***Worship

Colossians 1:15-20

COL-137***

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Our subject is "Hymn in Honor of Christ," number 27 in Colossians 1:15-20.

The primary mission of the local church organization, according to the Bible, is to convey to people the mind of God by which they may guide their daily living. This is not a natural thing that people possess. This is something which must be developed following one's personal, spiritual regeneration. No person can function as a normal human being who lacks the thinking of God to guide his life. No person can function as a normal human being who knows the principles for divine guidance but refuses to follow them. The natural unsaved have the mind of Satan, so they live in opposition to God's moral code, and they live as the enemies of God. The supernaturally saved people are spiritually alive, so they are capable of receiving the mind of God through the instruction of doctrine – doctrinal truth delivered in the local church by the pastor-teacher.

**The Christian Life**

With the mind of God, a believer can live with biblical integrity, great personal manhood and womanhood, and a life to the glory of God with great personal blessings in time and rewards in eternity. This kind of a life of which a believer is capable, and which is the objective of God for each of us, is referred to in 1 Corinthians 2:14-16. What is the Christian life all about? When we know that, we have a clue as to what the local church ministry is supposed to be all about, because it is through that agency that the Christian life is brought to its fruition. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says, "But a natural man (that is a biblical term for the unsaved person) does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised (or spiritually grasped)."

The natural, unsaved person lacks the indwelling Holy Spirit. Therefore, he cannot understand spiritual phenomenon. He cannot understand the principles of Scripture. Therefore, on the basis of his human IQ, he considers the things that Scripture teaches as foolishness in many respects – not only scientifically, historically, and in social relationships, but not the least of which in how to get to heaven. That is the greatest piece of foolishness to the unsaved mind. The unsaved mind, like the Mormons like to say, is that nobody gets anything for nothing. And you don't get salvation for nothing. But how wrong they are. It doesn't cost us anything, but it did cost God a great deal.

However, you may have had the experiences I've had. I have been told by somebody who's pretty smart, and who has an education, that nobody in his right mind would believe the things that we Christians believe. Nobody would adhere to the lifestyle that we Christians adhere to on the basis of the Word of God. This is an unnatural way of life, and an unnatural way of thinking to our normal unsaved condition. So, the unsaved people consider all this as foolishness.

However the unsaved does not have the means for evaluating spiritual things. He's like a deaf man who is asked to evaluate a piece of music, or like a blind man who's asked to evaluate a piece of art. They are blind. They are deaf. Therefore, they cannot understand spiritual things.

So, I tell you that so that you'll not be intimidated by somebody who has some great prestige; some great standing in society; and, a string of college degrees behind his name. Those people, without the Spirit of God, are nothing but ignorant intellectuals. Ignorant intellectuals cannot evaluate a piece of music. They are deaf. They cannot evaluate a piece of art. They're blind.

1 Corinthians 2:15, "But he who is spiritual appraises (judges) all things. Yet he himself can be judged by no man." The saved person, by means of the Holy Spirit, is able to understand; to accept; and, to apply the principles of Bible doctrine. The spiritual Christian can discern, therefore, spiritual deception. He can spot the agents who are promoting Satan's values. And the sooner in life (the younger you are) that you develop the ability to spot those who are on track with Satan's thinking, the more grief you will preserve yourself from. And this is what, indeed, your children should be given.

Recently, one of our teachers, who teaches in one of our lower groups periodically on Sundays, said that the children in her class are made up of numerous, pretty bright kids. And one girl spoke up and said, "You teach us once a month. When you're here, could we discuss Dr. Danish's sermon with you, because we don't understand everything."

Now, she was thrilled, and I was by the report, because what is that telling us? Here is a youngster who recognizes that she is in the presence of the Word of God, and that there are some things that are not easy to understand, and that need a little more explanation, but she wants to know. And that's the first step toward becoming a normal human being. She wants to know. You would be surprised (maybe not) how many Christians don't want to know. There they are. Just look at these empty chairs. They're all at home. They're all off someplace else. They're all doing something that they think is just as good as if they were here this night. But they're wrong now, and they're going to find out how wrong in eternity they have been. Do they have justifiable reasons? Oh yes. They got all kinds of justification. They would be horrified if you were to suggest that they are not justified in not being here.

