

## Christianity: What Cost? (Go To Meeting)

Lyall Johnston—June 17, 2022

Christianity is going to cost you and me everything that we have in this life! It's going to cost us everything.

*The Story of the Christian Church* by Jesse Lyman Hurlbut

### Chapter V The Ages of Shadows

From the Martyrdom of St. Paul 68 A.D. to the Death of St. John 100 A.D.

We name the last generation of the first century, from 68 to 100 A.D., "The Age of Shadows," partly because of the gloom of persecution was over the church, but more especially because of all the periods in the history, it is the one about which we know the least. We have not longer the clear light of the Book of Acts to guide us; and no author of that age has filled the blank in the history. We would like to read of the later work by such helpers of St. Paul as Timothy, Apollos and Titus, but all these and St. Paul's other friends drop out of the record at his death.

For fifty years after St. Paul's life a curtain hangs over the church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120 A.D. **with the writings of the earliest church-fathers we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul.**

We might add there, of course, John who wrote until about 100<sub>A.D.</sub>, which this author doesn't necessarily recognize that factor.

What we find in the churches today—mainstream Christianity—do not base their teachings so much on the Scriptures, as they do on their theology. At one stage the Worldwide Church of God ministers were encouraged to study theology. The basic theme of theology, one of their most profound statements, is *faith-seeking understanding!*

- But do they turn to the Bible? *No!*
- Where they turn to? *Human thinking and human reasoning! And they use the method of philosophy of the Greeks, Egyptians, and going clear back to Babylon!*

So, mainstream Christianity has no idea where it's at. Jesus said, 'I will build my Church, and the gates of the grave will not prevail against it.'

*Paul said, Ephesians 2:20: "You are being built up **on the foundation of the apostles and prophets...**"*

- Why did they turn from the Word of God?
- Why did they resort to their own ideas and particular doctrines as instruction?

Basically beginning from 128<sub>A.D.</sub> If they had followed Isa. 8 they would be looking to the Word of God and not to their own understanding.

Isaiah 8:16: "**Bind up the testimony, seal the Law among My disciples.**" *These are the words given to Isaiah by the One Who became Jesus Christ! This is such a powerful Scripture.*

### **"Bind up the testimony..."**

- What does God mean by that?
- Does it mean the testimony of the Prophets who wrote about the coming of Jesus Christ? About His crucifixion?

They couldn't really truly understand it, because what they were prophesying was given to them by God the Father through Jesus Christ. They could only anticipate what it meant, and --- into it.

What the apostles wrote—and you can see this through out the Old Testament—is actually established from the foundations of the O.T. Much of it written for our learning and understanding.

**"Bind up the testimony... [of life, the teaching and the meaning of Christ and Him crucified and seal it] ...seal the Law among My disciples."**

- What does give us? *The Old and New Testaments!*
- What do they give us? *Jesus Christ and Him crucified!*

The teachings, as we know and have been given to understand them, what is the cost of Christianity to us?

For those of us who are in the Body of Christ, everyone who has been baptized, this is a benchmark, a choice that we had to make, each one in their own time.

Luke 14:25: "And great multitudes were going with Him [Christ]; and He turned *and* said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life

also, **he**... [both male and female] ...**cannot be My disciple**” (vs 25-26).

Verse 27: “And whoever does not carry his cross... [that’s a subject in itself] ...and come after Me **cannot be My disciple**. For which one of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has *sufficient* for its completion; lest perhaps, after he has laid its foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build, and was not able to finish?’” (vs 27-30).

Can anyone say that about you and me? *It can be said about many who were called, many who made the decision to follow Christ but they turned back!* They turned away from Christ!

Verse 31: “Or what king, when he goes out to engage another king in war, does not first sit down *and* take counsel, whether he will be able with ten thousand to meet him who is coming against him with twenty thousand? But if not, while his *enemy* is still far off, he sends ambassadors and desires the *terms* for peace. **In the same way also, each one of you who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple**” (vs 31-33).

