

They Ought To Know Me!

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As transcribed by Jane Vaughn

I want us to look at two scriptures for foundational purposes before I lead you to our main context for this message. The first scripture is from Job, chapter 37, verse 5: “*God thundereth marvelously with His voice. Great things doeth He which we cannot comprehend.*” Let’s read that again to really catch what God is saying to us. “*God thundereth marvelously with His voice. Great things doeth He which we cannot comprehend.*” We may not always understand everything He is saying at the moment, but He does speak! Marvelously!

The next verse is Isaiah 44:6. “*Thus saith the LORD, the King of Israel, and his redeemer, the LORD of hosts*” – that’s His title and Who He is. Many become more interested in what someone has to say when they know something about who that speaker is. “*Thus saith the LORD, the King of Israel, and his redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside Me there is no God.*”

We sing that in so many different ways – in different choruses. We sing it every way there is to sing it: “You’re the only One – there’s no One but You!” And yet, I don’t think, by and large, we honestly express the truth of that in our personal living levels. In other words, I’m not sure we’re really convinced of Who He actually is – or our lives would reflect it.

A few weeks ago, I had a vision. I have had probably, I don’t know, maybe a half dozen real (authentic) supernatural visions in my life. Vivid, undeniable visions. Before I tell you what it was I saw, I need to remind you that the Lord very often uses things that are familiar to us when He speaks through visions. When He gives us a picture of some truth, it’s often of something to which we *personally* can relate and then have more understanding.

My ministry logo is from Proverbs 28:1 – “*The wicked flee when no man pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.*” That’s very important to me – lions and the lion of Judah. There is one room in my home we call the “Lions’ Den” – and I have lots of lions there – just to remind me of the powerful God we serve – and what He expects from us. There are pictures of lions on the walls and lion statuary and figurines standing in various places. I even wear lions often – jewelry, like pins and earrings. Lions truly mean something to me and have for many years.

Now, having prefaced my vision with that bit of information, I think that’s why the Lord used a lion in this vision – plus the fact that I had just seen (and if you don’t believe in Christians going to movies, just forgive me ☺) I had just seen the recent film taken from the Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis. Now, if you think it’s a sin to go to the movie theater, it’s available on video and you can just rent it... ☺ (No one like God’s people to know how to get around things... ☺)

I was studying for and musing with the Lord – meditating if you will, whatever word fits your doctrine – I was waiting on the Lord for inspiration from Him for the message I should carry to the place where I was going to speak next. During my study and prayer time, I saw this *huge* lion. He was just enormous! I can’t emphasize that enough – the immensity of His size. He would have stretched clear across the platform of a big church and He was lying down, like you see many of the lion statues. They’re just lying down – looking.

As I looked at Him, I could see He was magnificent! He was simply grand! And then He turned His head – and looked down right at me. It’s so hard to describe exactly what I saw – but His head was just enormous. Of course, that should have been obvious because of the largeness of His body and the enormity of the whole scene. But it was just a massive head as He turned to face me. Are you interested in hearing this? ☺ At all? ☺ Oh good, because it was an awesome vision!

He opened His mouth and out of it came *waves* which I understood as a voice. As it came forth, I was so thrilled because of the few visions that I've had in my life. Each one of them has impacted me for years really, and in an on-going way. I was, simply put, excited! As I saw these waves coming out from Him, my mind (because I've got a crazy mind that goes in all directions) my mind was thinking of "*the sound of many waters*" (Rev.1:15) – "*His voice is as the sound of many waters.*" That's precisely what I was thinking as these waves came forth. But I understood the words.

This is what He said: (forcefully, loudly, with great emotion, emphasis, stress, and authority) "***THEY OUGHT TO KNOW ME!***" And then He turned His head back as He had been and looked straight ahead. I wish I had the vocabulary to explain the *pathos* (emotion of sorrow and sadness at tragedy) – the cry – the feeling – that came with those words. Only five words: "*They ought to know Me.*" But it was an extraordinary message.

The closest I can think of that was similar to what I was sensing from Him – must have been the way Jesus felt when He stood above the city of Jerusalem and cried in anguish: "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! How I would have gathered thee unto Myself as a mother hen gathers her chicks – but you wouldn't have it!" (Mt.23:37; Lk.13:34,35). It was that kind of emotion! "***THEY OUGHT TO KNOW ME!***" And that was all He said.

