

- This outline is after Paul S. Minear -

## 1. Salt of the earth \*Matthew 5.13

Here the analogy is one of "being" - it is that the body of disciples "are" salt, and that in relation to the earth. It is founded upon the fact of who Jesus "is" - because "I am", then you "are".

The context of the Matthean text is the sermon on the mount. Here Jesus has asserted "who" the disciples are by his Word. They are light of the "world" [ the hostile alien environment enveloped in the dark.] and they are salt of the "earth". Here, as the "salt of the earth" we are to understand their preserving function. As long as the Christians are on the earth they will preserve it. The day they leave is the day for the earth to understand that the time is very, very short.

*ACTION! 1. Repent and renounce any low view of the children of God in respect of the earth. We have a "holding" function by the very presence we maintain. See the importance of God's children in the plan of things.*

*2. See the implications for the environment as well as the eternal implications for the presence of God's children in the historical plan of things.*

**salt - the essential ingredient** \*Mark 9.49-50 [setting 9.42ff]\*Luke 14.34-35 [setting 14.25ff]\*Colossians 4.6

Here the image is of something which you "have". It is addressed to the body as a whole, but applied personally to each disciple.

The setting of the Lukan and Markan text is that of the cost of discipleship. In both instances Jesus uses the analogy of salt as that thing which has one essential ingredient in its make up. If it fails to maintain that ingredient, then it is of no use to the kingdom of God. In Luke that ingredient is the importance of giving up everything to be his disciple. If we lack that we are useless to him and are to be thrown out.

The Markan setting is that of being aware of hindrances which we have to living the kingdom life. We need to remove, ruthlessly if need be, all hindrances to entering to the kingdom of God. Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness it cannot be made salty again. The implication is that we must not lose that essential ingredient of renouncing all that hinders the walk of discipleship.

*ACTION! 1. Take careful stock of what hinders you from following the Lord in an absolute way. It is better to enter heaven with one house than to enter hell with two. Add up what it is that uses your time - better to throw it and spend time for the kingdom than that. Uselessness to God is a question of having other priorities. The good is often the enemy of the best. What is it for you? Be ruthless!*

The Colossians text speaks of having a gracious way of conversing as having salt in your speech, it will enable you to give answers to people.

## 2. A letter from Christ \* 2 Cor 3.2-3

Here we see a complex image applied to the Corinthians. They are a letter of which it may be said:

- a. the sender is Christ
- b. they are delivered by Paul and others
- c. the ink with which they are written is the Holy Spirit
- d. the writing is upon the tablets, the hearts of people. People will read the letter by looking at the hearts of the people who make up the church.
- e. the message is intended to be read by all men, it is a public message. The message is communicable to the outsider. [The world has the right to judge, whether the Christians love each other.]
- f. this letter is a result of Pauls' ministry, and so the image is that the believers at Corinth are an open letter which is a result of a ministry.

*ACTION!*

*1. Each local body which springs up, is an open letter from Christ to everyone of the presence of a church which is the result of someone or some groups' ministry. Understand that where the churches are planted, they are the work of Christ, but that they are also an open letter of the apostolic ministry of the planter. [I do not mean a planter who stays permanently there, but one who moves on, understanding that the head of the church is Christ, and the local elders are the shepherding people].*

## 3. "fishers of men" \*Mark 1.17//Matthew 4.19//Luke 5.1-11

The image is addressed to men who have spent their lives trawling and dropping nets into the water to haul them up and investigate their catch of fish. Now they shall trawl for men. The image asks us to understand:

- a. the fishing for men is an action of casting nets
- b. the catch is unpredictable by the fishermen
- c. the catch is varied, you accept what you get

- d. as fish swim into the net so men will come voluntarily
- e. as fish are creatures of God, so are men, and He is responsible for drawing them

**ACTION!**

1. Are we, as a body, prepared to fish for people? If not, repent.
2. Have you ever coveted certain persons for the kingdom on the basis of their works and abilities? Change your mind about this - let the Lord swim the people in He wants.
3. Have you ever wanted a monochrome church? Ever gone to a local gathering of Christians because they were your sort of people, rather than they were the gathering where you lived? If so change your mind.
4. Ever tried to make people, by manipulation, to swim into the net? Change your mind about this. They must come because the Lord draws them - he alone can draw them and preserve their freedom at the same time.

**The parable of the fish net \* Matthew 13.47-50**

This is a parable of the kingdom, where the rule of God is likened to a net which is let down and brings up a very varied catch. The fishermen who separate the catch in their picking over the fish on the beach are likened to the angels who, at the end of the age separate the people in the net. In this way the kingdom of heaven has an inclusiveness of people and a mixture. The separation takes place at the end of the age and it is not for us to sort out who is who now.

