

TWELVE PILLARS - FOUNDATIONS FOR TIKKUN

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Since the formation of our network as a restoration oriented Messianic Jewish Network (1984), much greater understanding has been graciously granted by our Lord. This little booklet is from a message that has been widely preached in our network. This message is one approach to summarizing that message. It provides an understanding of those things that bind us together in a common vision and commitments which follow from these commitments. My desire is that these twelve pillars become twelve convictions in our leaders and people, convictions which will be established by continued vigilance. May we not stray from these pillars until we see our Lord face to face.

Pillar One: The Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom

Much confusion exists in the Church world including the Messianic Jewish world because there is not a clear understanding of the Good News. Many have been taught that the Good News is a message about how to get to heaven. It is summarized in the following terms. Because we have sinned, we are not qualified for heaven. Jesus died for our sins, and if we believe in his death and resurrection, we will go to heaven. At its worst, it has been taught that no change of life is necessary for going to heaven. It is said that to require any life change is works-salvation. This is contrary to classic presentations of the Gospel which taught that one is saved by receiving the grace that transforms. In conversion, one is receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord. God gives us the grace to enable us to make this decision. Grace is not merely unmerited favor, but the power that transforms. To receive him as Savior and reject him as Lord is not saving faith. It is in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's words, cheap grace. Indeed, "**believing**" in the New Covenant Scriptures is a relational term of entrusting one's life to Yeshua.

However, even this classical correction is not a sufficient correction, for the Gospel is much more than a message about going to heaven. Now far be it for me to disparage in any way the hope of heaven or our life after this one. Without such a hope of future life, we are, in the words of Paul, to be most pitied. Indeed, the hope of heaven is based on the atoning death and resurrection of Yeshua. However the Good News is much more than the hope of heaven.

We can understand the fuller message of the Good News if we understand that a concern for going to heaven was not the issue in the first century Jewish context of the Gospels. Most Jews were quite convinced they were headed for heaven after death, for they were assured of life with God after death as long as they sought to be faithful to the covenant God made with Abraham. The Mosaic Covenant was the administration of Abrahamic covenant at the time of the life of Yeshua. There was, however, a great Jewish concern. It can be phrased in a question; where is the Kingdom of God promised by the prophets? Indeed, the great hope of the prophets was that Israel and the nations would be one under

the rule of the Messiah, the Son of David. Israel would be delivered from all her enemies in such a mighty intervention from God that the nations would stream into the Kingdom of God. As we read in Isaiah 2, swords would be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Nations would no longer go to war. The word of the Lord would go forth from Zion. Even nature itself would be transformed for, as we read in Isaiah 11, the lion would eat straw like an ox. The wolf would lie down with the lamb. The earth would be full of the knowledge of the Lord. The Lord would be one and his name one in all the earth as we read in Zechariah 14.

The first century questions had to do with the when and how of the Kingdom, much greater than the form of the Kingdom of God in ancient Israel. The religious parties other than the Saducees sought to discover a way to move history to the climax of the coming of the Kingdom. Phariseeism was largely a program of applying the purity laws given to the priests to the people as a whole. The thought is that if we can get enough people to be as pure as the priests and the land to be pure like the Temple, the Messiah will come and bring deliverance. This is a last days program to effect world redemption.

The Essenes thought in a similar fashion. However, they saw the Pharisees as compromisers with a corrupt Temple and priesthood. Indeed the high priest was a political appointee and no longer a legitimate descendant of Zadok to whom the priestly succession was given. They therefore sought a purity more strict than the Pharisees. Some joined monastic like communities that practiced daily bathings and strict ritual purity. Their hope was not the salvation of the whole nation of Israel, but only of a faithful remnant that would fight in the wars of the sons of light against the sons of darkness as reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls authored by the Essenes.

The Zealots looked upon such ritual extensions as foolish diversions. Faith was understood as raising a revolt against the Romans. When a sufficient number were in revolt the Messiah would arise and lead us to victory. The Zealots led our ancestors to the disasterous war against Rome.

When Yeshua began his ministry it was with an announcement that astonished and fit the context of our people. He announced, "The Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the Good News." (Mark 1:14). At hand is a Hebrew euphemism which means available to you. In Yeshua the Kingdom had come in such a way that it could be embraced and entered into. The life, ministry, and teaching of Yeshua was an exposition of the meaning of this Kingdom that was available. It was an answer to the first century Jewish question, where is the Kingdom? Yeshua would now have to show that the Kingdom really had appeared and was available even though the final fullness of this Kingdom fully established over all the Earth would still await a future intervention.

Where is the Kingdom of God? It is wherever the rule of God is established. To the extent that His rule is established in any sphere of human life, we can say there is the Kingdom. However, the Kingdom can only be established by His power; we in our human weakness and sin do not have the ability to establish it. Therefore Yeshua comes with the power to establish His rule, beginning with His rule in our hearts. All the

dimensions of Yeshua's ministry show the reality of the Kingdom he offers. The power of the Kingdom delivers from disease and demonic oppression. Such is Satan's disorder, not God's order. Yeshua and his disciples heal. The power of the Kingdom in Yeshua even overcomes the dangers of natural disaster. God's Kingdom power enables us to live according to the teaching of Yeshua. This teaching brings Torah to its highest application. Hatred is removed from our hearts. Murder becomes impossible. We love our enemies. We do not only avoid literal adultery, but have freedom from lust in our hearts. We are honest in our words and true to our promises. We are free from religious pride and pray with sincerity. We are free from material greed and material worry, for if we seek first the Kingdom of God, we shall have all things added to us.

The parables of Yeshua show the nature of the Kingdom he offers. It spreads by the seed of the word of God and finds reception in willing soils (hearts). It grows from a small beginning, a mustard seed, into a large tree. It is the treasure that supersedes all else. (Matthew 13)

The disciples did not realize that the Kingdom that was offered in Yeshua would not immediately lead to its ultimate final stage. They did not understand that His death resurrection were necessary to more fully establish this Kingdom. Indeed the gift of the Spirit at the feast of Shavuot was the key to the availability of the Kingdom to all peoples. Before Shavuot the Kingdom was limited to those connected to the earthly life of Yeshua. It was expedient that He go away. The gift of the Spirit shows why it was expedient.

Therefore **the message of the Good News is that the Kingdom of God is available.** If we come to the Father on the basis of the death and resurrection of Yeshua, our sins are forgiven and we enter the Kingdom of God. **The Kingdom message is the promise that God will put all things in our lives into his right order, Kingdom order, Torah in the New Covenant. The Kingdom message is the promise for our personal lives, families, communities, businesses, artistry, and so much more.** It is best pictured in the great parable of the prodigal son. The son returns to his father's house and submits to his rule. In so doing, everything in his life is put into right order.

The Good News of the Kingdom includes everlasting life. This becomes a greater concern in the preaching to the Gentiles in the first century. The invitation to the Kingdom is only possible because Yeshua died for our sins. Because our sins can be forgiven in Him we are invited. **However, in this world we now can live in and from the Kingdom of God by the Spirit's power in us. This power now effects every dimension of our lives. Once we so understand the Gospel of the Kingdom, it immediately leads us to embrace the quest for establishing God's Kingdom order in every sphere. We seek first his Kingdom, a relationship with the King, the establishing of his right order, and the extension of the Kingdom by the invitation of evangelism.** It leads to a quest of his power to obey all of his commandments beginning with our love for Him and our neighbor. When we understand that the Gospel is the invitation to enter and embrace his Kingdom, to live in and from the Kingdom, any

debate concerning whether we can reject his Lordship and be saved is seen for the foolishness it truly is.

