

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.

The Tree of Life from the week ending 02/04/07

What it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery. Part 51.

Being victorious as believers requires using divine power.

Under the category of what it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery, we have now noted: 1. The baptism of the Spirit. 2. The indwelling of Christ as the Shekinah glory. 3. The Angelic Conflict. 4. The mystery of adoption. 5. The sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. 6. The Predesigned Plan of God (PPOG). 7. The mystery of predestination. 8. The unique equality factor of the Church age. 9. The Portfolio of Invisible Assets. 10. The Two Unique Royal Commissions - The royal priesthood and the royal ambassadorship. 11. The indwelling of each person of the Trinity.

We are noting our twelfth form of mystery doctrine: The availability of omnipotence or the divine power to execute the PPOG. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is available to every Church-age believer for the execution of God's will, plan, and purpose for the Church-age. We began with the three spiritual skills in the Christian way of life: 1) The filling of the Holy Spirit and therefore the use of divine power. 2) Cognition of Bible doctrine and therefore the use of divine power. 3) Execution of the PPOG and therefore the use of divine power. We need this divine power because Satan, as the ruler of this world, has maximum power which he utilizes for his evil policy of both moral and immoral degeneracy. This evil power is deceptive because it is often disguised with the facade of good works or religion. So, the distribution of the omnipotence of God to the Church-age believer began with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. The key to this delegation is the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ at the end of the dispensation of the hypostatic union. Eph 1:15-20 *“for this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your impersonal unconditional love for all the saints do not cease to give thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a Spirit of wisdom, and of the revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who have believed in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about or made operational by means of Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heavenly places.”* This divine power was not made available until God raised TLJC from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heavenly places. The surpassing greatness of His power is the Christian way of life; there is a very definite structural relationship between the power used in the resurrection of Christ and the power available to the Church-age believer today. Before the dispensation of the hypostatic union and the resurrection of the humanity of Christ, divine power was delegated to very few Old Testament believers, and then only on a limited basis.

There are times when we will experience the ultimate blessing of being able to go through certain situations alone with the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from our family and

friends. The peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. In Phi 4:6-9 *“Stop worrying about anything, but in every circumstance through prayer and through supplication for personal needs after thanksgivings let your requests or petitions be revealed to the God. In fact, that spiritual peace and prosperity from the source of the God, which surpasses or rises above and beyond all comprehension, shall garrison your hearts [right lobes] also your motivation [minds] in Christ Jesus. From now on, members of the Royal Family of God, whatever is true [doctrinal], whatever is honorable [noble or worthy of respect], whatever is just [fair or right], whatever is pure [of proper motivation], whatever personal loves exist, whatever is commendable, if there is any virtue and if anything worthy of praise, be concentrating on these things. These things also you have learned and received and having heard and have understood by means of me. Be putting these into action and the God of prosperity shall be with you, all of you [supergrace believers].”*

Therefore the principle: Between the resurrection of Christ and the Rapture of the Church is the greatest power experiment in all of human history, and you are a part of it. This great power experiment is divided into two parts: First, the incarnation and hypostatic union, a period of 33 years that terminates with the resurrection of Christ. Secondly, the Church-age, an indefinite period of time, terminating with the resurrection of the Church. The Church-age is the time of the most intense spiritual warfare in all of human history, because after our Lord's victory on the cross, Satan and the fallen angels increased their attack on the human race. God's power brings glory to God (creator credit), while man's power brings glory to man (creature credit). Therefore, we are the objects of the greatest power delegation of omnipotence in all human history. There will be times that we will go through trials and difficulties which others can see and can sympathize with; however, there will also be times when we go through situations that no one can perceive or sympathize with. In the latter case we are to do as Gal 6:5 says, *“For each one shall bear his own load.”* When some affliction happens to you, you allow it to either defeat you, or you defeat it through the experience of divine power or the application of the omnipotence of God in your life. There are times when the life of Christ is being cultivated within us as we are experiencing this divine power. It is here that we learn the secret of being alone with Him, and the experience of divine power or the application of the omnipotence of God in our life. You don't develop courage by being happy in your relationships everyday, but rather by surviving difficult times and challenging adversity. In this dispensation, it is not deliverance from trial that is the issue, but superiority to it that God gives to us. One often learns more from ten days of agony than from ten years of contentment. We learn that the path of least resistance is the path of the loser. We are to have the attitude of Est 4:16 *“and if I perish, I perish.”*