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**Images taken from the Old Testament**

In the use of the following images, all of which are taken from a common stock of pictures which come from the Old Testament usage we are drawn into an amalgam of leaven, bread, table, altar [cross], cup [blood], wine. All of these refer back to the Lord's death. So here we are invited to take the whole gamut of the images, and then to see that each of them is broadened by the others. Each has its full thrust of meaning when you see it in the light of the other ones.

These images do not say what the church is. Rather, they answer a number of questions about what is happening when we, as the church, do such and such thing. So for eg. what does it mean to eat together? what is being expressed when we do that? What is compromised in the way the Lord sees us, when we have malice and wickedness amongst us and then go on to the Lord's supper together?

**4 - A new lump of unleavened bread 1 Corinthians 5.6-7**

Here Paul asks us to rid ourselves of the old leaven which comes from the old life, and the threat of leaven is that a little of it leavens the whole lump - it works through the lot. That is its danger. And there are three symbolic actions here which are detailed

- a. the riddance from each household of leaven = malice and wickedness. The cleansing out of the old leaven is consequent upon the fact that Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us. With the result that, as a new lump, we shall keep the feast.
- b. preparation of the unleavened bread = sincerity and truth
- c. sacrifice and the consumption of the lamb

**ACTION!** The importance of leaving the old life as something which is preparatory for the keeping of the feast which has Christ as the Passover lamb. If He is the lamb then we shall celebrate in a new way. We shall clear out the malice and wickedness of the old life and live in sincerity and truth. will you do that, personally and corporately work for it in the church?

**5 - We are one loaf 1 Corinthians 10.16-18**

This has the expression of our unity stated in the act of sharing the loaf which we have as a fellowship [communion - koinonia].

"... the bread which we are breaking, is it not a communion in the body of Christ? 17 because there is one loaf, we many are one body. For we are all partakers out of the one loaf."

This expresses our oneness in that we all eat of the one sacrificial meal of which the Passover is the pattern behind the Lord's supper and the example of the altar in the OT pattern is expressed in verse 18, where Israel according to the flesh expresses their action of eating off the same altar their oneness.

**ACTION!** We must understand the way the Lord considers us as one and the way He gives us to express that oneness. We may need to repent of many times when we have broken bread together and not really discerned the

*body of Christ as being one. Or, have sustained a lack of expressed unity in life whilst we at the same time broke the bread with those we would not be practically at one with.*

## **6 - The Table of the Lord 1 Corinthians 10.21-24**

That as a community of the Lord we are distinguished from other communities [ in this case idol worshippers] by the Host who is present at the table we eat. It is that we have the privilege of sitting at the table "of the Lord" that causes us to understand that we cannot have a place at other tables. Otherwise we shall run the risk of provoking our Lord to jealousy, and we are not stronger than He.

*ACTION! We need to understand the jealousy of the Lord and the extreme solemnity of sitting at the table with Him. If it is His table, then we must take a serious view of who we are as his people and guests to the table. We are also excluded from the table of his enemies. It is the "Judas syndrome" we need to be careful of here - the familiar friend who ate with Him, was also the one who had dealings with other powers who were his enemies.*

## **7 - We have an altar [a place of service] Heb13.10,**

[See also in 1 Corinthians 9.12-13 where Paul likens the preaching of the Gospel to serving in the temple and therefore able to eat the sacrifices which are brought there]

Here we need to see that we are the privileged servers of God who have the right to serve him in such way that we have an altar which is unlike the OT pattern in that we are called to serve outside the camp as Christ was killed there.

*ACTION! Make certain that you see the church of God as those with the great privilege of being called to serve in a close way the Lord who calls them to serve in a place which involves the rejection of the OT priestly caste, and also of the pagan religions.*

## **8 - The Cup of the Lord 1 Corinthians 10.16ff**

Here it is that the cup which we bless is a communion [koinonia] of the blood of Christ.

There are a number of allusions to the cup in the New Testament.

a. Mk 10.35-45, // Matt 20.20-28 where at the request of James and John, Jesus speaks of the "cup which He must drink" and by that infers a meaning of His death. Can they do this?

b. Mk. 14.23-25 // Matt 26.26-28 // Luke 22.17-18 where the issue is of the Passover meal and the cup which is to be drank. All the disciples drink it, and all are commanded to do so.

c. Mk 14.32-42, John 18.11, where drinking has, for Jesus, become a symbol of dying.

d. 1 Corinthians 11.25-32 [12.13] to participate in the act of the cup is an act of proclaiming His death until He comes.

e. John 6.53ff to drink is understood as a symbol of receiving eternal life. [ This idea is connected with the body, spirit, temple, sacrifice, exodus and Passover images.]

Each of these analogies from the pictures of the vine, vineyard, fig tree, olive tree are designed to make a number of points.

