WORD AT WORK

VOLUME XXIX NUMBER I

Judging Righteous Judgment I

Dear Friend:

As I was preparing to watch the second presidential debate, the Lord said, 'Do not watch it…I'm having a debate about what to do to your nation and I want your input!" I heard myself plead for 24 months for the sheep who could not discern their right hand from the left concerning voting in the election thanks to the mush and milk-toast diet they get on Sundays. To my surprise, the heart of my intercessory input was about the shepherds not the presidential candidates.

At this stage after the election, I have two conclusions: 1. Enough adverse circumstances are coming to blunt either candidates' agenda. 2. Before God calls national leaders to accounting for their actions, He is going to confront church leaders for their Ezekiel 34 ways. Leaders who have fed themselves and not the sheep are in for a very strong visitation. While repentance is always a good option, in some cases it still will not atone for the damage done! The judge is coming to the church!

Jesus is coming to the church to cleanse and challenge leaders before He releases us to confront government agents responsible for filling America with iniquity. I believe a real fireworks display is coming and will be seen first in the church. Judging righteous judgment is essential to be in the right place at the right time for God's very best! What is God's standard of righteousness required for each of us to participate in His justice? Will the Lord give us a voice in His dealings with church leaders? What should our intercessory posture be in the church and toward government officials?

Judging righteous judgment dictates taking a stand with Jesus for righteousness against every manifestation of unrighteousness whether political or spiritual. Knowing Jesus is going to deal with the church first, avoids the frustration inherent in seemingly unanswered intercession when praying about perverse politicians. The messenger of the covenant is coming to the temple but who can endure His appearance? "For He is like a refiners fire and like fullers' soap."

Yours in Him,

Al Houghton

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THURSDAY, January 1
Scripture: John 7:24

The month of January makes a profound change for the church in America as a new president with very different values is inaugurated. Hostility and perversion are guaranteed for all who oppose the homosexual agenda. This is an assault of which those of us who live in California are quite familiar and transcends political parties. The issue of whether you are a Christian first or a party loyalist has been increasingly tested on the national political scene. God demanded Abraham leave his country, kindred and culture to build all three on an eternal foundation. No one can claim the Lordship of Christ and support a politician who promotes homosexuality and abortion because those abominations fill a land with iniquity and bring devastating judgments. Every person who supports such a politician opens the spiritual door for those spirits to invade their own families and possess their own children. When an Antichrist spirit grows in a culture, the church better know their covenant and know how to move Good's hand in bringing divine justice upon hostile politicians. The early church did not win the Roman Empire by turning the other check to a Herod. They prayed—worms ate the enemy—righteous judgment manifested. The word of God prevailed! We should do no less!

FRIDAY, January 2
Scripture: Acts 13:11 John 16:7-11

How do we grow to the place where we can move God's hand in righteous judgment? The Holy Spirit came to manifest judgment—but you can't build a successful ministry teaching judgment. Most people run to a "safer" environment. Why do we not train to represent Him? Is it because we know Jesus the Savior and not Jesus the Judge? In Mark 11, Jesus gave a few hints about His post resurrection ministry as the Judge of all the earth. He indicated mammon would quickly rate divine action. Is God judging mammon in America by shaking everything that can be shaken? The Pharisees had long departed from the living God by bowing to mammon. The fig tree made a great visual for a spiritual truth, which generations of believers would need. Like elements of the church, the fig tree looked good but had no fruit. Jesus knew the season for figs was not yet, but following the leadership of the Holy Spirit, spoke the words that initiated judgment and destruction. The temple, then like the church today, had become captive to a spirit of mammon. Jesus addressed the spirit of mammon and initiated an example of judgment. The temple had the same leafy green appearance and yet was producing nothing to feed the people. Jesus cleaned house in an attempt to restore the temple to a house of prayer. The following day, Peter noticed the dead fig tree. Peter saw spiritual government in action and said, "*The fig tree which You cursed has withered away*." As the spirit of antichrist gains ground in government, the church is desperate to recover this

authority and yet in many areas has been reticent to pursue it! Now we either pursue the government of God or perish!