This presentation of the Good News is most relevant to Jewish people who ask, if Yeshua is the Messiah, then why is the world such a mess? The answer is that it is not a mess everywhere, but is in order where the Kingdom has been embraced. Like Nathaniel, we are given an invitation to come and see. (John 2) Our families, congregations, work places, modes of education, power demonstrations and more show that the Kingdom has come and is available. It is a witness in words and deeds, in preaching and in life patterns.

The other eleven pillars simply flow from understanding the Good News of the Kingdom and the importance of fully coming into God's Kingdom order by his power at work in us.

Pillar Two: The Kingdom is Expressed in Worship

In Matthew 6:33, we are told that we are to, "Seek first his Kingdom and His righteousness." The first step in seeking His Kingdom is to seek our relationship with the King, to seek Him! Seeking Him begins with worship. The Kingdom that is available to us is founded upon honoring and worshipping the King. We begin the Messiah's prayer and the *Kaddish* with the same orientation. "Glorified and sanctified be God's great name." "Hallowed be your name." We glorify Him in many ways, but first of all in worship. All the dimensions of Kingdom attainment flow out from worship. The Moravians under Count VonZinzendorf well knew this. Their communities were 24 hour centers of worship; a worship which especially emphasized their gratitude for the suffering Messiah. In John 4, we read these words of Yeshua to the Samaritan woman,

"You worship what you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Let us take the last matter first. Individually and corporately we must worship God in truth. This means that the content of our worship must be according to what is true and that it must be sincere. Sometimes recent worship is very empty of good content. God is to be extolled as Creator, the Infinite One, who is merciful, loving and just. He must be extolled as the one who intervenes in human history to bring about His good purposes. We think of how the exodus and other historical actions permeate the content of the Psalms. However, Yeshua is drawing out a difference here between the Mosaic order and the New Covenant order. Of the new order it is said, the least in the Kingdom is greater than John the Immerser. "The time is coming and now is," said Yeshua. In this better covenant, the center of our worship is "God was in Messiah reconciling the World to

Himself.” **Our worship now centers on Him and all he has done for us: His crucifixion, His mercy, His ministry, His resurrection, His ascension, His rule from heaven, and His return and future reign.** Sometimes this becomes a problem in Messianic Judaism as some seek to make our people comfortable and more like the Synagogue. I have nothing against using Synagogue forms. I am for it. My concern is the content. Our worship content must be full of the reality of Yeshua, full of New Covenant content.

In a familiar double *entendre*, Yeshua says, “If I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men to Myself.” (John 12:32) This sentence has an intended double meaning. First, it refers to his crucifixion. It is in his being lifted on a cross that He draws all. The cross is the place of power release. Such power and love is released in His crucifixion that it must lead to the resurrection. Here is where justice and mercy kiss. Here is the fullest expression of the love of God and the revelation of His suffering with all the pain of humanity. “For God so loved the World that He gave his only begotten Son.” (John 3:16) **For those who know the truth about Yeshua, their worship must center on this reality. To not center on New Covenant realities (not to the exclusion of other content), is displeasing to God.** I believe that the lack of such centering in Messianic Jewish worship will lead to a diminished presence of God. I am happy to see this content be expressed in different ways; classical forms or modern guitar and drums. Of course I desire that our form be recognizably Jewish. Yet, we must have this content.

Of course, the worshipper must sincerely be committed to the worship content he or she expresses. This sincerity and concentrated intention in worship is part of worshipping in truth. It is the opposite of hypocrisy. This of course is a bridge to the point of worshipping in spirit.

Worship in spirit connotes a fervor of spirit. As Jonathan Edwards so well argued in his *magnum opus*, **The Religious Affections**, our relationship to the Father, Son and Spirit is an affectionate relationship that must include emotion. The type of affection that is acceptable to God is now by the Holy Spirit in us. He kindles this affection. I am not here arguing one way to show emotions. Those from one tradition will find it difficult to relate to how others show their passion for the Lord. Is it in warm feeling quietly expressed, but deeply felt or is it in the bodily emotional exuberance of many of our youth. God is pleased with both, and both should be valued. It is in that intimate sense of worship in the second person, the “I-Thou” to quote Martin Buber, that we most experience the reality of our life in Him.

We should also note that Yeshua in this passage in John 4 is anticipating the time when the presence of God will not primarily be manifest in the Temple, but in congregations, temples that will exist all over the world. On the day of Shavuot, in Acts 2 we read of the great day of the outpouring of the Spirit. Their sons and daughters prophesied in fulfillment of Joel 2:28. This occurred as the disciples of Yeshua, the one hundred and twenty, gathered in the Temple court. It was not the upper room, for there was no crowd to hear in the vicinity of the Upper Room nor space to gather to hear Peter. The new temple whom we are was birthed out of the Old Temple. Temple reality would

now be experienced by each individual believer who is temple of the Spirit (I Cor. 6:19) but even more so in the gathered worshipping community (I Cor. 3:16). In this temple reality of the Spirit, we experience His presence, His gifts and His manifestations of the Spirit. We go forth from the temple to the market place where signs and wonders confirm the Word of God. Therefore, in the New Covenant order, we are called to strive for the manifest Presence of the Spirit in our midst and a worship that is fervent and sincere. Wonderfully, this worship can take place wherever there is a committed community to do so.

Pillar Three: The Kingdom is Expressed in Community

The Spirit is poured out and the truth of Yeshua is confirmed to the hearts of people. What happens next? If it is real, they are drawn to form what I call community. This is quite different than much of what is called church or congregation in the world at large.

In Matthew 16 Yeshua says,

“Upon this rock I will build my congregation; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”

What many have built in this world, which looks successful, is not according to the pattern of Scripture. It is worldly. Let us not look at worldly as violating a set of mores from narrow minded Christians, which rules are not even Scriptural. Rather, worldliness is conforming to the systems of this world. This is often a more subtle matter, but more pervasive and dangerous.

Sociologists have noted well the nature of what is being built by many today. In December 2001 a U. S. A. Today newspaper even documented it. The great sociologist-pollster, George Barna has fully documented the reality. Modern Christians are building a consumer Christianity. In consumer Christianity, a congregation is a gathered group of individuals who are buying into the product to a group of leaders. That group usually consists of a paid clergy with a handful of volunteers (those unusually committed) who put forth a product. Ralph Neighbor argues that the maximum for this is 15% of the so-called members. First of all the product is the Sunday morning service. For today's consumers it must be a brief service, an hour to an hour and a half maximum. It must be upbeat. The message should be short and encouraging. For growth, it should be seeker sensitive. This last is a misnomer, for true seekers are willing to go through “hell and high water” to find the truth. I think the better term is visitor friendly. It is said that people should feel good when leaving, not tired after the service. They should feel burdens lifted. If there is multimedia it is all to the better. The preacher should be truly entertaining; good jokes are a must.

