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Dear brothers in the Lord,

This letter I have mailed to **over 700 Anabaptist churches across the USA**. The timing is urgent, so please read quickly—and read to the end without pause. **There is a (rapidly approaching) date attached to my request in this letter.** Please share this with your entire body of leadership, and then prayerfully ask the Lord whether He requires you to share it with your congregation. *(This letter is also posted online at brethrenlove.com, for purpose of swift distribution.)*

My heart is heavy, and I have wondered why the Lord would ask me to write and send this to you. I am not a wealthy man, or a man of great influence. But God has clearly instructed me, through multiple visions and dreams throughout this year, that I must send this to you, because you are His Chosen. No matter what the cost is to me—I must share these things, or else be in disobedience.

There is no “flesh” in me, that would inspire me to write these words. Otherwise I would have written this letter a very long, long time ago. The man I am today is not much changed (in perspective) from the man I was twelve years ago. My situation is similar. My beliefs are similar. My burdens are the same. But I write this now, because the Lord requires it.

What God has revealed to me this past year, has been a burden also for me to bear. Within a very short time our Anabaptist churches will be completely altered—maybe even within a matter of months, or days. A huge testing is coming to the Church—a great “sifting.” I have been challenged to give up my own aspirations for the future, because of what has been revealed to me. I have been challenged to surrender to an Almighty God who WILL accomplish His own purposes in the earth, regardless of the desires and pursuits of men. The “earthly empire” which I imagined to build for myself, long term—cannot be. But I will explain further, in the following pages.

This is serious. God would not have given me visions and dreams on your behalf otherwise. It is His desire to spare you. You are a precious people to Him, and much beloved of the Lord. It is His desire to spare you, to grant you His mercy and His grace. It is through your own turning to Him, that many others in this world will also be saved—not only spiritually, but physically.

You will understand all these things very soon. This is a very serious matter. It will be a heavy responsibility for Anabaptists to bear, for the sake of all the nations.

You may wonder why I tell you that we must again turn to Him. Aren't the Anabaptist churches without blame? Aren't we the remnant of God, the most obedient of His people, casting off the things of this world and lifting holy hands unto heaven?

I did not realize the magnitude of God's great anger toward our people until God gave me a series of visions and dreams to indicate that He views our Anabaptist churches as shameful and naked before Him. We are truly **stripped bare**. As I was recently sitting in my prayer time with the Lord, He brought a supernatural vision before my eyes. I saw a large, black book come down swiftly from Above, like a gavel on a table in a courtroom. The book had large, gold uppercase letters on the front. The letters spelled the word, “JUDE.” As the Lord slammed down this book in front of me, I could feel His anger. It felt palpable, and I realized the serious nature of His perspective. He was not to be trifled with, nor to be questioned by our Anabaptist leaders. His word was final. His judgment was settled. The Lord also revealed to me (in a dream following this supernatural vision,) that my letter to you is to contain the following reference: Revelation 3:14-18.

I looked up the reference, because I was unaware of the words of this text. The Lord's word to our churches is as follows: "Rev 3:14-18 "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. **Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.**"

As I read these words, I found that it made my heart tremble. Are our churches filled with such pride and un-righteousness, because of the diligence of our own hands and our financial prosperity? I think that perhaps we do not recognize these sinful things in ourselves. A couple of scriptures come to my mind, which may shed light on our situation.

James 2:1-10 "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man...in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: **Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor.** Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: **But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.**

Matt 23:23-26 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! **for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.** Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! **for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.** Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."

When we read the book of Jude, it is a fearsome thing to realize that the Lord views us in the category of people addressed here. We may think ourselves kindhearted—choosing to help some people while rejecting others (on account of their personal status). Or perhaps we help in some ways (such as with medical bills) but not in other ways, on account of cherishing our own pocketbooks. But God views this hypocrisy as great as any other sin.

In some cases, we may actually lend physical aid to others, even to our own brethren in Christ (to protect the reputation of the church)—and while we help them, we despise them by thinking of ourselves more highly. In fact, this "hidden sin of respecting persons" is great enough for God to strike our names out of His Book of Life (as we may discern from God's wrath in Jude.)

Also consider the story of the good Samaritan. Who IS our neighbor? Who is our "brother?" (Luke 10:25-37)

Here are some excerpts from the book of Jude: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and **exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.** I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye

once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not... Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. **Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots...** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murderers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, **having men's persons in admiration because of advantage...** There should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts... But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life..."

First, what is the "gainsaying of Core?" If we research the Strong's concordance, we will find that this name "Core" leads us, in reference, to the person of "Korah"—who was a Levite leader in Israel. Korah rallied many other influential men to his side for the purpose of challenging Moses and Aaron. (The story can be read in Numbers 16.) This is a story of division within leadership. The "gainsaying of Core" is referring to a man's tendency, even as a leader in his own church, to exalt himself against other leaders—to cause splits and divisions within the Body of Christ.

When an individual leader rallies a group of men to his side, in an effort to divide the Body of Christ, against other leaders—he tempts individual members to choose sides and say, "I am of Paul." Or "I am of Apollos." These actions are forbidden in scripture. 1 Cor 3:3-7 "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

What happened to Korah and the men who joined him, in opposition to Moses? **The Lord caused an earthquake to open the ground where they stood, and they were buried alive.** Fourteen thousand and seven-hundred people also died of a plague in the camp, because of this sin.

What is the "way of Cain?" The way of Cain is despising or "cutting down" the brethren (which is murder in the heart). It's breaking the sixth commandment of God: THOU SHALT NOT KILL. As Anabaptists, we pride ourselves on upholding a doctrine of non-resistance. But God sees deep into our hearts. There is nothing that we can hide from Him.

The "way of Cain" also speaks of our offerings of unacceptable sacrifice. If we exalt ourselves against God, and choose to make our own offerings to Him, without offering Him true obedience and charity toward the brethren—then we make ourselves to be hypocrites before Him.

What is the "error of Balaam?" Balaam was a man who was primarily concerned with his pocketbook. It was his uppermost focus in life—even while he was engaged in the work of the Lord. He was willing to curse Israel for profit. (These earthly rewards were received from Midian.) But God forbade Balaam to physically utter a curse, and forced him to utter a blessing instead. So Balaam taught Midian how to place stumbling-blocks before Israel, so that they would sin, and bring God's curse upon themselves. Numbers 31:6-16 "And Moses sent them to the

war.... **Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword....**Behold, these (Midianites) caused the children of Israel, **through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord** in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord.”

The sin of Balaam was the love of money, more than love for God. He was willing to withhold a loving heart attitude toward others, in order to obtain wealth. **Outwardly, Balaam obeyed the clear command of God**, but he found ways to “get around” God’s true heart of love—because he treasured earthly reward. It is easy to “cover up” the sins of our hearts and feel pleased with ourselves because we keep an “oral law” of interpretations (regarding scripture), and because ***we exercise charity towards those who we admire (as a “respector of persons.”)*** On the outside we appear to be holy and righteous, even though our hearts are more concerned with obtaining wealth than we are with blessing those whom we despise. Romans 12:14-16 “Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the **same mind one toward another**. Mind not high things, **but condescend to men of low estate**. Be not wise in your own conceits.”

Here is a *true story*: There was once a young brother who worked for an (elder) Anabaptist brother, while lodging with him, and eating meals at his table. This younger brother had a conscience issue which disturbed his elder brother greatly (because it prevented him from gaining as much benefit from the younger brother’s labor *as he would have liked*.) When their job arrangement finally came to an end, the elder brother estimated the amount that it had cost him to feed the younger brother at his table. Because the younger brother was poor, he could not pay for the food he had eaten—and the elder, Anabaptist brother asked for (some of) the tools of his livelihood in exchange for these meals.