In the Old Testament, people were put in the furnace and they were not burnt; they were put into the lion's den and they were not touched. Now they go into the furnace and they do get burnt, the lions may devour them, but they don't give in. The power for them is the word of God which is alive and powerful and the power of the Holy Spirit who indwells us. That power is Phi 4:13 *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”* You will never know your own strength until you are faced with adversity and experience divine power in your life. Every defeat, heartbreak, or loss, contains its own seed, its own lesson on how to improve your performance the next time. Be grateful for all your problems, 1Th 5:18 *“in everything give thanks; for this is God's*

will for you in Christ Jesus.” When trials, difficulties, sorrows, or weaknesses come our way, the thing to consider is the grace and the power to be above it all. Calamity is the perfect glass wherein we truly see and know ourselves.

So, between the two resurrections is the dispensation of the Royal Family of God, the Church-age. This is the dispensation of the intensified angelic conflict, the crossroads of human history, and God's delegated power being made available to every Church-age believer. The resurrection of Christ is a dividing line between limited power to a few believers before His resurrection, and maximum power to all believers after His resurrection. The sooner you learn about this power, the sooner you will be able to bring glory to God. This power is available to every believer; however, availability does not mean utilization of divine power. Utilization of this potential depends upon the believer's self-determination and his perception, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine. There is no substitute for cognition of doctrine; knowledge is power (Pro 24:3-5; 2Pe 1:3). Between availability and utilization is perception, metabolization, and application of the mystery doctrine of the Church-age. The invisible hero of the Church-age is manufactured out of divine power. The invisible hero also has maximum use of divine power during any given generation of the Church-age, and has maximum use of the ten problem-solving devices of the PPOG. God's superior power and omnipotence is delegated and distributed in two areas: 1) The omnipotence of the Father which in eternity past created invisible assets for every Church-age believer. 2) The omnipotence of the Holy Spirit who has provided an unprecedented delegation and distribution of divine power inside God's plan for your life. This omnipotence of the Holy Spirit is described in such passages as Zec 4:6 *“Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord.”*

The power for the execution of the PPOG is related first of all to the power of the word of God. Heb 4:12 *“The word of God is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of joints and the marrow, and is a critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”* We will never be victorious in this life as believers if we think that life with God means freedom from suffering, because in reality we are strengthened by participating in His sufferings. Eph 3:14-16 *“For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being.”* The phrase *“The riches of His glory”* emphasizes three forms of divine power: 1) The omnipotence of God the Father related to our invisible assets. 2) The omnipotence of God the Son holding the universe together. 3) The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit providing the necessary power for the execution of the procedure plan of God.

The cross has only suffering and death as its ministry, but we have divine power (the application of the omnipotence of God in our life) to meet the cross head-on, 2Co 4:11 *“For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”* Rom 6:18 *“and having been freed from the sin nature, you became slaves of righteousness [the new nature].”* There are times when we are even chastened by God, not because of divine discipline, but as a part of learning how to experience the application of divine power in our life. In Heb 12:5 *“and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, ‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprovved by Him;’”*

Things don't go wrong and break your heart so you can become bitter and give up; they happen to break you down and build you up so you can be all that you were intended to be and experience divine power. Heb 12:6-10 *“For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines [instructs, nurtures, cultivates], And He scourges [puts to the test] every son whom He receives.”* Heb 12:7-11 *It is for discipline [training; instruction, nurture, cultivation of mind and instruction which aims at increasing virtue], that you endure [undergo, bear, persevere]; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”*