During the service, there must be child care. God knows that today's world does not want to be sitting with children. There should be a really entertaining program for

children. Something for the teens, for singles and for specialized groups should be offered (widows, widowers, single moms, and maybe different professional groups). Now there is value to this, but note how much the group is stratified and not integrated.

So along comes the consumer believer. He looks for the best program to “meet his needs.” He goes shopping and when he finds, he joins (maybe, for membership is not longer to be expected in some circles). If after a number of years, the person tires of the program, a new shopping adventure takes place. Some join new growing organization in large metropolitan areas every few years. Worldly consumerism has swept the American church world. It is self oriented. Indeed, it produces decline, for though there are big consumer congregations, Barna notes that today’s church is largely ineffective and is declining in numbers overall.

While it is well to make visitors feel welcome and well to meet the needs of different age groups, the meaning of congregational life is something on a very different foundation. Indeed, I refuse to answer the question, “Where do you go to church.” This is like asking me, “Have you stopped beating your wife yet?” To answer this question is to involve oneself in a falsehood that accuses oneself of wrong. In the New Covenant Scriptures we do not go to Church or Synagogue, we instead become part of a community. This is a community of committed covenant relationships. It is a community to which we are submitted to be equipped to do the work of ministry (Eph. 4:11 ff). This is a very different picture. **One of the tests of what we are building is whether long term covenant relationships are formed that will last a lifetime.** In addition, it should be noted that the place of joining should not be according to comparison shopping with a check list, but a matter of the leading of the Spirit. **The real direction of the Spirit is the only reason for joining and the only reason for leaving.** Our joining may have nothing to do with the excellence of what is offered, but the quality of what we will bring to it. Perhaps we are called to join to bring a dimension of life and blessing to the community. We may be called to a community that is in great prosperity or one in great need. It is the Spirit that joins us in community. We see this pattern clearly in Acts 2.

“ And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship and to the breaking of bread and to prayer. And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. And day by day in the Temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the LORD was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

I want to clarify two things. First, the issue of size is not the issue. One can build large and still be building according to the pattern of the New Covenant Scriptures. The Acts 2 community was quite large. Larry Kreider of Dove International has built very large, but it is very according to the Acts pattern. Let us note some of the features of the Acts pattern.

First is that they had intimacy and met from house to house. We will expand on this point. They were building their lives together in community. They were in real fellowship!

Secondly, they were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching. When the Spirit is poured out historically, there has oftentimes been a major change in the willingness of the people to receive teaching. God's people will never learn the Bible in one half hour on Saturday or Sunday morning. Individual study and teaching are necessary. In today's consumer cafeteria, some may choose education, but most will not. Barna again documents the appalling ignorance of today's believers. It will take real time and effort to be a well taught people.

Thirdly, they were full of love for one another. Open homes and hospitality were their way of life. Of course, houses provided the primary meeting places for the first century New Covenant community. In addition, the sharing of possessions was spontaneous and exuberant. I do not believe that we are describing a socialist community where to be part of it, one had to live from a common financial pot. They sold as others had need and the leaders distributed according to Acts 4. Ananias and Saphira were members of the community before they sold their property.

They were also devoted to worship and prayer. The verse says that this was one of things in which they continued. The word prayer here was not just intercession, but includes prayers of praise and worship.

In College days, I began to question this thing called church. Was attending a meeting once a week really what God had in mind or was it something that was much fuller in meaning and more demanding? I came to the latter conclusion. It appears that many in my generation were also questioning and became part of many communities that were formed to live a more intensive life together. Some of these communities continue to this day. People choose to live near others in the community and to be connected in small groups that meet weekly for mutual accountability. I think this is a good model and to a significant extent can be followed by all. The Methodists followed it and derived their name from the small group method. **We are called to community; so where we live and work is connected first of all to that community call.**

New Testament theology envisions a people who are in covenant community and mutual accountability under an eldership. They come into recognized membership upon immersion in water. **They are equipped to do the work by "Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers."** They are building long term covenant commitments and will stay in one community until or unless the Spirit sends them forth. All seek to exercise their gifts and talents to build up the community and to grow in the knowledge of callings and vocations. 100% involvement is the goal.

We should note that the Bible assumes that the small group, today called the cell group, is the basic foundational gathering, though the larger community gathering is also important in my view. This is clear in I Corinthians 12-14 which assumes that the people in the

groups that meet will all be seeking to be used in the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit. Indeed, Paul says that they can all prophecy one by one. Each is to bring their hymn, teaching, exhortation, prophecy, tongue, or interpretation. **Thus the N. T. assumes a vibrant charismatic community expressed in small groups as foundational.** In such a small group each member may find a prayer covering and share their victories and challenges. Each may be touched by prophecy, perhaps not every week, but it is available frequently. Newcomers are brought to the friendly atmosphere of a home. Leaders are trained in the context of leading small groups. The Biblical pattern is unmistakable. In America, this pattern is difficult because it costs something for our average lazy existence. However, some have done it! Larry Kreider, for example, proves it can be done in America. It is flourishing in China, Africa, and Eastern Europe!

In community there is accountability for decisions. We seek confirmation. If we do not receive it, we have cause to pray more and check whether we have really heard the Spirit. We then are free in conscience to follow the leading of the Spirit in our lives. I am looking to lead a network of congregations with people of deep and lasting covenant relationship and commitments. I will not answer the question, “Where do you go to Church?” Neither should you. Rather the question should be, “What community are you a part of.” God’s evaluation is not whether or not the community is large or small. There are leaders of tens, fifties, hundred and thousands. It makes little difference to him to have one hundred communities of one hundred that are multiplying new communities and linked under an apostolic ministry or one organizational structure of 10,000 led by an apostolic pastor. The issue is are they truly producing covenant life where the great majority of members are fully engaged and building community? This is the kind of community we see in the New Testament, and we must settle for nothing less.

Pillar Four: The Kingdom is Expressed in a Life of Power

Western congregations debate the issue of the reality and importance of the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit. Congregations and China, India, Africa and South America do not debate this issue. Their pattern of life is supernatural and looks remarkably like the pages of the Gospels and the book of Acts. The very fact that this is debated shows our sad situation. I am aware of the teaching that the gifts of the Spirit, for example, were only for the transitional age of Apostolic leadership. Yet, this interpretation was a rationalization for the lack of power. In a Jewish first century context, where the Holy Spirit is significantly present, “stuff happens.” This is fully proven in the massive studies of the renowned scholar Gordon Fee. The nature of the New Covenant is the universal offer of the Spirit which is characterized by a quality of supernatural happenings that who “show the Spirit.” This is seen in Peter’s preaching in Acts 2 interpreting the marvelous miracle of languages,

“And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young

men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon My bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days, pour forth of my Spirit, and they shall prophecy.”

This is not something for only the first disciples of Yeshua. Those like Martin Lloyd Jones who have taught that the immersion (baptism) in the Spirit is a definite experience to be sought until attained are surely right. That immersion is accompanied by supernatural love and manifestations of the Spirit.

So also, Mark says,

“And these signs will accompany those who have believed, in My name they shall cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it shall not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Some have said that this is a disputed text. However, it is so early that it certainly gives us a summary of what the earliest believers thought and understood to be the teaching of Yeshua.

