

GOD'S FINAL OUTPOURING

Text: Joel 2:28-32

Key Word: Outpouring

Key Thought: Every Christian Should Be Sold out and Committed to God as They Understand the Clear Signs of God's Final Outpouring

SWISS WATCHMAKERS AND THE MOVE OF GOD

*** If people would have been asked in 1968 which nation would dominate the world in watch making during the 1990's and into the twenty-first century the answer would have been uniform: Switzerland. Why? Because Switzerland had dominated the world of watch making for the previous sixty years.

The Swiss made the best watches in the world and were committed to constant refinement of their expertise. It was the Swiss who came forward with the minute hand and the second hand. They led the world in discovering better ways to manufacture the gears and mainsprings of their watches. They even led the way in waterproofing techniques and self-winding models. By 1968, the Swiss made 65 percent of all watches sold in the world and laid claim to as much as 90 percent of the profits.

By 1980, however, they had laid off thousands of watchmakers and controlled less than 10 percent of the world market. Their profit domination dropped to less than 20 percent. Between 1979 and 1981, fifty thousand of the sixty-two thousand Swiss watchmakers lost their jobs. Why? The Swiss had refused to consider a new development-the Quartz movement-ironically, invented by a Swiss. Because it had no main-spring or knob, it was rejected. It was too much of a **paradigm shift** for them to embrace. Seiko, on the other hand, accepted it and, along with a few other companies, became the leader in the watch industry.

The lesson of the Swiss watchmakers is profound. A past that was so secure, so profitable, so dominant was destroyed by an unwillingness to consider the future. It was more than not being able to make predictions - it was an inability to re-think how they did business. Past success had blinded them to the importance of seeing the implications of the changing world and to admit that their past accomplishment was no guarantee of future success.***

James Eney White
"Rethinking The Church"
Baker Books, 1998, p. 20

APPLICATION: Many Christians are this way with the Spirit of God or a move of God. They are hesitant to accept changes by God's Spirit because they have never done it before or they are doing fine just the way they are. God IS going to pour out His Spirit one last time before Jesus comes back. Are you open to God's Final Outpouring?

What Will Be the Signs of the Final Outpouring of God's Holy Spirit?

I. THERE WILL BE AN OUTCRY FOR REPENTANCE

II. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RESTORATION

III. THERE WILL BE AN OUTPOURING OF POWER

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

29. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

30. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

31. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

32. And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls."

Joel 2:28-32

I. THERE WILL BE AN OUTCRY FOR REPENTANCE

A. A Sorrow That Leads to Hope

When God begins to move among people there is a cry for holiness that is issued and must be answered. The Holy Spirit begins to convict people of sin and brings them to a place of sorrow but that place gives them a new hope not condemnation and hopelessness.

Our action of repentance is done out of a need for hope. Without hope we are a lost people doomed and destined for annihilation. And our Hope is none other than Jesus himself.

Sorrow is not a bad thing. Sorrow should always lead us to repentance and in repentance we have hope for the forgiveness of our sins. Not sorry that we been caught with our hand in the cookie jar but that we realize that we were wrong and that we have broken God's heart.

I. THERE WILL BE AN OUTCRY FOR REPENTANCE (Contd.)

A. A Sorrow That Leads to Hope (Contd.)

“Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it – I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while--

*9. yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us.
10. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*

II Corinthians 7:8-10

B. To Turn Away Not Confess Away

The old cliché that says “confession is good for the soul” is good and true but **confession** cannot and does not take the place of **repentance**. Confession is simply owning up to you sin and saying *“yes, I was wrong”* whereas repentance is the turning away from your sin and to not do it again.

For too long some have missed the true outpouring of God’s Spirit because they come to the altar to confess their sin but are not turning away or repenting of it. God can’t pour out His Spirit upon unclean vessels. **We must confess and repent, not merely confess.**

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

I John 1:9

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.”

Luke 3:8

What good is confession if there is no action to go along with it. Ours words are spoken in vain and have no validity or value to them if we do not change. Confession must be accompanied with repentance that is; a turning away from th wrong things we say and do and changing the way we think.

II. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RESTORATION

The word **“restore”** means *“to bring back into existence or use; re-establish: restore law and order. 2. To bring back to an original condition. 3. To put (someone) back in a former position: restore the emperor to the throne. 4. To make restitution of; give back: restore the stolen funds. [Middle English restoren, from Old French restorer, from Latin restaurâre.]*

A. It's Your Choice

God desires for all of us to be in right relationship with Him, but He has left the choice up to us. I can't choose for you nor can you choose for me. Nor can God choose for you. God wants people to love Him because they choose to NOT because they are made to.

The prodigal son had an open invitation to come home and be restored with his family at anytime. He had to make the choice. In the same way, God's invitation is extended to all people for restoration, His hand is extended and we must reach for it.