If we are going to receive the benefit of the cross, we must go through the suffering of the cross. That is where we come to know and appreciate the Holy Spirit as our Comforter. He comforts us in the very crucifixion He applies, and we learn to glory in the cross that crucifies and how to operate in divine power. Affliction comes to us, not to make us sad but sound; not to make us sorry but wise. The work of the cross causes us to do what Phi 3:3 describes *“keep on worshipping in the Spirit of God and glory or boast in Christ Jesus and we put no confidence in the flesh.”* While the Holy Spirit causes us suffering in the crucifixion of the self-life, He also comforts us in our growth in the new life. Look at Jam 5:9-11 *“Do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we count those blessed who endured [they stuck with the plan of God in the midst of their undeserved suffering]. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”* God will not permit any troubles to come upon us, unless He has a specific plan by which great blessing can come out of the difficulty. 1Pe 4:1 *“Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from being controlled by the sin nature, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men [the desires of the flesh], but for the will of God.”* Triumphs without difficulties are empty; in fact it is difficulties that make the triumph. We are to arm ourselves with the same purpose (to go through suffering rather than living in the sin nature), because he whose human nature has suffered has obtained a ceasing from (the domination of) the sin nature. We have inherited new difficulties because we have inherited more privileges. Gal 5:24 *“Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”* We will no longer spend the rest of our natural life living by our human power and desires, but rather living for the will of God. Our attitude becomes one of a firm stand against self and a solid stand for the cause of Christ. The price of our spiritual birth was His death *for* us; the price of our spiritual growth is our death with Him. Gal 2:20 *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and*

delivered Himself up for me.” This is why it is difficult for us to realize and agree with the fact that suffering is one of the major factors in our spiritual growth.

We have two more areas of mystery doctrine to cover: The Age of No Prophecy, and then the Church-age as the dispensation of invisible heroes. The Church-age is the only dispensation where there is no prophecy during the course of the dispensation. There are only two prophecies in the Church-age, which are its boundaries. First, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which began the Church-age, and was prophesied by our Lord in Joh 14:20 and Acts 1:5. In Joh 14:20 our Lord said, *“In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”* In Act 1:4-5 *“And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, Which {He said,} you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*

The Rapture of the Church is the next prophetic event. This is why the Rapture is always called imminent, because there is no intervening prophecy to be fulfilled. In every other dispensation, there is an ongoing system of prophecy related to its function; the only exception is the Church-age. There is no prophecy between the baptism of the Spirit, which began the Church-age, and the Rapture of the Church which concludes it. Instead of prophecy, this is the only dispensation that functions entirely on historical trends. The Church-age is coterminous with the times of the Gentiles, mentioned by our Lord in Luk 21:20-24. This means that the Church-age is the only dispensation in history where all client nations are Gentile nations. As goes the believer in the Church-age, so goes the client nation to God. A maximum number of mature believers in a pivot means blessing to that client nation. A minimum number of believers in a pivot means national discipline in the five cycles of discipline.

The outline of the Five Cycles of Discipline is given in Lev 26: The first cycle is found in Lev 26:14-17, the second in Lev 26:18-20, the third in Lev 26:21-22, the fourth in Lev 26:23-26, the fifth in Lev 26:27-38; Deu 28:49-67. The cycles of discipline are based on the fact that Jesus Christ controls history directly, indirectly, and permissively. Let's look at the First Cycle of Discipline, Lev 26:14-16 *“But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, (the execution of God's plan for Israel's dispensation) if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant, I, in turn, will do this to you: I will appoint over you a sudden terror [terrorism], consumption and fever [epidemic diseases] that shall waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, you shall sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies shall eat it up.”*

The phrase *“sudden terror”* is the function of terrorism, and also violence, unrestrained criminality, and hostility from other nations. Epidemics have also been the beginning of the end of great nations or empires. *“You shall sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies shall eat it up”* means economic disaster and depression. In Lev 26:17 *“And I will set My face against you so that you shall be struck down before your enemies; and those who hate you shall rule over you, and you shall flee when no one is pursuing you.”* In the first cycle, such defeat by enemies refers to only preliminary wars. *“You will flee when no one is pursuing you”* means the general population becomes cowardly, afraid of war. They have no motivation from patriotism or the spiritual life and will do anything to avoid a war, even surrendering whatever advantages they have.