The person who has the Spirit of God in him is able to evaluate the misconceptions and the evil ways of our society. Yet, people look at him, and they can't figure him. The spiritual Christian cannot be evaluated by the unregenerate who lack the mind of God to judge. So, what does that mean? They're going to blow you off. They're going to sell you off. They're going to treat you as the last guy that they pick when they're picking teams for an athletic event. Don't you hate to be the last guy picked? That's how they deal with living and life. The Christian is the last one they want on the team.

Now, don't let that make you feel bad. Consider it an honor, as Peter says, to suffer for doing right. They don't want you because you're not of them. They don't want you because they think they can evaluate you, but the truth of the matter is that they cannot. They don't have the ears and the eyes to understand.

1 Corinthians 2:16, "For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him, but we have the mind of Christ." The natural, unsaved man thinks that he's quite qualified to speak on religious subjects, but he does not possess the ability to know divine viewpoint truth. The unbelievers cannot tell God anything. They cannot instruct God about what constitutes godly ways. They cannot instruct God about His wisdom for living, but they do it all the time. They're always making declarations about what is right and proper and acceptable to do, and what is the proper and right way to conduct yourself. That's why you don't listen to people. That's why you don't listen, when you're a young person, to those who are in your age category, unless they too are associated with the Word of God, and they have the mind of Christ. We who are believers have the mind of God, and that mind is expanded constantly through the intake of the Word of God into the mentality of our souls. And because we have the mind of God as a result of being instructed in the principles of the Word of God, we out-think everybody in our society. We live in reality. But they do not. These people, who are outside of the family of God, actually think that they can teach God how things ought to be.

Now, what the Bible contains is revelation from God, and it pertains specifically at one point to the church age, the age of grace, in contrast to Israel and the legalism of Judaism. And I hope that by now you'll begun to get a sense of appreciation (a sense of the distinction) between the two. The Bible reveals the distinctiveness of the church with a series of analogies, revealing the relationship between Jesus Christ and the church. These analogies show what a close relationship and intimacy exists between Christ and his church. These analogies reveal the relationships which were never enjoyed by Israel as a nation. These analogies make it crystal clear that you cannot mix Israel's Judaism and the church's Christianity together. They don't fit. Worse than that, they contradict each other.

**Analogies of the Christian Life**

We've looked at several of these analogies, these comparisons: first of all, the figure of Christ as the shepherd and the Christian as His sheep. The Jews never knew that kind of a relationship: somebody to take care of you. Somebody to watch over you, as the shepherd does his sheep. Secondly, there was the figure of Christ as the vine and the Christian as the branches – the life of God flowing through you. The Jew never knew that. Well, of course, that's true. Christ lives in me. The Holy Spirit lives in me. The life of God (the spiritual life of God) flows through me in Christ, and the power of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Jew under Judaism never had that kind of an association.

Third, we had the figure of Christ as the chief cornerstone, and Christians as living stones forming the temple of God: the Holy Spirit. It is a great disgrace for any stone in the temple of God to break down the moral code of God, and not to represent the integrity of God. We Christians are building the temple of God. And one of the ways I've found that you can make people really indignant, especially those who are very self-righteous, and those who have a very high estimation of themselves, is to remind them that sin begins in the mind. And some of these people, who like to put on the front of just being the greatest, are people who have mental attitude sins galore.

Our relationship with Christ has to begin with the fact that we have the mind of God functioning within us. If Christ is the cornerstone, then every living stone has to match what He is. That is our calling, and it's entirely possible, because we live in the age where grace does it all for us. Grace doesn't only take you into salvation. Grace also takes you into the heights and the deaths of spiritual maturity. Don't make the mistake that you're going to be a good Christian by deciding it. You're going to keep your nose clean by confessing your known sins, and thereby, with that confession, to cease and desist, and God does the rest, as you know the Word, and he's able to apply it in your experience.

