

## To worship in Spirit and in Truth

2 Tim. 3.1-5 : "But mark this: 'There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a form of godliness but denying its power (Thompson Chain-Ref. Bible, NIV,1990).

The aforementioned text clearly points to extreme self-centredness, self-indulgent complacency, in other words, being taken with the Self and with the pleasures of the world - the spirit of the times.

It is no wonder that modern Christendom cannot understand true spirituality anymore. Also why the Spirit of the Lord has to a large extent departed from the Body of Jesus and to such an extent that we are now on the whole sitting with a form of godliness. This prophetic word from Paul is therefore spot-on and indeed relative to our day and age.

Since the Toronto Blessing, we have been faced with so-called "dancing in the Spirit" and this type of spiritual demonstration has been so tightly knit with devotional worship, that it was, and still is, rationalized to the extreme and especially by pastors who, since its introduction to the assemblies, have supported it wholeheartedly.

I can remember, i.e. while watching a TV Church service in the nineties, how taken a pastor from one of the leading charismatic churches was with the dancers and their mesmerizing movements. As he was sitting in the front pew following their every move, he was clearly deeply impressed and I was of course quite amazed observing a man who was so outspoken against sin and sinful conduct also the "proper" way of serving God, that he was known for the "preacher who preached the hell out of you!". Now, anybody stuffed with prayer and the Spirit of God could sense that something was happening within the Body of Jesus and which was then impacting so strongly on the senses of those attending the service, that one could just describe it as a "foreign spirit" having taken possession of the Churches.

In retrospect, many will today admit that it was indeed a carnal spirit clearly connecting with the spirit of the world that had then subtly - yet blatantly - overtaken the real Spirit demonstration of God. Fact is, that wonderful revival God had sent after years and years of prayers and fastings, had then crudely been mixed with this type of admixture, leaving us with sacrifices the people of Israel had been sitting with as in the days of Micah and the Baalim worship. And the pastors were to blame for allowing it. Nobody else! They were also the ones who approved the mad "Toronto Blessing" that had wreaked havoc on the Body of Christ.

Now, there is indeed, and what especially those from earlier Pentecost will know all too well, "dancing in the Spirit", however, "true dancing in the Spirit" is not to be confused with cultic dances (almost in the form of habitual dances) as were also sometimes experienced in Pentecostal churches of earlier eras.

What I mean with "true dancing in the Spirit" is what I know occasionally had happened in earlier times and when God had healed, e.g. a sick person miraculously, i.e. when the Spirit of God was so powerfully manifested that she was instantly touched by Jesus. I have seen the touching of Jesus' hand later again and when a woman whose lower spine was busy disintegrating because of severe osteoporosis, was jumping up and down and dancing in the Spirit, completely healed when the instrument of God commanded: "Be healed in Jesus Name!"

Now we see something similar in Luke's Acts and when the lame man was healed by Peter and John - more or less like the miracle I have referred to previously, which had taken place in the fifties and when my Dad was praying for this very sickly woman who was emaciated and bedridden for months on end. Now, God worked in a marvellous way that specific day, revealing first and foremost through the Gift of tongues and prophecy the cause of her sickness.

After she had confessed her sins (see Ja. 5.16), he anointed her praying for her healing. He then commanded her in Jesus Name to rise and stand on her feet. The frail woman, in a miraculous way, thereupon jumped to her feet, and to the amazement of those present, began to dance in the power of God's Spirit, joyfully bringing glory to Jesus and exalting His Name.

It was then the Spirit of God that, in a mighty supernatural way, took hold of her and one can then only let go of all one's prejudices for such miraculous signs compels one to admit that it is indeed God Almighty in action. This is indeed the gift of miracles the apostles of Jesus had so often brought into action through faith in the Name of Jesus/Yeshua moving onlookers to faith in a living, risen Saviour.

I have also seen a prophet of God dancing before the Lord praising God whilst bringing glory to the risen Jesus. This is the type of individual, momentous anointing I have in mind when discussing the "real (spontaneous) Pentecostal dancing in the Spirit". There are other case studies I can also mention, however, I will leave it in the meantime here.

Dancing in the Spirit of God is then totally different from what we have, on the whole, seen in the Pentecostal and the Charismatic churches in recent decades. As long as we can differentiate between true (authentic) dancing in the Spirit coming directly from God and then, on the other hand, habitual, religious ritualistic dancing which we may rightly classify as "cultic" dances.