- What does Jesus mean by this?
- Does this mean that we have to give everything away?
- Does this mean that we have to park our lives on the streetside and just expect God to take care of us? *Of course not!*

Jesus does say that ***we must count the cost!***

For those of us who have counted the cost, we have to ensure that we continue on that path, on that walk! The Word of God and Bible is our manual. Not the ‘church fathers,’ because they’re going to tell you that God is three persons ignoring Greek grammar, ignoring the fact that if Jesus Christ, as a person, is worshipping the wrong person. He should have been worshipping the Holy Spirit as His Father, not God!

It shows you how idiotic that is, and yet, mainstream Christianity swallowed that up. Even those who were once a part of the Church of God are now praying to the Holy Spirit, saying they had been wrong not to understand the trinity.

Where do they get this information?  
*From ‘church fathers.’*

What is it going to us you and me to be a Christian? *You’re not going to find this from the churches of this world!* They’re going to tell you that it’s a ‘free ride’; all you have to do is accept the blood of Jesus and you’re home and made. The Bible doesn’t teach that! This is the basics!

But they don’t understand that! This ‘once save always saved’ is not a teaching of Scripture!

Let’s see what Paul has to say about what it’s going to cost us, or what it will cost us. ***‘It’s not burdensome for me to repeat to you what I’ve already said. It’s profitable for you!’*** The deeper we go into the Word of God the more God unfolds to us through the power of His Spirit.

It’s always profitable to read in context. Frequently the subject matter just flows from one chapter to the next. So, to find out what the writer/author is talking about, we go back to the previous chapter or chapters to find the context.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy... [pure; the Bible has much to say about purity] ...*and* well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service.”

Sin is not pure to us! Those things that are pure are pure.

Jesus said in the book of Matthew, ‘Blessed are the pure of heart.’ It’s another way addressing the subject of Holiness; it’s synonymous. The mercies of God; He’s pleading with us along with the Roman brethren “...to present your bodies a living sacrifice...” ***Think about that!***

- What is sacrifice?
- What were the sacrifices in the Old Testament?
- What did they do with the sacrifices to be offered up to God?
- Did they now slaughter them?
- Were they not rendered dead?

That’s what Paul is saying here. *A living sacrifice!* Except we are to be living, but dead to this world!

**“...present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy and well-pleasing to God...”** (v 1).

In the very first offering that God gave to us through the book of Leviticus was the burnt offering. That offering was a total sacrifice. It was completely consumed by the fire. That animal that was sacrificed represented Jesus Christ.

- Was the life of Jesus Christ a total sacrifice?
- Did Jesus say anything of Himself, for Himself?
- Did He have His private thoughts apart from the Father?
- Did He have His own private desires apart from the Father?
- Did He have the things that He did apart from the Father?

***NO!*** *This is what God has called us to!* But we also need to understand how to apply that in our lives.

**“...present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy and well-pleasing to God...”**

Was the burnt offering in Lev. 1 pleasing to God? *Moses wrote the words that God—the One Who became Christ—gave to him!* The words that were given to Him by the Father. They were well-pleasing! The words used there is a ‘sweet savor’ to God.

So, our living sacrifice—being dead to this world—is a sweet savor to God! The burnt offering was offered on the altar and it was from the altar, which is God’s table (Mal. 1).

**“...which is your spiritual service”** (v 1).

What was happening in Malachi’s time was that the people were no longer offering sacrifice on the altar—God’ table—so, if we are to be a living sacrifice to God, have we not placed our lives on God’s altar, through Christ? That we become a complete and total sacrifice consumed by God.

Malachi 1:12: “But you are profaning it... [God’s name] ...when you say, **‘The table of the LORD, it is polluted; and its fruit, His food, is contemptible.’**”

The reason that I said to you that the altar where sacrifices were made, the altar that God wants us to place our lives on as a living sacrifice, God feasts from that. God is satisfied when we offer our lives to Him as a living sacrifice. It is well-pleasing to God.

***It’s a discipline that we must learn!*** That’s why God has given us His Word, so that we can learn that discipline of becoming a living sacrifice.

1-John 2:12: “I am writing to you, little children...”

This could be translated “...*beloved* little children...” because John<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup> had such love toward the brethren.

Paul also poured out his life for the brethren; that was his mind and heart! Everything he did was to serve the people of God. In so doing, didn’t Paul become a living sacrifice, even in the end when he gave up his life after taking the lives, as Saul, of many of the Christians.