This is why it is alarming to see believers leaving the ranks of those who believe this way to join non-charismatic congregations and to even more to see leaders go in such a direction. (Again the work of Barna shows proves this trend.) One said that she wanted to get back to basics. Which book are they reading? According to the Bible this is basic! The whole matter of the power of the Spirit and building up our faith by the Word is that without which we can not experience full transformation.

We can not pick and choose what we like from the New Covenant Scriptures. The Scriptures are in full agreement on these issues. Yeshua says,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do because I go to the Father.”

This does not mean that every individual believer will do more, but that the potential is there. Certainly it also shows that the Body of the Messiah will do much more, for the gift of the Spirit makes the presence and power unlimited in time and space. Some have said that the greater work is preaching the full Gospel after his resurrection. However, it is also the signs and wonders promised. In the N. T. period the Apostles did do the same and greater works. Yeshua was certainly not speaking here of his own death and resurrection which is unparalleled, but of the supernatural power that would accompany ministry.

This brings us to an important interpretation of I Cor. 12-14. In this marvelous section of Scripture, Paul gives us guidelines on the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit in the gathered home assembly. There is to be an order so all can benefit to the maximum. Love is to be the motive; this is the reason for I Cor. 13. Love causes us to seek power for we desire to

be more effective. Love seeks to be effective! Thus Paul can command us to be motivated by love to seek the best gifts.

“But earnestly desire the greater gifts.”

“Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophecy.” (I Cor. 12:31, 14:1)

There is no neutrality here. Praying in tongues for individual edification, the importance of prophecy in the life of the Body and more are well taught here. Let no one mistake it, the verses just quoted are commands, not options. These gifts also are at work on the cutting edge of evangelism as the late great teacher and pastor John Wimber fully proved.

The relationship to the power and presence of the Spirit is the key to overcome boredom. It is the answer to the question of user friendly verses seeking God. God’s Spirit will lead those who are sensitive to the Spirit’s leadership. In addition, Larry Kreider well teaches that the key to successful cell groups is the presence and moving of the Spirit. When they become boring, all are called to repent and intercede for a return of his manifest presence. Are the people becoming slack so they have no contribution to make? Then repentance is needed. The cells will be as good as the contributions of the people.

Publications too numerous to mention demonstrate how much more effective witness is when accompanied with power. John Wimber’s Power Evangelism and Ed Silvosa’s writing on Prayer Evangelism are just two such examples. The model for this type of evangelism is in the pattern of ministry in the Gospels. In Luke 9, Yeshua sends out the twelve disciple and then in Luke 10, the seventy. The instructions in both chapters are the same. They are to go into the towns of Israel and heal the sick and announce that the Kingdom of God had come near (become available). Healing and deliverance shows the reality of the Kingdom in both power and order. Both confirm the Gospel of the Kingdom. They show that the powers of darkness are overcome by the power of the Kingdom. They show God restoring right order through healing and deliverance, Kingdom order. So this is a non-negotiable pillar, and I hope that it will forever be for you. I have too many experiences of the reality of His supernatural in accurate prophecy, healing, and deliverance to ever turn back. I know that it is harder to govern when room is made for prophecy or movings of the Spirit in a service (even if only for those proven in the main service). I know that those who seek the Spirit sometimes are gullible. However, I am convinced that though we need to grow in wisdom, the price is worth it. Messiness with life is better than order with death.

Pillar Five: The Kingdom is Expressed in a Life of Character

Understanding the Gospel of the Kingdom leads to a way of life which we could call Kingdom life. The Gospel of Matthew is very helpful here because it connects the Kingdom of God to the commandments of Yeshua. In Matthew 28:18-20 we read,

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

The commandments of Yeshua are the foundation for character evaluation and the instrument for character training. We are able to grow in obedience to his commandments by depending upon his transforming grace. This includes identification with his crucifixion whereby the deeds of the flesh are put to death. This imaginative identification with his crucifixion in prayer is a key to transformation. It is the place of the forgiveness of our sins. The participation in the Messiah's supper in the broken body and shed blood of Yeshua is also very important. So also is resurrection power, where we believe and are constantly being filled with the Spirit to motivate us to obedience. The dint of self effort will utterly fail.

Yeshua made it clear that not only his commandments, but all of the commandments from the Hebrew Scriptures are important and are to be studied and applied in a way that fits the New Covenant order. His teaching in Matthew 5-7 gives us the pattern for such application. The New Covenant is pro-Torah.

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless our righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

How can believers become anti-commandments or anti-Torah after reading the words of Yeshua? Only from misunderstanding Paul, who did say, “The righteous requirement of the Torah is fulfilled in those who walk by the Spirit.”

Those who are least in the Kingdom are greater than John the Immerser according to Yeshua. To experience the Kingdom we must at least practice the weightier commands, but even the least of the commandments instruct us and have applications of some sort for the New Covenant. The wise person searches out this meaning.

Yeshua then goes on to detail the greater righteousness that is not understood and practiced by the Scribes and Pharisees. The Sermon on the Mount details a life of character that is most wonderful. The important thing is to note that by His power it is doable. It is not that we can do this perfectly, but that our lives can be generally said to be according to Matthew 5-7. We do not limit ourselves to these chapters but affirm all of the New Covenant, but what a summary we find here! These commandments that inform a way of life that is according to the character of the Kingdom. This character is part of our life of witness.

First Yeshua show that we are no longer victims. Because the Kingdom has come in Him, the poor, the mourning, and the persecuted are no longer subject to the old circumstances. Their life is now determined by the perception of God's will, and they are empowered to carry it out. We are delivered from the determinations of poverty, mourning and persecution. The pure in heart will see God.

The Torah is applied to the issues of the heart. The believer is not only one who does not murder, but he is commanded to not have anger and hatred in the heart. He is to love his enemies, to pray for them, and even to do good to them. Not only will he or she not commit adultery, but they will obey the higher command to have no lust in the heart. In Yeshua the very source of the sins is dealt a blow and victory is ours. Oaths are not taken to prove that we are speaking truth. The follower of Yeshua is fully honest and carries out his word!

The follower of Yeshua is delivered of all religious pretension and pride. We must not do religious things for the praise of men. In prayer, fasting, and giving alms, we come to a place to act in love and to please God. We pray according to the model spoken by Yeshua, for His Kingdom to come and his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. This prayer means that we seek Him first of all, then we seek to establish his order in every sphere of life, and lastly we seek to extend the Kingdom to the lost. This is not just a prayer for the second coming!

Then we are delivered from greed and do not lay up treasures on earth for ourselves. Those called to make money make it for the Kingdom. Those called to modest lives live unto him. In addition, we are to live free of worry. It is a command to not worry over our material conditions! If we seek his Kingdom first, he will provide. We are to not have condemning attitudes to others, but are to seek the best for all. In addition, we are to keep on praying and seeking and knocking for thereby the Kingdom of God is extended. We are to build our lives on his teaching, the solid rock of security.