[i]. Each of them are taken from the OT background of the people of God. And in that sense they stress the continuity of the people of the New covenant with the plan of God expressed for those of the Old covenant.

[ii]. They show Christ as the source of life and fruitfulness, the owner of the whole work and the one requiring produce, and as the one capable of changing the tree to produce different fruits according to his grafting programme. So the history of Israel is summed up in the work of Christ in regard to his people.

[iii]. Each Christian has a place in the scheme. He or she is a branch, and is individually required to bear fruit. Yet we are together in our fruit bearing as well. We are warned to stay on the vine, to remain. We are instructed that our individual destiny is wrapped up in the whole people of God. As a tree, we are interdependent, a unit of growth and fruitfulness and we are under the plan of the Master who grafts on to the tree whom He will.

## **9 - The Branches of the Vine John 15.1-13**

Here is expressed the need for the branches to bear fruit, but at the same time the total dependence of the branches on the vine to which they are attached, to have any fruitfulness at all. The "you are" of

the branches is derived from the "I am" of the vine.

- a. There is a mutual abiding [remaining] v.5
- b. There is the promise of answered prayer to the ones abiding v.7
- c. Abiding comes to mean obedience to the Son [7,14]
- d. There is a sharing of joy [11]

## 10 - Vineyard 1 Cor 9.7

Here Paul is at pains to indicate that the workers, by which he means the apostles, have the right to eat whilst engaged in the work. He argues from an number of analogies. That of the vinedresser, the soldier and the shepherd.

Similarly, Matt 21.28-41 Jesus pictures the people of God as a vineyard, which is planted by the Lord, and in this case, attended poorly by the scribes and the Pharisees. In this case, the vineyard whilst it represents people, it is really a parable of the kingdom [43] in the sense that the charge of the vineyard is taken from the tenants and is removed from the Jews and given to the Gentiles.

*ACTION! The implication here is that we must see the people of God as a vineyard in which we also work as well as take our own place. Thus last parable has a sense of warning to us as well - that we tend the work of God [kingdom] as it is expressed in the care of his people, well.*

## 11 - Fig tree Lk 13.6-9//Mk 11.12-14, John 1.47, Matt 15.13.

The fig tree is a symbol for the people of God. The cursing of the fig tree recorded in the Gospels by Jesus signifies something consistent with the transferring of the kingdom from the Jews to the nations which bear the fruit of it [Matt 21.43].

*ACTION! We need to see that, like the statement of the vine and the branches, we must be fruitful in the work of God. As Jesus came to the fig tree, He was appalled by the lack of fruit. [This is the point of the cursing, for the disciples note that it is not the season for the tree to bear fruit - so it is not the natural understanding of the tree which is stated here] it is that the coming of the Messiah was the day of their visitation and they didn't have any fruit to give the rightful son and heir. We need to be fruitful - our work will be tested. Will you take this seriously. Being in the church is not for a slack time.*

## 12 - Olive tree Romans 11.13-24

Here the Olive tree represents Israel. And in that sense the exploitation of the root and the branches expresses the relation between the Israel after the flesh [and the promises God gave them] and the grafted on branches of the latter Gentiles. The analogy shifts to the inclusion of the Gentile church members as a wild olive tree grafted [contrary to normal horticultural practice] onto a cultivated olive tree.

*ACTION! Accept the place of the Jewish people. We live, for the Master has engrafted us, on the promises of the Lord to the Jews. We need to check our attitudes to these folks. And accept the Lord as the One who grafts on whom He will.*

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Images of God's people which have in common the fact that **God is the grower and the owner** of what is taking place. Men and women co-operate with Him, but He is the source of the growth and change.

## 13 - God's Planting 1 Cor.3.9

The Greek word here [georgion] has the usage of a "field, plantation, planting". In the context here we see the following truths stated by the use of this image:

- a. congregation belongs to God as His planting
- b. all processes of growth are attributed to Him
- c. Apollos and Paul are seen as servants in the plantation
- d. partisanship, and competition contradict the character and the nature of the church.
- e. There is a sequence here of planting - watering - growing.

## **14 - God's Building 1 Cor. 3.9**

Here the image is changed but the effect of the message is the same. Also, Apollos and Paul are seen in relation to one another as a foundation layer [Paul] and a wall builder [Apollos]. The point that Christ is the foundation is seen to make us sure of the basis of the buildings strength and foundation.

