

Why Strong Delusions

Part 2 – Cut Off and Taken Away

Prepared by
Elder Dwight Burford
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*The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, **to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.** (Psalm 34:15,16)*

*I am **the true vine**, and my Father is the husbandman. **Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh [cuts] away**; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth [cleanses and prunes] it, that it may bring forth more fruit. ... I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me [**“the way, the truth, and the life”**], and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. **If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.** (John 15:1-2,5-6)*

*Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, **if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.** (Romans 11:22)*

Strong delusions, **as spoken of by Paul**, are forms of God’s judgments which He pronounces upon those who do not *receive the love of the truth*. **In the words of Isaiah**, this form of judgment comes upon those who do not answer the Lord when He calls and do not hear His voice when He speaks. Instead of choosing God’s ways, they *choose* to continue on in *their own ways* and *do evil* in His sight. Therefore, God chooses their punishment in the form of *strong delusions* for a specific purpose: to **cut off** and **take away** from His **presence** in the kingdom of heaven all those who **continue** to **harden their hearts** in and according to **the deceitfulness of sin**, which sin they **commit against** Him and His kingdom.

Because God is **light** and **love** and His **word is truth**, to be **cut off** and **taken away** from His **presence** in the kingdom is to be **cut off** and **taken away** from His **light**, **love**, and **truth**. The only place or state of being left for a person or a group of people so judged by God is outside of His **light**, **love**, and **truth** (outside His presence and **fellowship of grace**) in **strong delusions** (in darkness).

Notwithstanding the *severity* of this form of judgment upon those who refuse to abide in *the truth* (i.e. *in Him*), we are assured that *God is good* and He does nothing *save it be for the benefit of the world, for He loveth the world*.¹ Therefore, any delusion God chooses for a particular person or group of people who withstand His truth serves to present them with a choice between the truth and that which awaits them outside the truth (in darkness). It serves to provide them with *a place*, e.g. *the valley of decision* spoken of by Joel, and a *space of time*, e.g. “*Today*” spoken of by the writer of the Hebrew letter. This place and space of time are meant to give them an opportunity to repent of their hardness toward the Lord and to return unto Him to worship Him *in spirit and in truth* with *thanksgiving*. If they turn from the delusion by repenting *to the acknowledging of the truth*, God promises to *restore* them to His presence by grace. For, as Peter has written, “*The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*”

To be an effective form of judgment, a delusion must be strong enough and capable enough to actually *cut off* and *take away* a person or a group of people from the presence of the Lord. The strength of such delusions is found in the love of their own hearts. If they love things that are not true or are but shades of truth – e.g. lies, vanity, false traditions and devotions, errant teachings and beliefs, etc. – then the delusion selected by God as a judgment upon them will take great hold upon their hearts, even as *chains of darkness*. On the other hand, those who humble themselves under the weight of the delusion (darkness) and receive *the love of the truth* with gratefulness will be brought closer to Him, but only if they *choose this day* to serve Him. For none of us can serve *two masters*. Those in whom the love of falsehood and deceit prevails will procrastinate forsaking the delusion and returning to the light of God. If they persist in doing so unto the end of their lives, they will inherit everlasting darkness outside the Lord’s kingdom.

In summary, delusions as judgments in this life are meant to humble us and to turn us back to the truth. If a person or a people who come under such judgments will repent while it is called “*Today*,” the Lord promises He *will bless, heal, and restore* them unto Himself, but only according to His wisdom and word. For them to return fully into His presence in light and truth, they must turn completely away from their *wicked ways* and *come unto God* by Jesus Christ to be saved to *the uttermost*. Otherwise, when the final day of His judgment comes, they will be *everlastingly cut off* from the Lord and His kingdom of righteousness.

Reserved Unto Judgment

As described in *the first post in this series*, God’s judgments include *strong delusions* which

¹ This is why we should be grateful that it is God who chooses certain delusions as judgments, and not anyone else. Anyone else would not have our best interests, our eternal interests, in mind or as their objective.

God pronounces upon those who do not *receive the love of the truth* but instead *remain in unrighteousness*.

