

SECOND EDITION

THE PORTRAIT OF A CHRISTIAN



LIGHT ALWAYS CONQUERS DARKNESS

MINISTER RAYMOND D. SOPP

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REDEMPTION 
P R E S S

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Acknowledgments

To God be the Glory!

About the Author

I have been a born-again Christian for more than thirty-eight years. I am not affiliated with any organization, or denomination. I, like Paul in Philippians 3:7–8, “Counted all things lost in order that I may gain Christ.” The church I attended for fifteen of those years was chosen for the man behind the pulpit and not the denomination in which the church belonged. I looked for a man who loved God with all his heart and had a love for the truth at any cost. The past thirty-eight plus years were used to know God and not for the study of religion. I truly counted all things as rubbish to gain the knowledge of Christ. My passion was single in focus; I wanted to know Christ Jesus my Lord and Savior, and the God who sent Him. This has given me a love for all who love God and the truth, regardless of their affiliation. Therefore, I endeavor to minister to anyone who is willing to listen. My purpose with this book is to benefit people of all affiliations in the knowledge of God, and help every called-out-one safely into the Kingdom of God.

God's Call on My Life as a Watchman

A watchman is just a very ordinary man who is placed in an advantageous position where he has an unobstructed view to see an enemy or trouble coming from afar. A watchman's sole objective is to sound a warning whenever he sees trouble coming so everyone has ample opportunity to get prepared and thereby ultimately be saved. Spiritually speaking, I'm just a *very* ordinary man who God has supernaturally placed in a position to have eyes to see the enemy or trouble coming from afar, contemporaneous to our times. And then motivated by a supernatural love placed within my heart for God's Church, *I sound the warning*. Inasmuch as it was God who placed this love in my heart for His Church and then placed me in a position to see, I have nothing to boast in, nor am I better than anyone else. *To God be the glory!*

In order to fulfill my call as a watchman to God's Church, God has given me a heartfelt desire to see every *called-out-one* safely into God's heavenly kingdom. Therefore, when God allows me to see trouble, or our enemy (Satan) encroaching upon His Church, I *must* cry out a warning with everything that is within me. Know-

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ing well, with tears, there will be some who will be offended, and some who will just completely ignore the warning. But I also know, with tears of joy that some will hear the warning, respond, and therefore be saved.

I have always known my calling would never make me popular with the masses, but I must tell you that I would *literally* not trade places with anyone for all the riches and/or the popularity this old world has to offer. How exceedingly rich and truly blessed I am to be called as a watchman to God's *precious* saints. To spy out and then expose the enemy and/or trouble coming from afar, in order to give God's saints *ample* time to take cover under God's wings by prayer; to avoid our enemy's *deceptive* snares; to avoid our enemy's *cunning* subversions. And finally, so we're not caught sleeping, but awake, fully equipped, and prepared to resist the evil one's onslaught in the might and power of God. Yes, I have the best job in the world! *To God be the glory!*

Preface

2 Corinthians 13:5: “Test yourselves to see if you are in the *faith*; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?”

If there was ever a time in the entirety of mankind’s history to take the above verse of Scripture seriously, it is today. In the above portion of Scripture, the Apostle Paul was *not* speaking to the unbeliever, but he was directly addressing his admonishment (warning) to those who identify themselves as Christians. This is very significant as Paul seemed to be *very* concerned about the *very* real possibility that everyone in Corinth who identified himself as a Christian may in fact *not* be a genuine born-again Christian at all.

So the Apostle Paul urged the Corinthian Christians to examine themselves to see if Jesus Christ was indeed dwelling within them, i.e., to see if they were actually born-again with His Spirit. And now if we were to combine the Apostle Paul’s admonishment to the Corinthian Christians with his prophetic warning in

2 Thessalonians 2:3 of a last-days apostasy (falling away) from the *faith* within God's Church, the above verse about testing ourselves to see if we are in the *faith*, becomes a bone-chilling warning that *cannot* be ignored.

When I first became a Christian and started to study God's Word, there was one thing that profoundly stood out to me. *How could the Pharisees of that time not recognize Jesus as their Messiah?* After all, they knew the Holy Scriptures better than our most brilliant contemporary theologians; their words and even their behavior seemed to be in order. *Yet they did not recognize Jesus!* Jesus put it this way: They were religious (God-fearing) on the outside, but dead within. Their apparent spiritual blindness presents to us a profound problem as it exposes to us the real possibility of being spiritually blind ourselves; even though, as with the Pharisees, we have knowledge and appear clean on the outside.