## **15 Building on Rock Matthew 16.18ff**

Here is a conglomerate picture of the action of the establishment of the church of the Messiah nested in a number of images. Building, warfare, city gates, keys, kingdom and the action of binding and loosing. Within the complex interplay of these metaphors we have

- a. Christ is the builder
- b. Christ is the owner; "my" church

*ACTION! It is really important to understand that Christ is at work in the field and building that He owns. Will you acknowledge about the church of God that:*

- a. It is His by ownership - and turn your mind from anything which is contrary to this truth. Turn from denominational labels, saints and other appendages to the church.*
- b. It is He that makes it grow. We must take seriously that it is not pastors who make the church grow - it is the Lord. [The pastors simply pick up the sheep when they fall over - do not confuse here the maintenance task with the growth which God brings.]*
- c. Express your faith that the Lord is at work to grow his church. Do not put your faith in anything other than Him. Not programmes of church growth, or charismatic personalities or anyone else. Have you ever done this? Then change your mind.*

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Here we have a number of images which are built around the actions of **betrotal and marriage and the appropriate clothing of the participants in the marriage.**

They emphasis that we are people who have a relationship which is intimate and to be consummated in the future with the Lord. The emphasis falls upon the chastity and care to keep oneself loyal to the Lord during this life. The church is the bride who is appreciated by her husband to be as her deeds of faithfulness to Him cause her to look grand in his sight.

The whole image of clothing and putting on the right clothes is that we are seen in the sight of the Beloved. Or in the case of the Father, we are seen to have put on Christ.

The clothing also emphasizes the triumph of the church for she has the right to wear certain clothes which adorn her and represent her past deeds.

## **16 - Virgins Rev.14.1-4, Matthew 25.1-13**

The image of the people of God is that of virgin women who are awaiting the presence and the coming of the Bridegroom. What is emphasized in the Revelation passages is the singleness of mind with which the virgin bride awaits the husband to be. [This same image is exploited quite practically in 1 Cor 7 in Paul's advice to the unmarried - they have the time and the energy to wait upon the Lord in an unencumbered manner].

In the context of this singleness of mind [and the purity of the virginity speaks of reserved only for him] harlotry is seen as duplicity and defilement. [The scarlet woman]

*ACTION! We do need to understand as those who have reserved ourselves for the One who is coming as our bridegroom. We are those who have a singleness of eye in respect of what dominates our expectancy and forward vision. We await the coming of Another who answers to us. This encourages us to be:*

- a. single-minded b. to keep ourselves untainted by other c. to wait with expectation*
- d. to understand that the rewards of our relationship at the moment are future and better and more intimate than now.*

## **17 - Messiah's Brothers Rev.12.1-2,17; Colossians - firstborn image**

Here the picture is of the woman [Israel] who gives birth to the Messiah, who is understood to be the "firstborn" and yet there are others who are the brothers of this One by virtue that they are the children of the same mother. They too are the sons and daughters of Israel. These children of the woman live under the hostility of the devil, and are being constantly pursued by him. They overcome him be the fact that;

- a. they have settled the matter about not loving their lives



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- b. they have a testimony of the persona and the work of Jesus
  - c. they take refuge from the accusations of the devil in the work of the blood of the Lamb

## **18 Elect Lady 2 John 1.1, 1 Peter 5.13**

Here we see a local church as being a collection of the saints who meet in one place addresses as an elect lady who has her children.

## **19 Bride of Christ 2 Cor.11.1 -2**

Here Paul speaks of the Corinthians as to how he is zealous with the zeal of God that they maintain their purity. He says that "I betrothed you in marriage to one man [husband] as a pure virgin to present you to the Christ"

Here the image is that she is a chaste bride, unsullied by any other. He goes further [3] to speak of his fear that as the snake deceived Eve, so they might be turned from their simplicity [loyalty] and their purity to Christ.

The metaphor exploits the ideas of how we must consider ourselves:

- a. reserved for Christ as his bride
- b. this is expressed in a single minded loyalty and sincerity toward him
- c. we are careful to not be deceived into being sullied by others.

There are other metaphors which come out of the OT here. If the church is thought of as an Eve then Jesus is seen as an Adam, a husband. There are other metaphors which see the church as a bride which are mixed with this one eg.

[i] Rev 21.2-4 the church is seen as a city descending out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband

[ii] Ephesians 5.21 if the church is seen as a wife for whom Christ died that he might present her to Himself without spot or wrinkle

[iii] John 3.29 speaks of Christ as the bridegroom and John the Baptizer as the friend of the bridegroom.

## **20 - The Wedding Feast Rev. 19.9, Mark 2.19, Lk 12.36, Matt 22.1-10, 25.1-13**

Jesus, seeing his presence among the ones around him [sons of the bridegroom] as a reason, not for fasting, but for celebrating. Here the picture of the apostolic band is of men who are standing in attendance of the bridegroom before the wedding.