... they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (II Thessalonians 2:10-12)

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; **who love not the truth, but remain in unrighteousness**, After that which may be known of God is manifest to them. (Romans 1:18,19)*

In the words of Jesus, people who *love darkness rather than light* – because their deeds are evil – are *condemned already* because they do not believe on the name of the Only Begotten Son of God.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish; but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He who believeth on him is not condemned; but he who believeth not is **condemned already**, because he hath not believed on the name of the Only Begotten Son of God, which before was preached by the mouth of the holy prophets; for they testified of me. **And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.** For everyone who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But **he who loveth truth, cometh to the light**, that his deeds may be made manifest. And he who obeyeth the truth, the works which he doeth they are of God. (John 3:17-22)*

Like the *everlasting chains of darkness* that bind the fallen angels, *strong delusions* serve to reserve the disobedient and rebellious *under darkness* unto the judgment of the great day.

*I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath **reserved in everlasting chains under darkness** unto the judgment of the great day. (Jude 1:5,6)*

Please note that this judgment is not reserved for fallen angels alone. It is pronounced upon all who sin against the Lord, “...chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government.”

*For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, **and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment**; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) **The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished; But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.** (II Peter 2:4-10)*

*Likewise also **these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.** ... But these speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and shall perish in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear; clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, **to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, **Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.** These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. (Jude 1:8,10-16)*

Thus we see how *strong delusions of darkness* serve as one of the strongest forms of God's judgments which He pronounces upon evil. Jesus explained in His parable of the wedding feast that this form of judgment will come specifically upon those who do not clothe themselves in a *wedding garment of righteousness*.

*But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man who had not a **wedding garment**. And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a **wedding garment**? And he was speechless. Then said the king unto his servants, **Bind him hand and foot, and take and cast him away into outer darkness; there shall***

be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few chosen; wherefore all do not have on **the wedding garment**. (Matthew 22:11-14)

Because **God is everywhere** – i.e. *in and through all things*, including *darkness* – those who receive such judgments will still experience the Lord's *presence*, but *without mercy*. For example, the following is a description of the judgment that awaits those who worship the *image of the beast* as opposed to worshipping God and His image, **in whose image they were created**.

*And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man **worship** the beast and his **image**, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wind of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and **he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb**; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*
(Revelation 14:9-11)

By way of an illustration, this is the form of judgment that was pronounced upon the rich man who **passed by Lazarus every day** without showing him any mercy. In a word, this rich man failed to bear God the fruit of His *true vine*, Jesus Christ. Therefore, in keeping with the words of our Lord, the rich man was *cast out into a place of torment*, one of *everlasting fire* set apart from the righteous by *a great gulf*, even *the sword of justice*.

*For there was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple, and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried of the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; **for I am tormented in this flame**. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou **in thy lifetime** receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus, evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, **between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed**; so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into **this place of torment**. Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.*

And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one should rise from the dead. (Luke 16:24-36)

Only the truth, God's word, is able to set a person or a people free from the *bondage* of darkness that awaits the hardened. But we must *continue* in His word of truth to be *free indeed*.

*Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.** They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in **bondage** to any man; how sayest thou, ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever. **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.** (John 8:31-36)*

It was expressly to this end that Jesus came among us, preaching repentance to those who *sit in darkness and deliverance to the captives*.

*And Jesus departed unto Galilee, and leaving Nazareth, in Zebulun, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Nephthalim, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zebulun, and the land of Nephthalim, in the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; **The people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and unto them that sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up. From that time, Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.** (Matthew 4:12-16)*

*And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and as his custom was he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him, the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, **The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken- hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.** And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and he sat down. And the eyes of all those who were in the synagogue, were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. (Luke 4:16-21)*

*...To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should **bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.** (John 18:37)*

In a word, Jesus came to save those who are lost in darkness, and if they will believe the gospel which He preached and embrace Him as *the truth*, He is willing and able to save them *to the uttermost*.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. (John 12:46,47)

And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. (Hebrews 5:9)

Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:24)

Therefore, except for a *sin unto death*, there is hope for those who yet live in this life, who will forsake sin and darkness and return to *the light of the world*, who is Jesus Christ. But remember, it is God who *grants repentance* according to His understanding and purposes. Therefore, we must rely solely upon His ability to save us and respond to His voice and calling without hypocrisy when He calls us.