The issue of the call to character, whereby we first die to self is little taught in the American church. Let us take the one issue of divorce, which Yeshua forbids in this very passage. In classical communities that sought to follow the teaching of Yeshua, fellowship in the community required following Yeshua's teaching on divorce and remarriage. These were of two basic orientations. The first allowed no divorce and remarriage was forbidden as long as the spouse still lived. The other only allowed divorce with remarriage in the case of adultery (in some cases only adultery without full repentance) or desertion whereby the deserted would be considered as an unbeliever. Even then, a significant amount of time would have to pass. Today, to enforce discipline and disfellowship those who are in adultery due to illegitimate divorce and remarriage is looked at as harsh and judgmental. Our age of "easy believism" can not accept that the Bible requires discipline for serious sin. Therefore, the divorce rate is the same or higher among those who profess to be believers and those who do not. This is greatly dishonoring to God and discredits the Gospel. Obviously this is a complete misunderstanding of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Often the excuse is fulfillment in this

life, not feeling in love anymore, not getting along. Some say, “God would not want me to be in an unhappy marriage. He wants me to be happy?” This whole orientation is “My right to fulfillment in this life.” How different the orientation of godly character which says, “I am crucified with Messiah. . .yet not I but Messiah lives in Me.” If both parties to the marriage profess to be believers, then we come to a theological impossibility. It is that two who are growing into full Kingdom character and love for Yeshua would not be able to love their spouses. God commands husbands to love their wives through Paul in an age of arranged marriages. He commands love for fellow enemies and fellow believers. He empowers us to do what He commands. Therefore divorce for two committed believers is impossible. They will love each other as they are more and more like Him.

Character is the key to establishing all of the right qualities of commitments to people and to our responsibilities. His commandments begin with love for God and abiding in the vine. It then moves on to command love for the brethren, love for the neighbor and love for enemies. Character enables one to maintain life time covenant relationships. It includes integrity in business and finance. It enables the right relationship of authority and submission in every sphere; family, congregation, apostolic stream and civil government. Those in authority handle it with godly love, and those submitted are strong in conscience and submitted without servility. We are among one another as those who serve, just as in the teaching and modeling of Yeshua. All of this comes from a full commitment to do all that Yeshua commanded and to teach others the same. To those who do so, Yeshua promises to be with us always.

Pillar Six: The Kingdom is Expressed in Apostolic Order

What do we mean by apostolic order? It has two meanings. **The first is that we seek to order congregational life according to the teaching of the original Apostles in the first century. The second is that we order our congregations under apostolic leaders who are chosen by God today and supernaturally confirmed as the overseers of congregations.** This is an issue of God’s government. Sadly, concern for government is at a low ebb in the American believing community today. Is the congregation governed by the pastor as tyrant? I mean this in the true historical origin of the word tyrant meaning one man rule. He may have advisors, but the leader is not accountable to either a board of elders, to the congregation or to outside authority. The only alternative to congregation members who disagree is to leave. Or is the government a democracy where the vote of the people is the final determination of direction (Congregationalism). Is the government in a plurality of elders? Then is this plurality accountable to a higher body of elders from many congregations? This last is Presbyterianism. Or is the congregation part of a network overseen by a bishop? This is Episcopal. The rights and responsibilities of members are defined according to the government structure of their congregations. Conviction about these matters is therefore crucial in building lasting community. However, few today even ask. They visit a program oriented, consumer

oriented congregation and if they like it, any governmental structure is accepted. Will we be a people of mere preferences or convictions?

What is our view here? It is first of all that elders in plurality are to govern congregations. This is seen clearly in the book of Acts where it says that elders were appointed by Paul. It is amazing how little emphasis there is on a senior pastor. The Epistles themselves were written to congregations, and senior pastors are not mentioned. Even in the book of *Revelation* where the messengers are probably first among equal elders of the congregation of the City, there is not great emphasis. I do believe there are varying gifts of leadership, and that there are leaders of tens, fifties, hundreds and thousands. I do believe it is wise to recognize such a first among equals leader who has greater ability in vision and unifying the rest of the leadership and implementing direction. So I do believe in a leader of the group of elders. However, elder plurality government for local congregations is the emphasis of the New Testament.

Secondly, congregations are not independent. As the congregations grew they were part of one congregation of the city numbering many thousands overseen by elders of the whole city. In addition, congregations in the New Testament were overseen by apostles, figures that either planted or established the primary foundations either directly or by those they sent as in the case of Timothy. One sees quite readily that apostles acted as part of the governmental authority of the congregations of their oversight. Again and again Paul brings his corrections to whole congregations. Sometimes this is embarrassing to the elders. Where were the elders of Corinth when things were so disordered, when a man was in a wrong relationship with his stepmother, and when believers were going to Roman courts against one another? While it was expected that the apostle's authority was to be received and attitude of submission was to prevail, yet one still sees the dimensions of plurality. What if Corinth under its elders said no to Paul? He could only trust supernatural power to enforce his authority.

In our structure the principle of accountability leads us to a moderate appropriation of the New Testament pattern. First, the apostle does not have a veto over the local elders. The elders and the apostle truly seek unity. However, if after fully hearing the apostle the elders still desire to go in a different direction, they are free to do so with one qualification. The apostle will only intrude (and he should intrude) in situations of gross moral or doctrinal error or gross incompetence. The last may be rooted in psychological pathologies. It may also be a matter of such incompetence that elders need retraining or to be replaced by competent elders. In such cases it is well for the apostle to make appeal to senior leaders to weigh the issues with him and to involve the members of the flock very judiciously.

In this the apostle himself should be accountable to other senior leaders. A team of senior five fold ministers, including other apostles, pastors, evangelists, prophets and teachers are potential members of a team of plurality to hold the senior apostle of a network to accountability. He also can be confronted if in sin and can be removed. In addition, the Bible seems to give special weight to the role of prophets working with apostles in laying foundations. In Romans 12 we read first apostles and then prophets. In

Ephesians 2:11 we read “built upon the foundations of apostles and prophets.” In Ephesians 4, we read, God has given, “Apostle, prophets,” etc.

The focus of all elders expressing any gift ministry and apostles especially is to enforce God’s order or standards of righteousness and good government. However, equipping is an equally important emphasis. For an apostolic order is seen in Ephesians 4 where we read that “He has given some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and some teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry” A congregation needs training from all five. The apostle maintains foundations, the prophet imparts a prophetic anointing to the members of the community so their lives are led by the Spirit. The evangelist imparts effective witness. The pastor imparts community in such a way that the whole community is pastoral. The teacher produces a community that knows the Word of God and can teach others. If we do not have all five within a community, we then are called to invite those who can train from without.

In such a structure, how do we see the role of members. Members too are part of the accountability structure of the congregation. First, according to Matthew 18:15 every member can be part of the process of correction for those in sin. This can lead to restoration or even disfellowshipping. In addition, Galatians 6:1, 2 speaks of members correcting one another. Any spiritual believer is to correct one overtaken in sin. This does not mean that we correct every little thing, but significant sin should be dealt with. **In addition, an elder can be corrected by the testimony of two or three members. Members may and should correct leaders according to Matthew 18.** In the case of Paul’s instructions to Timothy, who I believe was an apostle, he could receive an accusation against an elder when there was testimony by two or three. **Therefore members can appeal to the apostle when leaders are in sin and do not repent or when the sin is such that they need to repent. Members are to be trained in their responsibilities and are not to be mere patsies. If my interpretation is correct here, it would follow that good leadership involves the members in processes of input and confirmation for major decisions.** Yes the authority is in the elders, but wise elders build unity with the members. The budget, choice of elders, deacons, rabbis, pastoral staff etc. should be subject to membership input before there is a final decision. If there is strong support for a change from members in a budget item or reservation with regard to a leader, wise elders will change the budget or delay the appointment of a leader. Confirmation by the flock is therefore a good practice.