The Lukan text pictures the disciples as those who are awaiting their friend who has come back from the wedding feast. The Matthean text relates a parable of the kingdom, which is the marriage feast of the son to which guests are invited. Rev. tells us the fact that "Blessed are those who have been called to the marriage supper of the Lamb"

## **21 - Wearers of white robes Rev.19.7, Matt 24.1-14**

We notice that the throne of God is white [Rev.20.11], the hair and the robe of Jesus are white [Rev.1.14, Mark 9.3], the elders garments in the heavens are white [Rev.4.4], and the rider who comes as faithful and true is on a white horse [Rev.19.11]

The arrival of the bride of Christ is that she comes allowed to array herself in fine linen, which is the righteous deeds of the saints [19.8]. Here we see the clothing is indicative of the deeds of the bride. Her loyalty and faithfulness is expressed in her deeds which are in turn that which adorns her in the sight of her Bridegroom.

*ACTION! Let us repent of the deeds which we have done as a body of Christ. And let us beseech the Lord to cause his church to become pure and chaste, and uncompromised by the world. Let us beg the Lord to get the world out of the church in any way He chooses. Let us ask him to do drastic things, whichever are in His programme for the cleansing of the deeds of the church. For she can do no good works except by faith, and except by obedience to Him. She must abide to have these garments.*

## **22 - Undressing and dressing - Choice of Clothing - "putting on" and "putting off"**

Romans 13.14 ... put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the desires of the flesh."

Galatians 3.27 " All who have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"

2 Cor 5.2-5 the desire of the Christian is to be clothed in his spiritual body, so that he shall not be found naked. The image is that of exchanging the clothing of the mortal body for the immortal. [see also 1 Cor.15.51-54]

1 Thessalonians 5.5-8 speaks of us being spiritually well balanced and self controlled, having clothed ourselves with a breastplate of faith and love, and a helmet of salvation. We are looking for the coming of the Lord.

Colossians 3.9-11, Eph4.22-24 Old man - new man

Here we have a number of images which are built around the actions of betrothal and marriage and the appropriate clothing of the participants in the marriage.

They emphasize that we are people who have a relationship which is intimate and to be consummated in the future with the Lord. The emphasis falls upon the chastity and care to keep oneself loyal to the Lord during this life. The church is the bride who is appreciated by her husband to be as her deeds of faithfulness to Him cause her to look grand in his sight.

The whole image of clothing and putting on the right clothes is that we are seen in the sight of the Beloved. Or in the case of the Father, we are seen to have put on Christ.

The clothing also emphasizes the triumph of the church for she has the right to wear certain clothes which adorn her and represent her past deeds.

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These are images of the church which are taken from the areas of **political and economic terms.**

### **23 - Citizens Ephesians 2.19, Galatians 6.10.**

As opposed to being strangers and sojourners, the Gentile are now citizens and members of the household of God. This means that we have a place and the privileges of being God's citizens. The image is that of being part of a conglomerate whole which is benevolently cared for by God and we have the access to the privileges.

A similar idea of the household turns up in the Galatians passage.

*ACTION! Have a high view of your citizenship. The fact that you are in and have a place but that also you have benefits because of the king of whose citizenship we are. He protects us and governs us. All these images are within this idea.*

### **24 - Exiles 1 Peter 1.1,2.11,Heb 11.13**

This seems to be contradictory to the above, but in fact it just depends on the land in reference. For to be citizens of heaven is to understand that you are exiles upon the earth. So here Peter is reminding the Christians that they have no abiding place here. They are to be in the world as strangers and exiles. If we don't have the sense that we fit here, then let us not be dismayed.

### **25 - The Dispersion James 1.1, 1 Peter 1.1, Heb.11.8-28, jn 11.51-52.**

During the time of the Old Testament, when the people of God were scattered they understood that they were out of favour with the Lord. For the sign of his care was that they were gathered to Him. This image is taken from that Old Testament theme. Just as to be dispersed however in the OT was associated with the discipline of the Lord, however in the New Testament it comes to mean the enduring of the time before the great gathering of us to Himself. So we see ourselves as temporarily dispersed.

### **26 - Ambassadors 2 Cor. 5.18-21**

Here the picture is of the apostles as being the people through whom God is making an appeal for reconciliation to the world. They understood then that the ambassadorship is from the God of heaven to the people of the world. We reside here, but we are representing another Country.

### **26 - The Poor Luke 6.20, James 2.26**

Poverty on the earth is something which is juxtaposed to the wealth of the kingdom of God. It also has the idea of the humility of the poor in our life style as well. We are those who do not parade with pompous wealth

and presumption through the world. Rather, as the poor man had humility, so do we.

## **27 - Hosts and guests Matt 10.40, 25.31-46, Romans 14.3, 15.7,**

The whole question of hospitality in the early church was linked to the fact that the Christians had a view of one another which arose from the above images. They cared to take one another in. They practised a mutuality of welcome.

