

NOW CONCERNING SPIRITUAL THINGS

an historical account of one man's walk with God

Jim Ash letter No. 93

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"Behold the former things have come to pass, and **new things I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.**" (Isaiah 42:9)

OUR ROLE MODEL

As I have previously written in one of my *letters*, the Lord said to me, "Jesus of Nazareth is a microcosm of the church (universal)."¹ From two dictionaries I obtained the following definition of microcosm:

"From Medieval Latin *microcosmus*, a modification of Greek *mikros kosmos*. A little world; a miniature universe. Hence, a Man, or human nature, as a supportive epitome of the exterior universe or great world."

In consideration of God's word to me that ***Jesus of Nazareth is a microcosm of the church***, my definition of *microcosm* is, "an encapsulated miniature." *Jesus of Nazareth* is an encapsulated miniature of what the church universal is supposed to be. To be more specific, *the life of each believer is to be patterned after the three and one-half year ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.* He is *our role model*. Or is He? Could this be? If He is, compare Him to what the church is today and you may end up in shock. Is God's "word" to me accurate? How may it be applied to the church today? Is it possible for believers to attain such implied spiritual maturity that we may actually become as Jesus was during His personal ministry? Ouch! The purpose of this letter is to examine in some detail God's rhema word to me concerning the activities of Jesus of Nazareth and draw some conclusions for you and me. When God gives a rhema word, sometimes it's fun to explore the meaning. This is one of those times. A few words may grow into a *letter*. Stay with me. Let's see what we may find out.

Notice that the "word" I received was ***Jesus of Nazareth is a microcosm of the church.*** From a biblical standpoint, for the purpose of clarity and in order to explore this rhema word from God, I have arbitrarily divided *the activities* of Jesus into five time-frames:

(1) From before the world was² to conception in Mary's womb.

(2) From conception³ to the beginning of His three and one-half year ministry.

(3) His three and one-half year ministry including the cross.⁴

(4) From the cross to being seated at the right hand of the Father⁵ at which time He was given all authority in heaven and on earth.⁶

(5) From being seated at the Father's right hand to the point of relinquishing all the authority in heaven and on earth *back to the Father* that He (the Father) may be all in all.⁷

What we are going to do is zero in on *activity* number (3), the three and one-half year ministry of Jesus of Nazareth to include the cross. Therein is the ministry of *Jesus of Nazareth* defined. **It is that life**, that period of time in the life of Jesus, which is the *microcosm of the church*. Therein is He considered to be *our role model* and that is where we will start.

When the Lord gives a rhema word, pay attention, listen and carefully examine it in light of the written word (logos). The rhema word and the written word (logos) may each confirm the other either in detail or in principle. Remember, however, that everything Jesus of Nazareth did in His personal ministry is not written in the bible. For example, the apostle John wrote, "And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples which are not

³For the conception story of Jesus in the womb of Mary, see Matthew 1:18-23.

⁴The four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) contain the vital record of His three and one-half year ministry from His miraculous conception to the cross.

⁵When Jesus ascended to the third heaven and placed His own blood on the mercy seat, **He sat down at the right hand of the Father** symbolizing the victory He had gained over Satan and the beginning of another phase of activities authorized by the Father. See Hebrews 1:3 and 10:12.

⁶Immediately after John's baptism, Jesus relinquished to the Father all authority placed on His shoulders (Phil. 2:5-8). However, after He placed His blood on the mercy seat, He sat down at the right hand of God (symbolizing authority) and was given by the Father all authority in heaven and on earth. See Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:44-49; John 20:21-23.

⁷When Jesus completes everything the Father has commissioned Him to do, following the Great White Throne Judgment, the cleansing of the earth and the heavens by fire, the descending of the New Jerusalem to the earth at the beginning of the eternal state, Jesus then surrenders all authority originally given to Him by the Father (see footnote 6 above) back to the Father that He (the Father) might be all. See 1 Corinthians 15:24-29.

¹See Jim Ash Letter No. 86 dated July 20, 2006.