“...because *your* sins have been forgiven you through His name. I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked *one*. I am writing to you, little children, because you have known the

Father. I wrote to you, fathers, because you have known Him Who *is* from *the* beginning. I wrote to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God is dwelling in you, and you have overcome the wicked *one*. **Do not love the world...** [that’s part of the sacrifice, not loving the world] **...nor the things that are in the world....**” (vs 12-15).

***Like Moses*** who wouldn’t be called a son of Pharaoh’s daughter, rather suffered with the children of God. With all the beauty, wealth and power that he had as a great man in Egypt, ***he cast it all aside to spend his time with the people of God!*** Look at what God did through Moses.

**“...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him”** (v 15).

We know this! But we need to think about it and take it before God’s Throne!

Job 42:2<sup>[transcriber’s correction]</sup>—*Job says:* “I know that You can do all things, and **that no thought can be withheld from You.**”

Every thought that we think, everything that passes thorough mind God knows and is aware of sitting on His Throne in heaven above.

Jeremiah 23:24: ““Can anyone hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him?” says the LORD. **‘Do I not fill the heavens and earth?’** says the LORD.”

On His Throne in heaven above, God is aware and conscious of everything! He is just that great, powerful and as Job said, ‘God, You know all things!’ How does His mind cope with everything? *We don’t know!* One day we will find out!

1-John 2:15: “Do not love the world, nor the things *that are* in the world. **If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.**” *Basic Scriptures! Elementary!*

- Didn’t Paul talk about the simplicity that is in Christ?
- Isn’t this the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ?

These are not difficult to understand Scriptures, are they? *They are written for our learning and for our benefit!*

Verse 16: “Because everything that *is* in the world... [all things; and John identifies it]: ...**the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life...**”

Was that not Job’s problem? The Scripture says that *‘he who is thinks he stand, take heed lest he fall!’* Job was righteous ***in the letter*** of the Law! He

obeyed God's Law perfectly and God couldn't fault him in the *letter* of the Law. But Job was so filled with his own righteousness that became self-righteous and could not see himself.

What did God do to Job? *He turned him over to Satan!* Job couldn't understand it; he thought that he was more righteous than God. God allow Satan to smite Job's family and everything that he possessed, and Satan was allowed to smite Job's body with boils!

We're told 'do not despise the chastening of the Lord.' God loves us, and every child that God loves He's going to correct! So, we have to find out if our problems are those we're bringing on ourselves, or is this from God?

This is the wording from Paul in the book of Hebrews: If you don't submit yourself to the correction of God then you are a bastard and not a son. Those were the words that Paul used. Of course, it was written in the Greek, but that was the meaning; *you're illegitimate!*

There are some people that it doesn't matter how much God corrects them, they just don't see to be able to get the message. God has a way of working with us. I have to stop and ask myself first: Where am I wrong? Then search the Scriptures to see!

Verse 16: "Because everything that *is* in the world the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life is not from the Father, but is from the world."

If we are like Job and maintain our own righteousness, then we are not going to learn from God and receive His correction.

Verse 17: "And the world and its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God abides forever." *He becomes a living sacrifice:*

- by following God's Word
- by following God's way of life
- by standing in the precious blood of Jesus Christ

*which is there for all eternity!*

Verse 18: "Little children, it is *the* last time..."—*written for us, for our generation, every generation!* But we are far closer to the end-time than to those to whom Paul was writing to. They did not have the understanding—it was not given to them—that you and I have.

"...and just as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have risen up, by which we know that it is the last time" (v 18).

- look at the 'pride' movement
- look at what is taking place in the political and geopolitical area

You see much of that is part of the antichrist as well as the religious and educational and financial areas of this world. *It's coming on us!*

Verse 19: "They went out from among us... [and we hope and pray that they will come back] ...but they were not of us, because if they were of us they would have remained with us; nevertheless, *they left* that they might be exposed to show that they all were not of us."

What does it mean to not love the world? *That means that we are going to be living a sacrificial life on the earth!*

I would like to mention something else that probably is important to us. The sacrificial life, in fact, is an investment; building up and storing treasure in heaven.