SATURDAY, January 3
Scripture: John 7:6-10 Mark 11:15-21

Will the judicial hand of God move against political leaders before it moves against spiritual leaders? First we recover church government then we can move God's hand nationally. How can we judge if ministry is successful? Jesus set the standard in John 17:6-10 by the condition of our listeners. I believe I'm successful as a minister if I can teach you how to stand on God's covenant and move His hand for justice. Ministerial success should be judged by the condition of the people. If you can confidently move God's hand, I'll feel successful. How do we judge fruit? Is good fruit large numbers of people attending our church? Not in Jesus paradigm! In American culture, authority is assumed and assigned based on attendance. A pastor of 20,000 is granted far greater authority than a pastor of 20. In the Bible, many men and women of great authority never led large groups. Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Hannah, Esther, and Paul were all honored with authority based on how they used their faith. Before we get to the laws governing dispensing judgment, as Jesus did to the fig tree, there is the issue of how God perceives fruit and are our definitions parallel. Is good fruit to God, good fruit to us? Does 20,000 in attendance automatically mean good fruit? Jesus warned of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees as disqualifying for the Kingdom. If 20,000 people receive New Age ministerial mush, is that good fruit? Do the 20,000 ever become a reason for withering the fruitless fig tree because they are the captives of a mammon-based system? Jesus cursed the fig tree as a sign of what we could do when encountering mammon-based religion. Isn't it time to seek governmental authority because of what we face? We may not be allowed to confront those in Federal government until we toast those in spiritual government. The next 24 months may be hell for some church leaders!

SUNDAY, January 4
Scripture: Scripture: Mark 11:22-26

Peter was absolutely amazed the fig tree had withered away. Jesus made it clear that spiritual authority included withering fruitless fig trees. Do we believe that? Are we willing to pursue such authority? Jesus said, "*Have faith in God*." Jesus used the fig tree as an example of removing a mountain by speaking to it. The contextual mountain was corruption in the religious system manifested in mammon controlling the temple. The same corruption can manifest in the House, Senate and Presidency demanding the same action. Jesus modeled the prayer of faith for withering fig trees, for cleansing temples, for correcting presidents and restoring houses of prayer! Pursuing spiritual authority can bring great conflict often beyond what we think we can bear. Jesus used His faith to clean house in the temple at the beginning of His ministry in John 2, and at the end of His ministry in Mark 11. The second one resulted in His death. The prayer of faith is a house cleaning prayer. It can be for withering a proverbial fig tree or for restoring a captive institution. If the White House becomes a "Pimp House," curse the pimp! Cursing fig trees or cursing pimps is intended to release God's government or to "put things back in order." Jesus made clear those who had faith and would not doubt could move in this realm. Spiritual authority is no easy dimension because the surrounding adversity can be so intense as to cause despair of life itself. Elijah is the prime example. It is much safer to teach people to use faith for personal blessing than to exhort them toward spiritual authority for government. Elijah found satan's ability to devastate far greater than God's willingness to deliver for a season. Spiritual authority is not for the faint of heart. Count the cost and choose another path if you can but you may have to find a neutral country for a residence.

MONDAY, January 5
Scripture: Mark 11:27-29

Moving mountains and killing fig trees should be a way of life for the church! Developing skills after they are needed can be very costly! Having the faith of God is a wonderful thing, but do we have it? Do we walk in

the authority Jesus paid for? Can we recognize the authority of God in its different manifestations in our world today? The level of spiritual authority a person attains must parallel the depth and magnitude of their call. The end-time ministry must possess double what the early church experienced. For those in ministry, that means Ananias and Sapphira events are not uncommon! For the Saints, the double means praying the removal of Herod! One key to moving in the governmental realm with authority too wither fig trees is discerning of spirits. We cannot discern in another what we ourselves are bound by! Allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us into freedom is absolutely essential. The religious leadership of Jesus' day could not discern the authority behind His ministry. We have multitudes of Christians who are not discerning sources of authority behind judges, politicians and even ministers. This is a crucial hour for the church to discern by what authority men are moving! Seek the discerning of spirits as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Judging the source of actions and spiritual direction can be a matter of great blessing or great loss. May all our works be done ***in Him.***

TUESDAY, January 6
Scripture: Scripture: Mark 11:30-33

The key to moving with the Lord in this hour is discerning what He is doing. I was amazed at the despair after the election from all who prayed so hard for a righteous outcome but suffered such a stinging defeat. The incoming American leadership has all Pharaoh's traits! Jesus confronted leadership and they quickly went on attack! When Jesus was questioned He shot right back with a discernment test more pointed than what was asked Him. Are we seeing what God is doing? Many in the church world rejected the Reformation when it came but God blessed it. Many rejected the Great Awakening and were carried off into Unitarian heresy. Many rejected Azusa Street but God sent it all over the world. Every move of the Spirit forces us to answer Jesus' question afresh! "*The baptism of John – was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me*." All these Christian leaders claiming apostolic titles, is it from heaven or the latest fad of man? Where is the power? The word "**ex-oo-see-ah**" is our Greek word for authority and it has four primary applications. It means the power of choice or doing as one pleases. It is also used for physical and mental power as in a nation with a mighty army. In its third application, it is used as influence or right according to an office or position. The President of the United States has great influence. Authority emanates from his position. Demons fight for the presidency. The church must demonstrate who rules. Finally, it refers to the power of rule or government. Each one of us has a dimension of authority in our life. God is going to pour out His authority on His people, and one of the ways we qualify is by demonstrating a desire to properly use what He has already given. Why would God give governmental authority to a people who consistently make very poor choices in choosing antichrist-leaning Representatives, Senators, Judges and even a President. Some elements of the church consistently demonstrate disqualifying discernment. If we choose to be dumber than dust, we forfeit authority!