You know what it's like to hear a word from God – I mean really *hear* Him speaking directly to you. Whether it is a prophetic word given in a meeting, or from the written word when you open the Bible and revelation just sort of jumps off the page and comes alive for you, or whether it be a dynamic sermon you've just heard – you know what that's like: ***God has spoken and you know it!*** You hear it and have some understanding right at that moment, but then, because it is a *seed planted*, it grows and enlarges as you think upon what you have just heard. And then it just expands more as you continue to receive more and more understanding as Holy Spirit unfolds more details. That's the way this vision was.

Now, I was preparing to travel and speak to a group where there would be many ministers – pastors – church leaders – and I thought: "*They ought to know You, Lord? Lord, don't the ministers know You?*"

So, with that laid as a foundation let's turn in our Bibles to Psalm 71. Have you ever heard the statement: "This is a *clarion* call?" I've even used that – I've said those words: "There was a clarion call." And when I was thinking about *this* message for today, I believe the Lord said that that vision was a "*clarion call.*" And I thought – "What is a clarion call?" I mean, sometimes we just say things and we don't have a clue what they really mean. ☺

Then, I began reviewing what I already knew. "Well, I know that a clarion is a trumpet – sort of – of some kind – but I couldn't get away from the thought of exactly what the Lord might be getting at, so I conducted some research. What I discovered is that, indeed, a clarion is a trumpet, although much longer and thinner than what we usually picture used today in a modern band or orchestra. When you blow this trumpet – because of its unique shape – with the tube being quite narrow – it makes the tone more acute (or, sensitive, sharp, heightened, finely tuned, discriminating). It is a clear sound and it's more than a simple trumpet blast. It is an absolute, acute sound – from heaven! And it commands attention. A clarion call: "***They ought to know Me!***"

Why? What was God saying that we need to pay sharp attention to?

If there ever was a time in the history of our lives (in this present generation), when we needed *desperately* to know Whom we serve, it is *now*. We talk about it – ministers do – when we get together. We talk about the fact that one of the greatest shortcomings common among so many Christians today (among too many Christians!) is that there's a lack of the *fear of the Lord*. And I know that's true. But, do you know **why this lack exists?** You can't fear what you don't know. If I didn't know there was a robber already inside my bank, I would just blithely walk in to do my banking business – fear-less. Only when I saw the gun would I fear.

Oh, yes. I can just imagine some of your thoughts back to me and your questions: “We’re saved – and were baptized – and we declared our salvation (Rom.10:9.10) – and we do know Him. He is our Savior! Our healer! Our soon-coming King!” But that isn’t what He said, or meant, in the vision.

You see, you can’t really know me unless you *live* with me. Some people know me as one thing and some as another. If you go back far enough in my past, there would be people that would say, “Oh, yes. Iverna was a music leader.” Others would say, “Oh, she’s a fiery preacher.” Someone else would say, “No, she’s a teacher.” Another person would say, “She’s Judson Cornwall’s sister.” Still another would say, “She’s a friend of... so-and-so.” Each one knows some little things about me, but they don’t really know me. Not really. They haven’t lived with me day in and day out, rain or shine.

If false accusations were made about me to people who barely know me, they might be prone to believe them. People tend to believe just about anything that’s passed along as gossip. ☺ But if you said to either of my children, or any of my grandchildren, “This is what Iverna did...” because they know me, their fast answer would be, “Not Mom.” Or, “Not Grammie. We know her. That’s not how she would handle that situation!” Can you grasp what I am saying? I hope I’m developing something in your mind. We fall so far short of truly *knowing* God. We’re full of information *about* Him, but do we intimately know *Him*?

That kind of “knowing” is going to be so necessary in the very near future. As we see the spreading of false religions in our own country, right where we live and work, and the many false gods that are being presented as valid and valuable – we will need to know our God. And Just watch what will happen in our nation, soon, “in the name of human rights” – that we all must accept these false religions and their gods as viable. **Only the people who really know Who God is are going to be able to stand firm in these trying days.** Only those who really *know* Him can honestly say with the Psalmist: “*In Thee, O Lord, do I put my trust. Let me never be put to confusion*” (Ps.71:1).

Confusion is one of the projections from the enemy to the Church. When he can’t talk you out of what you have, or what you possess from God, he will endeavor to confuse you about it. He wants you to question God – to doubt Him. He certainly does not want you to *trust* Him! Paul reminds us that “*God is not the author of confusion...*” (1Cor.14:33). But the enemy will use any guile that works.

So many things that the news commentators are saying today are so liberal and biased – and *against our God*. If you listen to them, they sound very logical and so *seemingly* right. They say, “It’s not fair to judge people by their religion.” And, “It isn’t fair for us to demand that the only ones who get a tax break are those who serve the God we serve” (i.e. the IRS 501c3 tax exempt designation). We hear these things over and over until *confusion* begins to come into our minds and we conclude: “Well, I don’t really know what is right.” Dear God, help us to know You!