Therefore, we must be honest with ourselves in these last days that there is at least the possibility that we, too, could be spiritually blind. Yet, if we are to examine ourselves to see if Jesus lives within us, we must also have the ability (the spiritual eyes) to recognize Him. Obviously, by looking at the Pharisees, we know that an overwhelming head knowledge of Scripture, the ability to quote it, and doing righteous works will not insure us the spiritual eyesight to allow us to recognize Jesus. So how can we attain this spiritual eyesight, which is so essential to our self-examination? How can we attain this spiritual eyesight to see if we recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ within us?

As I pondered this dilemma, it became clear to me that the only way anyone could recognize Jesus was by the Spirit of Jesus; or you could also say, by the Spirit of God, inasmuch as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one. I then began to ask the Holy

Spirit to reveal to me the Spirit behind God's Word, since Jesus was the Word made flesh (John 1:14). It became my heartfelt desire to use, or allow, God's Word to reveal His nature (Spirit) to me. No longer was I content to just memorize God's Word so I could recite it by rote, I wanted to be able to recognize His Word by the Spirit behind it.

Nevertheless, it remained an imperative to me to know His written Word as it was the only way I had to know God intimately, i.e., to know His very nature or spirit. So I proceeded to spend a lot of time reading and listening to God's Word; but then I went a step further, I also spent much time with God in prayer. No longer was I interested in a religious study of Scripture; I wanted to know the Spirit behind the words in the Bible. Over the years, as my intimacy with God grew, I found something truly remarkable; although several people wrote the Bible, I began to recognize that God's awesome unchanging Spirit was truly behind every word from Genesis to Revelation.

But now my heart began to break. As my spiritual eyesight became clearer and clearer so I could begin to recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ, to my horror, it also became harder and harder for me to recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ within "God's" Church at large. Oh, I indeed saw many within God's Church saying the right words (even quoting Holy Scripture better than I could), and everything on the outside seemed to be reasonably righteous, but something was missing. I did not recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

My heart sank within me. *Something was very wrong!* My heart profoundly sank into my innermost being. It was then I knew in my heart of hearts that this insight was *not* given to me to judge anyone, but to *help* every called-out-one safely into the Kingdom of God. I wanted to somehow spiritually paint "*the portrait of a*

Christian” in order that all who professed to be Christians would then be able to examine themselves to see if they could recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ within themselves. And, God forbid, if they failed the test, just maybe, if they had ears to hear, they could then turn their mere Christian profession into a truly born-again experience.

With this in mind, the title I have given to the following thirty-one stand-alone commentaries is: *The Portrait of a Christian*. The title comes from the knowledge that the best way to warn (admonish) of a fault is to expose the genuine—to expose the Spirit behind the Holy Scriptures so you can examine yourself to see if you recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ (The Word) in you. *This is one examination that all professing Christians must pass; to fail this examination has eternal infernal consequences.*

As a Watchman, it is my heart's desire to lovingly warn and/or admonish the professing Christian by profiling a portrait of the Spirit of God—by profiling the portrait of a Christian from the perspective of the Spirit, and not by what we see through our physical eyes. From the vantage point of our physical eyes, the Pharisees had everyone fooled (even themselves); but from the Spirit's vantage point, Jesus could see nothing but darkness within. Matthew 23:27: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white-washed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.”

So as a Watchman who wishes none to perish, and who is filled with a love that can only come from God (*to God be the glory*), I place before you thirty-one commentaries—warnings—admonishments, in order for you to see if you recognize the Spirit of Jesus Christ in yourself. This is something that is between you and God, as only God can truly expose the state of your heart to you. There-

fore, may God forbid anyone in using my commentaries to judge another. For not even I, who wrote the following admonishments (warnings), would even dare to judge my brother or sister as far as his/her salvation is concerned.

So as you begin to read, I pray that those who *do* recognize the Spirit of Christ Jesus within themselves will also find comfort and security in these most troubling times. And for you who *cannot*, may you know that God loves you enough to expose it to you now so you can reevaluate the profession of your faith before it's too late and you become condemned with the rest of the world. Matthew 25:7–13: “Then all those virgins (notice that they all identified themselves as virgins of the bridegroom, i.e., Christians) rose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the prudent answered, saying, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. And later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’ But he answered and said, ‘*Truly I say to you, I do not know you.*’ Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.”