WEDNESDAY, January 7
Scripture: Scripture: John 19:1-11

Growing in authority is the only way to prepare for the persecution that is coming! The demonized are confronting church congregations on Sundays by invading and demonstrating in church services! Preparation is essential. When we begin to seek spiritual authority, some very interesting questions arise. In John, chapter 19, we see one of them. Pilate says, *"Do You not know that I have authority to crucify You, and authority to release You?"* But Jesus said, *"'You could have no authority at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.'"* Will God give us authority against demonized governmental leaders whether the President of Iran whose avowed purpose is to nuke Israel or the US President whose avowed purpose is advancing the homosexual agenda! Who then claims to have authority over all governments on earth? Jesus demonstrates it in the resurrection – and gives it to the church in Matthew 28! How can we qualify for this authority to make changes in government? The early church qualified! Will we? National governments progressively resist God's will as we advance toward the end of the age. When does man's government get out of line to the extent we are no longer required to obey it? Authority poses some interesting questions. The early church was forced to choose who they

would obey. When are we under authority, and when are we exempt from being under authority? When are we *in* harmony with God's authority structure, and when are we *out* of harmony with it? Should we submit to our government in everything? Should wives submit to their husbands in everything? Do we follow others only as they follow the Lord? What are the guidelines of spiritual authority? Does the Bible speak clearly on this issue? When does a mate leave an abusive relationship? Would immediately be too soon? How about our spiritual relationship to leaders? Are there times we obey our ministerial leadership, and yet, are there times when we must disobey? Spiritual authority is not a subject which can be treated lightly! Perhaps, as much as any other doctrine, it has a daily impact on our lives!

THURSDAY, January 8
Scripture: Romans 13:1-7

Early church leaders found themselves in conflict with government and they sought an anointing so great as to stop the mouths of the persecutors. We are told to "*Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God."* The surface reading of this passage would tend to say whatever the government says we must do. We must recognize there are seasons when God's will conflicts with the will of government. When Israel was in Egypt, government filled the cup of iniquity in how they mistreated the Jews so that every god of Egypt was judged. The people were not obligated to obey the Nazis, Leninists or any other demonized government leaders! Herod desired to please the Jews, and stretched out his hand to kill James, John's brother, and was about to kill Peter. Prayer was made by the church for Peter's deliverance in direct opposition to the will of the government of that day. Peter came out and Herod died. God honored the spiritual authority of the people when the governments conflicted. Once again, as we begin to pray, I believe God is going to release spiritual government through believers over the demonized decisions of the President, Congress and "Supreme Court". Let the government of God arise!

FRIDAY, January 9
Scripture: Luke 4:1-8

Does satan have authority? There are many people today who think satan has no authority, but that is not what Jesus taught. In Luke, chapter 4, we see clearly satan has entrenched himself in the world's system, and he seems to have a dominating position in passing out power until dispossessed. In Luke 10:19 Jesus said, "'*Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.'"* The enemy has a definite degree and dimension of authority and power in which he operates. Thank God the authority given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ is **above** his power. There are people who are anointed by him and empowered to bring deception into the body of Christ. There is no doubt about the fact satan has a certain amount of power and executes it through deception. The removal of barriers to perversion in the last few years is a good example. Some ministers preach ultimate reconciliation while others ordain homosexual priests. Deception to apostasy is a spiritual fact of life. If the church loses its authority how long can the nation stand? When a land fills with iniquity, devastating judgments come because people lose their yardstick of righteousness and discernment therefore electing demon dominated leaders!