Our young people are especially vulnerable to these assaults. They are absolutely being indoctrinated in their schools today. They’re being told that basically they have to be accepting of *everyone* and *everything* – particularly how other people serve their gods in their own ways. And we must know that the Word of God is so ANTI to that stance! If we don’t shake ourselves soon, from our places of slumber and complacency, and come back to the **boldness** that the Holy Spirit puts within us – and begin to really know our God – we’re not going to know how to appropriately counter these pressing worldly influences!

The Psalmist says, “*Deliver me in Thy righteousness, and cause me to escape; Incline Thine ear unto me, and save me*” (Ps.71:2). There is a desperate desire to escape today. Now, I want you to understand that “escape” (here in the scripture) is not “run away.” What the cry of the psalmist is, I believe – and is *my* cry as well – “Deliver me from *confusion*!” Cause me to escape that, Lord, so we can honestly proclaim – as the New Testament does – “*I know in Whom I have believed and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day*” (2Tim.1:12).

Where did that confidence go? What has happened to the Church? “Well, we just – we’re just trusting... We’re just...” You’re not trusting! You’re wishing! When we come to understand fully Who He is, then we can say, as verse 3 does in this Psalm: “*Be Thou my strong habitation whereunto I may continually resort.*” Oh! How important it is we find that place of trust! And run to *Him*!

There is an old song from my background: “On Christ, the Solid Rock I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.” We came through some tough things in days before this one – some very heavy kinds of testings and trials. And we learned that He is the Rock! We learned that when the winds blow and the floods come (cf. Isa. 43:1-3), we need to be **ON the Rock**! It’s the only safe place to be! It’s not enough to just say (or sing), “You’re my Rock! You’re my Fortress! You’re my Deliverer! In You will I trust!” (see Psa. 18 and 118). It’s not enough to say it – if you don’t DO it!

All the counseling done in churches – would cease – if we knew our God! All the whiny, competitive – “I’d go to that church, but I don’t like the color of the stairs!” ☺ – would cease if we *really* knew God. We would walk into His Sanctuary, *wherever it is*, whatever color it is, with an awesome fear – that reverence that recognizes His greatness and righteousness, His holiness and sovereignty. “Oh my God, that Thy Presence may be *here* and be responded to by Your own people!” Every church, whether 20 people or 2000, is nothing without His Presence!

If we build it, a church building, in His name, then let’s know Him! Let’s spend some time with Him! If you’re not in the Word, you’re missing out on time with Him! And I don’t mean just patty-caking around in your favorite Psalms! They’re wonderful and I love to preach from them, but they are not the whole counsel of God. I can hardly believe that when a preacher, speaking to all believers, draws from an unfamiliar passage – like, “We’re going to speak to you today from Micah 2...” or, “Obadiah 1...” – that the people in the congregation have to search through their Bibles (flipping the pages). Why is that? Because they don’t pick it up from Sunday to Sunday! They are not getting to know their God! and yet call themselves “followers of Christ!” You can not know Him and stay out of His Word!

Oh sure – we want the revelation today. You would be happy with me if I just stood up here and prophesied. We love that. And there is a lot of that today where the prophet just picks out specific people to give them a personal word – and sometimes they truly are from God. ☺ I can let the Spirit of prophecy flow and do that and sound very authoritative: “And the Lord would say to this church...” “And the Lord would say to that church...” “And the Lord would say to this person and that person...” We love that – because **we’re too lazy to find what He’s already said!**

There’s a desperate need in this psalmist as there is a desperate need in every generation. Today, God is speaking to *this* generation about the previous one – and about the future one. Did you get that? The message today that God is speaking is *about* the previous generation and *to* the future generation. And, He is making a demand on the *present* generation.

Now, I’m 76 years old and am privileged, still, to be – a voice – to the Church. That’s a real privilege. Truly it is and I recognize it as an honor. I’ve been through three fairly good-sized past Revivals, and lots of little ones in between, and I’ve seen many things – I think I can match just about any story. ☺ But I’m still here, and I’m presently living in the middle of a situation where the heart of God is simply *throbbing* within me to get across to all believers this message: “Unless you get to know God, you are not going to leave a heritage for the coming generation – who are already alive and in our churches!