Then we looked at the figure of Christ as the High Priest and the Christians as the priests of God. Israel had a division of its people into clergy and laity. The whole church, however, constitutes a priesthood. There is no such thing in the Christian age (in the Christian era – in the church age) of clergy and laity. A Christian priest enters the universal church age priesthood by the washing of regeneration and he maintains his qualification to serve with a periodic washing of the confession of sin to maintain temporal fellowship. This morning, we told you that in the Old Testament, the priest was taken, and his fellow priest gave him a bath. That was only done once. It was a symbolic sign that he was spiritually alive and born again. Then every time he went to minister, he had to go up to that laver of water out in the middle of the courtyard, and wash his hands and his feet. That was the day-by-day confession of known sins.

The Lord Jesus Christ rules the Christian priesthood, and He directs each priest to his particular service. Christians are priests of God right on into the millennium, and forever. They will never fail, as they did the Old Testament priesthood. Because every believer in the church age is a priest, every Christian is automatically in full-time Christian service. This is a very important point to remember. If I'm a priest of God, then I'm a priest of God forever, even after I die, then my life is under the direction of my High Priest, Jesus Christ, and I'm in His service all day long. Whatever I do in earning my livelihood, and whatever activities I engage in, everything is conducted by the High Priest. He is the one who cuts the orders, and who issues the direction of what we are to do with our lives. And it is very important that you understand that you are in full-time Christian service. It will enable you to start your day in a very different way.

How old do you have to be to be a priest of God? The moment you're born again, you are a priest of God. And it is just as easy to be a dirty, rotten, lowlife priest of God as it is to be a high and noble priest of God. In the Old Testament, periodically, there were some real rogues who were in the priesthood. It can happen to us, but we have the ability to be far better than the Old Testament priests ever could be.

**Spiritual Sacrifices**

The Christian priests today offer spiritual sacrifices to God rather than animal sacrifices. Number one: the sacrifice of our body and of ourself. Number two: the sacrifice of our lips with praise. Number three: the sacrifice of our possessions; our money; and, our substance. And number four: the sacrifice of divine good works – service produced by the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

**Worship God**

I want to continue on the figure of the priesthood where we stopped this morning, because one of the things that the New Testament priest is to do, as the Old Testament priest did, is to conduct worship of God. He is to worship God. In the Old Testament, the priest worshiped God through performing certain rituals, and through certain furnishings of the earthly temple which symbolized Christ in various ways. The furnishings of the temple – the ritual symbolized the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

Now, here's a big clue. It'll tell you a lot about a church. If you go to a church, and you discover that there's a lot of symbolic ritual as worship of God, you should be very suspicious. If you see holy water being sprinkled around, the red flags should go up in your mind. If you see all these things that were done as rituals of the Old Testament being brought into the New Testament church era, you know that you're dealing with legalism, and not grace. The New Testament priest worships in very specific ways:

1. **Learning Doctrine**

One, every time you learn doctrine, you are now at the point of the highest experience of Christian worship that is possible, where you are listening to instruction of the Word of God. Remember that the meaning of worship is to learn about the worthiness of God. The old English word for "worship" was "worthship" W O R T H S H I P. The "worthship:" and it became consolidated to worship. Worship is learning the value of God so that you esteem and honor Him.

1. **Prayer**

Secondly, the Christian worships God through prayer, and is often a neglected part of our worship. There are some people (Christians) who never pray. Or they pray very seldom. Praying without ceasing is the commandment to Christian priests. Now, what does that mean? That means that eventually you will catch on that prayer changes things, as a favorite little plaque on the wall says. Prayer changes things. And you'll get to the place where every issue of life that comes up; what you must do; and, the need that you have. You will not pray in generalities. You'll pray in specifics. Prayer change things. It can be to some people a very trivial thing. But those trivial things are often very burdensome things. Prayer changes things. And the Word of God says, "Do it continually." Ask God. And what you ask will be the power for you to get the right thing done.

1. **Giving**

You worship God through your giving. One of our ladies this morning told me that she was visiting over the weekend with someone who was trying to feel her out on her religious viewpoints, and asked if she believed in tithing. She said, "No." The reason she said "No" is because she's not a Jewish, and she's not under Judaism. This person was shocked. She thought that this is the way you worship God: through your 10% giving. Is there something wrong with 10% giving? No, you're a cheap, lowdown scoundrel if you don't at least do that. Well, maybe an upper-class scoundrel, but you are a scoundrel, if you don't at least give God 10%.