The younger brother then went to work for another Christian brother who was not of the Anabaptist persuasion. This Christian brother was not even making a profit from the project he was funding. **Rather, he put up cash (to fund this project) for the sole purpose of providing other Christian brothers with a job.** This benevolent man paid his young brother very well, and bought back many of the tools which had been stripped away from him, by his Anabaptist brother.

If we were to sit under the teaching of Jesus (and He were in disguise)—and Jesus would tell us to “sell everything we have and give it to the poor,” many of us would fail the test. We would utterly reject Jesus. For example, a “wise objection” was recently put forth to me by another Anabaptist brother. He chided me for my desire to prosper, so that I could then turn around and pay off the debts of other brethren in the Body of Christ. His position was that we should all work hard to pay off our own debts—not that wealthy men should hold their own money in common with the less fortunate brethren.

But how can we reject God’s Holy Spirit and put it into a box? **The greatest of the fruits of the Spirit is love. In the Spirit, we should desire to see ALL of our brethren free! So this is a heart issue.** The Spirit of God destroys the wisdom of the wise, and it overrules the letter of the law. 1 Cor 1:19-20 “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the **understanding of the prudent**. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

The Gospel preached seems as foolishness to many people. So also do the words of Jesus Himself seem to be foolishness to many Christians.

The early church took the words of Jesus seriously, and they chose to live by them. They embraced the true heart of God. They realized that only those who are willing to hold their physical possessions loosely for the sake of Jesus’ Kingdom and for the brethren are doing the will of the Lord. Acts 4:32-35 “**And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.** And with great power gave the apostles witness of the

resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. **Neither was there any among them THAT LACKED: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses SOLD THEM, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.**"

Are there Christian brethren among us who suffer lack (and who are stressed to make ends meet), while there are others who possess large houses and much property—more than they need for their own, basic sustenance? Do many of us seek to grow our own earthly empires, *before* freeing our brethren from the slavery of debt? Are there those among us who have plenty to spare, while others are struggling? Who are the most honored and respected brethren in our midst? The rich and successful—or the poorest of our brethren? Why is this so? What is the (anti-scriptural) theology behind such attitudes and perspectives?

Furthermore, why do we lean so heavily upon Old Testament scriptures (such as the wisdom of Proverbs) when it comes to applying principles on how to obtain wealth and property—while we simultaneously reject the New Testament example of the early church, who sold their own properties so that no brother would suffer lack, or live in bondage of debt? Why do we “pick and choose” as our fleshly hearts desire, pitting scripture against scripture and exalting our own knowledge against God—instead of searching God’s heart for the truth?

An Anabaptist brother recently told me that he had a question about the truth of scripture. He prayed and asked God for the answer, but in the end, he still was not certain of the truth. His conclusion was that some things we cannot know and understand.

But what does scripture say about this perspective? Jesus Himself explains **the reason why** so many people blindly grope for answers, but knowledge escapes them. Jesus told the Pharisees in John 3:19-21: “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, **because their deeds were evil**. For every one that **doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved**. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that **his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.**”

A man who seeks to know the truth, without being willing to obtain that truth regardless of what it costs him—even if it costs his family, his life, his wealth, health and reputation—cannot be certain that he has embraced the truth. It is the truth **which sets our minds free**—and before our minds can be freed, **we must first be obedient to truth. We must be willing to pay the necessary price.** Matt 13:44-46 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

Knowledge is the *fruit of obedience*. And obedience is the fruit of a purified heart that is fully surrendered to Christ, even when facing the loss of EVERYTHING we hold dear. If we are not truly surrendered in this way, then we have no right to believe that we possess the truth. And we also cannot begin to find this truth. It will elude us, no matter how much we pray in vain repetitions and “study to show ourselves approved.”

What is one of the marks of a man who is surrendered to God? One mark is that his faith will not waver. He will believe that God DOES give wisdom and understanding to the person who asks. But the criteria is that this man “has nothing to lose.” He is willing to give up everything. He is willing to embrace an unpopular opinion, even if it costs him reputation and physical wealth. James 1:4-12 says: “But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. **If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.** For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. **Let the brother of low degree**

rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

Humility and compassion are essential to the exercise of true spiritual power—which often results in healing of both the body and soul. James 5:16-20 “**Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.** Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

James is saying that even in Old Testament times, Elias (or Elijah) who was a common man like we are—was able to perform great signs and wonders because his prayers were effectual. But why were his prayers so effectual? The answer is right there in the text. Elijah was a man who received answers from God **BECAUSE he was righteous**. His priorities were in order. Elijah possessed a true heart of love for God’s people. His life was wrapped up in serving the nation of Israel. He didn’t have “one foot in the Word of God, and another foot in the world, or mammon.” Wealth was not his focus. God’s people were his focus.

Brethren, the reason why we do not possess the power of God in our midst is NOT because God has ceased to love and bless His Church (with physical deliverance) like he did during the times of the Apostles. **It is because we are a dead church.** We are the church of Laodicea, who is neither hot nor cold for Christ.

There are Christians in many other parts of the world, even today, who are dying for Christ. They are His beloved martyrs. God is still moving in many of His Eastern churches, multiplying “bread” miraculously and healing the sick. But these people have sacrificed **everything** for Him. They have dedicated everything to Him—mind, body and soul. In Mark 16:15-18, Jesus said to His disciples: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. **And these signs shall follow them that believe;** In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.”

However, Jesus also said in Matt 12:39 that “An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and **there shall no sign be given to it**, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.” As Christians, we are not supposed to **seek after signs**. Rather, we are to believe the Word of God without question, and we are to pursue obedience like our souls depend upon it. The more we are “sold out” to Christ, the more likely we are to see those signs “following us.” We will automatically give God the glory for these things, and take none of the credit.

A false move of signs and wonders (which we often witness in disobedient, self-serving churches of the West,) are **also the result of deadness**. When we are spiritually dead, Satan is able to “move into our midst and deceive.” If the theology of a dead church readily **embraces signs and wonders**, then Satan will readily give these “miracles” to that **dead church**.

But if we are a dead church which (theologically) **rejects signs and wonders**, then Satan will simply uproot our churches with bitterness, false judgment, hatred and division **instead**. We won’t experience false signs and wonders, *but we won’t experience the power of God either*. Regardless, Satan is victorious—both among many modern-day churches, but also among the plain churches of America. We are all “ripe for judgment”—together.

If we do not see and understand the truth, **it is because we do not want to see, because this knowledge would be a reproof to us**. It would show up our deeds—namely, that we have neglected to live out the heart of Christ in a non-hypocritical fashion. For example, many Anabaptists love to “glorify” physical martyrdom (looking with

pride upon our slain ancestors), but we refuse to sacrifice ourselves for the Body of Christ. We will sometimes give to others **if it doesn't hurt us to give**—but we have little comprehension of what it means to give like the poor widow did, in Mark 12:41-44, who literally gave all that she possessed—simply because the Spirit of God prompted her to do so.

Again, consider this gravely. We claim that we are ready die for Christ—**but we refuse to make GENUINE sacrifice for His children—which is His Body.** Unfortunately, it is *all the same to God*. God sees through this hypocrisy, and He will not regard our works as an acceptable sacrifice on the Judgment Day. Our sacrifice is the sacrifice of Cain—not the sacrifice of Able. We neglect to give the gifts of love, charity and obedience which God truly asks for. We often only give according to our own inclinations and desires—and then we pride ourselves blindly for **having made a sacrifice, like Cain did.** We cannot handle the truth about ourselves. We struggle to accept it, and would rather point the finger everywhere else—even accusing our brethren who have been excommunicated from the church—not for genuine sin, but because they have humbly sought to live their lives in accordance with God's Word.