The enemy is wiser than the children of the Kingdom. He indoctrinates at very young ages. He goes after the children. Yes it’s true, that I did preach my first message at age 8. And just shortly after that, I began to see apparitions and have demonic manifestations and so on. What I’m telling you is that the enemy knows when God is going to use someone. Not because he is all-knowing as God is, but he can see all the signs and read them accurately. He is very experienced in this. My folks wisely led me out of that evil supernatural arena and into the awareness that “*greater is He that is in you*” (1Jn. 4:4). And they taught me about the *efficacy* (complete effectiveness and value) of the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, they taught me how to apply that truth in a practical way. I learned early on how to trust in Jesus, my only Rock and Refuge.

Are you teaching your boys and girls (kids and grandkids) the truth of God's Word? Or, are you leaving all the educating to the professional educators? It's good if your children are in Christian Schools – but not all of them from your church are so privileged. And they're hearing all kinds of things in the public schools you wouldn't believe or even could imagine. It's only when we *know* our God that we can discern what is from Him and the truth. Our *children* need to know God so they can know when it's the enemy trying to feed them some sort of information – or experiences.

My father rarely took us to a doctor – not because of his faith alone, but we didn't have the money – Depression era. And so we grew up knowing that when we got hurt – when anything went wrong, actually – Dad came and prayed for us. Jesus truly was our Doctor. That was a *wonderful* time in our lives. What happens today? Today we have the money, or insurance policies and credit cards, so we don't *need* to trust or rely on God. It's not until we get cancer or something else incurable that we ask for prayer – something the *doctors* can't handle – and so we become desperate.

Do you know that we do the very same thing about life in general? Hello? We think we can handle most of our situations with our own wisdom or abilities or intelligence or other resources. We just don't turn to God for very much. Why? Because we really don't understand that *He's enough!* “Oh, just please pray for me. We're just – we're just having such a time financially.” And then that very next Sunday we'll sing: “My God is enough!” Read the Book. What does it say about finances? Are you a tither? “Well, we can't afford to tithe.” You can't afford not to tithe! Are you a giver? “Oh, I tell you. If I had it, I would give it!” If you won't give a dime on a dollar, you won't give!

We cannot walk in disobedience to the Word of God. We cannot just pick and choose out of the Bible what seems right (or reasonable) to us, or only the admonitions we know we can actually do. Or, our excuse is: “I didn't know that was in the Bible.” Well, read it! Discover for yourself! Press in to know your God!

Throughout God's Word, the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, Christ is revealed – the Messiah is revealed. God reveals Himself. And yet over and over in the Old Testament Scriptures, you find Him coming back on the scene and having to re-introduce Himself! “I am the Lord thy God!” “Ohhhhh...! WOW! I didn't know that!” ☺

Ask any pastor how much time he (or she) spends explaining to the people something that happened in the church. We have to sit down and go through the Bible, finding chapter and verse. “You see, they did this then, and it's thus and such...” If you read The Book for yourselves, you'd spare that! And you miss the adventure of discovery when you rely on another to answer all your questions.

A desperate need in this generation is for *hope*. Anywhere you go as you travel, you hear words of *hopelessness*. Listen to the television – you hear hopelessness. Or the songs today – the lyrics are full of hopelessness. There's just no hope. It's hopelessness that prevails in this generation – doom and gloom and pending disaster for the whole world. That's the picture today.

Get the Book! THE Book. And read it. The Revelation of God is full of hope! “*I will hope in the Lord who made heaven and earth*” (lit. “My help is in the Lord...” (Ps.124:8); “*The Lord is my portion; therefore I will hope in Him*” (Lam.3:24).

Hope's petition is: “*Lord, in Thee I put my trust... Deliver me in Thy righteousness...Be Thou a strong habitation...*” (Ps.71:1-3).

Hope's declaration is: “*Thou hast been*” and “*Thou art...*” (vs.3).

Now, if I was falsely accused, but this time by my own family, I probably would respond like this: “You ought to know better than that. You know I wouldn’t do that.”

I hear the Father saying the same thing to us – “You ought to know better than that.” You doubt that He’s your... How many times has He healed you? How many times when you were broke and you put your budget down on paper – but that didn’t work or balance out – and you still were able to pay all your bills? Miraculously. And you didn’t know how it happened nor could you figure it out.

How many times has He lifted you from depression? When you got to a point where you just – “I don’t even want to be... I just – if I had the nerve, I’d shoot myself (if I had accurate aim ☺). But your despairing cry was: “I want out!” And He showed up and gave you *hope* again.