The Second Cycle of Discipline, Lev 26:18-20 *“If also after these things, you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. (A "wake up" call takes place as a result of the first cycle of discipline, and everything in the first cycle is intensified in the second by seven). And I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze. (Once the first cycle of discipline is administered and it does not turn around the nation, arrogance sets in) And your strength shall be spent uselessly, for your land shall not yield its produce and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.”* In the agricultural economy at this time, this referred to a depression, bad social life, no national pride, and people work hard for nothing.

The Third Cycle of Discipline, Lev 26:21-22 *“If then, you act with hostility against Me [NVTD] and are unwilling to obey or hear Me, I will increase the plague on you seven times according to your sins (the intensification of epidemics and illnesses in the land). And I will let loose among you the beasts of the field [criminality], which shall bereave you of your children and destroy your cattle and reduce your population so that your roads lie deserted.”* With the end of civilization, violence overflows from both animals and people. The population is thinned out by violence, crime gets out of control; commerce is stopped; there are natural disasters.

The Fourth Cycle of Discipline, Lev 26:23-26. So far nothing but grace warnings have been given; now God will really judge the nation. There will be great uncontrollable crime, military invasion and partial defeat, disease from overcrowding, a shortage of food causing starvation, and even greater natural disasters. Lev 26:23-26 *“And if by these things you will not be corrected by Me, but will continue to be hostile toward Me. [negative volition in reversionism], Then I will go into opposition toward you [act with hostility toward you], and I will strike you seven times more for your sins (the intensification of the characteristics of all the cycles). I will also bring upon you a sword which will execute vengeance for the covenant; and when you gather together into your cities, I will send pestilence among you, so that you shall be delivered into enemy hands. (One of the great signs of loss of freedom, and replacing it with moral and immoral degeneracy, is the breakdown of the military.). When I break your staff of bread [cut off your food supply], ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread in rationed amounts, so that you will eat and not be satisfied.”*

The Fifth Cycle of Discipline, Lev 26:27-38. Now there is nothing to eat, enemies have taken over the country, people are put into slavery, and people are afraid of everything. Lev 26:27-29 *“Yet if in spite of this, you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me (The only hope is Bible doctrine; the only hope for the nation is found in believers) then I will act with wrathful hostility against you [no more grace]; and I, even I, will punish you seven times for your sins. Further, you shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters you shall eat.”* No longer do you eat bread and rationed food, as in the fourth cycle; now you eat people! Cannibalism is the total malfunction of all establishment principles. This type of cannibalism actually occurred between 66 and 70 A.D. among Jews under the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman army. Civilization suddenly departs in the fifth cycle of discipline. Lev 26:30-36 *“I then will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and heap your remains on the remains of your idols; for My soul shall abhor you. I will lay waste your cities as well, and will make your sanctuaries desolate; and I will not smell your soothing aromas.*

And I will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled over it. You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste. Then the land will enjoy its sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe in your sabbatical years while you were living in the land. As for those of you who survive, I will make their right lobes so afraid in the lands of their enemies that the sound of a wind-blown leaf will put them into flight. In fact, when no one is pursuing, they will run as though fleeing from an army, and they will fall even when no one is pursuing. Furthermore, they will fall over each other as if fleeing from the sword, although no one is pursuing them; consequently, you will have no strength.” No strength means no military establishment for freedom, no patriotic motivation. It's too late in the fifth cycle, because it takes a long time to train military forces. Lev 26:38 *“But you will perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies will devour you.”*

If the first cycle of discipline mean the population becomes cowardly, afraid of war, if the second cycle means a depression, bad social life, no national pride, and people work hard for nothing, if in the third cycle the population is thinned out by violence, out-of-control crime, and natural disasters, if the fourth cycle means great uncontrollable crime, military invasion, disease, starvation, and even greater natural disasters—do any of you believe that we are in the Fifth Cycle of Discipline? Actually we are living in exciting times! Times to rejoice, not to fear. In the Age of No Prophecy, the only one we're waiting for is the rapture, which is imminent. In every other dispensation, there is a system of prophecy. The only exception is the Church-age; as a part of the blessed hope; Jesus Christ is coming back!