SATURDAY, January 10
Scripture: 1 John 3:8 Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. You can't destroy the works if you can't move God's hand on the perpetrator! Did Jesus accomplish anything which has impacted satan's authority? Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the **death, burial, and resurrection** was aimed specifically at satan's multiple levels of authority. Jesus said, "'*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore….'"* That makes it possible for us to carry out the assignments which come from on high. Nevertheless, there is a power struggle being waged. In Revelation 12:7-12 we find clear evidence the warfare is still raging. As kingdom rises against kingdom, the

government of God should be increasing. That increase demands appropriate action from the church. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and obedience to the Spirit which may cost us our life in confronting darkness. Taking a stand for righteousness may bring the wrath of demonized leaders as it has in Muslim countries. "*Loving our lives not unto the death*" means we are willing to be obedient to the Holy Spirit and move and flow in His direction regardless of the price. The truth of the matter is obedience makes it possible speaking what God wants said even if our life hangs in the balance. It makes it possible for us to stand up and speak to the mountain, and see the fig tree wither or the mountain removed! Without that last phrase of Revelation 12:11, we will not see the dramatic results which bring a satisfying measure of victory. *"Loving not our life to the death"* means obeying God rather than the desires of the flesh. When we come to that place of commitment, we are ready to see the power of God flow through us bringing a testimony even if it comes through our dying words!.

SUNDAY, January 11
Scripture: Revelation 12:12-17

Revelation teaches us to expect persecution from demonized leaders but promises divine aid even from the creation so that we can be victorious in our witness. Prepare yourself for conflict by studying to show yourself approved. Faith comes by believing and believing by the word of God. The military conducts boot camp for a very practical reason – war demands preparation. It was only after eighteen months of training that I was qualified for nuclear weapons delivery school. We don't **start** warfare with nukes, we **end** wars with nukes! God has an armory called a storehouse full of hail and other accessible options for the last days. Know the Lord and through relationship gain access to His storehouse!

MONDAY, January 12
Scripture: Ezekiel 28:12-17 Isaiah 14:11-14 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Ezekiel 28 portrays a prophetic glimpse of how one of the archangels of God, created for a very specific purpose, loses his position. Apparently he led worship and praise, but fell through a progression of pride, corruption, and finally rebellion. Isaiah 14 completes this progressive picture. Verse 13 says: *"For you have said in your heart; '**I will** ascend into heaven, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God; **I will**…'"* There are five "***I wills***" in this passage. It is obvious he used the gifts of God for self-exaltation. Rebellion has its roots in pride and sins against divine authority. Satan can be enthroned in our will, our plans, our hopes, desires and dreams. "***I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God*." Yielding our will, plans, hopes, desires and dreams to the counsel of God is a foundational choice for all spiritual authority! Isn't it interesting to note that satan has never given up his quest for showing himself he is God, even though he was kicked as lightning out of heaven? He is still determined, and the Scripture says, will one day set himself up and show himself that he is God, howbeit only for a short season. Notice verse 4 says he "*…opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God…."* A very interesting manifestation of that today relates to how a few Supreme Court members are willing to corrupt our Constitution for perverse ends. Look for the spirit who is moving politicians to pander to pornography and homosexual marriage. For thirty years perverse men have been changing our Constitution through deception. The Antichrist spirit is alive and well in high places in Washington, D.C. The church must exercise our God-given authority releasing divine government. There are those on the Supreme Court deceived into believing *they* are ***Supreme***. If the church will arise, the **real Supreme Court** of heaven will intervene!

TUESDAY, January 13
Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:5-7

In the Lord's prayer we are told to pray specifically, "*Thy kingdom come, thy will be done*." The kingdom of God functions only when people willingly, lovingly submit to the revealed will of God. Their impact is to

restrain the spirit of Antichrist which spreads lawlessness. The prince of lawlessness has made an assault on **absolutes** in the last three decades. God's word is full of **absolutes,** and the attack that has come through educational elites and the courts is aimed at removing all biblical barriers to rebellion. Removing biblical barriers is a very deceptive way of bringing people to feel they can do what they want as long as no one is hurt. ***Sin is always deceptive in concealing the damage until people are completely entrapped!*** The mystery of lawlessness is at work. The question is, do we recognize all of its manifestations in order to actively counter the deep inroads already rampant in our society? Rebellion and lawlessness invite judgment. Are we willing to let a few perverse people bring massive destruction on a whole nation especially if they occupy the White House and rule Congress? It is time to pray Davidic prayers! Voting for such a person joins us with evil, forfeiting all authority until we repent.

WEDNESDAY, January 14
Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12 Matthew 7:15-23