How many times can you look back in your life, even if now you’re only in your teens but you can look back in your life and see – right at the edge of disaster – right at the brink of problems – the Lord stepped in and said, “Oh no, you’re Mine! You *are* Mine. For a brief moment, you’ve forgotten Who I am, but from the time you accepted that I died for you, I brought you into a Kingdom – My Kingdom. I brought you into a higher place. And you’re not going to kill yourself – and you’re not going back on drugs – and you’re not going back on this – and you’re not going back to that!”

I have watched people who absolutely were determined to do it – end their lives – but they couldn’t be successful at that! I’ve heard testimony after testimony – “I drank this and this and this and this and I couldn’t even get a “buzz” on!” Or, “I went back to this and it didn’t work!” Of course it didn’t work! You’re *divinely ruined!* ☺ Once you’ve given your life to Him, He writes your name in a Book, and there’s no eraser for it! Oh, you can do your little thing and be miserable (just like the Prodigal Son Lk.15:11ff) – but He waits – Father waits (vs.20). The Bible says, “*The Lord waiteth for thee* (Isa. 30:18) *that He may be gracious unto thee.*” Do you know what that means? “The Lord out-waits thee!” ☺ It doesn’t matter what detour you take, He’s standing right there waiting for you to come back. The same thing is true of a church.

I’ve watched churches advancing toward a great move of God – Revival – and then they stagnate or become waylaid. Why? Because you will never exhaust *knowing Him*. The more you know Him, the more of Him there is to know! Do you understand? The knowledge of God is inexhaustible! So, keep on pressing in for more of Him.

Now, I believe that we are absolutely on the brink of coming into an exciting fresh knowledge of the Lord that we’ve not had previously. I don’t think He is willing for anyone to stop or stagnate or just embrace the present day knowledge. I believe the reason that there is a *divine mandate* of missionary outreach concerns in many of His churches, and on the hearts of pastors, is because we’re finally going to see – finally – at the end of this generation – my generation – we’re finally going to see that the ***Kingdom is much bigger than the Church!***

That doesn’t mean the Church will pass away. The Church is His Body! Christ died for the Church! Is that not true? But Jesus’ opening sermon was – “Change your mind (or, “Repent!”) – the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!” (Mt.4:17; Mk.1:14,15).

How do you reckon or balance those two seeming opposites? The Church and the Kingdom? Which are we? Are we building the Church or are we to be concerned with the Kingdom? The answer is “Yes.” God is building the Church and that’s us. The trouble, as I view it, is that the people of the Church never seem to understand that the *seeds* that are sown for the Kingdom harvest – are the sons of God – YOU! You are the seed sown. I know, on one occasion, the seed sown is the Word (Mk.4:14; Lk.8:11) – but on another occasion, it says, the *seeds* are the *sons of God* (Mt.13:24-30 and 36-43 – the parable of the tares and wheat). You’re the ones being sown! And if we don’t come to *that* reality... But the sad truth is we come to church and other Christian meetings and conferences all the time, to have someone else sow into

us! We come to church – so empty – waiting to be filled – and then we’re bored because we already know those things that are being spoken. Do you want a higher level? Rise!

I didn’t have to keep saying to my kids – when they were younger – “Clean your room” if their rooms were clean. I didn’t have to repeat myself to get them to do something – if they were already doing it. Are you there? But the Lord is saying the same thing over and over because – we don’t get it! We have missed or ignored His point. He’s so patient with us that He brings all different kinds of speakers – even women! ☺ – and says the same thing over and over through them. One person is humorous about it. Another person is prophetic about it and another... You listen! Listen carefully and you’ll know I’m telling you the truth. You can go to all the many available conferences from now until Jesus returns but until we get this present message and He speaks differently, we’re just going to hear the same thing through these different voices.

So pastors – don’t be discouraged and pray, “Oh, dear Lord, I need a new revelation to bring to my congregation.” No! Nobody would get it yet but you! ☺ But soon... I’ll prophesy now. Really. Are you ready? Very soon, the Lion is going to say, “They’re beginning – to know Me.”

I’m sorry that it takes *pressure* to get us to a place where we say, “I’ve just got to know this is God. I’ve got to know this is God.” We’re going to know Him. But we are going to see some disasters. Yes, we are, more of them. Now, I’m not a “doom and gloom” preacher but I think – you don’t even have to be very wise just to look around and realize – things are not getting better. Things are deteriorating in our society – and in the whole world.

“Well then, how can you say that the Kingdom is here, and the Kingdom is expanding?” I promise it is. I’ll tell you why the Kingdom of God looks so tiny right now. There are a couple of reasons – do you want to know? ☺ One of the reasons it looks so small is that the Lord hasn’t connected the *marketplace* with the *Church* – yet. He hasn’t connected them up till now. But that’s alright, He will. It’ll just take a second to do that because what He is doing first is waking up everyone in the marketplace who has known Him and has said “Yes” to His call. They’re out there!