While we do not believe that anyone can write Scripture today, indeed the Canon is closed, the function of apostles in government and in fostering a vision for growth and Kingdom extension beyond the local congregation is crucial. The congregations therefore partake of his training programs, conferences and mission opportunities. His vision brings forward direction to multiple congregations together.

In addition, we see the leaders of congregations in a region meeting together for fellowship and up building and being called upon by the apostle to help with matters of leadership discipline.

The New Testament presents us with linked congregations, not independent congregations. It presents us with an apostolic order where apostolic leaders have ministry and governmental input into congregations they oversee.

Pillar Seven: The Kingdom is Expressed in a Quest for Unity

In John 17:21, Yeshua makes the remarkable request in prayer, “That they may be one as you Father and I are one, that the World might believe that You have sent me.” In context, Yeshua states that this prayer is not just for his disciples but for all those who would believe in Him through his word. This is most extraordinary. Here we see that the unity of Yeshua’s followers is a key to the redemption of the world.

However, this unity brings fruit at every level. A family in true unity has tremendous power as a force for the Kingdom. An eldership in unity also has great power as does a congregation or an apostolic stream of leaders and congregations. We are told that when, “brothers dwell together in unity, there God has commanded a blessing.” (Ps. 133) This unity is love that flows supernaturally from our relationship with Yeshua. Yeshua’s prayer is actually ultimately for linking true disciples in unity throughout the whole world. This is certainly a prayer for unity that must be fulfilled before His second coming, for after His coming it will be done and no more prayer for this is needed.

We should note, as connected to pillar six that five-fold ministry is a key to this unity, especially, I believe, the recognition of apostolic authority and leadership. For under such equipping ministries, do we all come to the unity of the faith and grow into a mature man, fully equipped.

It may seem outlandishly impossible to attain, but Yeshua’s prayer commits to pray and work for the vision enshrined in His. It also requires us to believe that this will happen. So how do we work for unity? First in our own congregations, we are to pray for unity and to come against the attacking spirits of evil that bring division, gossip and more. In addition, we are to seek to support the vision and direction of leaders where it is not out of line with Scripture. However, beyond the local congregation, for most of us, this unity will be expressed in praying for the unity of the congregations in our counties, cities and regions. This means that congregational leaders will be drawn together for prayer and cooperative ministry. In addition, it means that we will pray for a recognized leadership to be called of God to lead the unity of the congregation of the city.

This is not easy when we have charismatics, non-charismatics, independents, Evangelicals, Calvinists, and Arminians. However, we often find that even those of similar viewpoint do not enter into cooperative unity. We should at least enter into close cooperative unity with those who share our convictions. From this base we can reach out to others with times of joint prayer and cooperative effort. Lastly, we can pray for revival and unity. I truly believe that only a mighty revival will bring this unity, which will

include new orientations in doctrine so that we can come more closely together. The idea of a sloppy unity where there is a watering down of convictions is not what I have in mind. However, but the Spirit God can bring us closer and closer in our convictions and can help us to cooperate in mutually beneficial efforts for the Kingdom.

Also, we should note that in Tikkun we require all pastors to be in this quest for unity by being part of pastor's fellowships, Church of the City efforts and more. We strongly encourage joint worship celebrations. If we are to live as Messianic Jews, we then need to as well show our unity with the larger community of believers and reject sectarian attitudes. We see some strides forward such as in Baltimore with Bart Pierce. Dave Hess in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania carries the banner of John 17:21 for his region. In addition, Paul Zink carries such a great burden for Jacksonville, Florida.

This quest for unity should characterize our whole lives. It is our quest in our families, in our elderships, in our congregations, in the congregations of our cities and beyond. We will pray and talk until we are in unity. As Asher Intrater said, we pray-talk, pray-talk and pray-talk until we have unity. We must be focused and unwilling to be denied. I know that some see such unity efforts among the congregations as a waste of time, but I think it is mandated. It is a key for the salvation of the Jewish people in our area. In this unity great power is released for salvation for all in the region. Such has been the experience of Ed Silviso as record in his book **That None Might Perish..** Unity has been the precursor of great success in evangelism. **I believe that when the congregations in an area are in unity, they have the power to bind the princes of darkness over a territory.** Indeed, when they take the Messiah's supper together in representation, they make contemporary the word of Colossians 2, that when the Messiah died, the princes of darkness were stripped of their power, and He made a public example of them. Let's have conviction to be in the quest for unity. In all of these matters of pillars and convictions, I am seeking that you would be an educated people and that you will not settle for a congregational life that denies or ignores these convictions.

Pillar Eight: The Kingdom is Expressed in Jewish Calling

In Romans 11:28, 29 we read,

As far as the gospel is concerned; they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarch, for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.

The Jewish people, the nation of Israel, have an irrevocable calling. The context is not that every gift and call that God gives is irrevocable, as some wrongly teach. Rather, it is the calling that in the covenant with Abraham that is irrevocable. I have written about this calling in many books, the last one entitled **The Irrevocable Calling.** Israel's preservation is a great testimony to the faithfulness of God and his ultimate Lordship over history. Her return to the Land of Israel is a further demonstration of his power and

faithfulness. Israel's unique life of testimony memorializes God's action in the history of the nation. It is a testimony to the fact that God created the heavens and the earth in six *yomim* and then rested on the seventh.

The Sabbath is both a humanitarian gift to Israel, and a foreshadowing of the Age to Come wherein all enter into Sabbath rest or Shalom in Him. **Every feast has reference to God's provision for all of Israel's needs (agricultural), God's action for Israel's salvation, and a foreshadowing of future redemption for Israel and the nations.**

Passover, for example, is the time of first fruits, the Passover and Exodus from Egypt, and then the foreshadowing of Israel and the nations coming into their promised lands in the Age to Come. Indeed, Israel entering into her promised land shows the heart of God for all nations.

So also in *Shavuot* (Pentecost), we see thanksgiving for the early harvest; the outpouring of the Spirit in the first century; and the foreshadowing of all the earth being filled with the Spirit when the knowledge of God will cover the earth as the waters cover the beds of the seas (Isaiah 11:9).

In *Rosh Hoshana*, or *Yom Teruah*, the The Feast of Trumpets, we see the announcement of the judgments of God and the coming of the Messiah to rule and reign. I Thessalonians 4:16, 17 recounts the events. The *shofar* shall sound, the dead shall be raised, and those alive at his coming will be transformed into glorified bodies and will meet the Lord in the air. Isaiah 27 tells us that at the sound of the they *shofar* the Jewish people will be called to return to the land of Israel from all the nations to which have been scattered. Those who have not yet returned to the Land will do so. .