Many brethren in leadership have accused other brethren (who have humbly submitted themselves to Christ's Word)—and have then rejected them. They have slaughtered their brethren, like Cain slew his brother, Able. They have turned righteousness “upside down.” This angers the Lord greatly. Isa 5:20-24 “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!... **Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!** Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: **because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.**”

God's heart and his true commandments are not difficult to discover. They are not hard to understand. If we do not understand, **it is not God's fault. It is ours:** Deut 30:10-20 “For this commandment which I command thee this day, **it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.**”

Rom 10:6-11 “But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? **The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach.**”

When we act like the divisive Korah, or follow the hateful and hypocritical way of Cain, or embrace the error of greedy Balaam—then we automatically reject the “weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy and faith.”

And if we keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, we are guilty of breaking them all! How much more serious it is, then, if we offend not ONLY in one small point—but are guilty of neglecting the “weightier matters” of God's law altogether! My dear brethren, I fear that our Anabaptist churches are ripe for God's judgment. We lift ourselves in pride, comparing ourselves against churches which we have judged as being “worldly,”—and yet we do not realize that our own sin may be even GREATER. We bear the sins of the Pharisees and hypocrites who nailed Jesus Himself to the cross.

The reason why it is such a sin to be a “respector of persons” is because we are not privy to the mind of God. When we make unwarranted judgments against others, we exalt ourselves and often judge contrary what God Himself has decreed. For example, what would my Anabaptist brethren say today, if God sent a naked prophet

to us—a prophet like Isaiah, to show us how utterly disgraceful our sin was to Him? (Isa 20:2-4) (Note that nakedness still means the exact same shameful thing today, that it did then.) Or what if God sent a prophet Jeremiah into our midst, who was forbidden to marry or to attend funerals and social church and family celebrations? How would we treat the prophet who refused to come to these important family events, even during that time period? This was the requirement of God upon Jeremiah, [Jer. 16] and it was a heavy thing for the prophet to bear. There were also restrictions upon the Apostle Paul, when he voluntarily shaved his head for a Nazarite vow. (Acts 18:18 / Num. 16) Here was how God’s people treated Jeremiah for the judgments which he uttered against them. Read in the 38th chapter: “Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchiah.... And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.”)

How would Anabaptists treat a prophet like Jesus, if he came into our “most holy, righteous congregation” swinging a whip, and contending that we had made His church into a place of unrighteousness?

And would we, like Joseph’s brothers, throw a Bible teacher into a pit and turn him over to the curse of excommunication (“sell him into slavery” by denying him the church’s support)—because he tells us that the Spirit of the Lord has revealed to him a harmonization of scripture? And would we falsely accuse him of great pride and arrogance (just as Joseph’s brothers did to him), because we cannot bear the thought that such a brother might have more understanding than we do? Would we fail to exercise a Berean spirit, and humbly test every word in our midst, with open hearts, to see whether or not these teachings line up with God’s Word? (Acts 17:11-12)

As Anabaptists, we often take pride in our prosperity, and look down in judgment upon those who are suffering. However, the Apostles themselves never possessed the luxury of good reputation or prosperity. Instead, they suffered for the sake of truth: 1 Cor 4:8-13 “Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. **We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day.**”

The Pharisees (of Jesus’ day) lifted themselves in pride against their ancestors who killed the prophets of old. They were certain that they were more righteous than the wicked Hebrews who slaughtered their own prophets. But Jesus corrected them for their false presumption. Matt 23:29-37 “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, **If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.** Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, **that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets....** Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and **some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city...** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

Not only do divisions reign heavily among us. But many of us have made the Word of the Lord to be of no effect, for the sake of honoring traditions. Many of these traditions can be supported by scriptural principles, but if our hearts are not in the right place, we will find it impossible to “rightly divide the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15)

Many of our traditions are good, and ought to be kept. 2 Thess 2:15 “Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

But many times our Anabaptist leaders have also used scripture to slaughter scripture, in an effort to continue traditions which were not passed down by the Apostles themselves. We have allowed ungodly men to “creep in unawares” in the past, and these ungodly men have denied the Lord Jesus through their teachings and actions. We have then continued in these errors ourselves, many times innocently unaware of what took place. Jude 22-25 “And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

Mark 7:5-13 “Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. **And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.** For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: **But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.**”

When we pride ourselves on giving physical aid and funding to many good causes (through tithing and “working bees”)—and yet in our personal lives we neglect many good causes that don’t “suit us,” or we despise people who we consider to be “beneath us,” then we make the word of God of none effect, through our traditions. 2 Tim 3:1-7 “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be **lovers of their own selves**, covetous, boasters, proud....false accusers.... heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; **Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:** from such turn away. **For of this sort are they....Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**”

Note that the passage above is talking about people who **have a form of godliness, but who are not living in the power of the Holy Spirit.** There are many people like this in worldly, Western churches who are living sensually, devilishly—but this also includes us, my dear brothers, **because we also have a form of godliness, but many of us are living without His Power.**

Don’t misunderstand when I speak of our tendency to unwisely cling to traditions. There are some who have left our churches because they despise the traditions altogether. They have been hurt—wounded by the hypocrisy in our midst, so they have chosen to **reject all**. But I do believe in cherishing the Biblical traditions of our ancestors. I have not rejected Anabaptist traditions which are clearly supported in the Word of God. My wife dresses modestly and wears a covering, and there are other unpopular scriptures which we hold fast to. In past years I did begin to compromise in the area of worldly media and entertainment. But the Lord has prompted me to again “get my house in order,” to “clean house” of all the things that do not fully bring honor and glory to His name—to lay aside even the weights which may easily beset us. (Hebrews 12:1) **We must all now “clean our houses”—the Anabaptist churches as a whole.** Instead of entertaining ourselves, we must seek the Lord with prayers of repentance, and fasting.

The Lord has revealed many things to me during this summer. I am currently engaged in a fast of denial for a total of 53 days. This fasting is for you, my Anabaptist brethren—and here is why I tell you this, so that you will know just how much I care for you. You will know that I am burdened, and do not speak lightly. I pray that the Lord will honor these things. I pray that He will mercifully forgive us all, and spare us from His wrath.

Throughout this summer, I began to do research. My research was astonishing. I am not the only one experiencing the dreams and visions which the Lord promised to give to His people in the latter days before His return. Acts 2:17-18 “And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”

The first time I heard the Lord speak to me, it was early this year, In January of 2017. His voice brought me to tears in the early morning. I heard God speak these astonishing and revelatory words to me, “I will heal you.”

Then, a few months later, God spoke to me again--this time also through a vision. Within a few minutes, the Lord took me on a spiritual journey, down through an examination of every person who had “hurt” me in the past. I was not in control of this process. The Lord guided the experience, telling me very clearly, “I’m going to take care of this now.”

One by one, many old friends and acquaintances flashed into my memory, and I became aware of the pain of the past hurts that had been inflicted upon me. Instantly, God erased the pain of each hurt from my heart, one after another. **He healed me.** I found myself miraculously freed from the “chains” which had bound me—chains of pain which were buried so deep that I forgot they existed (even though they affected me subconsciously and shaped how I perceived myself). Then God gave me a supernatural vision. I saw people standing up out of wheelchairs. I saw my Anabaptist brethren being healed physically of many chronic conditions—even genetic maladies!

I then came out of this vision, sobbing so hard that I could barely tell my wife what I had seen and experienced. I realized then just how much my heart is for you, my own people—for your peace and comfort, for your healing, and for your joy.

