!)

Never static: We have to continue to keep the blaze of zeal going. We have to continue to feed off the spirit and make our lives open to the Spirit’s direction in our lives.

- **Uzziah** – was blessed as long as he sought the LORD. But that relationship ebbed when he sought to offer incense as a priest and was struck with leprosy.
- **Jehoshaphat** – after the amazing display of faith in 2 Chron 20 – also ebbed
- **Even Elijah** – after the breath-taking faith of 1 Kings 18 – the next chapter shows how quickly relationship can change.

5. RELATIONSHIP –BASED WORSHIP IS BASED ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP – NOT SOMEONE ELSE’S. It’s YOUR responsibility, not the pastor’s.

So YOU pray, YOU fast, you seek him. YOU ask for more of the Holy Spirit, for more of God’s wisdom.

In RELIGIONS – in many cases the flock is told to just trust their pastor or priest. IN the “old days”, they didn’t even allow the members to have their own Bibles. People who translated Bibles into the local language were often burned alive at the stake.

Does your pastor get all buggy when he finds out you’ve been listening to sermons from somewhere else? Or doing your own Bible study and learning some great things as the Spirit guides you? Imagine that? Or is there consternation if he finds out some of the flock are getting together without him to discuss the Bible?

Must not be! Come to Christ! Seek HIM that you may have life.

John 5:39-40

“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 ***But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life***”

Yeshua said that to the JEWS around him – not just to their leaders.

The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. That could take time. So we’re not quick to dismiss someone because they have a belief or two that is different from ours (Except for CORE beliefs like Yeshua/Jesus is the Son of God and was uncreated GOD in the beginning).

There’s so much more to say...

But the whole focus of this sermon is to have us focusing on

- **our own relationship with Christ and our Father and not relying just on leaders**
- **To turn our “receivers” on** – and start tuning in to God’s leading and to his voice... MY Sheep will hear my voice; START each day with prayer; spend time with God

MANY times a day, each day... and ASK HIM to speak and ask him to open your ears to his voice.

- **To understand that YOU have been given gifts of the Holy Spirit - and ask God to reveal what they are (yours and others) and how you are to use them to edify His body. Then step out in faith – and use them. If your pastor won't let you, find a body of believers who let the Spirit flow.**
- **Ask God to show you the REAL MEANING of verses you're reading – and the spiritual intent...**
- **Ask him to let you have the faith to follow the leading of His Spirit – whether you're by yourself or with a group.**

Acts 2:14-21

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.
16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith **God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:**

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

BE READY for it. God's spirit is moving. There's going to be a great moving of the Spirit among God's people. Get ready for it. We will see prophecies, healings, great works and wonders and miracles....

Remember He promised he would be with us to the end of the age.

And he promised that those who believed would have great signs and wonders follow them.

We're there. Let's seek it and be open to it and use it – to His glory. Let's let God lead us, truly LEAD us, by HIS spirit.