2 Corinthians 6:1–2: “And working together with Him, we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain, for He says: ‘*At the acceptable time I listened to you, and on the day of salvation I helped you; behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation.*’”

CHAPTER ONE

Jesus Instructed Them to Tell No One

Luke 8:52–56: “Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, ‘Stop weeping, for she has not died, but is asleep.’ And they began laughing at Him, knowing that she had died. He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, ‘Child, arise!’ And her spirit returned, and she rose immediately; and He gave orders for something to be given her to eat. And her parents were amazed; *but He (Jesus) instructed them to tell no one what had happened.*” Luke 5:12–14: “And it came about that while He was in one of the cities, behold, there was a man full of leprosy; and when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and implored Him, saying, ‘Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.’ And He stretched out His hand, and touched him, saying, ‘I am willing; be cleansed.’ And immediately the leprosy left him. *And He (Jesus) ordered him to tell no one,* ‘But go and show yourself to the priest, and make an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.’” Matthew 9:28–30: “And after He had come into the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, ‘Do you believe that I am able to do this?’ They said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord.’ Then He touched their eyes, saying,

‘Be it done to you according to your faith.’ And their eyes were opened. *And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, ‘See here, let no one know about this!’*”

Isn’t it amazing that Jesus would perform such awesome miracles and then instruct them to tell no one? Apparently, Jesus did not know how to build a large successful ministry. Surely, Jesus should have proclaimed His miracles from the mountain tops, placed full-page ads worldwide to herald His miracles, and then immediately begun a worldwide miracle crusade. After all, these miracles would assure that millions would come to Jesus the Christ. Oh, if only we were there to advise our Lord on the effective and proper way to build His Church, because now we have the tools and knowledge to successfully bring millions to Jesus. All you have to do is appeal to the creature comforts and desires of this world, and then just stand back and marvel at your success. And what better way to appeal to mankind’s creature comforts than through miracles. The whole world would show up for health and wealth, which extrapolates to the whole world coming to Jesus. Right? After all, why else would Jesus do miracles if it was not to attract the whole world to Him? *So why would Jesus instruct them to tell no one?* Well, let’s try to answer that question.

Matthew 11:2–6: “Now when John in prison heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples, and said to Him, ‘Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?’ And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Go and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who keeps from stumbling over Me.’” *There was only one reason for Jesus to do miracles, He needed to fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures written about Him in order to identify Himself as the Expected One—the*

Deliverer—to those who were already seeking God's Deliverer. Jesus never wanted the miracles to become the object the multitudes sought after. The miracles were meant only to be an attesting sign that He was indeed God's Deliverer, God's sacrificial Lamb, who was spoken of in the Old Testament Scriptures. Hence, Jesus' miracles were only meant to identify God's Deliverer to those who were seeking to be delivered, one who would emancipate them from this present world of Satan's (Egypt). Jesus passionately wanted to identify Himself to those who were seeking salvation, but at the same time, conceal Himself from those who were only seeking His miracles.

Jesus was being very careful not to allow the miracles to become the desired object; hence, *He instructed them to tell no one.* Which is why, even today, we will see many more miracles in areas where there is an ignorance of the identity of God's Deliverer. But once identified to those who are seeking to be delivered, the miracles will decline so that the miracles will not become the object of our affection, and thereby, become sought after instead of God's Deliverer, which is our greatest need. Even the awesome miracle of raising one from the dead is still at best a temporary life, but those who seek God's Deliverer will find eternal life. *God will still do miracles, but they will always be used to further the gospel. The miracles themselves must never become the gospel.* Therefore, Jesus (God in the flesh), being aware of our weakness—our tendency to make the miracles themselves the gospel (the good news)—*instructed them to tell no one.*

So then, if creature comforts and miracles cannot build God's Church, inasmuch as they are not the gospel, what can? Luke 1:15–17: “For he (John the Baptist) will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be *filled with the Holy Spirit*, while yet in his mother's womb. And he will turn back

many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, *to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*”

The only way God’s Church can be built is by the Holy Spirit, as He is the only one who can turn our hearts away from seeking miracles and the things of this world, to seeking after God’s righteousness. In other words, only He, the Holy Spirit, can cause us to genuinely seek after God’s Deliverer, the One who can rescue us from the corruption of our old nature, which is infatuated with this world of Satan’s. Whereas, if we try to increase the size of God’s Church by appealing to mankind’s flesh, it will only increase one’s infatuation and love affair to Satan’s world and become a real hindrance to the gospel of God’s Deliverer. The gospel of God’s Deliverer is, deliverance from our corrupt worldly-minded heart (spirit), to His own righteous heart (spirit), i.e., to become born-again. Therefore, a miracle has the potential to become a real hindrance if it becomes more than just an identifier, and becomes more important than being born-again. *And Jesus instructed them to tell no one.*