In some such way Minear expresses it. He speaks of the fact that the mutuality of welcome was the meeting point of many of these images. Here exiles welcomed one another as fellow-citizens, the scattered were gathered together, here the prisoners became the ambassadors, the ambassadors were received by the poor, all were impoverished and all were enriched, here the sent were received by others who were also sent. Hospitality was the sign of a new kind of community where every image was destined for incarnation.

*ACTION! Take seriously the fact that we really belong to God and yet, as a privileged people we are strangers here.*

*Recognise that the whole understanding of hospitality is actually a matter which stems from this view of the people of God. It also explains why we are not to be hospitable to wolves who are known to be wolves. They are not to be received.*

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## **28 - The people of God 1 Peter 2.9-10, Romans 9.25-26**

This is a general title which is opened up in the New Testament under four headings. The images given to explain this heading are drawn from

- a. political and national analogies
- b. Exodus experiences
- c. the story and life of King David
- d. metaphors taken from the pastoral economy
- e. metaphors which are taken from the ceremonial/cultic tradition of the Israel of God.

### **1 - Political and national analogies**

## **29 - Israel Galatians 6.15-16**

Although two groups of people contest the same name, Paul defines Israel as one people [Ephesians 2.12, Hebrews 8.8-10, and Rev.2.14].

There is the understanding of the same God fulfilling covenant promises to the same people.

## **30 Chosen Race 1 Peter 2.9**

## **31 Holy Nation 1 Peter 2.9, Matthew 21.43**

## **32 The Patriarchs 1 Cor 10.1-10, Romans 15.8-10**

## **33 The true Circumcision Romans 15.8-10, John 7.22, Philippians 3.3-11**

Here it comes to mean those who worship in spirit and make no provision for the flesh. The contrast, as we have seen before is from the outside based worship to the inward motivated worship of the inner man.

## **34 Abraham's sons Galatians 3.29, Romans 14.16**

Here sonship in respect of Abraham has the sense of three things:

- a. doing the same deeds and the works of Abraham [faith]
- b. sharing the faith that Abraham had in God of Bible
- c. sharing in his posterity

### **2 - Exodus experiences John 3.14, Acts 3.22, Hebrews 11.23-29 and 1 Cor.10.1-12**

The thrust, particularly of the Corinthian passage is that the Christian community repeat the communal experience of the exiles as they came out of Egypt. There are parallels, but these are not simply parallels, but entry into the same history almost.

### **3. from the story and life of king David**



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The Davidic origins of Jesus, both from Joseph's side and also from the line of Mary are laid out with care in the New Testament. [ Matthew 1.1,6,17, Luke 3.23-31, Romans 1.3, Rev. 3.7, 5.5, 22.16.]

### **35 - David's house or kingdom Acts 15.16-18**

Where the church is equated with a rebuilt house [hut] of David's kingdom which has no end.

### **36 - The remnant Romans 9.27, 11.5-7**

Does Paul here mean the Jews or the Church?

#### **4. Metaphors from pastoral economy**

### **37 Flock**

This is applied:

a. to the whole community of the Lord's people where the word used is shepherd [poimne] and the sheep [poimion] Matt.26.31, Luke 2.8, 12.32[?], John 10.16, Acts 20.28-29, 1 Cor. 9.7, 1 Peter 5.2-3

b. to the band of the disciples [where the words used are [arnion, arne, probata] sheep and lambs. Matt.7.15, 9.36 and //s, 10.6,16 and //s, 15.24, 25.32, John 10.1-27, 21.16-17, Romans 8.36, Hebrews 13.20, 1 Peter 2.25

**ACTION!**

*In all of these the master image is the relation of the shepherd and the flock. 1. The sheep are owned by the shepherd, He is watching over his own.*

*2. The fortunes of the sheep are dependent on the character and the work of the shepherd.*

*1. Will you see yourself and the whole of the church as owned by the shepherd and absolutely dependent upon Him. Will you relinquish the life you have to his shepherding - in every matter!*

[There is also a working out of the division between sheep/goats Matt.25.32ff although that is a parable concerning nations]

### **38 - Lambs who rule Rev. 2.26-27**

Here the picture is of the overcomers who are given the rule [poimenei - shepherding] of the nations with a rod of iron.

#### **5. Metaphors which come from the cultic traditions**

We shall find that there are three foci here:

a. those which centre around the city

### **39 - The Holy City, Jerusalem, the city of David Rev.11, Hebrews 12, Galatians 4.21-31 and chapter 3.**

b. those which centre around the mountain

### **40 - Mt Zion, the holy Temple 1 Cor.6.19, 3.16-17, Ephesians 2.18-22, 1 Peter 2.5**

Here the presence of the Holy Spirit among the people of God is the parallel for the use of the metaphor. The people of God are now a holy place, where the Spirit of God may be encountered.

c. the priesthood

### **41 -The holy Priesthood Rev.1.6, 5.10, 1 Peter 2.9, Hebrews 5-8,**

Here the understanding of the people of God, cleansed, sanctified in the blood of Jesus are now able to draw near and to serve the Lord in close relation with Him, to make intercession for others, and to rule over the enemy through the blood of Jesus.