²Here are words from the prayer of Jesus that He prayed to the Father shortly before he was crucified, "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You **before the world was.**" (John 17:5).

written in this book.”⁸ As an example, the Holy Spirit has instructed us to do things in our Healing & Deliverance Ministry which are very effective but which are in the bible only in principle. I could give you examples here, but that is not the subject of this letter.

To begin our study, observe the following twelve examples of what Jesus said about His personal ministry including what He said about Himself and His relationship with the Father during that three and one-half years period of time. Listen to these words from the mouth of Jesus as recorded by the apostle John and Dr. Luke:

1. “. . . My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” (John 4:34)

2. “. . . most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do . . .” (John 5:19a)

3. “I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.” (John 5:30)

4. “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” (John 6:38)

5. “My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.” (John 7:16)

6. “. . . that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.” (John 8:28)

7. “For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” (John 12:49)

8. “. . . the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.” (John 14:24)

9. “For I (Jesus) have given to them (the disciples) the words which You (the Father) have given Me and they have received them . . .” (John 17:8a)

10. “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44)

11. “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.” (Luke 6:40)

12. “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it

again. This command I have received from My Father.” (John 10:17, 18)

Here is a summary of these twelve quotations from Jesus of Nazareth concerning His three and one-half year ministry.

a) He surrendered everything to the Father including His own will. (Items 1, 3, 4)

b) He did not initiate anything Himself. (Items 2, 3, 6, 8, 9)

c) He had no authority whatsoever of His own. (Item 7)

d) The “doctrine of Jesus” was not His own. It was the Father’s who sent Him. (Item 5)

e) Jesus was given a command by the Father as to what He (Jesus) said (logos) and what He should speak (rhema). It doesn’t get any more meticulous than that! (Items 6, 7, 8, 9)

f) He could do nothing in and of Himself. Even the words He spoke were taught Him by the Father. He had to deny Himself in order to listen to and obey the Father. Sound familiar? (Item 2, 3, 6, 7)

g) He never acted on His own authority because that had been completely relinquished to the Father. In all that Jesus did, He, in essence, was a clearing house for the Father’s desires, direction and activities. (Item 7)

h) He did not even initiate the choosing of His twelve disciples. From the context of these eleven quotations from the mouth of Jesus, one may accurately conclude that when Jesus called His twelve disciples, the reason they responded to His call was because the Father had previously been drawing them to Him (Jesus). When the drawing was sufficient, the Father announced it to Jesus who then called them. That is why the responses were immediate. (Item 10)

i) The obvious conclusion drawn from Items 1 through 10 is that Jesus surrendered Himself completely to the Father, including what He did, what He said (logos) and spoke (rhema). The Father, therefore, directed everything Jesus did, which includes walking on water, feeding the 4000 and the 5000 and calming the waves and wind in the storm, etc.

j) The conclusion from Item 11 is that when we (disciples) are fully trained, we will be like our Teacher (Jesus)

k) The three and one-half year ministry of Jesus of Nazareth ended at the cross. I have included within the term “the cross” both His death and resurrection. Notice the words He said and spoke were commanded (authorized) by the Father. Notice also both the power to lay down His life (death) and the power to take it again (resurrection) were also

⁸John 20:30. In this quotation John was referencing His Gospel only.

commanded (authorized) by the Father and that the same terminology was used in both authorizations. (Items 7 & 12)

Although Jesus of Nazareth was totally submissive and subservient to the Father's expressed will, after John's baptism, He was also empowered by the Word and the Spirit⁹ in:

- A. Everything He did, including all miracles.
- B. The words He said and spoke.
- C. His death.
- D. His resurrection.

During the personal ministry of Jesus, the Father had all authority in heaven and on earth whereas today that authority is vested in Jesus.¹⁰ Here is evidence that we as disciples of Jesus today must be in total submission to Him, as He was in total submission to the Father during His personal ministry.

The following words were spoken by Jesus and recorded by Luke in chapter 14 of his Gospel:

26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate¹¹ his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and **his own life also**, he cannot be My disciple."