So then, it’s the Holy Spirit’s job to prepare our hearts to seek after God’s Deliverer by convicting us of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Our hearts (spirit) must first be brought to a place where we are seeking to be delivered, in other words, to a place of repentance. We need a repentant, contrite heart, which is not infatuated with the temporal (Satan’s) world, otherwise, our hearts will be found seeking miracles, instead of God’s Deliverer. The awesome miracle of being delivered within our hearts from the desires of our old nature, which is in love with Satan’s fallen world, to that of God’s, is truly a miracle that only God’s Holy Spirit can do. *Only*

the Holy Spirit can convince our hearts that what we once thought to be good is actually evil, and what we once thought to be evil is actually good. If you do not believe that, just try to get someone who is committing adultery to admit from their heart that adultery is a sin by means of a miracle, a persuasive argument, or an eloquent sermon—it cannot be done. At best, these earthly things can only produce a temporary sorrow or regret, which is not enough to cause someone to seek a Deliverer. There is no power on earth, except for the Holy Spirit, that can turn our hearts around so completely as to cause us to desire and value God’s Deliverer much more than the miracles, which at best, are only temporal.

Now we are beginning to understand why Jesus said in Mark 3:28–30, “Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin, because they were saying, ‘He has an unclean (evil) spirit.’” It is *impossible* for you to begin seeking after God’s Deliverer if you are at the same time calling evil, good and good, evil. After all, if you believe this world (Egypt) and its ways to be good, why would you need a Deliverer? And why would you seek a Deliverer if you perceive Him as evil? To you, the statement, “He who wishes to be the greatest, should seek to be a servant to all,” is just moronic and absurd. After all, we know that in this world, the greatest is the one who dominates over all. Everything, and I mean everything, of value in God’s Kingdom is the antithesis of what this world considers of value. You may indeed seek miracles as they will appeal to your old worldly nature, inasmuch as the miracles will make you more comfortable in this world; but to crucify this world so that Christ may live in you, well, that’s just moronic to our old worldly nature or spirit. *Therefore, there is no other way (path) to Christ (the Deliverer), but by the Holy Spirit.* So if you close your ears (heart) to the Holy Spirit, who or what is left

to convince you that you need to seek out God's Deliverer? Why would you want to be delivered (saved) from a world that you love? Although, your worldly-minded sin nature would be more than willing to accept any miracles from God's Deliverer if the miracle would make this worldly life you love more comfortable and/or last longer.

This brings us to Matthew 8:19–20, “And a certain scribe came and said to Him, ‘Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go. And Jesus said to him, ‘The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.’” Over and over again Jesus made it crystal clear that this world of Satan's, with its ways, was *not* His home. So if we want to follow after and embrace Jesus, we must also acknowledge from our heart that this world of Satan's is not our home; only then can we embrace Jesus as God's Deliverer (Savior) from this world (Egypt). *On the other hand, if we still love and embrace this world, and its ways, Jesus can never become our Deliverer, because we would not be seeking one.* And if we do not embrace Jesus as the Deliverer, but we do embrace His miracles and favors, we are embracing another gospel, which is *no* gospel at all. We must be very careful not to accept signs, wonders, and miracles, or even creature comforts as the gospel (good news), since God's true gospel is salvation out of Satan's world—not salvation within Satan's world. *Hence, Jesus instructed them to tell no one.*

John 8:37–38: “I know that you are Abraham's offspring; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.” *There are only two Kingdoms, and it is absolutely impossible for anyone to embrace both.* The two Kingdoms are such an antithesis to one another, it is impossible for them to coexist. Therefore, we who are born into this

world of Satan's will naturally find the things that Jesus said as completely absurd and moronic, such as: "Salvation is found in the cross, and whoever wishes to follow Me must deny himself and take up his/her cross." What kind of foolish, moronic nonsense this must be to the natural man; no wonder so many rejected Jesus, and some even sought to kill Him. The only way Jesus' words (God's Word) can find a place within our hearts is by the power of the Holy Spirit. To embrace such words that Jesus spoke as wisdom is truly a miracle in itself. So I ask the question, "Can we build God's Church on a foundation built by appealing to our flesh through signs, wonders, and miracles, or must we rely totally on the power of the Holy Spirit to make a place within our hearts for God's Word?" John 6:43-44: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Do not grumble (over My words) among yourselves. No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.'"