### **42 - Offerers of sacrifice [of praise] Hebrews 13.10-16**

**ACTION!**

*The function of these images is to relate the contemporary Christian generation with the historic community whose origins and history proceed from the covenant promises of God. They have a pilgrimage and a journey which has been recorded and come into existence by God's call.*

*1. See yourself and the church of God as a people who have the call of God to do what He wants in this world. Interpret the meaning of your life from the setting and the context of the people of God with whom you are journeying. Understand that the call is the basis for the historical meaning of your existence.*

*2. Recognise that the promises of God are the basis of your action. Faith in God on the basis of what He has*

*promised is the only way we, as the people of God have to live now.*

*3. Understand that the purpose for which God has called us is the overriding purpose of our life. Will you sink the purpose of your life into that which God has to do?*

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Here we see the making of a **new humanity**. There is the beginning here of a cosmic humanity which has a destiny. This sets the Christian life in the context of God's eternal purpose. He is making a new humanity - which has a glory and a new life. In this setting there are many images of the people of God which speak of the redemption of the world.

**Romans 5.12ff, and 1 Corinthians 15.21-22** Both of these passages, in speaking of the contrast between the results of Adam's actions and Christ's actions indicate that both of these men stand at the beginning of something which is significant for all. They are the [federal] head men for others.

#### **43 - New Creation 2 Cor. 5.17, James 1.18**

Here the Christian personally [Corinthians] and collectively [James] is a first fruit of the whole of creation. The Christians are the new type of person. They are to understand that old things have passed away and that the new has definitely arrived.

#### **44 - First Fruits 1 Cor. 15.20-23, Romans 8.23, 11.16, 16.5**

Takes the image from the first of the fruits to ripen off the tree when the season for the fruit arrives. The first fruits indicate that there will be fruit this year, they show that there is more to come. They are a few, whereas the harvest off the tree is numerically much greater. So they are an encouragement.

#### **45 - Resistors/fighters - Engaged with God's Arch enemy Ephesians 5.8-16, 6.10-18**

As part of a new humanity upon the earth we are found in conflict with the darkness from which we have been rescued. In this way, once we read the Revelation of John, we are caught up in the cosmic battle of which God is involved with the enemy. We need to understand that as a new breed, we are a first fruit of that new humanity. We incur the hatred of Satan, for we signal the first fruits of which there is more to come. We are a sign of his ultimate and sure defeat. Whilst Christ's death is the basis for that defeat - we are the evidence of the success.

#### **46 - Called into God's Kingdom and Glory 1 Thess 2.12**

#### **47 - Light of the world Rev.21.22-24,22.5, Matt. 5.14, Phil 2.15, Ephesians 5.8, Acts 13.47, 1 Peter 2.9 = Acts 26.18,23 2 Cor.4.6, Colossians 1.12, 1 John 1.1-5**

All of these indicate the function and purpose of light in the place of darkness. We are those who are the "sons of light" [John 12.36]. We are exposers of the darkness of men's actions [Ephesians 5.18].

#### **48 - A community in fellowship with the Holy Spirit 2 Cor 13.14 Acts 2, Romans 8.10-17**

Each person has the Spirit of God within them, and yet, they also have the communion of the Holy Spirit collectively. The presence of God is promised them when they gather.

*ACTION! We need to have as very high view of the sort of persons we are in the midst of God's plan and cosmic work. We represent to spirit powers and to the angels the high product of the work of the Lord which has a purpose which is cosmic. Let us accept that.*

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These are names which we have given to us in Scripture which indicate the common things we have in relation to the Person and the Work of the Lord. They are ways we look upon one other in the light of what has happened to us.

49 THE COMMON LIFE OF THE SANCTIFIED

50 THE FAITHFUL

51 THE JUSTIFIED

[a] the disciplined community

- 52 FOLLOWERS
- 53 DISCIPLES
- 54 THE ROAD, THE WAY
- 55 COMING AND GOING
- 56 WITNESSING COMMUNITY
- 57 CONFESSORS
- [b] the common slavery
- 58 SLAVES
- 59 FRIENDS
- 60 SERVANTS
- [c] household of God
- 61 SONS OF GOD

**ACTION!**

*We must recognise about one another the way the Lord sees us. For, in the light of his work, we have come into a relationship with Him which now becomes the basis for the relationship to one another. Recognise that such a view of one another is not man made, but is the miracle of accepting what Christ has done for oneself, and then seeing that that is also true for another. This is a constant miracle.!*

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Around the church as understood as the body of Christ is a series of flexible and yet integrated ideas. It is not so much a single expression as we may have thought.