Here we see the central issue of our warfare in the earth. As the people of God, we must choose to walk with Him and obey the leadership of His Spirit. Our warfare comes from the existence of a rebellious, outlaw spirit who tries in every way possible, to gain our agreement and consequently, worship. In verse 7, the "*mystery of lawlessness"* is the Greek word **anomia.** In verse 8, the *"lawless one"* is the word **anomos**. **Anomia** is the condition of one without law by ignoring or violating it. It is not having, knowing, or acknowledging God's way. **Anomos** is free from, or not subject to law. **Anomia** and **anomos** speak of sin as opposition to, or contempt of, the will of God. Satan said, "***I will*** *exalt my throne*", and ***your*** throne is ***your*** will, plans, hopes, desires, and dreams for life. When we understand **anomia**, it is entirely possible to agree with the Word of God on one hand, while yielding to demonic impulse on the other. How many believers agree homosexual marriage is wrong yet vote for politicians who support it? Matthew 7:15-23 reveals we can do miracles while embracing a path which leads to destruction. How is it possible to walk with God in power, signs, and wonders while simultaneously protecting disqualifying principles of satan through **anomia** and **anomos**? As we read this passage, we ask ourselves, Did they know the Word? Were they doing the works of God? Yes! They prophesied in Jesus' name, they cast out demons in His name, they did miracles in His name. Through a lack of discernment, they kept a thread of rebellion which brought judgment. *"'I never knew you; ...you who practice **anomia**!'"* is a strong indictment. They found a move of the Spirit and participated but not with a whole heart. They were doing God's work but possibly with a motive of building their own kingdom. Doing ministry is a good deed but doing it for the right reason is essential. When Jesus said you *"'...can't serve God and mammon'"*, He was very serious because of the eternal consequences. A significant number of men in ministry give the spirit of mammon worship in how they conduct their financial dealings. I can visualize Jesus saying, *"Depart from Me you worker of iniquity, I never knew you."* Walking with the Lord in the last days demands yielding to God's ways., will and timing in all we do. There is so much of the world leavened in the church, it is hard to distinguish the holy from the profane!

FRIDAY, January 15
Scripture: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

We have a generation of believers who do not ***know*** Jesus the Judge. The parable of the wheat and tares is about end-time judgment. We have to deal with wheat and tares. God said, "Don't pull them up but let them grow until the end-time." Then the separation comes. In verses 36-43 Jesus explains the parable of the tares. What does it mean to be a "son of the kingdom", and what does it mean to be a "son of the wicked one"? Notice verse 41, *"'The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice **anomia** (lawlessness). ... There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!'"* This does not describe the rapture. It describes a season of judgment where hindrances to harvest are removed! The major problem comes when people decide they want to do something, rather than letting God lead them. We must not do whatever we want just because it feels right. We must be free to be led by the Holy Spirit or what we accomplish

will not count for anything in eternity. There is ***no substitute*** for a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in which we talk to Him and He talks back, conversationally. It is the best guarantee of resisting lawlessness! Develop relationship with God.

SATURDAY, January 16
Scripture: Matthew 23:1-28

One of the biggest problems we face in ministry is developmental. When positional authority exceeds spiritual authority then the Saints suffer under ministerial immaturity. If the grace of God does not intervene, pharisaism can result potentially ruining a career. Character and Christ-likeness are keys to maintaining spiritual authority once birthed. The preparational path for power has many and varied crucifixions. Rejecting instead of yielding in any application of the cross forfeits future power. We hardly ever recognize that at the time and that is why it is a spiritual test. There are seasons when God demands position match power or position is forfeited. The most dangerous thing we can do is seek a position for which we are not yet empowered. Today's widespread practice of naming individuals as apostolic creates an avalanche of concern. Are good leaders being set up for failure? My first question is where is the apostolic power? If they are out of place and assuming positions either not called to, or before character development has qualified for parallel power, the result is the same – pollution. The church has a rising tide of pollution from "apostles" without power. They tend to make up their own doctrines. They miss-emphasize the important things of Scripture. Their religion deals with the outside, but does not touch the inside, as verses 25-28 declare. Jesus said, in verse 28, *"'Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men,* but *inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (**anomia**).'"* To submit to the Holy Spirit and His leadership is perhaps the chief challenge of our day, because He never promotes prematurely!

SUNDAY, January 17
Scripture: Matthew 24:1-12

Promoting prematurely is a form of lawlessness and doing it to enlarge a personal apostolic network for 5 or 10% a month is much worse! Jesus said, *"'And because lawlessness (**anomia**) will abound, the love of many will grow cold.'"* My question is how will lawlessness abound? Will this leaven come from the people or from the platform? Is it primarily growing in the foundation of our ministries, some of which are started in self-will and self-desire? Will it enter through a desire for promotion without paying the price? Is a pastor really a pastor, or is he a teacher trying to pastor? Or is he an evangelist who is pastoring for reasons other than the fact that God directed? Lawlessness can abound in ministry and permeate people from the pulpit! If I choose to only preach 50% of the Word for fear of offending people as a Seeker-Sensitive pastor, am I not spreading lawlessness? Lawlessness is a spirit. All who hear us preach partake of our spirit. Lawlessness is throughout the Body of Christ, and it permeates much of leadership. Only the Holy Spirit can separate and bring a restoration, and I believe He will as He begins to release once again the ministry of the prophet with the anointing to hew, reveal, and shout from the housetops that which is done in secret.

