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JESUS MUST INCREASE!

One of the greatest prophets that ever walked the face of the earth was John the Baptist. The prophet Isaiah spoke of John the Baptist when he described him as -

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” (Isaiah 40:3)

Then the prophet Malachi in chapter 4, verses 5 and 6 also spoke of John the Baptist as being sent by God, Himself. When JESUS arrived on the scene He confirmed John the Baptist in the eleventh chapter of Matthew. Among other things, He said of John;

“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen one greater than John the Baptist;” (V.11)

In the first chapter of Luke the angel of the Lord (Gabriel) appeared to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, and said the following concerning John ;

“For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.” (V.15)

Clearly, John the Baptist was held in high esteem by Almighty God, so much so that he was filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother’s womb. And think of the statement that JESUS made, when He said of John, that no one greater than he had ever been born of a woman! John even received his name from God. (V.13) Apart from JESUS, no man had ever entered the harvest field of the earth, as a servant of our God, with stronger credentials than had John the Baptist. Not only that, but until this very day, there has not arisen any man of God greater than John the Baptist.

Think about it. If a modern day John the Baptist showed up in our midst we would soon declare him to be a christian super star. We would idolize him as being one of God’s favorites. Before long, he would have his own T.V. show, tape ministry, and a good work for all of humanity’s needs. In a very short time, this modern day man of God would find his name in marquee lights as well as being headlined in all of our christian publications. Money would flow in like a river filling one bank account after another bank account. Fame and fortune would soon raise up an empire around this one soul that was so gifted of God. And if any saint of God were to question the validity of our modern day John the Baptist, we would quickly label that person as an accuser of the brethren. Of course we would do all in the name of JESUS, and our hero (idol) would also tack the name of JESUS on all that they did. Who would dare question them? After all, they had the anointing of God.

Sadly, the above scenario has occurred time after time down through the years and in fact is occurring today. We mere mortals simply cannot handle fame and fortune very well. I believe this to be the case because both fame and fortune are tools that Lucifer uses in his world system which is designed

to entrap the souls of men and then populate hell with them. JESUS Himself was tempted with the world, including all of its fame and fortune, and He rejected it outright as not being of His Father. (see Matthew 4:8-10) JESUS had but one interest in life and that was to please His Father and to see Him glorified in all things. Jesus never sought to glorify Himself, or to amass a fortune so that He could carry on His Father's work. He did not even attempt to draw attention to Himself. And neither did John the Baptist.

When John the Baptist spoke of JESUS, he said;

“He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.” (John 3:30-31)

“HE MUST INCREASE!”

John the Baptist had more than an intellectual understanding of who JESUS was. He had a full revelation of not only who JESUS was, but also he understood just how unworthy he was in relation to this God Man JESUS CHRIST. This man whom God Himself had named - This man whom God Himself had designated to go before His only begotten Son and prepare the way for Him - This man who was chosen by the great and awesome God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to step into the waters of the Jordan river and baptize His Son, JESUS - This man John the Baptist declared that JESUS, who was coming after him, was mightier than he was, and further of JESUS, John declared - “whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.” (Matthew 3:11)

**“HE MUST INCREASE
AND
I MUST DECREASE!”**

When it came to JESUS, John clearly recognized his own spiritual poverty. When it came to JESUS, John set his own ministry aside in favor of that of JESUS alone. When it came to JESUS, John had absolutely nothing to brag about before man or God. When it came to JESUS, John considered himself to be totally unworthy to carry even His dirty sandals. John, in his spiritual poverty, was once again blessed of God as he set the example for those of us who would follow JESUS.

**“BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.”
(JESUS SPEAKING - MATTHEW 5:3)**

Today, for the most part, we christians are so far removed from John's attitude of heart toward JESUS that it would seem that we had formed a JESUS in our image - a JESUS that was altogether like we are. Many of us seem to think that JESUS cannot get along without us. We have become convinced that the success or failure of God's plan for human kind is dependent on us, on our ministry, on our being a spiritual success. Some of us even believe that we, like John, have been chosen to bring about revival in the land. We are making great plans to further the Kingdom of God in the earth. We are buying lands, building massive buildings and forming new programs daily. We are now even putting up our own christian satellites and developing christian radio and T.V. stations around the world. Christians have formed movie companies to begin making christian movies to satisfy our lust for fleshly entertainment and pleasure. Christianity has now become a multi billion dollar industry worldwide.