There are thousands and thousands of Christian businessmen that are doing very big things for God! They’re doing them quietly and on their own. I have met dozens of them and it’s just exciting to see what they’re doing – things that the Church has only thoughts about – dreams, maybe. But if those successful people come into our churches, we don’t know what to do with them, so we just make them ushers. ☺ I rest my case.

God is going to change us – individuals in the Church *and* Christians in the marketplace. He’s bringing us up higher – with the different idea that not everyone serves Him exactly the same way you do or just like I do. That isn’t important – the “how” of serving God. What is important is – do they serve the exact same God that you do?

When God connects the two arenas – those He’s preparing out there in the marketplace and these He’s preparing in here in the Church – the Kings of the Lord with the Priests of the Lord – when God gets us all ready – Kings and Priests are going to come together and the Kingdom of God is going to see itself! (see Rev.1:6). It is going to be very big, His Kingdom. And we will be surprised – maybe even shocked – at the revelation of it all. But He is going to remove the curtain – the veil? – that has prevented us from seeing with clarity before now.

What we like, in the Church – what we’re *comfortable* with – are conferences and conventions and things that *relate to our own circles*! It’s exciting! When our whole fellowship of churches comes together in some annual meeting, it’s really exciting being together with – *kindred* – folks that are in our own “circles,” if I may use that term. It’s just exciting to look around and say, “WOW! Well, there were 2000 people there, Pastor and it was incredible! I didn’t realize we had that many people!” That’s exciting!

And it truly is – and it should be. But just wait until the *Kingdom* gets connected! You want excitement?
☺ That will produce excitement!

Remember, we've been discussing the fact that God wants to join the Christians in the marketplace with what is happening in the Church. When you receive this concept, this revelation – every one of you that are ***in the workforce, or marketplace***, is going to receive a fresh revelation – the anointing wants to operate there! And, in the same manner that it operates from pulpit. Truly, I honestly believe that is coming, soon. The Holy Spirit inside of you wants to get out – and minister. And we haven't, in many churches, in most churches, we haven't taught you enough about how to let Him.

You see, when you take a job, your attitude ought to be – “Oh, are they blessed to have me!” ☺ Because *now* the blessing of the Lord can “*make rich and add no sorrow in it*” (Pr.10:22). And now this business where you are employed is going to be blessed just because you're there – not so much because you're so great (even though I'm sure you are ☺), but **because of WHO He is** that is in you! (see Jn.14:16,17). Are you there? Are you understanding this? I hope it makes a lot of sense. This is not a particularly light message, but it'll carry you through this next scene, if you can hear it.

God is going to connect the Kingdom – the marketplace-ministry with the Church – and I think it may happen even in my lifetime. That should be exciting to you! I see things coming together rather quickly – to where we can respect one another on a new level because we know the same God and serve Him. And whether the storms and natural disasters come, or all this “stuff” that goes on politically gets worse, it honestly doesn't matter. We're the ones that ought to declare the *hope*! We're the only ones who truly can – because we have hope in God (Ps.42:5,11; 71:5,14; 78:7).

“*I am as a wonder...*” Underline that word in Psalm 71, verse 7. It's /mo-faith'/ in the Hebrew. That means – “you gotta have mo' faith.” ☺ ☺ No, that was just having a little fun with the sound of that word. ☺ “*Wonder*” as used here is in the sense of *being conspicuous*. “*I am a wonder*” says the psalmist, “*unto many, but thou art my strong refuge.*”

What makes you a “wonder?” Is it your weirdness? Do you try to cram the Bible down everyone's throat – and call it “witnessing?” Is it that you speak one thing but they see you live another? What makes you or what makes me – *conspicuous* – noticeable – obvious – striking?

I want to believe it is the Christ within, and the glory of God that shines through us, and the authority that He gives to His Kingdom people. I want to believe it's that we have answers when the others don't because He supplies them. I want to believe that when we step into a situation, we are as in charge as if our *title* gave us that right – “Christ-ian.” It's when others cheat – and you don't. It's when filthy or prejudicial jokes are being told that you simply step out of that circle. *That* makes you conspicuous. What a way!