MONDAY, January 18
Scripture: Second Timothy 3:1-5

Second Timothy, chapter 3, is a passage which deals with the church in the last days. Within this list of characteristics, we find the derivative of **anomia** and **anomos**. It is in verse 2, and says, *"For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful and (**anosios**) unholy."* **Anosios** is the strongest term denoting presumption and wicked self-will or self-assertion in the New Testament. It is the pinnacle of a number of years of lawlessness, spreading into a harvest of multitudes of people doing their own thing. To offend God's authority is a rebellion far more serious than the sin of pride. Pride is a matter of conduct, but rebellion is one of principle. It is possible to preach Christ according to satan's principle. How would you like to partake of that apostolic network? The Scripture says, *"From such, turn away!"* How

can we turn away from what we can't discern? Is there an unhealthy need for approval from wounded leaders making them susceptible to counterfeit apostolic networks? **Real apostles** should not have to recruit – the gift makes room!

TUESDAY, January 19
Scripture: Hebrews 1:1-3 Matthew 28:18-20

God claims restoration of lost ultimate authority in the earth through the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scripture says He has made Him *"…heir of all things, through whom He also made the worlds,…"* and all things are upheld by the word of His authority. There are levels of authority in Scripture, and the ultimate level is the Word of God. That is why Jesus used it to resist satan, saying three times, *"It is written…."* Matthew chapter 28, concludes the purpose of Jesus ministry by saying, *"'All authority is given unto Me in heaven and on earth.'"* When Jesus paid the price for our sin and was resurrected, God gave Him authority in both realms. At that point, satan lost his legal right to the authority he had held since deceiving Adam. God tells us we must go and make disciples of all the nations, and teach them to observe all things Jesus has commanded us. In the restoration of divine authority, God first delegated it to the Lord Jesus Christ, as head of the church, and then to the church itself in Jesus. In this act, we see a blueprint of God's plan for repossessing the earth. It is to be done through the church, which is why we have a Great Commission. God could give us positional authority in the earth, but it would accomplish little until matching spiritual authority is revealed in us and we are willing to stand up and use it. The fireworks always begin when God gives spiritual authority to those who have no positional authority.

WEDNESDAY, January 20
Scripture: Ezekiel 28:12-17 Isaiah 14:12-15

We have a picture of satan offending God's holiness in Ezekiel, while the parallel account of the same event in Isaiah shows offense to God's authority. In Ezekiel, we see the account of iniquity being found in him as his heart was lifted up in pride because of beauty. Proverbs says God hates pride, and the reason is it becomes a platform for rebellion. To offend God's authority is much more serious than to offend His holiness. In Isaiah 14, satan offends God's authority, attacking the very foundation of His throne through selfish-ambition, self-will and the other self-manifestations which became giants. God's throne is built and established on His authority as Creator of the heavens and earth. To attack His authority demands an immediate reaction. In this case, He, of course, kicked satan out of heaven, and Jesus said, *"I watched him fall as lightning."* When we see individuals "doing their own thing" and building their own kingdoms, whether churches or apostolic networks, selfish ambition must be discerned. If present, this re-building thread will spew rebellion on all who join or sit under its authority. Imagine yourself going to church and during the message a misty blanket of **anomia** settles over you from the preacher who chose to discount 50% of the Word and never confront sin! Welcome to much of the American church. We can finally see how lawlessness will abound.

THURSDAY, January 21
Scripture: 1 Kings 13:1-3

1 Kings chronicles God's response to an impure altar. A young prophet came to pronounce God's judgment. He was specifically warned to not "*eat bread or drink water*" in that place as a spiritual sign of how people get defiled by impure altars and lose their authority in the Kingdom. An old seasoned prophet had been living there utterly unaware of the defilement of "self-will" which built the altar that had over time possessed him. Being hungry to repossess the lost anointing, the old prophet caught the young man and told him, "*I too am a prophet as you are and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.*'" The old prophet lied. Once the young prophet had eaten and drank, the old prophet gave a true word of judgment. The young prophet was killed by a lion. How could the old prophet lie and speak a true word within a couple of hours? What is in the altar gets in us when we sow there!

FRIDAY, January 22
Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

Second Thessalonians 2:1-4 is perhaps one of the most revealing passages we have in the New Testament, showing us the very nature of our enemy in manifestation. The Scripture says there is a man of sin who must be revealed, the very son of perdition. He *"...opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."* I am sure you have met people who were trying to prove something, who had an axe to grind, and were obviously out to show the world they could do what they determined. Satan still believes he is God, and that he can act as God. That is the ultimate deception. Much of the warfare we encounter stems from the conflict mentioned in verse 4. Satan opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God. If God is building an army, satan will attempt to do the very same thing. Because he is a deceiver, he will probably call it church. He will counterfeit everything God does in an attempt to prove he can do it better and more efficiently. Growing in discernment is so necessary in the day and hour in which we live. Do we attend a **real** church or a nice non-confrontational apple pie and spice where everything is nice place?