How old do you have to be before you start worshiping God with your giving? Just as soon as you get your hands on any money. As soon as Aunt Hepsabog gives you a little gift, start giving something to the Lord. When Uncle Useless comes by, and he gives you a little gift, start giving some to the Lord. Learn early on that what you have, you have as a steward of the Most High God in the church age. So, worship through giving is a great part.

1. **Divine Good Service**

Then, of course, we worship Him with our divine good service.

1. **Praise**

We worship him with praise.

1. Also, one very high point of service of worship is when we hold the Lord's Supper service. And many of these elements that worship God are included in that Lord's Supper meeting.

The Old Testament priests, however, had certain prohibitions which were placed upon them in the process of worshiping God. One of these is in Exodus 30. And the analogy comes over in the New Testament for the church. Exodus 30:9: "You shall not offer any strange incense on the altar (on this altar), or burnt offerings, or meal offerings. And you shall not pour out a libation on it. You shall not offer strange incense." In Scripture, strange incense was a symbol of man-made religion. Incense represented the aroma of faith in God (the aroma of prayers – the aroma of worshiping God His way). And the Old Testament people were surrounded by pagans who worship in terrible ways, and the strange incense was a symbol of man-made rituals.

In Central and South America, their rituals included human sacrifice: man-made religious rituals. You don't approach God on a religion of your own making. So, too, the New Testament priest is to reject religion and mere formality of ritual. Non doctrinal teaching churches always fall into some category of worshiping God that is strange incense. Ritual is substituted for reality. And some people just love the ritual.

When I was a junior-age boy, I was reared in a liturgical church – a great denomination out of the reformation, and which I had a straight doctrine of salvation, but very ritualistic: the priest; the altar; and, the whole bit. And in the city of Chicago, in the wintertime, it gets cold. And after the service one day, I was waiting for my parents to come. I was out front, and there was a kind of a stone banister that went down the steps. And I put my Bible on the banister at a flat place, and then I sat on it, because the stone was cold. I was worried about pneumonia and that sort of thing, and a lady came out, and she saw me sitting on the Bible. She had a fit: "You're sitting on the Word of God? I can't believe that you would do that. And it scared me to death. So, I got off my Bible. And she thought that this was a sacred act of God: ritualistic to the core – sitting on the Bible was such a terrible thing to do. And she scared this little kid out of his wits – wits which he has never recovered since. Sitting on the Bible – how terrible. This is how crazy you become when you go into a ritualistic operation.

**Strange Fire**

But there's another thing the Old Testament priests were also forbidden to do, which has an application to the church. Leviticus 10:1: "Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective fire pans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them." They did not take the fire from the proper source of the hot coals that were on the altar of incense that was provided for this. Instead, they took a fire of their own, and what they did was violated the symbol here in the Old Testament of controlled emotions. They were burning what was out of control, and the sin nature was represented by that strange fire. The sin nature specializes in emotions out of control. When the sin nature runs religion, it's always a blast. It's always a big jumpin', jivin' operation, because it's playing on people's emotions. Most people go to church to have their emotions manipulated. And if they haven't had a good emotional jag, they don't feel they've been to church.

The New Testament priest, using the same analogy, is not to conduct his service with a soul which is dominated by emotions under the control of the sin nature. Now, we did not say that there are not great emotions in serving God, and in living the Christian life. It is a ball of wonderful emotions, but created by the Spirit of God, not the fake emotions that can be generated by the sin nature.

I went out to Williams Square yesterday to listen to the concert, and watch the fireworks, and got there early before the Symphony Orchestra played. And it was a rock and roll group. And it was noise and yelling, and just beating away as loud as could be. It was horrendous, but all over the place, there were people. And I started counting them. A lot of ladies were keeping time with the music. I mean there was no melody. There was just a hard beat. There was a lot of noise. And these people are having a wonderful time. So, I leaned over to the people I was with, and I said, "Take a look at this." All over the place, these hands were up, and the bodies were swaying. I said, "What's the difference between this and a charismatic church service?" And they said, "Nothing." And I said, "Including the music." I first noticed that on one of my periodic trips to Las Vegas. I walked into this casino, and this gal was up there. I can't say singing, but she was belting out this tune. And the noise was loud, and the beat was jivin' and jumpin', and she was belting out a song, and people were going wild. And that's when it first struck me that this is the identical technique of Satan that he uses here in a totally whirl context that he uses in the charismatic church context. This is what stirs the emotions to wild levels. That is what is referred to as strange fire – emotions generated by the sin nature, not by the Spirit of God.