To be restored to God means that at one time there was an intimate relationship with God, a state at which we were in love with Him. But just like we made the choice to leave Him (whether intentional or not) we must make the choice (intentionally) to return to Him and allow Him to restore us back to our original state.

B. The Justice of Mercy

The justice of God doesn't always line up with the way we understand justice. You see God doesn't work on a system of justice like our governments do. God is just and sovereign.

The word **“sovereign”** means *“1. One that exercises supreme, permanent authority, especially in a nation or other governmental unit, as: a. A king, queen, or other noble person who serves as chief of state; a ruler or monarch. b. A national governing council or committee. 2. A nation that governs territory outside its borders.”*

God's justice is above our justice system and above our understanding. The pottery doesn't tell the potter how to mould it. No, it simply has no way of influencing the potter to create and mould it into the vessel that he/she wants it to be.

God in His justice of mercy has chosen to pour out His Spirit upon an undeserving people. God's ways don't work like ours. He is greater, and more powerful than we could ever hope to be or attain to. Isn't it strange that some people have the boldness to question His justice when it doesn't fit into their way of thinking?

II. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RESTORATION (Contd.)

B. The Justice of Mercy (Contd.)

*"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.
9. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."*

Isaiah 55:8-9

These verses are intended to motivate repentance by explaining that the Lord's plans and methods are better than those a man may devise on his own (cf. Romans 8:28; Philippians 1:6). Many conclusions that we come to just don't make any sense as time goes on.

FUNNY, ISN'T IT

- * Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell.
- * Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says.
- * Funny how everyone wants to go to heaven provided they do not have to believe, think, say, or do anything the Bible says.
- * Funny how someone can say, "I believe in God", but still follow Satan (who, by the way, also "believes" in God).
- * Funny how you can send a thousand "jokes" through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing them.
- * Funny how the lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene pass freely through cyberspace, but the public discussion of Jesus is suppressed in the school and workplace.
- * Funny how someone can be so fired up for Christ on Sunday, but be an invisible Christian the rest of the week.
- * Funny how I can be more worried about what other people think of me than what God thinks of me.

Author Unknown
e-mail

We don't have to understand God's mercy to accept it. We even don't have to understand why God would want to restore us, we simply have to accept it. **In order for us to be part of the final outpouring of God we are going to have to be restored back into a right relationship with Him whether we understand the justice of His mercy or not.**

II. THERE WILL BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR RESTORATION (Contd.)

B. The Justice of Mercy (Contd.)

THE TRIAL OF RUDOLF HESS

*** Perhaps the most famous trials in history were known as the Nuremberg Trials, the trials of the Nazi war criminals of World War II. One of the masterminds of probably the worst of all concentration camps---Auschwitz---was Rudolf Hess. His trial was broadcast all over the world. During the trial witness after witness came forward to the stand to relive the worst atrocities known to mankind. Witness after witness told of the brutality, the killings, the fear, the gas chambers, the crematorium, and of Hess in the middle of it all.

As the trial came to a close, the day of justice had come. On the day of the reading of the verdict, Rudolf Hess entered the room, awaiting his fate. The crowd and the media grew silent. The verdict came: **GUILTY!** As the verdict was read, weeping could be heard from different locations in the room. Some were silently crying, others openly weeping and wailing.

As the courtroom emptied, a reporter stopped one of the witnesses. He asked, *"I can understand the emotion you must be feeling at this moment. Is it because justice has finally been served? Is it because now there is finally an end to the horror and the pain? Why is it that you are filled with such emotion?"*

The man stopped and looked long into the eyes of the reporter, and as he wiped his face he replied, *"it has nothing to do with any of those. I weep because as I stood there looking into his eyes, I saw myself."* ***

"Trial of Rudolf Hess"
Fresh Ideas 1997

Application: None of us deserve to be restored to God. We all have the same potential to commit the most heinous sin against God and man and some have. But God in His justice pours out His mercy on us nonetheless. In God's final outpouring there will be an opportunity for Restoration beyond what we would ever have hoped for or even imagined.

III. THERE WILL BE AN OUTPOURING OF POWER

A. Manifestations of God or God Himself?

What are you searching for, God or the manifestation of God, God Himself or an image of Him? What would you rather have a picture of your girlfriend or to be with her? **Yet the enemy has blinded our eyes and deceived us into accepting the manifestations of God as a substitute for God Himself.** And sadly to say, some Christian leaders have endorsed it.

I strongly believe that the purpose of God's final outpouring will be for people to draw near to Him not to worship or seek after His manifestations. Manifestations of the power of God such as being slain in the spirit, prophecy, healing, casting out demons, etc... are, only meant to point to the One who enabled people with the power to do those things not to the people or the manifestations themselves.