- What do we want?
- Do we want the treasures of this world?
- Do we want the love of the things of this world?

or

• Do we have hope in the Kingdom of God? *by which there is:*

- treasure
- pleasures
- joys

*Into the ages of eternity!* When we put that on the scales to balance it, it far outweighs the pleasures of this world!

Galatians 6:12<sup>[transcriber's correction]</sup>: "As many as desire to make a good impression in *the* flesh, these are the ones who compel you to be circumcised, *and* only in order that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ: for those who are circumcised, neither do they keep *the* law themselves, but they want you to be circumcised in order that they may boast in your flesh. But as for me, MAY IT NEVER BE that I boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom *the* world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (vs 12-14). *Paul says that the world is crucified to him!*

- Is it crucified to us? *Think about that and meditate on that!*
- How is the balance on the scales of our lives?

In 1-Cor. 2 is a powerful Scripture, and it has so much meaning for us once you think about it.

1-Corinthians 2:1: "And I, brethren, when I

came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom, in proclaiming the testimony of God to you. For **I decided not to know anything among you** except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (vs 1-2).

- What does that mean?
- Did Paul have enough material to cover on that basis?

Verse 3: “And I was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you.”

When we elders and ministers are preparing sermons, that’s the way we feel. Why? *Because we are working with each one of those of you whom God has called! You belong to Him!* We’re handling the words of eternal life, the words of the Bible, the Scriptures! These are the very words of God from His mouth through His servants, the prophets and apostles.

If we mess up, there’s trouble; we have to be faithful to the Word of God. We have to ask God to make sure that He’s guiding us and He’s putting His words into our mouth. We’re not speaking our own ideas and thoughts, and the evil that may come out of our heart. **That has to be crucified! It’s a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Eternal God!**

So, we do right to time that we come to speak. Because we put it in God’s hands, we have faith and trust in Him that He will use us as His servants to serve each of His children inasmuch as we’re able to.

Verse 3: “And I was in weakness and in fear...”

Fear of God and leading the children of God who are precious through the blood of Christ; fear of leading them astray.

In Acts 20 we’re told that this is going to happen in the Church, that there will be those who will rise up and draw people away for themselves. They will bring in false fire into the Church. Read Lev. 10 and what happened to the two sons of the high priest Aaron. **They brought strange fire into the very presence of God!** What happened to them as a warning to us, anyone who will bring false fire into the Church: **God personally consumed them with fire!**

So should we, in handling the Word of God, realize... as God said to Moses, ‘Take your shoes off, the ground that you’re walking on is Holy ground.’ If we get it wrong, the fire of God can touch us, as well. **So, we have an obligation to God to be faithful and true with His Word!**

Verse 4: “And my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human

wisdom; rather, *it was* in demonstration of **the Spirit and of power**”—**which upholds the entire universe!**

That power is available to you and me. We just have to ask and walk in the way of God the Father and Jesus Christ. That power is there for us as we been in order to stand in the presence of God. That is in the faith and blood of Jesus Christ, and to walk on the paths that Jesus walked.

As we see in the burnt offering (Lev. 1) it was the complete offering for sin. That was such an incredible truth, a sweet savor to God, pleasing to God. Here is a perfect sacrifice, the Son in Whom He was well pleased. It was an offering in which Christ was accepted by God the Father in the sacrificial system, which we no longer need. Christ was accepted by the Father for us!

It was also the offering of His life, complete and total sacrifice. That sacrifice was totally burnt; nothing was spared or saved. It pictures the totality of the sacrifice of Christ.

Paul said to the Hebrew brethren, talking about the Jesus as High Priest after the order of Melchisedec, which there is much to be said about Him. There is so much that we can learn about what Jesus Christ accomplished through the sacrificial system (Lev. 1-7). Paul is addressing the subject, and the book of Heb. Is basically about the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ, the change from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant, from the old priesthood to the new priesthood, which is the eternal priesthood.

Hebrews 5:5: “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘**You are My Son... [the Father addressing Jesus] ...today I have begotten You.**’ Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘**You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec**’; Who, **in the days of His flesh...** [the Son of the living God; now fully flesh and given up His glory] **...offered up both prayers and supplications...** [think about this as our example; #1 primary and paramount example] **...with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death...** [the second death] ...and was heard **because He feared God.** Although He was a Son, *yet*, He learned obedience from the things that He suffered” (vs 5-8).