Where JESUS relied on the supernatural power of God to carry out His work in the earth, we rely on money. Where JESUS relied only on the power of His Father to do the work at hand, we rely on programs and organization. Where JESUS shunned the fame and fortune that the world would heap on

Him in favor of seeing His Father glorified, we quickly accept that same fame and fortune - but of course, we do so in His name. Where JESUS refused to allow Himself to be consumed with the busyness of ministry and rushing from one place and from one appointment to another, in favor of waiting on FATHER - we just cannot seem to resist being busy for JESUS. We have never learned to tarry and refuse to “go” until He says, “go”. Where JESUS refused to brag and boast about who He was in His Father, openly declaring that of Himself He could do nothing (see John 5:19 and 8:28) - we reject our spiritual poverty in favor of proudly boasting for all the world to hear that we now have it altogether in JESUS, and have become His favorite people in all the earth. Spiritual pride, arrogant confidence, haughty boasting and religious smugness has replaced hearts of meekness, humility, spiritual poverty and mourning over the shame and reproach that we are bringing on the name of our God. JESUS, when He prayed to His Father, was heard by the Father because JESUS had a godly fear of FATHER. Not only that but He also learned obedience by the things which He suffered. Listen to the author of Hebrews:

“WHO IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH, WHEN HE HAD OFFERED UP PRAYERS AND SUPPLICATIONS, WITH VEHEMENT CRIES AND TEARS TO HIM WHO WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIM FROM DEATH, AND WAS HEARD BECAUSE OF HIS GODLY FEAR, THOUGH HE WAS A SON YET HE LEARNED OBEDIENCE BY THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED. “ (HEBREWS 5:7,8)

Today, for the most part, we are not heard by our FATHER, because we have no godly fear of Him. Not only that, but we have not profited from the things that we have suffered, which should have caused us to be a more obedient people. We are so drunk on our religious pride that we have now become a fearless and disobedient people, and most of us do not even recognize our true spiritual state. May GOD have mercy and wake us up before we become even worse.

In 1 John 2:6 John writes; **HE WHO SAYS HE ABIDES IN HIM OUGHT HIMSELF ALSO TO WALK JUST AS HE WALKED.”** When we purpose in our heart to walk, just as He walked, He increases in and through us. At the very same time that He is increasing, we are decreasing. As JESUS literally increases in and through us, His power to deliver, save, restore and heal, manifests itself in greater and greater measure. In the 14th chapter of the book of John, JESUS declared that His followers would carry on with His works after He returned to heaven. He said they would do even greater works than He did. (see verses 12, 13 & 14). In other words, He would continue to increase through the lives of those here on earth that had His word and were obedient to that word. In Mark 16:20 we are told that after JESUS returned to heaven He continued to work with His followers as He confirmed His word through the accompanying signs. If He is not doing His supernatural works through us today - If we are not seeing His word confirmed today, then there can only be one reason and that reason is not because God’s word is not true. Our FATHER has sworn to never change or alter the word that has gone out of His mouth. (see Psalm 89:34) The only reason that we seem to be so powerless in relation to our FATHER’S word is that there is more of man’s flesh, more of self at work, than there is JESUS.

I believe that most of us have the best of intentions when it comes to our christian walk. However, when our confidence in our good intentions is used to justify our spiritual immaturity, then we are deceived in deed. Listen to the living Word:

“THE SPIRIT INDEED IS WILLING, BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK.” (JESUS SPEAKS MARK 14:38)

**“THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND DESPERATELY WICKED;
WHO CAN KNOW IT?” (JEREMIAH 17:9)**

“HE WHO TRUSTS IN HIS OWN HEART IS A FOOL, - - -.” (PROVERBS 28:26)

Good intentions, apart from obedience to God’s word will get us nowhere. At the very least we

live our lives as spiritual cripples, carnal Christians who only took up time and space while here on earth. And at worst, we live a religious lie, die, and wake up in hell. May God have mercy.

My brothers and sisters, I beg you, please do not place your trust in “yourself”, in your good intentions. This is a deadly mistake. Trust only JESUS! Do not rely on my word. Do not rely on the word of some preacher, some Bible teacher or evangelist. Do not place your eternal security in the word or authority of some religious leader who carries a title of Apostle, Prophet or Pope. Rely only on the living word of a holy God, and know that any voice that would attempt to add to, take away from, or twist that holy Word is nothing more than the hiss of hell coming through the voice of man. Oh these are dangerous days indeed. There is so much deception in the church. So much that sounds so good, that looks so good, that appears to be cloaked in love, compassion or mercy. But far too often, the smell of spiritual death lies just beneath the surface of what appears to be light and righteousness. In the end, the flesh of man increases and JESUS decreases.