So, when you find yourself in a religious context where they love a lot of showmanship; enthusiasm; promotion; and, bouncy music, that's all replacing emotions generated by the Spirit of God. There are some preachers that preach like politicians. Now that's between them and the Lord. And if that's how they should preach, that's how they should preach. But you go to that congregation's meetings, and there is going to be periodic applause, yelling, and cheering, because he's going to keep throwing out one-liners. And they're going to cheer and carry on. And what he is doing is manipulating the crowd to be able to create these great emotions of the sin nature.

This is not worship of God. And a Christian priest should not substitute what can be brought out of the sin nature, and try to dignify this as learning about the worthiness of Christ. In the Old Testament, the priest represented the people of Israel before God. That's completely different in the New Testament. And the New Testament, the priest (you) intercedes only for yourself before God. He represents only himself before God, and this is a private matter, and that's why that Christian lives unto the Lord.

Now, if you're a part of an organization, like a local church, or some of its auxiliaries, then we have a right, if you step out of line with the conduct of that organization's work; its policies; its procedures; its integrity; and, its good judgment, we have a right to say, "You can't do that. You can't operate in that way." But what you do in your personal life is between you and God. And the priest represents himself so that he is responsible for himself. But boy, what a responsibility that is. There are a lot of Christian priests who don't represent themselves very well before God. They themselves are so out of integrity, they couldn't represent themselves before a Holy God. But the Christian priest must be respected for what he chooses to do.

Do Christians do ill-advised things? All the time. Do they do very stupid things? All the time. And they must live with that. But when it encroaches upon the ministry of the local church, or the reputation and good name of the agencies and activities of that church, then we have a right to intercede with that person, and call attention to the fact that he has neglected his responsibility, but that is not an interference with his priesthood. That is maintaining the integrity of our ministries.

Now, parents are the priests of their children. In the Old Testament that was until they hit 20. When they hit 20, they became their own responsibility before God. But you are your children's priest. And a priest has spiritual authority to direct the people. And it is amazing to me how parents, because their children's bodies grow big, get intimidated about acting as their priests and saying, "No, you can't do that. No, you can't have your way. No, you can't go here. No, you can't be in this. No, you can't do things that other people can do." And, of course, the biggest sign of this challenge to authority is the word, "Why? It is usually pronounced in a whiny way. In summer camp, one girl was talking about wanting to do something and I said, "No, we can't do that." And I explained a couple of things. Her first reaction was, "Why?" I love the question because I said, "Because I said so." Any kid who says that, and reacts that way, who's under his parents' authority, has not had his will broke. And the first thing you need to do, if you expect your child to grow up and be a real priest and priestess of God is that you have to break his will. And you break the will by not indulging their demands which come from the sin nature. They're going to have a hard enough time making it in life as it is. But if you exceed to their will, and if you accommodate their will, then you're going to have grief further on. This person will never learn what it is to be subject to authority. They'll grow up, and there'll be a sneak around your back and everybody else's.

Also, please don't talk stupid now, and say that I said you had to break the spirit of your child. That's not what we said. We said what the Word of God said: "Parents use the rod. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction will drive it far from him." Foolishness is his sin nature will. How can you expect him to worship God when you've never broken his will? Every time that he should be brought down, and brought in line, and be confronted with something, you make it easy for him, and you cover up, and you ease it off, and you sympathize.

The New Testament priest intercedes for himself. The parents must intercede for their children up to a certain point. Only the high priest, in the Old Testament, could enter the Holy of Holies – the very presence of God. That was how restrictive in the Old Testament a priesthood was. But every New Testament priest is permitted into the very throne room of God on the ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. If ever there was a distinction that was clear between Israel and the church, to show that the two are totally unrelated, this is one.