I also realize just how important it is to forgive all those who have hurt us, and despitefully used us. If we do not forgive others, then Christ cannot forgive us. (Mt. 6:14,15)

Since then, I have received more visions of repentance and healing for my Anabaptist brethren and their families. Other Christians across the world have also been receiving words from the Lord. Many people have experienced supernatural dreams and visions regarding a great and awful judgment upon the United States. They have also received dreams and visions of a Great spiritual awakening within the Body of Christ—a revival accompanied by signs and wonders, resembling what the church experienced in Acts. This is not only my own revelation, but it has been confirmed by other sincere Christians who have repented of their fleshly ways.

The Lord is trying to shake His church awake. We only have a short time left, and then many terrible things will befall our nation. It has been revealed to some Christians, through dreams and visions, that we are worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, because our nation first embraced the light—but then rejected it. We are not merely “heathen.” We are now the **apostate of the earth**. Our great nation rose to power after its leaders first submitted themselves to many of God’s Laws. But now our nation has been sold to Satan, through the bloody slaughter of over **50 million innocent, unborn children**. **We have had access to much truth, but have now rejected it.** Our leaders became like Ahab and Jezebel, who have shed the blood of the innocent.

God may mercifully withhold His judgment from our nation for a time, due to the prayers and true repentance of His saints—but ultimately, He **must** exact vengeance, lest the glory of His justice and His righteous name become desecrated in the earth. If God permits sin to reign unchecked forever, then He becomes our “partner in wickedness”—much as a parent who permits his child to sin and hurt others, while perpetually looking the other way. ***The longer the Lord withholds His judgment, the more innocent lives are lost.***

When God finally brings judgment to our nation, He will only spare those who are truly on fire for Him. The rest will be “spewed out of His mouth.” Only those who are “willing to lose their lives for His sake,” will find their lives spared from His wrath in the evil day. Rev 3:10-11 “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

Those who plant one foot firmly in the church, but who plant their other foot in the world, for the sake of their own financial gain, will be destroyed. They will lose everything, even in these last days. Matt 6:24-26 **“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.** Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. **Are ye not much better than they?”**

Remember Lot. Lot’s wife turned into a pillar of salt because of her “divided allegiance.” She looked back at the city she was forced to leave behind, and she coveted her life and her possessions there. There were also those in Lot’s family who were left behind to perish in the fire and brimstone of God’s great wrath. (Genesis 19:14-26) These were not willing to “lose their lives” in order to be saved. (They were mockers of the messengers of the Lord, saying in their hearts, “evil will not befall us. We will not soon come under judgment!”) **Our hearts must not be wedded to our wealth and our designs for the future, so that we become blind to the truth. We must not become mockers of the “signs” of the Lord’s return.** We must not be wedded to our possessions. This is idolatry.

This year Trump was raised to power in the USA for the sake of God’s believers. Our reprieve will only last for a short time. It will be long enough to “set our houses in order,” and to throw aside the weights which beset us. 1 Thess 5:2-6 “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For **when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them,** as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, **are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.** Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”

This brief reprieve is the “calm before the storm.” Even now Satan is gathering his forces strong against the Church. They have never been so strong and so dedicated before, here in America, as they are now. We must rally together with our prayers, even as the church did in Acts. We must prayerfully engage in spiritual warfare against principalities and the powers of darkness which surround our nation. We must engage in fasts of denial, to declare our earnestness before the Lord. We must plead with Him for more time, that He will withhold His greatest judgments yet a little longer, by bringing more “salt” and “light” to our nation in the form of dedicated, repentant believers. **If we let our light shine before men, that they might see our good works, and glorify our father in Heaven (Mt.5:14-16)—then our dead churches will become alive with the power and testimony of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit of God will put a dent in this evil which has befallen our great nation.** Eph 6:12-13 “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

We are now ripe for judgment, my brethren. Very, very ripe. We find ourselves in a very serious state, and many of us are still unaware. Right now God intends to hammer and shake America with a series of minor disasters, in an effort to awaken His sleeping church—the true body of Christ. But these natural disasters are nothing compared to the judgment that He has reserved for those in America who refuse to heed his warning, repent, and make the necessary changes in time.

Four days after the solar eclipse on August 21, 2017, hurricane Harvey made USA landfall as a category 4 storm at Rockport and Corpus Christi. "Corpus Christi" is Latin for "the Body of Christ." The name "Rockport" is also significant. In the week or two before the storm, my 9 year old son memorized the following Bible passage, **without prompting from anyone. This is the first time he has ever done this.** The passage that he memorized was of God's spiritual prompting, not mine: Matt 7:24-27 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which **built his house upon a rock**: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: **for it was founded upon a rock**. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it."

In the wake of the hurricane, Houston experienced a major flood of waters. The name "Houston" means "from Hugh's town," and the name "Hugh" means "hug (closeness?), mind, spirit." The name Harvey means "battle-worthy" or "blazing iron." This disastrous hurricane reflects God washing the Body of Christ with His Word, so that she will become pure and spotless before the time of His return. He wants to come back for a glorious bride, who is pure in mind and spirit—not dirty and spotted. He wants His church to be properly "armored" and battle-worthy before His return. Thus, He will wash His Bride, and He will also "sharpen" her—as iron in the fires of refining.

Hurricane Irma also made landfall in the US as a category 4 hurricane. The word "Irma" means "worldwide or universal." This "worldwide factor" is also true of the Church, or the Body of Christ. Another meaning for the name "Irma" is "God of war." Interestingly, hurricane Irma's first landfall was in the Florida Keys—a group of Islands which was discovered by Ponce' de Leon. These islands were initially called "Los Martires," which in English means—"The Martyrs."

Never before have 2 hurricanes of this magnitude ever hit the USA coastlines in one season, during recorded history. This is record-breaking. God is in control of these things, and He is sending His Church a message. God wishes us **to be willing to lay down our lives** for Him, even unto the death, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who said in Daniel 3, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

God is preparing His Bride, the Church, to attain the level of purity and devotion found in the Church in Acts, once again. He will not settle for a "dirty, lukewarm Bride." Those who call themselves Believers will eventually be separated into two different categories: those who are "on fire for God" because they have been "sharpened and purified" by His refining fires—or those who will be burned by His consuming fire forever. We must choose this day whom we will serve—God or Satan. Which "fire" will we choose?

These small, natural disasters are the work of Satan, who is the "accuser of the brethren." (Rev. 12:10) Sometimes God "turns us over" in warning, and allows Satan to (momentarily) afflict His unruly, disobedient children--to bring them back to Him. (1 Cor. 5:5) What Satan means for evil, God means for good instead—to those who love Him. (Romans 8:28)

Although I have not personally experienced dreams and visions of God's judgments, there are many others who say that God will continue to bring these small disasters to pass, one after the other, until God's true church has been fully shaken awake. Finally, the true believers of the Lord (both inside and outside of the Anabaptist churches) will cry out to Him and repent.

Heb 12:6-11 "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if

ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? **For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.** Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: **nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.**

Also consider 1 Peter 4:7-17 **“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.** Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.... **Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:** But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.... **For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?”**

What America is experiencing right now is the “pre-wrath” of God. It is the “shaking of His church.” It is the sifting of the wheat from the chaff in the latter days, before the time of Jesus’ return. But if we do not heed the Lord’s warning to us, we will ultimately be sifted out as “tares,” and will burn in the fiery judgment of the Lord for eternity. (Matt. 13:30) (Luke 3:17)

This is a serious matter, my brethren. Church leaders—Bishops and Deacons—He will hold you accountable for your congregations, for the many people under your watchful guidance. Do not fail your sheep before the great and awful day of God’s wrath! Do not cause them to miss the day of repentance which the Lord is holding forth for all to receive and take hold of. Watch out for their souls. Sound the trumpet! Declare this warning, lest the blood of God’s people be upon your shepherding hands!