I know that God's Spirit can descend on a group of believers, then praising and worshiping God this way, yet even here, and although performing in unity of Spirit, it is as though each one of the worshipers is then moving individually under the unction of the Spirit and it is then not in the least as if one is imitating the other but everyone is then busy with God yet praising Him in one accord.

It seems the type of supernatural experience I have previously depicted, is on the whole strange for modern Christians and therefore many of the younger generation cannot differentiate between what is from God and what is not. Yet it is good to draw this parallel, applying it for sound instruction, for what we are sitting with today, i.e. generally on the Christian front, is what the Apostle Paul rightly describes in his letter as "a form of godliness". Fact is this type of superficial approach to worship has taken over in the Body of Jesus and especially since the Toronto Blessing phenomenon had made its impact.

A little more on this phenomenon: We are indeed called to praise and worship our God and so that bondages can be broken over us - "Put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness...." (Jeremiah). Praise and worship therefore get perfectly but this is, ironically, also that very area where satan comes in uninvited as this is the sphere where man's spirit reaches out to the supernatural, making contact with either God or satan.

Paul for a definite reason then drew his own assemblies' attention to this very scenario, namely that satan changes himself in an angel of light, explicitly warning us against his subtle influence. He therefore comes in subtly and in the guise of an angel of light, yet what he is bringing along with his spirit demonstration - that is if we should allow him a place in our worship - is nothing but confusion!

Mixing the table of God with the table of satan is then very serious and should we remain onlookers, never using our divinely inspired knowledge of God to alert Christians timely against this type of watering off of the gospel, will cause us paying a heavy price in the end. However, the tragedy is, that once satan has found a foothold among the Christians, and especially in the assemblies, then it is almost too late for then carnality takes over and spirituality flies out of the window.

This is the reason why we are sitting today with what many will call "beautiful" worship and which will indeed for carnal Christians be that indeed but for those who know the Spirit of God and who have been endowed with the authentic Presence of God in their lives, it will be nothing but a demonstration of man-made gospel. Therefore a concert spirit, a spirit of performance, is ruling sway in the Body of Jesus. Much effort goes into preparing the choir and the orchestra players to perform well, but what has remained? Just a mere show without any real demonstration of God's Power!

Fact is, if Jesus/Yeshua is the head of the assemblies, why not give Him his rightful place in worship, i.e. not with Him as "silent listener" but with Him as central thereto and therefore actively involved in the proceedings! And this is why the charismata were crudely pushed on the periphery: The pastors have led their assemblies into error and therefore the assemblies have been transformed having become assemblies projecting dead religion for a dead religious spirit has taken over, leaving no place for true, authentic worship. This is the reason why we will step into a church feeling dry and empty in our souls, yet leaving again just as empty in our hearts.

Oftentimes there is still a little breeze of God's Spirit we may feel moving within us, but very often it is a crude Eastern wind - as the Lord indeed announced in prophecy once - leaving nothing but dryness of spirit (the east wind was that wind direction applied symbolically by the prophets as something leaving the land scorched and dry).

Fact is we can sing forever the most beautiful songs trying to build the assemblies spiritually, yet we will forever be sitting with a mere shell gospel in stead of having the true substance, the full fruit and therefore not only a mere tidbit consoling us. And oftentimes the modern-day worship songs are such a show of words-cum-music accompaniment that no real substance is felt as one would, for instance, have experienced worship in days gone by. And this is no mere "generation gap".

It is again and very clearly a legacy of wrong spirits impacting on the Body of Jesus for the focus is now on creating impressions and presenting a show to impress and entertain the audience. That deep Spirit bonding is just not there anymore - that is on the whole. Fact is, a carnal person has no inkling of real spirituality and therefore a spirit of performance is often sensed when listening to gospel songs just as one so easily can sense it in modern-day Church worship.

Now, praise is like the Jewish simcha and when participants spontaneously brings glory to God, their high praises also finding expression in spontaneous dancing before the Lord along with spontaneous expressions of "Hallelujah's", just as David would also have participated in his day and age. However, this type of worship and praise is far from trained, formal dancing and when a group of dancers is painstakingly educated and geared to perform church dances, having to perform whilst the audience is watching the so-called "anointing of the Spirit" (!) show or, at a certain time during the church service, even everybody participating in a ritualistic way and in conformance with the very same behavioural pattern. Sometimes the audience even having to watch a so-called "inspired" dancer dancing the Dervish way (like a tob spinning forever as if this type of "performance" is indeed proof of the Presence of the Spirit of God).