- Jesus had to learn obedience, the Son of the living God, the Word? the Logos? *Yes!*
- Why? *Because He had never been a man before!*

He had to live a life like we live! He had never done that before, and now He was a man, fully flesh with

bones and blood. He had departed or castoff all His glory and took on the form of a man; completely and totally man!

The Word of God, the Logos Jesus Christ, had never been a man before. Now He had to live as we live. Why? *So that He could be the Perfect Sacrifice before God the Father!*<sup>[transcriber's correction].</sup>

There's so much to learn with the sacrifice. You might read and say that this is a lot repetition. You chop the body up and take the core fat and all the innards and wash them and the legs.

Why? *The innards have to do with the heart, the emotions and feelings that guide us and lead us! What did Jesus say about the Pharisees? They wash the outside of the cup, but left the inside filled with 'dead man's bones, you whitewashed sepulchers.'*

The high priest actually washed the innards of the sacrifice, which represented Christ. Christ was pure in heart.

- Why was it when they killed these animals that it was bloody?
- Why did they have to be perfect without spot, stain, blemish or wrinkle *Because Jesus Christ had to be that perfect sacrifice so that His blood would cover the sins of mankind!*

Verse 9: "And having been perfected..." *He obeyed everything!*

He didn't do anything except the Father told Him. He didn't say anything and do anything except what He had from the Father. ***Talk about total sacrifice!***

As a teenager, I used to wonder what it meant to be fully surrendered to God. I never understood it until God hit me and got my full attention. Then I began to understand and I'm still learning. We're all still learning that lesson.

"...He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, after **He had been designated by God as High Priest...** [the High Priest of all of God's people] ...**according to the order of Melchisedec**; concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing" (vs 9-11).

I believe that here Paul is referring back to Lev. 1-7 where every particle, every concept that is mentioned there is a reference to the work that Jesus Christ has done.

What we see, of course, is the blood in Egypt was spread on the doorposts. When we repented, God's blood was shed on heart and body, our lives.

Do we stop and think about everything else that Christ sacrificed or did is all wrapped up there in Lev.—and expanded upon elsewhere?

Why is it that the sacrifice of Christ, and much of the symbolism referred back to time and time again. The physical is a type of the spiritual, and we begin to understand the deeper riches that are in Christ Jesus. A study of those sacrifices will help bring us closer to God and help us to know and understand Him better.

But all of those sacrifices were for one thing: *to bring you and me into that intimacy with God the Father through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, His crucified body!* It's the veil that was ripped away so that when we're before God's Throne and we pray, wherever we are, we have that instant contact, that immediate contact, and that intimacy with our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ and the sprinkling and shedding of His blood.

Verse 12: "For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers, *but instead* you need to have *someone* teach you again what *are* the beginning principles of the oracles of God..."

But if we're new in the Body of Christ, new in the Church, we're going to learn these things. Paul is addressing the Hebrew brethren that they were not redeeming the time. They were losing time. We're living in a time right now that we cannot afford to not be redeeming the time. Whether they were teenagers or in their 20s, 30s, right up to the 90s in the Church.

Paul said that he has taught nothing but Christ Jesus and Him crucified (1-Cor. 2). That is such an important topic.

"...and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food" (v 12). ***We all need to grow so that we can have that solid food!***

How do we do that? *Go before God's Throne in prayer and drinking in of the spiritual manna, which is the Word of God!* We add to that fasting and become that living sacrifice. That we're living in this world with the hope of the future, the resurrection! We don't want any thoughts, emotions or actions that is going to take us out.

What God has done through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is given us a standing, because our sins are being covered by the blood of Christ. But we don't stop there!

- What do we do next? *In that burnt offering not only were the innards washed, but also the legs!*
- What do the legs do? *With our legs, we walk! We make forward progress!*

The legs are washed so that we will continue to walk in the path that God has laid out so clearly before us, as David often prayed.

Verse 14: “But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil.”

Peter was the one who was the chief apostle in the beginning when the Church began.

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.”