In *Yom Kippur*, the day of atonement, we look back upon the holiest day on Israel's calendar when the High Priest would make atonement in the Most Holy Place of the Temple for the people. In Yeshua we see the fulfillment in our high priest entering into the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Tabernacle with His own blood of atonement (Hebrews 9). This atonement is yet to be applied to Israel and all of the nations in that day in which Israel will look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child. (Zechariah 12:10) A fountain of healing will be open for the cleansing of Israel. (Zech. 13) The nations will be healed as well (Revelation 22:2).

The great feast of Tabernacles not only looks back on Isarel's dwelling in tents or *Sukkot* in the desert and God's supernatural provision, it looks forward to that Day of the Kingdom of God in which Israel and all the nations will be one under the Messiah. They all will celebrate the Feast together, it is the Feast of Kingdom of God (Zechariah 14). The feast of annual final harvest looks forward to the harvest of the nations being gathered into the Kingdom of God.

The practice of the feasts is prophetic and intercessory. It is as prayer for what is portrayed and in various dimensions asks that God's Kingdom would come on earth as it is in heaven. In the events of the last days, Israel will be a mighty instrument of revealing

God's power and might, an instrument for all nations coming to the truth of God. This will only be accomplished by the prayer and support that will come from the whole Church. Indeed, the saved remnant of Israel plays a major part in this whole matter according to Revelation 7 and 14.

This is only the briefest summary. However, the re-ingrafting of Israel to the Kingdom in Yeshua leads to life from the dead. (Romans 11:15). Therefore, we see everywhere in the New Covenant Scriptures the Apostolic example of maintaining Jewish identity in Yeshua. Jewish followers of Yeshua are part of their people, of course. How could this ever have been challenged. Paul himself showed that he was obedient to Torah and demonstrated his continued part in the nation of Israel. Messianic Jewish congregations are the key way for Jewish followers of Yeshua to maintain their part both in Israel and the Body of believers. These congregations include gentiles which enjoy identifying with the Jewish people and worshipping in a Jewish rooted context. Jewish life is a communal thing and is hard to maintain individually. Some strong families and individuals can do so but this is exceptional. Integration into the larger Jewish community is also important. We affirm Jewish culture where it is good and beautiful and ideally seek to be living within this cultural context. However, the Messianic Jewish congregation provides a corporate witness to the Jewish community that Jewish life and faith in Yeshua fit together. In the land of Israel this is the only option. Jewish disciples of Yeshua are both the saved remnant of Israel and the Jewish members of the Body of the Messiah, the Jewish part of the One New Man. They join Israel and the Church together in an unseen corporate connection. Someday all Israel will be both preserved as a nation and will be part of the Body of the Messiah.

Jewish life in the Messiah is the call of the Jewish person by birth, by his part in the Abrahamic covenant. All believers are to affirm that Israel is still chosen, has not been replaced, and that Jewish believers are still a part of this important calling. God's goal is that Israel and the nations will be one under the rule of the Messiah. The Body of Believers is not a homogenized reality, but foreshadows the day when Israel and the nations will be one under the rule of the Messiah. All are called to be committed to make Israel jealous (Romans 11:14). All can pray or give. Some can be involved in loving service and direct witness in the Jewish community. Gentiles are called to show mercy in these ways. The whole Body of Believers is called to foster God's purposes in the Jewish people. In this we will see God's purpose for all nations fulfilled; indeed, God has a purpose for multiple ethnic groups which enrich the Kingdom of God.

Pillar Nine: The Kingdom is Expressed in Discipling the Nations

In Matthew 28:18-20 we read:

Then Yeshua came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey

everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

From the time of the fall, God voiced his commitment to the redemption of the peoples who would be born. The fall would be reversed. In the covenant with Abraham, God promised that all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through Abraham's seed. The Gospel based on the life, death and resurrection, is the fulfillment of the promise to the nations and will eventually lead to all nations coming under the rule of the Messiah or entering into the fullness of the Kingdom. At this time, however, we are involved in seeking an adequate remnant from every nation that will effect the salvation of Israel and the nations.

This is especially important for Jewish disciples of Yeshua. Israel is not called merely for their own fulfillment. Israel's call from the very first is for the blessing of the nations. Therefore Jewish followers of Yeshua should be involved in prayer for the nations and open to God's call to the nations. This can be expressed in a variety of ways. When a Jewish living disciple brings the Gospel to other nations, a very special quality of anointing is manifest. Some will do this on short term trips, some in mercy ministries, and some in long term venues for spreading the Good news.

Let us note that the great commission is not fulfilled by merely speaking the message, but in discipling the members of the nations to obey all of His commandments. This includes training in godly character, one of our pillars. It includes discipling believers in all of their responsibilities in all of the spheres of life.

Yeshua says to those who are discipling that "All authority has been given to Me." This means that He is delegating His authority and power to accomplish this commandment. In addition, He promises that those who obey and are involved in this commission, that "He will be with them, even to the end of the age." May God give us his heart for the nations and for making disciples. May he give us specific nations for which we are called to pray and specific Kingdom works to support more specifically.

Pillar Ten: The Kingdom will be Expressed in the Coming Fullness

For many years I have called myself a restorationist. I am one that believes that God will restore all truth and right practice that has ever been lost to the Body of Believers. Many restorationists teach that the Body of Believers has been in decline after the first century and began to be restored in the Reformation. What was first lost is said to be last restored. While there is much truth in this viewpoint, it is too simplistic. Various ages of the Church have seen advances and declines. Some truths have been emphasized in one period, lost in the next and picked up again. There is not a certain and simple line of decline and a certain and simple line of restoration that can be easily charted. In advancing, it is often two steps forward and one step back. Some advances, especially in

the Protestant world in recent times seemed to parallel the restoration of Israel. The discovery of the Baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues was parallel to the early Zionist return to the land. The latter rain was parallel to the independence of the nation and its recognition. The charismatic renewal in the late sixties was parallel to Israel coming into the government of the Old City section of Jerusalem. I agree with these teachings on parallel restoration so well put forth by Derek Prince and David Duplisis.

On the other hand, there are dimensions of truth that seem less today than in past years. The enforcement of congregational discipline was greater one hundred years ago than in today's America. Indulgence for divorce is certainly not a manifestation of restoration but loss. In addition, every age of the Church has seen advances and bright shining examples of truth. While there are restorations, we should see that even the word restoration as it is used in Acts 3 connotes more than restoring something that was fully present before.

“He must remain in heaven until the time of the restoration of all things spoken by all His holy prophets since the world began.” (Acts 3:21)

This refers to a restoration of the world to paradise. Since Adam and Eve, the world has not known paradise. Indeed, that all humanity would enter into paradise is something beyond and greater than anything that has occurred in the past. **Actually the Bible leads us to believe from Acts 3:21 and other passages that we are really moving toward something greater than is usually connoted by the word restoration. We are moving toward fullness.** By this I mean first of all that the Body of Believers will come to a place of maturity, unity, power and purity that is indicted in Ephesians 4, 5 and Revelation 7. The first passage speaks about the five fold ministry equipping the saints until all come to the unity of faith and grow into a mature man, a corporate man. The Body comes to a place that is described according to this passage as, “Attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of the Messiah” (Eph. 4:13). In chapter five we read of the Bride of the Messiah attaining to a place described as, “A radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.” (27) This is the end product of the work of the Messiah who is washing with the water through the word, cleansing and making holy (5:26) Revelation 7 describes a multitude from all nations in ascended worship dressed in white robes. This is the spiritual picture of His last days Bride. John 17:21 is that prayer for the unity of the Body which was upon the lips of Yeshua just before his trial and crucifixion.