I have brought this warning to you from the Lord, confirmed through multiple dreams and visions, and confirmed again through actual signs which were given to me. In one of my visions, the Holy Spirit showed me a small, country church, similar to many of our own church buildings. It was grey and dirty. Although there were many windows, they remained dark and unlit. This church appeared to be in a sad state of disgrace, even though the structure was well built. My dear brothers, this is how the Lord currently sees us. We are in an utter state of shame before him!

If my words line up with the Word of God, then they are confirmed by scripture, and you have nothing to fear, and nothing to reject. However, if you reject the clear warnings of the Lord, my brothers, then it will be worse for you than in the day of Sodom. Please heed this warning, dear brethren. Please heed it. This is very serious, and my heart is heavy for your sake.

The Lord has a test for you. Many of you may initially doubt my words. But some of you will believe, because God will confirm these things to your heart. I was also given a vision and dreams of this confirmation to some of your hearts. (This is what gives my heart strength and motivation to continue writing.)

God has given me confirmation that He wants me to set a difficult test before you. It will be a challenge to you, to uproot a certain tradition in your midst—a tradition that God never did sanction. He never gave you clear instruction, through the Apostles of Jesus, to keep this tradition—and yet, you have used this tradition **to subvert the very clear command of God.** It grieves Him. It has grieved him for a long time. Many of you have done this ignorantly, and in this, our ancestors have erred greatly.

God will forgive us and will permit us to start afresh. Trust God for this forgiveness. Embrace all that He has for you. Obey His commands, and allow Jesus to wipe your slate clean. He will not hold these past transgressions against us, nor against our ancestors whose hearts were truly sincere—even though they may have erred in ignorance! King David, who was a man after God’s own heart, wrote these words: Psalm 19:112-14 **“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”**

So do not fear, dear church leaders (and church bodies,) to test and question yourselves. Even David, who was a man after God’s own heart, realized that it was possible for him to err in understanding, and that God would forgive him of secret faults, if he ultimately bowed in surrender to God and repented of his presumptuous sins.

Our forefathers were also capable of error and mis-judgment. If David humbly recognized this potential in himself, then who are we, as an Anabaptist people, to lift ourselves in pride above King David? Were our forefathers like God, omniscient and omnipresent, so that they could know and understand all things? If we believe so, then we have made these men our idols, and have become law-breaking idolators before God. We have become like the Catholics who slaughtered our ancestors, while worshipping the Pope. We have become like Saul (before his conversion,) who slaughtered innocent Christians, due to his idolatry of the Jewish sages. Heaven forbid that we would also commit this great sin of idolatry! We are not “of Menno Simons.” Nor are we “of Jacob Amman.” Rather, we are ***of our Lord Jesus Christ.***

All true believers should be in a continual process of surrender to God, and also in a continual process of “studying to show ourselves approved.” This is not a one-time study of the “Anabaptist faith.” Rather, as we are faithful in the little things—as we are **obedient** in the little things, He will then begin to reveal more and more truth to us. It is a continual process—not an “instant download” of ***all truth***. As we are faithful in the little things, then He will ***give us more***. Many of you who read these words, and believe them, and initially heed them—it will be the result of your heart’s earnest desire to please God, and to walk in truth. This is why you will see and believe—because you have already “seen and believed,” and have been faithful to what you know to be true.

Then, as you exercise obedience in regard to what you have read and seen, God will reward you by opening the hearts of many others. But you must take that first step of faith. You must exercise obedience first, if you wish to see the Spirit of God move fully and mightily again, **among our entire people—with great POWER.**

What is this command that our forefathers have altered through the traditions of men? First, this is not something which I have previously felt led to challenge my Anabaptist brethren on. I have kept quietly to my understanding in this area now, for 12 long years—and in spite of my overall silence, I have suffered for it more than I wish to say. My obedience has cost me, in almost every area of my life. But I could not overlook what the Lord revealed to me, without being disobedient to Him. The Holy Spirit hasn’t given me a choice. However, I have not felt led to share this truth with many others, in detail, knowing that once these things have been fully explained, from beginning to end, and then **if it is rejected by the hearers for selfish reasons**—then those people will be condemned. Satan will accuse them before the Lord, and they will be found guilty of a presumptuous sin. James 4:17 “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

For this reason, I have withheld from sharing the following things with many people. Only if I perceived that I was speaking to someone who was ready and willing to give up **everything in his life** for the sake of truth, did I fully lay these things out in detail. Otherwise, I held my peace, unless directly challenged by a friend or family member. So, when the Lord indicated to me, through a vision, that I am to share this truth now, with many Anabaptist church leaders—it was a shock, and something that I felt unprepared for. This is a very serious matter,

my dear brothers. Be sure that as I lay these things out before you, that you search your heart and the scriptures to see whether they be true—lest you find yourselves condemned before the Lord.

I have asked the Lord for His Wisdom, and trust that He will confirm these things to you, by the power of His Holy Spirit. Again, I have “held my peace” with the church on these matters for twelve years now. If there was some sinful inclination in me that loved to engage in public confrontation on these matters—then I would have done it long ago. I only do so now, because I feel directly compelled by the Lord to write these things, or else be in clear disobedience to Him, at this particular time in history.

Let us see if we can read the Bible with an open mind and a bowed heart before the Lord. Let us see if we can “rightly divide the word of truth.” I will take you first to 1 Cor 16:1-3. “Now concerning the collection **for the saints**, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. **Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.** And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to **bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.**

This was a collection, made for those in Jerusalem, by the Saints in Galatia. Let’s examine this “gathering process” (that was typical in early church times), but that Paul did not wish to have take place **when he came to visit**. Here is an example of the liberal collections which were made in those days, on behalf of the early believers *who had need*: Acts 4:32-35 “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.... Neither was there any among them that lacked: for **as many as were possessors of lands or houses SOLD THEM, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.**”

There is a **reason** why Paul did not want there to be a “gathering” when he came to Galatia—namely, because it was a process. It involved selling property (likely to wealthy neighbors who were eager to buy.) It involved the **conversion of assets into money**. It constituted work. To “lay by you in store” means that the money would **not have already been gathered, from the sale of properties**. (Otherwise, would it not already “be in store?”) Paul assumes that believers will perform this labor, or “gathering” on the **first day of the week** so they could “lay the money **by them, in store.**” Then there would be no laborious “gatherings” when he came. (After he came, all the saints would then be able to take their money “out of storage,” put it together, collectively—and send it to Jerusalem.)

This great gathering was to be performed on the first day of the week, because it was the first day of their weekly labors. It was the “first portion” or the “firstfruits” of their week. Believers in the church often broke bread **daily**, from house to house—**most likely in the evenings, after their labors had been performed.** (Acts 2:46,47)

Many early believers **did** regard Sunday as a very special day, because the first day of Creation represents light and a new beginning. It was on the first day of Creation that God brought forth physical light into our world. The first day of the week was also the first day of Jesus’ resurrection. He birthed forth that spiritual light into the world, which He purchased on the Cross, for believers. This spiritual light was “created” or “brought forth into the world” as it dawned toward the first day of the week—thus fulfilling a prophecy of Creation.