Otherwise Thou Also Shalt be Cut Off

Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, warned the church in Rome of the possibility of being cut off because of unbelief as were God's covenant people. If there remains in us a like *evil heart of unbelief*, we too can and will be cut off from the Lord such that we are no longer nourished by His good word of grace and truth.

*Boast not against the branches, for thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. For if thou boast, thou wilt say, The branches were broken off, that we might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. **Be not highminded, but fear;** For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, **if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.** And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. (Romans 11:18-23)*

In effect, everyone who does not continue in God's *goodness* can come under the same judgment and thus be cut off permanently from His goodness.

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. (Hebrews 3:14,15)

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us by entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the rest preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (Hebrews 4:1,2)

Remember, it was their *evil heart of unbelief* that caused God's covenant people to forsake the Lord's word and walk after the vain imaginations of their evil hearts. Therefore, they were cast out of the land that the Lord had given to their fathers.

*And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt show this people all these words, and they shall say unto thee, Wherefore hath the Lord pronounced all this great evil against us? or what is our iniquity? or what is our sin that we have committed against the Lord our God? Then shalt thou say unto them, Because your fathers have forsaken me, saith the Lord, and have walked after other gods, and have served them, and have worshipped them, and have forsaken me, and have not kept my law; and ye have done worse than your fathers; **for, behold, ye walk everyone after the imagination of his evil heart, that they may not hearken unto me;** Therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers; and there shall ye serve other gods day and night; where I will not show you favor. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For mine eyes are upon all their ways; they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things. (Jeremiah 16:10-18)*

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; If that nation, against whom I have pro-

nounced, turn from their evil, I will withhold the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will withhold the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them. Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; **Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you; return ye now everyone from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good. And they said, There is no hope; but we will walk after our own devices, and we will everyone do the imagination of his evil heart.** (Jeremiah 18:7-12)

Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For everyone of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me; I the Lord will answer him by myself; And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, **and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.** And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have not deceived that prophet; therefore I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel. And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity; the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him; That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted anymore with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord God. (Ezekiel 14:6-11)

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding their hardness towards the Lord, even as He promised to restore them according to His covenants with their fathers, He is able to restore everyone who exercises faith in the name of Jesus Christ according to the New Covenant He mediates. What happened to God's covenant peoples Israel can and will happen to other peoples and nations who harden themselves against Him. Yet He is able to save any and all who were lost because He was cut off for us, so that in believing in Him we might not be cut off.

*He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? for **he was cut off out of the land of the living**; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the*

Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:8-12)

The Axe is Laid Unto the Root of the Trees

God sent His servant John to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. Of his work, John testified that the Lord was placing *the axe* at the roots of the trees and only those who brought forth good fruit would not be hewn down.

And now, also, the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water, upon your repentance; and when he of whom I bear record cometh, who is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, (or whose place I am not able to fill,) as I said, I indeed baptize you before he cometh, that when he cometh he may baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. (Matthew 3:37,38)

While God blesses the righteous, He cuts off the wicked from His presence.

*They shall speak vanity every one with his neighbor; with flattering lips, with a double heart do they speak. **But the Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that speaketh proud things,** Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail, our lips are our own, who shall be Lord over us? (Psalm 12:2-4)*

*The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, **to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.** (Psalm 34:15,16)*

*Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. **For evildoers shall be cut off;** but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. **But the meek shall inherit the earth;** and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. (Psalm 37:7-11)*

*The Lord knoweth the days of the upright; and their inheritance shall be forever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time; and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs; they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away. The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again; but the righteous showeth mercy, and giveth. For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; **and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off.** (Psalm 37:18-22)*

*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall come, **and they shall be cut off.** (Psalm 37:37,38)*

*For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. **But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.** (Proverbs 2:21,22)*

David, called a man after God's own heart, chose to rule over his kingdom in like manner in order that he might please the Lord.

*I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. Oh when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes; I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. A froward heart shall depart from me; I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I **cut off**; him that hath a high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may **cut off** all wicked doers from the city of the Lord. (Psalm 101:1-8)*

So may we also rule over our own lives that we too may not be cut off but enter into His rest.

Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart, for it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell. (Matthew 5:31)

And he who taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. (Matthew 10:33)

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments. (Matthew 16:25)

Strive to Enter in at the Strait Gate

Those individuals and groups of individuals who are under a judgment involving a delusion will lack confidence in truth. Like Pilate, they will become disillusioned such that even when presented with the truth, they will ask, *what is truth?* In an attempt to have some stability, they may attempt to fabricate their own truth to reconcile the different perceptions people have when abiding in darkness. Without the constraint of the truth, they are tempted to contrive some mental construct that provides them with some sense of stability, just so long as it gives them a sense of control while living under the delusion. Because they are lost from the truth, they end up wandering in darkness, never knowing anything with certainty. All things begin to seem relative because they lack a sure and steadfast foundation upon which to place their confidence. Nothing can seem absolute to them.

Into such darkness God sent *the light of life*, Jesus Christ, and He is yet sending forth light so that *whosoever* is willing may come out of darkness and into *the light of the glorious gospel of Christ*. Remember, the passageway is narrow because it is the truth, and anything outside of the truth will take you away from Him. Therefore, Jesus calls us to follow Him in the truth revealed to us by His Spirit.

*Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for I say unto you Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able; for the Lord shall not always strive with man. Therefore, when once the Lord of the kingdom is risen up, and hath **shut the door** of the kingdom, then ye shall stand without, and knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, But the Lord shall answer and say unto you, **I will not receive you**, for ye know not from whence ye are. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, ye know not from whence ye are; **depart from me, all workers of iniquity.** (Luke 13:24-27)*

*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and they see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. **Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall***

not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. (John 16:7-15)

We must respond quickly when the Lord calls; otherwise, the door will shut, and we will hear that the time has ended and our souls are not saved.

*When I would comfort myself against sorrow, my heart is faint in me. Behold the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country; Is not the Lord in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities? **The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.** (Jeremiah 8:18-20)*

*...Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. **I also will chose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because** when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear; but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not. (Isaiah 66:3,4)*

Strive, therefore, to enter in at the strait gate while it is yet day.

*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand; **let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.** Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to gratify the lusts thereof. (Romans 13:11-14)*

Escape this present darkness by pressing toward the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus as did Paul.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. (Philippians 3:13-15)

And if you do, Jesus testified that you will no longer walk in darkness.

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not

my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak. (John 12:46-50)

Glory and Honor are in His Presence

Jesus Christ atoned for our sins to offer us repentance through faith on His name. He is not only able to save us from darkness; He is able to save us unto *the uttermost* in His kingdom. Our Lord is willing, on conditions of our *walking in light* and *repenting of our sins*, to bring each of us into His presence where there is *glory and honor* and *the fullness of joy*.

Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place. (I Chronicles 16:27)

Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. (Psalms 16:11)

Seek, then, His presence of light and truth with *an eye single to His glory*. If and when you transgress and fall into sin, call upon the Lord as did David of old, asking Him to not take away His Holy Spirit from you.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. (Psalms 51:11)

Give thanks unto Holy His name – the only name by which we may be saved from our sins.

Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing. (Psalms 100:2)

Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name; the upright shall dwell in thy presence. (Psalms 140:13)

Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Let *the word of Christ* dwell in you richly, unto filling you soul with His light and love and His word of truth.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. (Romans 5:1-5)

For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. (II Corinthians 4:6,7)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. (Colossians 3:16,17)

But remember, His presence is as a consuming fire which melts all wickedness.

*Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, should have grace, **whereby we may serve God acceptable with reverence and godly fear; For our God is a consuming fire.** (Hebrews 13:28,29)*

*Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that **the mountains might flow down at thy presence.** (Isaiah 64:1)*

*As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; **as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.** (Psalms 68:2)*

***The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.** (Psalms 97:5)*

***As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!** (Isaiah 64:2)*

Who then may abide His coming? Who may dwell with Him in His kingdom?

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap; And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier

of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. (Malachi 3:2,3)

*Now will I rise, saith the Lord; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble; your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire. Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. **Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off. (Isaiah 33:10-17)***

***Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive a reward of the deeds done in the body; things according to what he hath done, whether good or bad. **Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;** but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. (II Corinthians 5:9-11)*

Come, then, and He will bless you. Come before His throne of grace, boldly in Christ, that you may *obtain* mercy and *find* grace *in time of need*, for He is our gracious Provider.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was on all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20,21)