There is then a special anointing and when God's Spirit can indeed take hold of a vessel as I have described it before, or when more than one can, during praise and worship, bring glory to God (yet again not done in a show-off, ritualistic way! There is therefore a fine line between "right" and "wrong" (false and true) and those who believe that God's Power can surely take hold of a vessel/vessels bringing honour to God and so that we can always know that God must be worshiped in sincerity of heart, will be led by God's Spirit IF they remain at the feet of Jesus, praying for His real Spirit manifestation.

The spontaneous working of the Holy Spirit, as it manifested in earlier Pentecostal times (in S.A.) has almost left the scene and therefore few will understand what is meant by the "real" demonstration of Holy Spirit praise and worship. The dead "Church of God" must stop talking, again becoming houses of prayer. Then only will believers in the risen Jesus/Yeshua be able to regain the apostolic spirituality that was exchanged for a form of godliness!. This is the very reason why the true working of the Spirit of God, also finding expression in real dancing-in-the-Spirit is rejected by modern-day Christians, even Pentecostals and Charismatics.

Dancing-in-the-Spirit is bringing glory to God and Paul implies this type of worship in his letters to the Corinthians and where he states being "overjoyed" while coming together worshiping God - in Afrikaans it is expressed as "uitsinnigheid". I could not find a satisfactory translation, however, it seems it implies "being so overjoyed in the Lord that one almost goes "over the top" with joy and clearly while praising and glorifying God.

The "form of godliness" maintained by the Church in general has succeeded in shackling believers, proscribing

so harshly for them that only an empty shell has remained when it comes to "Christian" worship.

There is nothing so empty as a make-belief performance and especially when it comes to spirituality, however, should one exclusively focus on passive worship, i.e. expecting the audience to obediently sit in the pews, never doing anything but passively receiving instructions from the platform, and, as in a school situation, training the learners and expecting of them to sit like dummies at their desks all the time - only watching the performance of rituals and ritualistic demonstrations (sacraments) from the pulpit - what we are eventually are sitting with, is an empty shell with all the substance of gospel truth and reality gone!

And this is why the churches in general have a form of godliness (some trying to be alive yet still retaining this semblance of overly strict, prescribed worship), having indeed become the proverbial "hospital for the sick".

I therefore invite you to watch my off-the-cuff video "To worship in Spirit and in Truth" on this web site I am specifically dealing with the following :

Jesus' mission fulfilled on the Cross

The Holy Spirit Power given to the bloodwashed

A spirit of confusion unleashed on the Body of Christ -

Are the charismata still for today and if so, what has gone wrong?

The Toronto Blessing manifestation - How does God judge it?

What is the solution for those who desire God's reality today?

And just to add in explication : God's Presence finds expression in signs and symbolism, e.g. fire, water, cloud and wind manifestations, and extending to man - convincing him of God's immanent Presence - since the New Testament Pentecost Day, i.e. in a very definite way, taking hold of man's tongue to glorify God and His risen Christ in Spirit and in Truth (Acts 2; Jn 4.24). This way God fastened the early Church's faith in a risen Jesus, however, He remains the God of all ages, including "those who are far away"(Acts 2).

God's reality is then what convinces us to believe in God as Creator of heaven and earth and this manifested glory (reality) is what we still need today. Therefore not mere rituals serving as cursors and reminders of what He was in the distant past but tasting the living testimony of a risen Jesus on an on-going basis. And this reality indeed contracts in the reality of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit Power!

I further would like to stress that there is a wide difference between the historical churches' concept of "how to worship in Spirit" and then, on the other hand, the Pentecostal tradition where the active baptism in the Holy Spirit, finding expression in the speaking of tongues and the endowment with the nine charismata (1 Cor. 12) are still acknowledged, although the reality of this phenomenon is not in sway any longer, that is as it was experienced in earlier Pentecostalism. So keep this in mind when probing this issue.

What is the difference then between past and present? Not so much that times have changed, but that our perceptions have been tampered with by strange and foreign spirits that have descended upon the modern-day Body of Christ! It is time the Christians again stand in the freedom Christ has brought us! (Gal. 5). However, meaning the freedom of not being shackled by outdated prescriptions, but being shackled by the millennium form of godliness!

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