Likewise, the mighty move of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost also occurred on the first day of the week—which resulted in the equipping of the Saints for their spiritual labors in the earth. This is symbolic. Being born of the Holy Spirit is an act or “labor” of Creation. It starts with a “planting of spiritual seed” in our hearts—which results in spiritual conception, and that seed must then be “lit and watered” so that it will grow to produce the “fruits of

the Spirit.” (1 Jn.3:9-24 / Gal 6:8) Thus, it is significant that a mighty baptism of the Spirit would also occur on the first day of the week—a move to “equip the Saints for spiritual labors,” at Pentecost. (Acts 2)

We see this further demonstrated in John 20:19, immediately after Christ’s resurrection: “Then the same day at evening, **being the first day of the week**, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst.... And...he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. **Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:**”

It was on the first day of Jesus’ resurrection that He chose to impart the Holy Ghost to His disciples. Jesus said to them, “**As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.**” Jesus chose to equip them for their labors in His service—to **send them out to plant** spiritual seeds, which would then produce fruit for the Kingdom. This is an act of Creation—not a rest, or a “ceasing from works of Creation.” Light and Rest both come from God—and both are purchased for us, through the Cross of Christ. Nonetheless, these are separate concepts. Light and Rest are symbolized through different Creation days of the week. The Holy Spirit grants us spiritual light. This light produces growth, or “works,” called the “fruits of righteousness.” (2 Cor. 9:10 / Gal. 5:22,23)

But Rest symbolizes a “ceasing from work” in order to commemorate God’s labors in His Creation—or to commemorate “that which the Light has brought forth.”

All of the works of God’s Creation are “wrapped up” and commemorated in one day—the seventh day, or Sabbath Day. This is the day in which we cease from works in order to honor the Lord who made everything. It is the day in which we honor Christ as Lord, BECAUSE He is our Creator. (Jn.1) Here is why Jesus said that He is the “Lord of the Sabbath day”—because He created all things, even our rest.

Anabaptist tradition says that the Disciples of the Lord changed the seventh-day Sabbath to a first-day Sabbath, after the resurrection of Christ. However, Catholic tradition disagrees and chooses to take credit for this change. The reason why Catholics claim credit for “changing the Sabbath day” is because there is no scriptural proof that the Apostles purposefully taught such a change.

The Catholic catechism by Reverend Peter Giermann:

"Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Have you any other way of proving that the church has power to institute festivals?

A. Had she not such power...she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."

Reverend Peter Giermann is absolutely correct. When there was a change made regarding the ceremonial cleansing of the Gentiles, **God gave Peter an open vision to establish this “change.”** (Acts 10:25-28) But apart from a handful of “first day” meetings in the New Testament—and the fact that the risen Jesus appeared to his followers on the first day of the week—there is no evidence of a change to the actual Rest (or Sabbath) Commandment. So it must be asked: Why would God give obvious instruction to Peter about the ceremonial cleansing of the Gentiles—but not give clear instruction to alter the Fourth Commandment, which was engraved in stone by the Holy finger of God Himself? (Note: I will soon address the argument against the law, and also the argument for letting each man “choose his own Sabbath day.) I am first addressing those who **do believe** that the Ten Commandments are still relevant for today—and yet they attempt to alter the Fourth Commandment.)

The Catholic church has asserted their god-like authority in this matter. However, Anabaptists (and other first-day-keeping churches) feel they must accept their own limitations. Protestant churches dare not claim authority

to alter the Ten Commandments themselves—so they insist that the Apostles have instituted change, when there is no hard evidence. We can search for this “evidence” from the Apostles themselves—but it simply does not exist in the Bible. Therefore, the Catholics must at least be recognized for their honesty.

Is there evidence that the Apostles did **not make a change** to the Sabbath commandment? Yes, the evidence is in abundance—but this evidence has been eliminated from our (carefully censored) literature. (I am familiar with various research books and a well-researched documentary, to this end.) Many eastern churches continued to keep the Sabbath, while others slowly became corrupted over time. For a season, the early churches kept Sabbath on Saturday, while also celebrating (though not resting on) Sunday as they met daily in their homes. Eventually, pressure was put upon many leaders to make a change in the Sabbath day, apart from genuine Apostolic sanction.

Nevertheless, there were many churches that remained untouched by the change. Even today, in Middle Eastern parts of the world, such as Nepal, the commonly accepted practice among churches is to formally congregate on *Saturday instead of Sunday*. **This is their custom in Nepal even today—the tradition that has continued in** the church, and what they understand to be true, from a direct study of scripture. I have personal friends in the Church in Nepal, and so I am aware of the primary day on which they congregate to worship.

We assume that our holy churches have remained largely “untouched” in areas of doctrine, down throughout the centuries. Paul recognized that false doctrines would creep into the church, and of this, he spoke to Timothy, ***regarding the Old Testament***: 2 Tim 3:14-4:5 But **continue thou in the things which thou hast learned** and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; **And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness**: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will **not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

Some theologians claim that our Sabbath rest has been transferred to the first day of the week, because the first day is also the “eighth day.” Supposedly, this “eighth day” is symbolic of our eternal rest with the Lord (after the heavens and earth pass away.) Such attempt to tie the Fourth Commandment to the eighth day fails, though, when we examine the actual commandment: Ex 20:8-11 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

I do believe we should accept the concept of an “eighth day” of eternal rest. I believe that the first day of the week ties into this concept, because light was created on the first day—and this great light emanated from God Himself (instead of from the sun, moon and stars)—just as it will in the eternal state, where there will **no longer exist any more day or night**. (Rev. 22:5) However, God never asked us to “remember our eternal rest.” Rather, He wishes for us to remember that He is **Creator and Lord of the earth in which we now live**. He is Creator of our own persons, and the air that we now breathe. And because of this, we owe Him our allegiance.

Furthermore, the fourth commandment is centered upon the concept of a **repeated cycle: Labor for six days; then rest for one**. Thus the fourth commandment is **tied only to the seventh day, and not to the first**. It is

based upon the commemoration of the ENTIRE Creation week itself—not the eternal state, in which all such cycles will forever cease. There will no longer be evening and morning in the eternal state. There will no longer be six days of labor, and one day of rest. The fourth commandment itself states what it commemorates—and if we use the “eighth day concept” in attempt to overthrow the clearly stated command of the Lord—then we exalt ourselves against Him, in pride.

It pains me to say this, my dear brethren, but it is true. Why do we try so hard to overthrow the clearly stated words of scripture? Why must we join the kingdom of Satan, of whom Daniel spoke these words: Dan 7:25 “And he shall **speak great words against the most High**, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, **and think to change times and laws**: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” Regardless of the actual event that this verse refers to, we **can all agree upon one thing: the authority figure who attempts to change times and laws, is “speaking words against the most High God.”** We have NOT been given authority by God, to make such changes.

Is there proof that Jews and Gentiles alike, met together on Saturday, during the time of the Apostles? Yes, it was still the custom in those days to meet in the synagogue on the seventh day of the week. Acts 18:1,4 “After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth.... And he reasoned in the synagogue **every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.**”

Acts 13:42-44 “And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, **the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.** Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. **And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.**”

Was this a one-time event? Or was it customary for the Gentiles to meet on the Sabbath day? If we read the New Testament, we will see that there was a huge contention about whether Gentile believers should convert to keeping the laws of Moses. Could Gentiles be acceptable to God, apart from being circumcised, and keeping the laws of Moses? Or did they need to keep the whole law, as it was mediated to Moses, through the angels?