**62 - The body of life Romans 5-8**

here the discussion of the Christian is of his personal body. It is a body of life as opposed to the body of death. The latter is that which is ruled by law, overcome by the power of sin through the flesh and is heading toward eternal death.

**63 - Bodies of the saints as members of Christ 1 Cor. 6.12-20**

Here the picture is that of the body of each Christian, being thought of as a member [appendage] of the body of Christ. The image is of a collective series of members joined together in one organic whole, but where the whole person of the Christian is understood as being a member of another greater body which is a single whole.

The point at issue here is that each person is responsible as to where, and into what liaisons, they take their body. In this way, should they defile their personal body with liaisons which are forbidden, then they have defiled the whole greater organism.

*ACTION! Be careful where, and into what situations you take your body. Particularly the places where it is mastered by something or someone. For, in this case there is a loss of freedom which effects the person but also the whole body. [Here is the basis for the discipline of the church in regard to sins of the flesh which control the individual members of the greater body.]*

**64 - Participators in the body and blood 1 Cor 10.16-17 and 11.17-34.**

here we see the similar material which was dealt with under [10]. It is the understanding that the sitting at the table of the Lord requires us to understand the Person of the Host, and therefore our great privilege. This has the corollary that we do not partake at the table of demons at the same time - for this will arouse the anger of the Host at our table.

It also means that we are in the situation of the need to discern the body [of the people of God] around us. So we act in respect of the rest of the brethren in a way which is courteous and understands them as those who are fellowsharers in the body and the blood of the Lord. Not to do so also incurs the wrath of the Host - people can get sick and die if they play with the supper.

**65 - Diversities of ministry in the body 1 Cor 12 and 14**

Here the following things are of great importance:

a. we recognise the importance of there being great diversity in the activities and services of the various persons of the church. Maximum diversity is a sign of the ministry of the people of God.

b. All this creative diversity emanates from the Holy Spirit who is among the church for the ministry for one to the other.

c. It means that the gifted persons are not to be bestowed with great honour. Indeed, the teaching is that the less presentable parts of the body have the greater honour. This implies that we need to value the persons with lowly service more than the others. [ This is consistent with the teaching of the Lord that those who would be great among you need to be your servant].

## **66 - Christ the head of the Church Colossians**

Colossians is the third letter which Paul wrote [AD 60] from his prison in Rome. Epaphras had reported that there were false teachers in Colossae teaching the people there that the Christian faith was incomplete, they needed to worship angels and follow special rules and ceremonies. We need to see that the way Paul handled this issue was to assert that the Lord was the Head over all things. And then went on to speak of his being Head over the church.

Christ is image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.[1.15] What this means is that everything was created by Him, things in heaven and earth, invisible things and visible, including thrones, powers, dominions and authorities. This means that He is before all things, both in precedence of person and historically in time. This means that to be head, in respect of the cosmic spirits in this context is to be :

- a. the creative source,
- b. the first principle
- c. the image of God
- d. king and lord
- e. preexistent before all things
- f. preeminent.
- g. that which holds all things together

This means that He is the head over all those authorities [2.10], and by implication [and redemption] over all the men who live under those authorities [1.19-20].

This is also to be so for the Church. Where to be head of the body is to be:

- a. the first born out from among the dead [where firstborn has the sense of the heir to the lot]
- b. their redeemer [1.14]
- c. the basis for their forgiveness [1.14]
- d. the beginning of the church [1.18b]
- e. the one we must be organically connected to, so that we may be supported, held together, and grow. [2.19]

f. be the image after which the new self is renewed [3.10] and as a result there is neither Jew nor Greek etc - unity

Which can be summed up in the Ephesians 5.25 where it is pictured that Christ loved the church and gave himself for her. This is what is summarised in a-d above.

*ACTION! The response of the body of Christ here to the Head is to be subject to Him in everything. For this reason, we need to:*

- a. Settle the matter about how we shall yield all things to the Lord in the life of the body.*
- b. Get rid of all standing instructions and traditional religion which commits us to something other than Christ alone.*
- c. Specifically, we need to exercise this freedom in regards to not allowing anyone to judge us about what we drink and eat, or the religious festivals which we keep, New moons, sabbaths etc which are the shadow of things that were to come [2.16-17] and the reality is now found in the Head, Christ.*
- d. we need to be careful of those who go into great detail about what they have seen in the spirit [2.18]. These have lost contact with the Head, and to do that is to lose support and growth.*