Dear reader, if you do not receive anything else from this message please hear this. You will never mature spiritually beyond where you are right now, at this very moment, unless you decrease and JESUS increases in and through you. I do not care who you are or how successful you may think you have been in ministry, if you do not decrease and allow JESUS to increase in you, then you have gone as far as you are going to go. We may have the best of intentions, we may be in a church meeting every time the church house door opens, we may teach or preach to thousands, we may be faithful in our financial giving, we may call ourselves prayer warriors or intercessors and we may cry rivers of tears - but we will still never be the son or daughter of God, that He desires that we be, until we determine to die to self so that JESUS can increase in us. Until JESUS is more important to us individually than our personal desires - until JESUS is more important to us than our good works - until JESUS is more important than our ministry or our church - until then my friends, we will never see the Kingdom of God at work here on earth as it should be. We are only kidding ourselves to think otherwise!

I hear many Christians, some in high leadership positions, saying that God is going to bless us with a great Holy Ghost revival that will fall over us in a sweet wave of His love. The net result being that the church will explode in growth and receive more prosperity and peace. This is, in my opinion, foolishness and leads many into a place where sudden destruction will overwhelm them. (see 1 Thessalonians 5:3) Those who are preaching peace, love and prosperity, along with those who are preaching the pursuit of signs and wonders, with a lot of warm fuzzies thrown in for good measure, are not preaching the gospel of JESUS CHRIST. They are using His name, while at the same time they are betraying His holy word! They are preaching another, a funny gospel. Paul spoke of these people when he said:

“THERE ARE SOME WHO TROUBLE YOU AND WANT TO PERVERT THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. BUT EVEN IF WE, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL TO YOU THAN WHAT WE HAVE PREACHED TO YOU, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.” (Galatians 1:7,8)

JESUS preached that we were to live a crucified life. (Matthew 10: 38,39) He preached a gospel of humility, meekness and persecution (Matthew 5:3-12) JESUS preached a gospel of separating ourselves wholly unto Him. (John 12:26, Matthew 10:37) JESUS preached a gospel that was narrow and difficult to find. (Matthew 7:13,14) JESUS preached a gospel of obedience to His word. (John 14:21 &23,24) JESUS preached a gospel that promised us His blessing “if” we would abide in Him, otherwise we were helpless. (John 15:1-8) Any gospel other than the gospel that JESUS brought to us from FATHER, is a false gospel. It may make us feel good. It may give us the warm spiritual fuzzies. It may agree with a part of the Word of God, but it is never the less a lie, a doctrine of devils, that is designed to make the flesh (self) feel good. The end result is what we have, for the most part, in the church today. A class of people, calling ourselves Christians, who have increased in everything but JESUS. The form is there, but the power - JESUS Himself - is no longer being manifested except in our vain imaginings. This confirms Paul’s prophecy in 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Paul also warned us of these days in 2 Timothy 4:3 & 4 when he

said:

“FOR THE TIME WILL COME WHEN THEY WILL NOT ENDURE SOUND DOCTRINE, BUT ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN DESIRES, BECAUSE THEY HAVE ITCHING EARS, THEY WILL HEAP UP FOR THEMSELVES TEACHERS; AND THEY WILL TURN THEIR EARS AWAY FROM THE TRUTH, AND BE TURNED ASIDE TO FABLES.”

Dear brothers and sisters we, you and I, are living witnesses of the certainty of FATHER’S word. It has happened just exactly as we were told that it would. Please do not be deceived by some voice that would tell you what your flesh wants to hear - that life, for the christian, is just going to get easier and easier. And that when things on earth get really difficult, God will just sweep us up out of it all, and we will be spared any suffering. This sort of theology defys the gospel of JESUS CHRIST as outlined in Matthew the 24th chapter. It also defys Paul’s warnings in 2 Timothy chapter 4, not to mention John’s warnings in the book of Revelation. I pray that we will be counted among those who have ears to hear what the Spirit of God is saying in these dangerous days .