The Apostles contended that it **was not necessary** for Gentiles to keep such laws, because the keeping of these laws did not pertain to the Gentile; neither were they necessary for salvation. Many such laws were types and shadows, given only to the nation of Israel to keep, as a sign to the world. Thus, the Gentiles were not required to practice circumcision, or to keep the Holy festivals of Israel—which were also “sabbaths” or “rest days.” Although somewhat “mixed” in identity, the church at Colossae was largely comprised of Gentile believers. Gentiles were often referred to as ***the uncircumcision***. Col 2:13-17 And you, being dead in your sins and the **uncircumcision of your flesh**, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. **Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.**”

Paul is saying here that the laws of God were “against us.” These ordinances were contrary to us, due to the “law of sin and death” which reigns in our mortal bodies. (Rom. 8:1-10) The laws of God are all “perfect, converting the soul.” There is no lack in them. (Ps. 119) But because we are enslaved to a sin nature, the law of God only serves to condemn us, because we cannot keep the law perfectly. This is why it was necessary for Jesus to come and triumph over the “law of sin and death,” which reigns in our mortal bodies. Through his blood, we can have spiritual victory. (Rom.7:7-18) It was this “contrariness (or condemnation) of the law” which was nailed to the Cross of Christ. Jesus did not come to destroy the law; rather, he came to fulfill it—and He came to **triumph over the powers of darkness**, which seek to destroy us through deception, and by perpetually enslaving the lost. ***(“And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”)***

How do we know all of this to be true? Because Jesus says in Matt 5:17-20, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.**”

What does Jesus mean? Till heaven and earth pass, not one jot or tittle will pass until all be fulfilled? 2 Peter 3:10-13 explains: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which **the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.** Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? **Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.**”

Jesus is saying that until the New Heavens and Earth are created, wherein righteousness will perpetually dwell—not one jot or tittle will pass from the law. Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly, in that He kept it perfectly—but **all things have not yet been fulfilled in this earth.** Jesus has now completed his First Coming—but He has not finished His Second Coming. Heaven and earth have not passed away. Perpetual righteousness has not yet been established for us. Therefore, Jesus finishes His thought in Matthew 5 by saying this:

“Whosoever **therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.** For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

What Jesus means here, is reflected in his words in Matt 23:23-24 “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: **these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.** Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.”

Jesus is saying that it **was GOOD** for the scribes and Pharisees to be meticulous in their observance of His laws. But it was *not okay that they neglected the “weightier matters.”* Because they rejected the weightier matters, **all their good works would count for nothing. They would be consumed by fire, in the great judgment day.**

What does Paul mean, then, when he says, “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. **Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.**”

The ceremonial “rest days” (or sabbath festivals) are **shadows of things to come. They aren’t the reality.** The reason why Gentiles are not required to keep the sabbath festivals, is because these festivals cannot save us. They only point us toward the fulfillment of prophecies. They picture or “foreshadow” what is to happen upon this earth. For example, the Spring Festivals (such as Passover) picture the First Coming of Christ, whereas the Fall Festivals (such as the Feast of Tabernacles) represent His Second Coming.

Jesus came to **fulfill the spiritual realities that these festivals represent** in the hearts and lives of all men—whether Jew or Gentile. Christ took away the condemnation which was laid upon us, due to the accusatory finger of God’s Law—and He nailed this condemnation to His Cross. The Passover Feast may point to our redemption, through the blood of Jesus—but it is Jesus’ *actual sacrifice* which saves us—not a Passover festival. This *true salvation of God* is the reality **that all men need to be concerned with**—whether Jew or Gentile.

The festivals *which point to these spiritual realities* were only given to the nation of Israel to perform, as a sign to the Gentiles. **They were not given as a means of salvation to either Jew or Gentile.** (The nation of Israel was

elected to typify these spiritual realities to the world. Israel was meant to perform them as a “collective, national entity”—ideally while in full possession of their land and the Temple of the Lord. (Deut.5:30-31)

Have all of these types and shadows been fulfilled yet? **No, the Fall Feasts have not yet been fulfilled by Christ.** We still await eagerly for His Second Coming. We still await to receive the full measure of our inheritance through the Resurrection of the dead, the receiving of glorified bodies, and the Wedding Supper of the Lamb. (Rev.19:7-9 / 1 Cor. 13:12) So, although Christ has kept or “fulfilled” the moral law of God perfectly, He has **not yet fulfilled all of the types and shadows of the ceremonial law.** This is indisputable fact.

Jesus is making a very strong statement when He says that “not one jot or tittle will pass from the law until all be fulfilled”—*especially with the criteria being that of “heaven and earth passing away.”* (Jesus’ teaching in this matter is the most likely explanation for Paul’s words and actions in the following passages: (Acts 18:18 / Num. 16) (Acts 21:24) (Acts 24:11-14, 17-18) (Acts 23:6) Note too, that even when God gave Peter the vision about the cleansing of the Gentiles, that there is not a declaration of *changed law*. **The law is not changed, but the Gentile IS changed (or cleansed)—which now affects the laws regarding Jew/Gentile association.** Note: There is much confusion even in New Testament times, over the teachings of Paul, because they were hard to understand. (1 Peter 3:15,16)

Applications of the Ten Commandments can also be made, according to the Spirit of God’s law—which Spirit is love. (Gal.5:14) Thus, we see Paul making such an application from Old Testament law, for the Church, in loving benefit of our pastors and teachers. (1 Cor. 9:1-11.) Also, we may not choose to put fences around the rooftops in our 21st American culture, according to the law of love (Deut.22:8), but we may lock a dangerous piece of modern machinery away from our young children, according to the same law of love (from which the Old Testament “fence law” application was based).

Otherwise, we may be legally guilty (before God) of our children’s unwarranted injuries, through negligence. Therefore, what may seem to be a “change of law” is not always a ***true change***—upon closer examination.

The question must be asked, Is the Fourth of the Ten Commandments (namely, the Sabbath Commandment) merely a “shadow of things to come?” Or is it **more than** a shadow, thus earning itself a place next to God’s moral commandments such as, “Thou shalt not steal,” “Thou shalt not kill,” and “Thou shalt not commit adultery?” Is it truly one of those special commandments to which **God “added no more?”** (Deut.5:22)

It is important to realize that marriage itself is a “type and a shadow.” The union between husband and wife typifies the marriage of Christ to His Bride—and celebration of earthly marriage foreshadows the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where we will someday experience face-to-face communion with our Lord Jesus. Likewise, our Sabbath Day Rest points to the spiritual Rest that we enjoy when we receive Christ into our hearts.

Therefore, we must be very careful not to abandon a commandment of the Lord, **simply because it contains a type or a shadow.** (Both Baptism and the Lord’s Supper also contain New Testament “types” of spiritual realities.)

God also attached *a special covenant blessing* to Sabbath-keeping, for the nation of Israel, after He rescued her from bondage in Egypt. God’s covenant with Israel (in regard to Sabbath-keeping and other laws), is similar in nature to the concept of one man physically saving another man’s life. The rescued person is in “debt” for this life-saving act, so he must now honor the request of his rescuer. If he disregards the desire of his rescuer, it will constitute an even greater disrespect than if another man disregards it. Likewise, (in the case of God’s deliverance of Israel), if Israel honors the heart of her rescuer—namely, if she gives honor to the commandments of the Lord, (including reverence for the “Holy space of time upon which God Himself has rested”)—then her blessing will be even greater than that of other nations. (Ex.19:4-6 / Deut.5:15)

But the Sabbath Commandment did not **first originate (in God's heart) after the Exodus of Israel from Egypt.** Rather, the Sabbath was sanctified (made Holy) by God, and was blessed at Creation. It's first **universal purpose** was to commemorate our Lord's act of Creation.

What separates the Ten Commandments from other ceremonial laws is that they **consist of more than a type, or shadow.** For example, while marriage is a type and a shadow, it is **more than this.** If we commit adultery, we break a vow of faithfulness to another person. It is a breach of conduct against another fellow human being. Not only does it **typify** unfaithfulness to Christ—but it actually constitutes a real, actual breach, in real time.

Likewise, keeping the Sabbath Day holy constitutes more than observing a type or shadow. Breaking the Sabbath Day is also a **breach of conduct.** How can this be? When the Lord created the world, He declared the seventh day to be a Sabbath Day of Rest. *Before the nation of Israel existed,* God sanctified and blessed this day, and then **He rested upon it Himself.**

What happens when God “stands” or “rests” upon something? It becomes Holy. Remember when God asked Moses to remove his sandals, because the ground on which he was standing, was holy ground? (Ex.3:5) Moses didn't argue with God. He didn't say to God, “Lord, can I move this Holy ground to another spot seven feet away, so that I can still stand here with my sandals on? After all, seven is the number of perfection.” He didn't say, “Lord, as a holy man of God, can I alter your commands to suit my own purposes?” No, Moses simply obeyed the Lord.