SATURDAY, January 23
Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:5-8

The Scripture says the last great showdown is over one issue, which of the two competing authorities will man choose? Any believer who has spent a lifetime feeding their own flesh by never choosing the cross has already cast their dye lot. *"For the mystery of lawlessness"* will grow in the end-times. **Anomia** comes from **anomos**. It means opposition to, or contempt for the will of God. **Anosios** is another very strong word used in the New Testament, and it means self-will or self-assertion. Some self-asserting "apostles" are wooing the unsuspecting pastors by promising promotion and blessing through association when what will really be transferred is simply self-will, self-assertion, self-promotion, self-protection and a defiling dose of mammon. Just because a message is good doesn't mean the underlying platform is sound. Anyone can preach right things, but do it from a demon-supplied motivation. Mammon is usually the dividing line! This principle makes it possible to have a good work, but not a God-ordained work. There is a tremendous difference! We must seek God for discernment expecting Him to faithfully illumine both the good and the evil!

SATURDAY, January 24
Scripture: Matthew 7:15-23

In this passage Jesus reveals the principle we talked about yesterday. He shows us it is indeed possible to minister for Him but do it from the wrong platform, and He tells us to beware of those people. He uses the ministry gift of prophets as an example because everyone of His day was familiar with that ministry. Verses 21 through 23 are extremely revealing. *"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. 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 (miracles, in the Greek) in Your name?' And I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness* ***anomia****!'"* Obviously they were preaching Jesus Christ, they were getting people delivered, prophesying, and getting them healed, but something in the foundation was wrong. There was a defiling blind spot which became second nature in how they conducted their ministry. Perhaps it was mammon, but we are not told. The power of God is exciting when manifesting but to build a personal empire with it brings judgment. Prophecy, healing and deliverance are exciting. Establishing a ministry is proclaiming we represent God. How we represent Him can attain eternal reward or damn us forever. Is joining just any apostolic network worth the risk? Answer that question before you join! May the church be the **church** and may the Lord promote the real apostles so that the

least discerning Saint can tell the difference. Can we discern **anomia**? Ask the Lord to make it a blinking neon sign!

SUNDAY, January 25
Scripture: Ephesians 2:19-3:12

God has a purpose for the church that is glorious indeed. We are to be a habitation of God in the Spirit, and God is going to take up full residence within His people in the last days. As He does, we are going to reveal even to the spiritual beings in the heavenlies God's full manifold wisdom. We are going to make it known to the principalities and powers in heavenly places and all those who number satan's army. This is the reason God is requiring each one of us to find his proper ministry and get in his proper place. If we want to see the authority of God work, we must declare war on **anomia**, **anomos**, and **anosios** in our life and surroundings. The Lord will help. All we have to do is ask. God is indeed going to have a mighty army in the last days that obeys Him! We intend to be part of it!

MONDAY, January 26
Scripture: Joel 2:5-11

This is an excellent passage which deals with the army and how they stand. They know their purpose. They are a strong people, set in battle array. Their purpose is war, not pleasure. Each one marches in his own formation, and they do not break ranks. They don't push one another. They have found their own column and they get in it. They are not out building their own apostolic networks. Because of being in their own place, rightly related with all lawlessness removed, they can lunge between the weapons and they are not cut down. They can't be stopped. They can't be wounded. They can't be destroyed. The reason is they are enveloped with the power and authority of God, because the Holy Spirit has removed lawlessness. We have a choice to impact the generation in which God is forming that army, and He is going to have His way in us!

TUESDAY, January 27
Scripture: Numbers 20:1-13

Here we see a primary example of what happens to people who fail to come under the authority of God. God told Moses and Aaron precisely what to do. He said, *"Speak to the rock, and it will yield its water."* In verse 10, they said, *"Must we bring water for you out of this rock?"* It wasn't them, but God, who was doing it, so Moses and Aaron assumed part of the glory of God. Secondly, they got angry with the people and they struck the rock twice. It cost them entering into the promised land. In the kingdom of God any lawlessness, or departure from what God has said to do, carries with it a penalty, a forfeiture of divine blessing and authority. This warfare we are involved in is indeed serious business, and our obedience many times results in life or death. In these last days we must become a people committed to obeying the leadership of the Spirit, because we have grown to recognize the cost and the reward.