You cannot read the four Gospels in the New Testament without coming away with the understanding that Jesus strongly disapproved of those who sought after signs, wonders, and miracles; yet He did not hesitate to identify Himself as the Deliverer (Savior) through miracles to those who were seeking a Deliverer—to those who reject this earthly Kingdom to seek after God's Kingdom where righteousness dwells. But once again, only the Holy Spirit can prepare a place within someone's heart for God's Kingdom. He, the Holy Spirit, must always be the forerunner to prepare a way, a path for the Deliverer. John 10:40-42: "And He (Jesus, the Deliverer) went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. And many came to Him and were saying, 'While John (the Baptist) performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.' And many believed in Him (Jesus) there." John, in the power of the Holy Spirit, preached a baptism of repentance—opening up hearts to acknowl-

edge a need to change Kingdoms, which paved the way for God's Deliverer, Jesus.

Trying to build God's Church on the gospel of creature comforts and miracles is simply a futile effort, because it's a false gospel. Why? Because one day everything we now embrace and seek after on this earth will be destroyed by fire. 2 Peter 3:10–13: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." That being the case, the only gospel which is good news indeed is the good news of God's Deliverer (Savior), since He (Jesus) is the *only* door available to us to enter into the new heavens and new earth. Everything else is temporal, and therefore, cannot be the good news. *Hence, Jesus instructed them to tell no one.*

Why am I saying all this? Luke 3:7–8: "He (John) therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? *Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance*, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.'" Calling yourself Abraham's child, a Christian, or even being baptized will not save you. The road to salvation *must* be paved by repentance. God's Holy Spirit must first convict you of sin, righteousness, and judgment, because before you can accept God's Deliverer, you *must* see a need for a Deliverer.

My heart breaks when I read about the church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14–22), which was filled with all the things this world of Satan’s values, yet they were actually poor, blind, and naked. Why? Because, it was not built on a foundation of repentance. God was still on the outside knocking to come in, but no one answered, because they rejected the Holy Spirit’s message of repentance so they were not looking for a Deliverer (Savior) to show up at their door. Tragically, they were spiritually deaf to the sound of the knocking upon their hearts.

Before I end this commentary, I need to make sure I’m not misunderstood. I strongly believe that God still does miracles, and there is nothing wrong with modest creature comforts; but they must not become the focus of our desires. About a year before I came to Jesus, the Holy Spirit had already prepared my heart by convicting me of sin, righteousness, and judgment, so I was already desperately looking for a Deliverer (Savior). I never even heard about signs, wonders, or miracles; I just needed a Deliverer. I was not worried about creature comforts, because I did not care if I lived or died; I just needed a Deliverer. *Miracles and creature comforts meant absolutely nothing to me, so how could they be good news (gospel) to me?* The only good news I was looking for was the good news about God’s Savior. Nevertheless, once saved, I’ll now pray for finances for this ministry, and when I’m sick, I’ll pray for healing. I’ll even pray the same for others. And I’ve seen God do awesome miracles. But because I came to Jesus through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, my desire—my passion—my focus remains on God’s holiness and righteousness, which was, and still is, my greatest need.

There is no greater gift God can give me than His Holy Spirit so I can reflect His holiness, righteousness, and love to this world. *There is no miracle I desire more than for people to see more and more*

of God's nature reflected in my everyday life. If God never used me to perform another temporal miracle, I would be more than satisfied with being filled with the Holy Spirit like John the Baptist, preaching nothing but repentance, even if it meant I would be scorned and hated by this world. Why? Because the convicting power of God's Holy Spirit is the *only* road to God's Deliverer (Savior), i.e., salvation. If I was on my deathbed, and my Lord withheld His healing from me, I would be more than satisfied if with my last breath I could show the awesome miracle of God's nature within me, just as Stephen did when he was being stoned to death. Stephen did not use his last breath to pray for temporal deliverance from his death, but he used his last breath to glorify and reflect God's nature to those who were stoning him: Acts 7:60, "And falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them!' And having said this, he fell asleep."

The gospel (good news) was never about making Satan's world a better place for us to live in through signs, wonders, and miracles, because it's going to be destroyed by fire and made completely new; therefore, *Jesus instructed them to tell no one.* However, the gospel is all about God's Deliverer. And no one can comprehend this mystery without the Holy Spirit first preparing his/her heart. We must never try to build God's Church by using this world's techniques (tools), or any other kind of church programs, because such things cannot save anyone, and would only end up profaning God's work. Exodus 20:25: "And if you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, *for if you wield your tool (techniques) on it, you will profane it.*"