As God pours out His power among His people in the last days it is for the lost, the sinner to see that there is only One true God and He is the Lord God Jehovah. When God did mighty works among the Israelite people, it was to show those around them that God was alive and well in the nation of Israel.

Satan is always out to get man's eyes off of Jesus and onto anything other than Jesus. James, Peter, and John saw Jesus transfigured with Elijah & Moses in Matthew 17:1-7 and immediately wanted to build tabernacles for all three of them. Why, were the tabernacles needed when Jesus was right there with them? They could even see Him.

B. The Power to Change Lives

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19. To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Luke 4:18-19

God wants to pour out His Spirit to change lives. It is not just to make some big display of His awesomeness. God doesn't need our praise or our approval. He simply wants us to be in a right relationship with Him and to love Him as He loves us.

In the days of Moses and the captivity of the Israelites in Egypt, God displayed His power so that the lives of people could be changed. He wanted the Israelites to be free from their bondage. **In the days of Jesus, God displayed His power again so people's lives could be changed, and freedom could be obtained for all who believed.**

III. THERE WILL BE AN OUTPOURING OF POWER (Contd.)

B. The Power to Change Lives (Contd.)

The power of God can be poured out on your life so that God can use you to change the lives of people in order that they can repent and be brought into a right relationship with God.

Power is never an end to itself – it is always used for a purpose greater than itself. A power saw that is used to build a house is not worshipped and adored but is merely used to build a house that protects us from the elements. God's power is poured out to change the lives of people and not to be worshipped and adored. God is the only One worthy of that honour. He is the One who saved us from an eternal fire.

THE ORPHAN GIRL

Once there was a little girl whose parents had died. She lived with her grandmother in an upstairs bedroom. One night a fire broke out in the house and the grandmother died while trying to rescue the little girl. The fire spread through the house very quickly and the first floor was soon engulfed in flames.

As the fire spread through the house, the neighbours arrived and tried to enter the house but couldn't because flames blocked all the doors. Someone called 911, but they knew that the fire department would arrive too late to save the little girl who was trapped upstairs. They could hear her cries in the upstairs bedroom, but there was nothing that anyone could do.

Suddenly, a man appeared with a tall ladder and raised it against the side of the house. He climbed the ladder, broke a window and disappeared into the house. Soon he reappeared at the window with the little girl in his arms. He climbed down the ladder just as an ambulance arrived, and delivered the little girl to the paramedics who took her quickly to the hospital. The little girl survived, but the man who saved her disappeared into the night.

A few months later, the little girl went before a judge who had the responsibility of placing her in a foster home. She had no living relatives, so it was up to the courts to find a proper home for her. The judge decided to interview several prospective people who were willing to take her in. After interviewing them all, he would make his decision. The little girl was present in the courtroom during all these proceedings.

(Contd.)

III. THERE WILL BE AN OUTPOURING OF POWER (Contd.)

B. The Power to Change Lives (Contd.)

The first person requesting custody of the child was a schoolteacher. She pointed out that the child would need a good education, and as teacher, she could make sure that she learned a great deal. She knew how to deal with children, she said, and she knew how to take care of a girl like this one.

The next person was a farmer. He offered the little girl a wholesome environment, where she would learn principles of hard work and the simple life. She would get to be around animals and learn responsibility.

Next was a rich woman who said, *"I can give this child anything she needs or wants. I will provide her with the finest clothes and send her to the best schools. If she lives with me, she will have whatever her hearts desires."*

Several other people were interviewed, each of whom explained why it would be to the little girl's advantage to live with them.

"Does anyone else have anything to say before I make my decision?" asked the judge.

Just then a man came forward from the back of the courtroom. He walked very slowly and with a slight limp. From his old clothes, it was obvious that he wasn't rich and perhaps not well educated. When he got to the front of the room, he stood directly in front of the little girl and held out his arms. The crowd gasped. His hands and his arms were terribly burned and scarred.

"This is the man who saved me!" cried the little girl. With a leap, she threw her arms around the man's neck, holding on for dear life, just as she had on the day of the fire. She buried her face in his shoulder and sobbed for a few moments. Then she looked up and smiled with a grin that lit up the entire courtroom.

"I think I've just made my decision," said the judge. And the court was adjourned

"Hot Illustrations"
Youth Specialties 1996

Application: The man used the power that he had to save the little girl from a fiery death. It was about the little girl and not about the power of the man. **He had used his power to change her life, in fact to save her life.**

If we are ever going to witness God's Final Outpouring we are going to have to repent, be restored and have His power actively at work in and through our lives to save others from an eternal fire.

ALTAR CALL:

1. For those who need to repent
2. For those who need restoration
3. For those who need God's power to change their lives

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Date: March 20, 27/22

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Take Me as I Am - D; My Life is An Offering - D

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