What happened to the Philistines when they secured the holy Ark of God's covenant for themselves, and desecrated it by removing it to places that were unsanctioned by God? They experienced a terrible plague. (1 Sam.5,6) What happened to the Levite priest, Uzzah, who reached up to steady the Holy Ark of God's Covenant? He was slain immediately, because it was forbidden to touch the Holy Ark in an unholy manner. (2 Sam. 6:6,7 / Num.4:1-15)

Perhaps we fail to remember that God instructed Moses to place the Ten Commandments (on tablets of Stone) into the Holy Ark of God's Covenant. The Ten Commandments **rested physically beneath the mercy seat of the Ark, upon which sacrificial blood was symbolically sprinkled. It was for the breaking of these commandments, that Jesus died on the Cross, to redeem all humanity—Jew and Gentile alike.** In contrast, the other laws of Moses were mediated through angels, written into a book, and placed on the **side** of the Ark. These laws likewise condemned those (to whom they were given,) because it was impossible to keep them without faith—but it was the Ten Commandments that condemned all of humanity. (Deut. 10:1-5 / Lev. 16:14,15 / Gal. 3:17-29 / Heb.2:1-4 / Deut. 31:24-26)

Why would we, as God's people, wish to trample on, or breach, a Commandment that God has declared to be Holy, from the beginning of time? Brethren, God has borne much with us, in our ignorance. He has waited patiently for a very, very long time. He is merciful to His people. Not only has He waited long to deal with the sins (of Korah, Cain, and Balaam) in our midst—but He has waited long to deal with our earthly traditions, which have been used to *subvert the clear command of God.*

There is a price to pay for disobedience. If we disobey, then we will become slow to hear, and slow to see. For example, we may struggle in understanding to interpret the following scripture: Acts 15:19-21 “Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. **For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.**”

Why would the Apostles need to command seventh-day Sabbath keeping, if it was still being taught and kept, as one of the Ten Commandments? It is obvious from this passage (and previous ones above) that the Gentiles were sitting under the instruction of the Law of Moses, in synagogues, **on the Sabbath day, in every city.** If there was no clear Apostolic change of the Ten Commandments, then we should assume that Jews and Gentiles still kept the Ten Commandments, **as they were written by God.** The confusion was not whether or not to keep the Ten Commandments (as precisely recorded by the finger of God)—but rather, which **ceremonial aspects** of God’s law applied not only to the Jew, **but also to the Gentile.**

Gentiles were instructed from within the synagogues, in regard to all the Laws of Moses—but they needed to know what applied to them, specifically. **They did not need circumcision. They did not need to observe cleanliness laws, new moons or ceremonial sabbath festivals**—because these things do not *save either the Jew or the Gentile, in an eternal sense.* **All they needed to do (ceremonially speaking) was to avoid the pagan (Gentile) temple practices of the day**—which often involved drinking blood, pollution of idols, and laying with temple prostitutes, as a “religious custom.”

But this did not mean that Gentiles were free to break, to subvert, **or to alter any of the Ten Commandments.**

Sabbath keeping is precious to God’s heart—so much so that He chose the Fourth Commandment to be the **test commandment** for His People, during their wilderness journey—to determine whether they truly would obey Him on the deepest level, no matter the cost. (Ex. 16:4)

Why did God choose the Fourth Commandment, specifically? The answer may come as a surprise. It is because He **BLESSED IT.** This is why God is bringing the Sabbath Day to the attention of our Anabaptist churches now, at this particular point in history. He wishes to reverse the spiritual curse which has befallen our people, as a whole. He wishes to forgive the sins of Korah, and Cain, and Balaam, in our midst. He wishes to give us eyes to see, and ears to hear. He wishes to give us grace abounding, and to cause our hearts to overflow with His great Love and vast knowledge, toward the brethren. He wishes to give us greater understanding and tender hearts. **These are the truest gifts of God—not wealth and prosperity, which can indeed grow to become a curse to us,** much as it did to the straying children of Israel, many times over again. (Num.11:4-35) God prospers even the wicked. Therefore, prosperity is not always a sign of great blessing. (Matt. 19:22-24 / Jer.12:1-3) **But true love in our midst is the greatest blessing of all.** (1 Cor.13)

When mankind fell into sin, we deserved immediate judgement. As sinners, we deserved no healing, no pardon, **no day of rest.** But God sent His Son, Jesus, to die in our stead—to pay the price for our sins. When Jesus died for us, *He redeemed for us a Sabbath Day observance,* which **Jesus Himself kept perfectly, according to the Spirit of His Law.** (Mt. 12:10-15)

This Fourth Commandment is Jesus’ **gift to us.** It is (part of) that “taste of our future inheritance”—a small “sampling” of better things to come, for God’s people. If we reject the small portion of physical rest which He has given to us now in this life, then why should He grant us a larger portion of His rest in the Age to Come? And if we tamper with (and alter) His commands, why would our Lord not feel disrespected and disregarded—as though we had been our own, “authoritative god,” instead of honoring the true wish of His heart? If we fall into the sin of self-idolatry and reject God’s greatest blessings in this life, why should He grant us more? (Lk.16)

My brothers, we need to search our hearts now, and seek God’s face earnestly for the answers. He will give us these answers, if we ask Him, in faith—with surrendered hearts. Brothers, I cannot explain the enormity of all these things to you now, but **God requires me to call for a meeting of our Anabaptist churches.** Those of you who are touched by the Spirit with a sudden fire in your heart to do His will, are **required to come together, with one heart and one mind. Do not come as a “curiosity seeker.” We are to pray together, sing the praises of the Lord, and to repent of our own sins, and for the sins of our people.** Bring your sisters, wives, mothers,

and your children. Bring those who are sick and ailing. Bring those who are in wheelchairs. Bring those with genetic defects, and mental disorders—no matter how debilitating. God has granted me the hope of deliverance for you. The revelations which God has given to me, speak of the healing of our people—mind, spirit and body, even as we repent and seek His face in earnest prayer.

The Lord knows how many of you will read this and respond. Such things are out of my hands, but He has given me a date, a time and a location for our meeting place. So I am stepping out in faith now, and trusting Him. My plane ticket has already been purchased, and official reservation has been made for our meeting location:

Bryan Memorial Park / Salem, Illinois

We are to meet in the park, on Saturday, September 30, 2017, at 4:30 in the afternoon. **Shelter # 4** has been reserved as our meeting spot. Please bring bottled water to drink, folding (or camping) chairs to sit in, and umbrellas in your vehicles (in case it rains and our numbers extend beyond the roof of the shelter). Come in a spirit of prayer and fasting on this day. ***Deny yourself in the ways which the Lord leads you, by the prompting of His Spirit—whether it be a complete fast, or a partial fast (forbidding yourself favorite foods and drinks.)*** Your self-denial is very important on this day. **It is the Lord's will for you. Do not deny Him in this area.**

For all those church leaders—Bishops and Deacons, and other members of our Anabaptist congregations: If you cannot attend this first meeting in Salem, Illinois, on September 30th, you are given another opportunity. Gather together in your churches on Sunday evening, October 8, 2017 just before sundown. Repent before the Lord. Pray to him, and sing His praises from your heart. Your leaders should repent of their own sins, then obediently lay hands on the sick, and pray for their healing, as commanded in James 5:14-16.

May the Lord's will be done, even on earth, as it is in Heaven. (Mt.6:9,10)

Your brother in the Lord,