WENESDAY, January 28
Scripture: Luke 4:5-8 John 17:20-23

How can we possess a Joel 2 anointing to war with so many leaders out of position or doing their own thing? More important than evangelists pastoring, or teachers pastoring or prophets pastoring is the mammon issue. Nothing disqualifies as quickly as mammon. I believe God will grace ministers who are out of position for a season. Grace is diminishing for mammon. I don't believe there has ever been a season in church history when it is more dangerous to move by mammon than right now. Every kingdom has positions in it, and each position has a glory. The major sin of Moses and Aaron was that they touched God's glory. They said, *"Must we bring water for you out of this rock?"* First Corinthians tells us Jesus was that rock which followed them in the wilderness.

When we assume a position we are not really called to, we in the same way are touching God's glory and setting ourselves up for perhaps the same penalty which came upon Ananias and Sapphira, or a shortened life like Moses and Aaron. They died as a result of that disobedience. Numbers 18:22 clearly says you cannot assume a Levitical position lest you die. How can we possess governmental authority when we are not fully submitted?

THURSDAY, January 29
Scripture: Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:8-9 and 15-17

If we follow dominion and authority in Scripture, we find God gave dominion and authority to Adam and Eve, and told them to subdue, or rule and reign over, which means exercise your God-given dominion and authority. But through disobedience they forfeited that authority and it was given over to satan. They came under his authority and the curse began to operate in the earth. They had never known the curse before; they had never known lack before; they had never known sickness; they had never known death; but they soon groaned under a new taskmaster. The fruit was not pleasant. We face the same choices today. There are only two authorities in the earth - God and the devil. We constantly choose which spirit to follow and when we choose not to obey God we come under satan's authority. It didn't take Adam long to realize he did not want to be under satan's authority. Oh, for that revelation to come to the church today! Choosing God's way means choosing the cross. The cross is the path to power.

FRIDAY, January 30
Scripture: Genesis 3:1-8

The self-will of Adam and Eve led to self-awareness. Faith was turned to fear and condemnation. God never intended man's actions to be governed by the knowledge of good and evil, but simply by a choice, through love, to obey what God said. Before they ate of the fruit right and wrong were in God, determined by their relationship and fellowship with God, but not so after the fall. After the fall they had a new source for determining what is right and what is wrong. In that new source, they could determine right and wrong out-side out of a relationship with God. Satan was right when he said, *"You will know good and evil."* He didn't tell them the other half. That, of course, was what brought death. Man was never intended to have or be his own yardstick for what is right and wrong. It is only as we maintain fellowship with God, are led of the Holy Spirit, and obey His word that we have the restoration which produces the authority to rule and reign over the circumstances of life. We can't get it on our own, by ourselves. The only way we can ever see that authority is to see it through a relationship with God in which He leads us by His Spirit and determines our activities and actions. Do we have that kind of relationship with Him?

SATURDAY, January 31
Scripture: Romans 1:18-32

Men have a sense of right and wrong in themselves, and it leads to the establishing of their own yardstick and their own decisions, so well described in Romans chapter 1. Redemption returns right and wrong to God. As we come into relationship with Him, we no longer presume to know what is right and what is wrong, but we give it over to Him. For example, how do we determine where to go to church? Some people like anointed preaching. Others like a nice facility. Others especially look for loving, caring, outgoing people. There are many parents who pick a church simply based on children's ministries. Others look for good teaching. If there is good teaching, they will go. All of those yardsticks are choosing a church based on the knowledge of good and evil, but not based on the leadership of the Holy Ghost. Long before our nation slid down the 7 step slope of Romans 1 into judgment, the church was choosing based on lawlessness. No church can be salt to a nation when embracing lawlessness!

I'll not be silenced by the darkness
For there is One above it all
The Light and Life of all creation
Into His arms I humbly fall

I'll not be silenced by the darkness
The One I trust in will not fail
Evermore I'll praise His glory …
Sovereign Author of my tale

Before Him I must sit in wonder
His ways much higher than my own
I'll not be silenced in this darkness
But choose to trust in Him alone!

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ITINERARY
Al Houghton

January 11-15	Lighthouse Christian Church Kilauea-Kauai, HI Phone: (808)826-9080 Meetings: **11th** 9:30AM **13th** 7PM **14th** 7PM **15th** 7PM
January 23-24	Presence, Power & Passion Ministries The Fire & Lightning Ministry Center 630 Texas Central Pkwy Phone: (254)716-5300 Meetings: **23rd** 7PM **24th** 9:30 AM 6:30 PM
February 8-9	City of Refuge Andrews, TX Meetings: **8th** 10:30AM **9th** 6PM 7PM