Saints of God, we did not get to this powerless spiritual state that the vast majority of us are now in, overnight. And we are not likely to turn things around very quickly, simply because there is so much flesh, religion and money involved. We must also remember that Lucifer and his agents are right in the middle of the battle, (see Ephesians 6:12) and they are disguised as “light” and “righteousness” (see 2 Corinthians 11:14,15) which means that they will be very difficult to identify until the very end. Never the less we must set our faces like flint and turn away from everything except JESUS Himself. If we are to be in a place where we can be assured of receiving His full blessing in these last days, then He must increase and we must decrease. There is no other way. More programs, more conferences, more churches, more books, more tapes, more organization, more meetings, more money, more, more, more of anything other than JESUS, will get us nothing but more of man’s flesh. Tacking the name of JESUS over the door of our works and not at the same time crucifying our flesh just makes us religious, and of little effect on humanity, except of course in our own minds. Sooner or later we must take our flesh, including all of our plans, visions, works, dreams and spiritual gifts to the altar of repentance and offer them up as a sacrifice to our God in favor of JESUS Himself. Only then will He increase in us, and with His increase, His Kingdom and government will rise up in power impacting all of humanity! Until then, there will only be more of the same, only worse.

Dear friends, our potential in JESUS CHRIST is beyond anything that we can imagine. In Him, we can be all that He said that we could be. In Him, He will continue to do His works and confirm His word, All of His word. We should expect nothing less than to see and experience exactly what our Lord said that we would see and experience. However, the full heavenly blessing is only found as He increases and we decrease. Apart from this reality of JESUS increasing in us, we can do absolutely nothing, except perform and be religious. (see John 15:4 & 5) If you are satisfied with your performance, if you are satisfied with a form of religion without God’s power and you are satisfied with only a small part of God’s blessing, rather than His full blessing - if you are satisfied - then you have wasted your time reading this message. I pray the Lord’s blessing on you as you go on to meet Him.

If, like me, you are not satisfied with the form without the power, if you are not satisfied without experiencing FATHER’S fullest blessing, if you are not satisfied without seeing JESUS lifted up to His rightful place as the Head of the true Church, then I invite you to join with me in turning back to JESUS alone. I am personally repenting for having allowed so much of Tom to rise up in my walk with JESUS, that He was not on the increase in me. I have purposed in my heart to allow Him to remove from me all religion, all of my preconceived ideas, all of my theology, my opinions, my desires, my anything, and replace all of it with Himself. I invite you to join with me in this most critical effort. For many of us, turning to JESUS, alone, will not be easy. In fact, it will be extremely difficult. There are few who will be willing to make the effort. But for those who do, there is great promise for success. You see, FATHER is

no respecter of persons and he does not show partiality between His sons and daughters.

“FOR THERE IS NO PARTIALITY WITH GOD.” (ROMANS 2:11)

What our FATHER will do for one of us, He will do for another. He loves us equally and desires only to bless us, to protect us, and to care for us. He only asks us to first love Him and to separate ourselves wholly unto Him. As He draws us to Himself and we choose to yield ourselves to Him, then He does the work in us. We decrease and He increases.

The process of our decreasing and allowing JESUS to increase in us begins when we make a conscious decision to turn and pursue JESUS alone. I am not talking about just believing in JESUS. I am talking about actually pursuing Him through His word, through meditating on Him in the quiet solitude of our hearts, and in much prayer. This is a very personal process for each of us. There are no short cuts and I can assure you that there are many obstacles along the way. The greatest hindrance to our becoming one with Him is religion. Before we realize it, our religion, our church, our denomination, our works become to us a security blanket, much like a blanket that a little child carries around with them. If you take away the blanket, the child becomes upset even to the point of crying. And so it is with our religion. We simply cannot believe that God has not ordained and given us our religion and all of its trappings. But the absolute fact is that man’s flesh has produced most of our religion, and this explains why we are now in an immature spiritual state. Our God gave us Himself - alone. He desires that we give ourselves to Him - alone.

**“I BESEECH YOU THEREFORE, BRETHEREN, BY THE MERCIES OF GOD, THAT YOU
PRESENT YOUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY ACCEPTABLE TO GOD,
WHICH IS YOUR REASONABLE SERVICE.” (ROMANS 12:1)**

May those of us who are like minded find mercy in the eyes of our Lord. May He bless us with the gift of repentance and grant us the grace to approach the cross with “self” and there offer our flesh up as a sweet smelling sacrifice before the very Throne of God. May He bless us indeed by allowing JESUS, Himself to use our hands and feet. May the world around us see JESUS and hear JESUS and feel JESUS through us. Amen

He must Increase!

God Bless

Tom