All of this gives us great hope that though revival and equipping we will see the Body of Believers come into fullness. Only such a Bride will be able to effect the salvation of Israel and then the nations. Let us note that we are looking at something that has never existed. It is foreshadowed in the early Jewish Body in Jerusalem led by the Apostles. However, for the world wide Body to attain the same position and more than was seen after Pentecost is beyond any historic attainment. It is greater than the attainment of Acts 2-4. Why? Because shortly after the message of the Gospel spread to the nations, we see divisions, impurity, and weakness. The Corinthian congregation is usually given as an example of the fact that the first century Body of Believers was not

the ideal. Let us note the letters in Revelation 2 and 3 as well. These are not ideal congregations.

We are committed to the restoration of all truth and more. We are committed to the coming fulness of the Body in unity, power, and purity. This will lead to the fullness of salvation for all of the nations of the world.

Pillar Eleven: The Kingdom is Expressed in Every Life Sphere

Today is a day of an advance in understanding. In past ages the Kingdom of God was identified with the Church. As the old hymn states concerning the Church, “I love thy Kingdom Lord, the house of thine abode.” In more recent times, the Kingdom has been understood as the Millennial Age and thus something that has been primarily postponed to the future. However, we are quite sure of the inadequacy of these views.

Many scholars such as George Ladd have clarified the issue of the Kingdom. First of all, the Kingdom really came in Yeshua. It is now possible to enter the Kingdom, live from the Kingdom and to manifest His Kingdom rule. However, the Kingdom, though present in reality, is not yet here in fullness. This fullness of the Kingdom awaits the second coming of Yeshua. So where is the Kingdom seen? It is seen in those manifestations of Kingdom power spoken of in pillar four. It is also seen wherever there is submission to the will of God. “Your Kingdom come, your will be done.” The Holy Spirit now dwells in each individual disciple. The Kingdom is seen in the one who lives according to the teaching of Yeshua. The Kingdom is seen in greater fullness in the quality of marriage and family that is ordered by His presence and power. Ephesians 5 and 6 describe marriage and family that is according to the Kingdom. It is then seen in the life of a congregation that is in apostolic order. Indeed, we might even say that congregational life according to His teaching is the fullest manifestation of the Kingdom in this life since Yeshua said, “I will establish my congregation and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it.” Yet the Kingdom is always in partial manifestation to the extent that individuals and spheres of human life are in submission to God’s order. Therefore we can not **identify** the Kingdom with any sphere *per se*. Instead we only see the Kingdom to an extent in any sphere according to the extent of submission to God’s order. Perfect submission to God’s order in any sphere will not occur in this age.

The Kingdom is in manifestation when civil governors govern according to Kingdom principles. Those who establish businesses are to manifest the Kingdom by bringing this sphere into line with the Kingdom, producing products and services that benefit people, and using profits to bless employees, shareholders and consumers. Indeed, the business leader creates wealth for the benefit of all who are part of the enterprise. His stewardship of wealth is also invested primarily for the extension of the Kingdom of God, not selfish opulent living. In this we see the Kingdom in the world of business. Godly employees through prayer and faithfulness also have power to bring transformation to this sphere. In addition, the world of art, science and education are to reflect the order of the Kingdom.

Since all these spheres require our involvement, they are all to reflect a Kingdom orientation on our parts and to thus manifest the Kingdom of God. Yeshua claims all these realms for Kingdom manifestation. Seeking his Kingdom means to seek to bring all into line with his Kingdom order, or Torah. This is part of our witness. No one knows how much Kingdom manifestation is possible in all spheres before His return. In the fullness of the Kingdom after Yeshua's return, Israel and the nations will be in right order toward one another producing God's international order of the Kingdom among nations. Until that day, let us simply seek to see the Kingdom in manifestation in ever sphere to the fullest extent possible.

Pillar Twelve: The Kingdom is Extended through Prayer

Prayer is the primary engine of Kingdom extension. Many other religions were founded on the sword. Islam for example mostly spread by the sword. However, our faith is not be spread by the sword, but by the supernatural weapons of preaching the Gospel which looks like something weak and foolish, and by laying down our lives for others. Martyrdom is one of the great weapons of Kingdom advance. We read in II Cor. 10:4 that the "weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty for the pulling down of strongholds." Prayer is that mighty weapon in our arsenal to be used constantly. As part of Yeshua's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, we read that we are to pray, "Your Kingdom come, your will be done?" This is a prayer that we might seek to be empowered to establish God's rule in every sphere of which we are a part, to extend this Kingdom to the lost, and lastly, to desire his return. Individual and corporate prayer has actual effect on the progress of the Gospel and the perfecting of the Body of Believers. Let us interpret the words of Matthew 7 in its context of Kingdom extension. Yeshua said,

Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, the door will be open." (Matt. 7:7,8)

In the context of corporate prayer, this is even more powerful a promise. Where two or three agree, there is great power. How much more when a hundred fervently agree! The kind of prayer that works is "will of God" prayer. When we dwell in the vine, we know His heart. Therefore Yeshua promises us that we will have whatever we ask if we so abide. (John 15:7) In John 14:13 Yeshua says, "I will do whatever you ask in my name so that the Son may bring glory to the father." Praying in His name is not a magic formula. In the Hebraic context this means praying according to the meaning of His name, the essence of whom He is. Our desires become as His and inspired by the Spirit, we are given the vision to pray into being.

So we read in James after a description of the power of Elijah's prayer, "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteousness man avails much.."

We are in line with a tradition on the power of prayer. Such writers as Dutch Sheets, Cindy Jacobs, Ed Silvano, and George Otis Jr. recently and Gordon Lindsey, Andrew Murray, and many others classically inform us by giving us guidance and examples of prayer. Biographies such as the ones on George Mueller, Rees Howells, and Hudson Taylor provide us with great examples from men of prayer. Prayer meetings, early morning prayer, and fasting and prayer times individually and corporately are essential for the extension of the Kingdom. If this is so, we will be happy if we will obey and practice this truth.

Summary of the Twelve

So these are the twelve pillars. Understanding the Gospel of the Kingdom; the Kingdom is expressed in worship; the Kingdom is expressed in community; the Kingdom is expressed in Power; the Kingdom is expressed in godly character; the Kingdom is expressed in apostolic order; the Kingdom is expressed in a quest for unity; the Kingdom is expressed in Jewish Calling; the Kingdom is expressed in the call to the nations; the Kingdom is expressed in hope for the coming fullness; The Kingdom is expressed in every life sphere; the Kingdom is extended by prayer;

May these pillars be deep convictions in all who read this or hear the message of the twelve pillars. May it be that your choice of a congregation is informed by these truths and that you will join those congregations that are most fully in accord with these convictions. May you all work to establish these convictions in the community of faith of which you are a part. May you never give up these convictions, compromise them, or forgo them for something lesser.