How many of you are ready to be marked by the “*mark of God?*” By the *high calling* of God? Who wants to *be conspicuous* – not because of being crazy – not obnoxious – but *conspicuous* – just different? A “good” different. “Different” by just breathing in and breathing out – until someone says, “What is it about you?” And you say, “What?” ☺ “I don't know – there's something... You're different!” “Oh, that.” ☺

Peter said, “*Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope...*” (1Pet.3:15). You're going to look like a crazy person if you speak *hope* these days – because all of society, that does not know the Lord, is speaking *hopelessness*. Right now, the blame is on Washington DC for our frightening national situations – and the disasters and all the *hope-less-ness*.

Here's what's being said concerning Iraq: “We never should have gone over there.” And – “We shouldn't try and make them be a...” And – “All the Christians put that crazy man in office (Pres.

George W. Bush) just because he said he was a Christian. But he's not Christian because he's allowing this and that and the other thing." Come on, Church. You hear these things! They're being spoken **BOLDLY** by the news commentators and the out-spoken liberal-thinkers.

Someone may inquire of you: "Do you think we should have gone to war?" It does not matter what I think or you think! We did! We went. Now – "*Obey them that have the rule over you*" (Heb.13:7,17; Rom.13:1; 1Pet.2:13). Now is not the time for us to vote – we voted back then! Now? – we support! There needs to be a lot more prayer going up for our governmental leaders, I'll tell you that is a certainty, for wisdom and godly input and all the rest of that. But our country is a different country than it was just five years ago. Yes, it is. And it's time to wake up and *know God* because –

In the vision, when I saw His head turn, I heard the "*sound of many waters.*" I believe what I understood by the *many* waters – the unfolding, or revelation, of that is – "**You aren't going to make it if you don't know Him!**" You are not going to make it – if you don't know Him! I cannot emphasize that enough.

We are being squeezed – this nation – and it's not a friendly hug! Do you understand this? We are being squeezed out of "Christian rights." "Well, are you suggesting then that we – we should go to Washington and demonstrate or...?" NO! I'm suggesting that we get to know God, hear Him, and do what He tells us! In the Kingdom, He's the KING! And He tells us what to do. We are His subjects – we are subjected to Him. That means we voluntarily come under His authority.

I just want to be faithful wherever He puts me. *You – need* to be faithful where He put you. And the absolute truth is, He is sowing you out there "in the field." He is sowing you. If you're a dead seed, nothing's going to come up – but He's sowing you! And what that means is – if you're a dead seed? – you're going to get walked on! Think *that* through.

Hope not only has a declaration, but it has a demonstration.

"How can you be happy? How can you sing? How can you smile? Don't you understand the situation?" Yes, I do. But I have *hope*!

It's not in the lottery. It's not "wish." It's not in my plans. Long ago, I learned I could not make out my plans, hand them to God and ask Him to bless them. He just doesn't do it that way (cf.Jas.4:13-15). He always does it His way. Even when I pray for mine – "in Jesus' Name." ☺

Why is it so hard – so difficult – for us to voice praise? Especially in times that are hard for us to understand let alone live through? When the leaders are up there giving us opportunity to sing: "Praise the Lord!" we often sing words that honestly are not the truth – or, *our* truth. We sing: "I will shout 'Hallelujah!'" But I don't hear any *shouts* out there! "Hallelujah!! I *praise* You, Lord! You are a *mighty* God!" I don't even hear any whispers! Oh, maybe a few – other than from the platform – but by and large, it's very difficult for people to praise God in tough times. And yet they say or sing, "Let's just praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" Are you praising Him in your heart? Or just with the lyrics because you know you're supposed to sing along? Where's the truth in that?

If you would interview individuals – in the church – you would hear some of them pitifully moaning: "You don't know what we're going through." ::*whine*:: "You just – I tell ya – things have never been this difficult." What has that got to do with anything? And they drone on: "But you see, I have an incurable disease. I've been prayed for, but..." So? You were born to die! ☺ Why are we always so shocked when we do? ☺ That is the usual way out! ☺

None of that changes the fact that God is always *worthy* of praise! "Well, things are difficult between my husband and me." So? Straighten him out! ☺ "Well, we've had godly counsel..." From God? Really? And it doesn't work? ☺ "I'm just weak – I'm just a weak person." **It's time for the Church to be different from the world.** It's time for us to plug into the vast resources of God! He is enough!

“*I will go in the strength of the Lord*” (Ps.71:16) – (the older you get, the more you claim those promises – every morning! ☺) “*He hath made me glad!*” (Ps.45:8; 46:4; 92:4; 104:15). “*He hath taken my sadness*” (Ps.30:11; Isa.61:3). “If it had not been for the Lord on our side... I just don’t know...” (2Chr.20:15; 1Sam.17:47; cf.Ex.17:8ff).