Hebrews 10:19-22: "Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way, which He inaugurated for us through the veil that is His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." This figure of Christ as the high priest, and Christians as his priests, stresses the role of Christians in ministering, sacrificing, worshiping, and intercession. And this passage makes it clear that one of the distinctions between us, as priests, and the Old Testament, is that we have access (every one of us) into the very presence of God through prayer. The blood of Jesus Christ authorizes the Christian priest to enter the Holy of Holies (God's presence), with confidence as church age believer priests. We do not have to go to a priest to get to God.

There's one mediator between God and man, the Bible says, and that is Christ Jesus. The Roman Catholic Church and all these religious groups that put an intermediary between you and God are of Satan's manipulation. You, as a priest of God, have access directly to him. This was represented by the fact that there was a heavy curtain that divided the holy place in the tabernacle (and in the temple) from the Holy of Holies. This was torn when Christ died upon the cross, signifying that now access into the presence of God was possible for a human being on a basis of personal justification (salvation). It is the cross of Christ that has torn open that curtain, and given us access to Him.

The Christian's access is said to be here by "new," and that word in the Greek is "recent" – a recent and living way. What is recent? Christ dying? What is the living way? Christ Jesus. We Christians of the church have Jesus Christ as our great high priest over the temple of believers. Christians of the church are free to enter God's presence in prayer directly. And we are told to do this with a sincere, confident mind full of faith. Faith in what? Faith in doctrine. With a confident mind, we can enter in the presence of God.

When pagan people approach their God, they do it with great fear, and great intimidation. They're afraid of their gods because their gods are brutal. Their gods are hateful. And they bring injury to them, they believe. Access to a Holy God based upon freedom from any sense of moral guilt by the blood of Christ, Who sprinkled us with His blood in His death. This is all made possible by the fact that absolute righteousness has been imputed to us. You don't have to worry about your moral guilt anymore. God has taken care of that. There is no evil conscience to intimidate our approach to God – to God our Father. And when we do step out of line, we have the daily washing of the confession of known sins. And as a priest of God, you must not be careless about that. And don't lie to yourself. That needs to be done on a daily basis in thought and word, and in deed. We need the confession of where we have stepped out of line. And don't try to pretend that there's some reality different from what there really is.

Christians of the church age of grace can really now enjoy God by putting away any inward sense of guilt, and by ceasing and desisting from outward impurity. Come clean, and stay clean. That's the calling of the Christian life. And you are fully, fully capable of doing exactly that. What a great thing to be part of the priesthood of God, and to be part of the association with Christ as our High Priest, and to have that high priest directing us in our daily priesthood; in our service; in our worship; and, in our personal living. This is what he has made possible for us. Don't cheapen your priesthood. You yourself are personally responsible for what you do with that priesthood. Don't humiliate yourself before God; before the angels of God; before other believers; or, before yourself. Don't humiliate yourself by acting in a way that is inappropriate for the priest of the Most High God. The average Jew never had to worry about that because he wasn't a priest. He had no close relationship to God, but you do. You are directly in the closest relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. You are of a noble company, the company of the priests of the Most High God.

Our Father, we want to thank You so much for that truth, which is almost hard to grasp – that we have been placed in such an exalted and honorable position, and that we are related to Jesus Christ, our High Priest, and that He is the One who leads us and directs us and guides us so that we act with total appropriateness. How great it is to be part of the church, and to be part of this age of grace, and with all the privileges appertaining thereto.

Our heavenly Father, we have never risen in our lives to what we can be. And, as the apostle Paul says, "He presses on toward his calling to reach the prize in Christ Jesus." So, every day we pray that our priesthood would be refined, and that we would live in the real world, and that we will admit when we have, in mind, or overtly, stepped into the territory which is inappropriate for those who are priests under Christ. We'll get things straightened out, and get back on track, and we will allow You to help us to rise to our full potential.

We pray, our Heavenly Father, that none of the people who are here tonight (none of us) will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and discover that we have wasted, out in the wilderness, so much of our lives, because we did not act faithfully as Your priests. You are ready to lead us unto the land of milk and honey. Oh God, why would we be willing to settle for less? Help us, we pray, to have a new appreciation for that, and a new determination to be a true priest of the living God. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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