27 "And whoever does not **bear his cross** and come after Me cannot be My disciple."¹²

33 "So likewise, whoever of you does **not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple**."¹³

It is evident from these three verses that you and I must be totally surrendered and subservient to Jesus as Lord, just as He was totally surrendered and subservient to the Father, even to death if necessary, **or we cannot be His disciple**. Chew on that. That does not portend a casual commitment. It means that our commitment to Jesus must be the same as was His commitment to the Father during His personal ministry or we cannot be His disciple. That kind of commitment is not the result of joining a church or being in the "in crowd" politically,

⁹See John 1:14; Matthew 3:16, 17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:32, 33.

¹⁰See footnote #6.

¹¹A follower of Jesus must *hate* members of his immediate family meaning to hate the "self" of each one that must be denied to follow Him (Luke 9:23). Activities of His disciples must be initiated by the Holy Spirit (**not by self**) to be acceptable in the kingdom (See Romans 8:14).

¹²The cross is not a symbol of life but of death. To become a disciple of Jesus one must deny himself, take up **his cross** daily and follow Him. See Luke 9:23. This is precisely what Jesus did in His personal ministry. He denied Himself in order to be submissive and obedient to the Father.

¹³This is not an intellectual concept. It must be given by revelation (the Holy Spirit) to be understood. This means (1) putting God first in everything, (2) being guided by His Spirit and (3) giving Him the praise, glory and honor.

economically, socially or religiously. Christianity is not a state of action, it is a state of being. Christianity is not a religion, **it is a personal, intimate relationship with the risen, living Savior Who gave His life to redeem us from the curse that began with Adam's sin**. To know Him as Savior and Lord is the epitome of life.

Jesus became God Incarnate when He was baptized (filled) with the Word and the Holy Spirit (See John 1:14 & Matthew 3:16, 17). However, that spiritual authority was relinquished to the Father immediately after John's baptism (See Philippians 2:5-8). Therefore, in His personal ministry, the Son had no authority of His own. He was totally dependant upon the Father, not only for instruction on everything He did but even for the words He spoke. Luke reported that at age twelve, Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men."¹⁴ God does not grow in wisdom, for example. He is wisdom. God did not have to grow in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men but Jesus of Nazareth did. Jesus grew thusly in His personal ministry to become like the first Adam in order to eradicate the first Adam's sin at the cross. God did not do that but His Son did. This is in no way to demean nor diminish the importance of the Lord Jesus prior to John's baptism. The fact that He accomplished what He did, as He became like the first Adam, is to testify that **God's intent in the first Adam was justified**. Jesus had to become as the first Adam was in order to eradicate the first Adam's sin at the cross. God could not have done that because that's what He sent His Son to do. What God was doing with the life of Jesus, including the cross, was vindicating Himself and His original plan for man. God did not fail. Man (Adam) failed. One created in the likeness of God failed. This was a blight on God's plan that could only be corrected by sending another exactly like the first Adam to eradicate the first Adam's mistake in order to vindicate God and His original plan for man.

The calling of the twelve, of course, includes the calling of Judas Iscariot. The Father drew him to Jesus to be intentionally and specifically chosen in order to betray His only Son so that God's family (Israel) might kill Him on the cross. It sounds cruel but it had to be that way. This was part of the "sinister plot" about which I have written in my letter No. 88, dated September 19, 2006, entitled. **JESUS OF NAZARETH, Part Four**, Page three, column one. Only the Godhead (The Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit) knew the details of the

¹⁴See Luke 2:52.

sinister plot; *otherwise it would have failed*.

Satan thought by killing Jesus he (Satan) would achieve the victory he had his eye on ever since Adam's sin.¹⁵ The *sinister plot* was this: Jesus literally was used as bait to lure Satan into a trap. Satan, on the other hand, thought by killing the Son of God, he (Satan) would be victorious and would again achieve dominance (control) of the earth that he had prior to his fall, about which I have also previously written. Instead, God's sinister plot for His family (Israel) to kill His only begotten Son was the only way for Satan to be defeated. Paraphrasing what the apostle Paul wrote concerning this sinister plot, "Had the Jewish rulers (the scribes, chief priests, Pharisees and members of the Sanhedrin) known what they were doing they would never have crucified the Lord of glory."¹⁶ That is why **only the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit were privy to the reality of the reason** for the cross. Although the Jewish rulers had Jesus crucified, it was God Himself Who orchestrated the cross. It could have been no other way as sinister as it was.