Now, listen – I’m not ignorant of some things that are obvious in current world affairs. My heart shakes and quakes when I see the threats against Israel! And I realize there are maps you can purchase today where Israel is non-existent! It is gone! Did you know that? There are globes available where they’ve actually removed Israel.

I care very much about our national condition today. I care very much that we’ve come this far – down. I’m aware of the potential of global disaster. I’m aware of all those things – **but they don’t change my God!** They don’t change my **trust** in God – except to increase it! Things are just lining up – “*When you see these things begin to come to pass, lift up your heads and rejoice – for behold! Your redemption draweth nigh!*” (Lk.21:18).

We are not in this to fail. We are in this to be “*more than conquerors*” (Rom.8:37). “Over over-comers” is what that word means in the Greek. We are in this to succeed! Not by grit. Not by New Year’s resolutions. Not by making commitments to one another: “We’ll make it, Brother! I’m with you – no matter what!” Sometimes those declarations last as long as 24 hours. ☺ We’ve done all of that. And perhaps I’m the guiltiest of all – I’ve answered every mission’s altar call since I was just a little girl. Whatever “field” the missionary came from, I got a new call to that one. ☺ And I’ve probably fulfilled most of them by traveling over these decades! ☺

It isn’t that I can say: “I, Iverna Tompkins, *will* make it.” I can’t say that and make it happen. I can say: “I, Iverna Tompkins, died at Calvary – and “*the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God...*” (Gal.2:20). We do need to come to the understanding – that without Him, we are nothing! Everywhere Jesus went, He said, “It’s the Father. Everything I do, it’s the Father! Everything I speak, it’s the Father!” (see Jn.5:19; 14:7-12; 7:16; 8:28,29;12:49,50).

Don’t allow the enemy to entangle you with confusion or despair. It’s your choice to succumb to his barrage of suggestions or to stand fast with God. “Well, I just don’t know what to do. And I don’t know how to fix it.” *Yes!!* You do! *You know God better than you realize you do!* You just aren’t – letting Him... This is how you spell that: L–E–T! L–E–T! L–E–T!

I challenge you to go back to your problem – whatever it is – and fix it – **with and because of** the God you serve. He is able to help you – give you the wisdom (Jas.1:5; 1Cor.12:8a) – give you the knowledge you need (1Cor.12:8b). But you have to want it and Him. I challenge you to come against the fear of failure. “If ye do these things...” Peter said, “*Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and... godliness... and brotherly kindness...*” (2Pet.1:5-7). Basically, he is saying, “**If you act like Christ** – He maketh you that you *shall not be barren – not be unfruitful* – and ye shall never fail [fall] (2Pet.1:10). That’s what the Good Book says.

“Well, how come I won’t fall when these others fell?” If you take your eyes off Jesus for one minute, you’ll be blubb-blubbing down in the water – just like Peter (see Mt.14:25ff). “Oh, my God! HELP!” He will! He’ll pick you up, set you back in the boat, and give you another chance. But truly – aren’t you tired of having to be picked up and put right back in exactly the same spot? If I need to be picked up, I want to be set down in a higher place than where I was. I want to be where He fellowships with me (1Jn.1:3). I want increased intimacy with my God!

Some of you don’t even *expect* Him to speak to you. Some of you would have a slight heart palpitation (if not, a full attack!) if I would leave this platform and head for you. ☺ I can just hear what you’d be

thinking: “Oh, I don’t even know if I want a word from God.” ☺ I know the truth of that – that’s why you stay out of The Book! You really don’t want too personal of an encounter with God!

I was talking with a young woman who was a wonderful Christian – wonderful in that she wasn’t a backslider. She just never grew beyond one certain level. I asked her, “**Are you in the Word daily?**” And this person said to me, “I don’t read the Bible – because it makes me feel badly.” I was so surprised! “What do you mean it makes you feel *badly*?” And she answered, “Everything I read, I just never measure up.” And I explained, “Oh! That’s the way it’s supposed to work!” ☺

There are only two possible responses to The Book. I do them almost simultaneously. As I’m reading along and come upon something wonderful, I say, “Hallelu— Oh, I’m sorry about that Lord.” ☺ Then I read the next verse: “Glory to G—! And I ask you to forgive me.” ☺ We either rejoice and praise Him, delighted with the revelation of His Word or repent for our shortfall, for “missing the mark.”

“*From glory...*” (glory is light – light is revelation – revelation of truth). “*From glory to glory*” He’s changing you! And He’s changing me! So, don’t run from Him, darlings – run to Him! It’s a new day! Get a bigger vision! And let Him work in you!