These go from east to west from Babylon. If he had been in Rome he would have reversed the order of where these states are.

Verse 2: “*Who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit...*”—*that’s our standing!*

Because of the blood of Christ, sanctified by the Spirit... Paul says in Rom. 8: ‘We are not under any condemnation’ because God has got us counted completely. As we repent of our sins and use the testament of Jesus Christ, Satan is kept out; as long as we’re going that.

“...unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, **has begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**” (vs 2-3). *That is our hope!*

Verse 4: “Unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us.”

There is our treasure, *in heaven!* A living sacrifice is not only a sacrifice, but it’s also an investment!

- You want to invest in the stock market? You want to get rich?
- You want to invest in stocks or put your money into gold and silver? *There’s no future in that, because it says that it’s going to be cast into the streets!*

***Our real treasure, our sacrifice is, in fact, an investment in the wealth and treasures, pleasures and joys, are in the Kingdom of God reserved for us now in heaven!*** That is going to be give to in the resurrection when we meet Christ and we will be rewarded for our sacrifices.

- Is that worth sacrificing our lives?

- Is that worth coming out of this world so we are not to be partakers of her sins?

Why did Paul not mention his name in writing to the Hebrews? *Because it’s all about Christ Jesus and Him crucified, and Paul didn’t want to take one ounce, one particle of the glory and honor that belongs to Jesus Christ!* Paul sunk into the background and stated the words that Jesus had given to him.

Heb. 4—think on this and meditate on it. Read it over and over again, because it is so powerful. It is the way to all the power that we need in God’s Spirit and be that living sacrifice, to be the sacrifice along with Christ. Read the rest of 1-Peter 1 where it talks about the significance of the sacrifice, it’s meaning for us and it also talks about Jesus Christ (1-Pet. 1:13-16) being Holy and pure, unblemished and without spot, wrinkle and stain. God wants us to be a sacrificed the way Christ was, without spot, wrinkle or stain and unblemished. That all happens by the precious blood that Jesus Christ spilt on our behalf.

Hebrews 4:12: “For the Word of God is living...”—*spirit!*

Jesus said, ‘The words that I speak to you are Spirit and they are Life’—*and Truth!*

“...and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of both soul and spirit...” (v 12)—*so that we can know what we need to look out for and get rid of!*

So that we can become more and more, day-by-day, that living sacrifice. It’s the Word of God that is Spirit, which is totally combined with the Word of God; they work together in perfect harmony.

“...and of both the joints and the marrow, and is able to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (v 12).

That’s why we need it! All these things we can’t know ourselves; God has to reveal it to us.

- What are the thoughts and intents of my heart?
- Why am I doing this?
- Why have I done that?
- Why am I suffering?
- Is it because I’m being persecuted?
- Is it because I’m being dumb and stupid and foolish?
- Is it because I’m ‘kicking against the pricks’?

***Show me, Father, in your Word what I need to bring before Your Throne and confess it!***

Verse 13: “And there is not a created thing that is not manifest in His sight... “

Tie in Job 42; Lord, You know everything and no thought can be hidden from You!

“...but all things *are* naked and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account. Having, therefore, a great High Priest, *Who* has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, we should hold fast the confession *of our faith*. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot empathize with our weaknesses, but *One Who* was tempted in all things according to *the likeness of our own temptations*; yet, *He was* without sin” (vs 13-15).

Verse 16: **“Therefore, we should come with boldness to the Throne of Grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”**

May God’s richest blessings on His Word and Spirit as He reaches out to us and helps us to become those living sacrifices; so that we will see Him when we become like Him in the resurrection!

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Ephesians 2:20
- 2) Isaiah 8:16
- 3) Luke 14:25-33
- 4) Romans 12:1
- 5) Malachi 1:12
- 6) 1 John 2:12-15
- 7) Job 42:2
- 8) Jeremiah 23:24
- 9) 1 John 2:15-19
- 10) Galatians 6:12-14
- 11) 1 Corinthians 2:1-4
- 12) Hebrews 5:5-12, 14
- 13) 1 Peter 1:1-4
- 14) Hebrews 4:12-16

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 20
- Leviticus 10; 1-7
- Romans 8
- 1 Peter 1:13-16

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