On one occasion while in prayer, I asked God why Jesus was so imminently successful in His personal ministry from the very first day when this had never occurred previously, and the instant reply I got were these words, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has *nowhere to lay His head*."¹⁷ Examine the Gospel records and you will find that once Jesus began His ministry He apparently never went home again. He forsook everyone, including His family, to follow the Father's call on His life. He would dismiss the crowds, send His disciples home and then usually retreat to a private place to spend the night and to pray (often on the Mt. of Olives). He did everything He asked His disciples to do to show us the Way. Every time Jesus gave a qualification to be one of His disciples, *He was also talking about Himself*.

Only love can prompt such devotion. Love in the heart of God and His Son and in the heart of His disciples today. The only source of that kind of love is a *personal, intimate relationship with the risen Savior* Who so loved us that He gave His life on a cross to pay for our sins, sorrows, griefs, pain, suffering, illness, disease, death and all that Satan, his fallen angels and demons have inflicted on man since Adam's sin.¹⁸ Such is the love that God and His only Son had for us that Jesus laid down His life on a cross to redeem us from the

cunning devices of the enemy. *I have discovered that intimacy, about which I have written for several years, and the good news is, so can you.* You can start now by inviting Him into your heart as the Yeshua Messiah of the Jews or as the Savior of everyone who will call on His Name.¹⁹

The only time of record that Jesus wanted to rebel against what the Father wanted Him to do, was when He (Jesus) prayed in the garden of Gethsemane immediately before His crucifixion. Three times He pled in vain with the Father to remove from Him the cruelty of the cross.²⁰ Shortly after His prayer, Judas led a contingent of Roman soldiers and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees to where Jesus was. They arrested Him, bound Him and took Him first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.²¹ That was the first stop on His way to the cross.

In most everything Jesus did, He identified Himself as the son of man and as the Son of God.²² He was secretly infused (filled) with the Godhead bodily, which was the source of His spiritual power to defeat the enemy. He was forced by circumstances to down-play who He was because of the Jews hatred against Him. In the four Gospels He spoke of Himself as the Son of Man eighty-three times (including parallel passages) while He spoke of Himself as the Son of God only three times. Only once did He admit that He was king of the Jews (Israel) and that was before Pilate, the Roman governor with jurisdiction over the final judgment of His trial. This obvious secrecy of His identity was necessary so that He could remain in His visible ministry long enough to satisfy the Father's call on His life and leave an adequate record for the four Gospel writers. To Him be praise, glory, honor and power until the day, about which the apostle Paul wrote, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father and surrenders (back) to Him all authority in heaven and on earth that the Father might be all in all.²³

Jesus of Nazareth is our Role Model. He was totally submissive and subservient to the Father, even unto His death on the cross. So, indeed, as we in like manner become totally submissive and subservient to Jesus as Lord, may we become His disciple.

¹⁹See Joel 2:32.

²⁰See Matthew 26:36-56; Mark 13:3-42; Luke 22:39-46. This shows the humanity of Jesus. The pain of the cross was as real to Him as it would have been to you and me. This was not God pleading with God (ridiculous), but the son of man, the Son of God pleading with God, His Father.

²¹See John 18:3-13.

²²Jesus was the son of man because He was born through the birth canal of His mother. He was the Son of God because the Father sent the Holy Spirit, the Spiritual sperm, as it were, to fertilize the egg (seed) in Mary's womb, and thereby become His Father.

²³See 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

¹⁵Jesus taught a parable confirming this statement as recorded in Matthew 21:33-42; Mark 12:1-11; Luke 20:9-18.

¹⁶See 1 Corinthians 2:8.

¹⁷Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58

¹⁸See Isaiah 53:4, 5.