

## Christian Maintenance

**Text: Hebrews 2:1-4** Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time **we should let them slip.** 2 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect (IGNORE - NIV, NLT, AMP) so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

**I Peter 2:2-5** As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 3 If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. 4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

**II Timothy 1:13-15** <sup>13</sup> Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup> **That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.** <sup>15</sup> This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. **(Phygellus - fig-u-less) (Hermogenes – her-mod-ga-nese)** *(REF. - Topical Bible) Paul laments the desertion of believers in the province of Asia, a region that included cities like Ephesus, where Paul had previously established a strong Christian community. Among those who turned away were Phygellus and Hermogenes. The text does not provide specific details about their actions or reasons for desertion, but their mention indicates a significant betrayal, as they were likely known to Timothy and the early church.*

**Introduction: CHRISTIAN MAINTENANCE** -- I know a little about maintenance -- most of the final years of my secular career was in Drydock - Facility - & Shipyard Maintenance:

- 8 years – Dockmaster / Fleet Manager for Army Corps of Engineers in Memphis, TN
- 5 years – Dockmaster / Maintenance Manager of an offshore shipyard in Texas
- 1 year – Dockmaster in charge of maintenance for three NAVSEA Certified drydocks in Florida
- Final 2 years of my career – Maintenance / Facility Manager for a shipyard in Texas

**What is the connection between Shipyard Maintenance and Christianity????**

***What must all Christians do after Salvation?***

**HOW WONDERFUL IT WOULD BE, IF GOD WOULD TAKE CHRISTIANS HOME TO HEAVEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEY WERE SAVED!**

**But what happens to a Christian immediately after they are saved?**

**Answer: WE ONLY START OUR JOURNEY TOWARD HEAVEN AT SALVATION! MILES AHEAD!**

**We are commanded to “Endure to the End” – “Occupy until He comes for us” – “WATCH and Wait”!**

**Maintenance is an ESSENTIAL part of the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) of a shipyard!  
Christian Maintenance is an important and ESSENTIAL part of the SOP of every Christians!**

**Matthew 24:42-51** Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

## **OUR MODERN CHURCH'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SPIRITUALITY---**

- Let us train others such as PASTORS, or SPECIAL PRAYER WARRIORS to be our SPIRITUAL PROXIES. Let some go to seminary and become TRAINED SPIRITUAL MEDIATORS between us and God. Let others become spiritual giants within the church and we will let them pray for us!
- We will worship God but at a lower position. We don't need the same level of commitment to God!
- We will even pay the Pastor a salary -- he will be a spiritual PROXIE for us-- so we can REMAIN Immature Babies in Christ!

### **I. The New Testament Teaches – “*The PRIESTHOOD of the BELIEVER*” as a FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURAL TEACHING:**

\*\*\* THERE aren't TIERS of SPIRITUALITY or HIERARCHY within Christ—There is simply only one level of BELIEVERS ---Those who are SAVED and JUSTIFIED by their faith in CHRIST!

**Peter 2:5, 9-10** Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

### **II. The Greatest EYE-OPENING Scripture to me today - after over 40 years of being a Christian:**

**Revelation 2:1-5** Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; **I know (1) thy works, and (2) thy labour, and (3) thy patience, and (4) how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou (5) hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And (6) hast borne, and hast patience, and (7) for my name's sake hast laboured, and (8) hast not fainted. **NEVERTHELESS** I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.**

**My GREATEST FEAR???** Maintaining my 1<sup>st</sup> Love toward God until the end – Maintaining fervent Love toward my Neighbor until the end!

**AGAIN, NOTE OUR TEXT-** Hebrews 2:1-3 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect (IGNORE - NIV, NLT, AMP) so great salvation...

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\*\*\*\***The Old Testament leaves us an example of Saints Maintaining their relationship with God! – Types & Shadows to help New Testament Believers maintain their Walk with God:**

### **III. God Commanded Israel to PRACTICE 3 Things to MAINTAIN a RELATIONSHIP with Him:**

*Let us examine these 3 things and look at their significant application for the NT Believer*

**1) The Fire on the Altar for Sin: GOD COMMANDED TO CONTINUALLY OFFER A SACRIFICE**  
**Leviticus 6:13 The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.**

#### **Five Types of Offering in Leviticus:**

- **The Burnt Offering – (memorial offering) – lambs offered by priest at sunup and sunset**
- **The Meal or Meat Offering – (symbolized the sweetness and favor of God) no blood offered – no animal sacrificed—consist of fine flour, frankincense, and olive oil burnt upon the altar**

- **The Peace Offering** – (*symbolized peace between God and man*) part of the animal burnt upon altar – part given to the priest or prepared as a private feast for a family to eat at the temple
- **The Sin Offering** – (*symbolized Christ's Crucifixion*) part of the animal was burnt at the altar – part was taken to a designated area and burnt outside of the camp
- **The Trespass or Guilt Offering** – (*atonement for sin against holy things or sin against other people*) animal was burnt upon the altar or restitution damages paid to an offended party

***THE ALTAR AND THE FIRE WAS NEEDED FOR ALL SACRIFICES LISTED ABOVE – THE FIRE WAS TO BE ALWAYS BURNING (day & night) UPON THE ALTAR! NEVER ALLOW TO GO OUT!***

***History of Temple Worship*** (REF. Google AI) – Israel Sacrificed Animals to God for approximately **1382 years** beginning in the Wilderness Journey and ending in 70 A.D – with a 70 year interruption due to the fall of destruction of the 1<sup>st</sup> temple

***History of Animal Sacrifices*** (REF. Goggle AI)

The Old Testament describes a significant number of animal sacrifices, with estimates suggesting that hundreds of thousands of animals were sacrificed annually, especially during major religious festivals.

*Daily Sacrifices*

- According to the Mosaic Law, the Israelites were required to offer two lambs daily as burnt offerings one in the morning and one in the evening. This routine alone accounts for at least **730 lambs per yr.**

*Special Occasions*

- In addition to daily sacrifices, there were numerous special occasions and festivals that required additional offerings. For example, during Passover, it is estimated that around **250,000 lambs** were sacrificed in ancient Jerusalem.

***\*\*\*The fire on the Altar symbolizes the SIN PROBLEM of man – it must be dealt with FIRST before anyone can gain entrance into the presence of God!***

***TODAY, JESUS CHRIST is the only Atoning Sacrifice that God accepts! – YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN! NO EXCEPTIONS! The unwavering requirement for all who are allowed into the Presence of God!***

***I John 1:8-10*** *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

**2) The Fire in the Temple Lamp -Menorah** (the seven-branched temple candelabrum)

**Exodus 27:20-21** (GOD COMMANDED MOSES) And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to **cause the lamp to burn always.** In the tabernacle of the congregation without the veil, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.

**Hanukkah** – (REF.: *What is Hanukkah* - <https://www.chabad.org/>) In the second century BC, the Holy Land was ruled by the *Seleucids (So-lou-sid)* (Syrian-Greeks), who tried to force the people of Israel to accept Greek culture and beliefs instead of belief in God. Against all odds, a small band of faithful but poorly armed Jews, led by Judah the Maccabee, defeated one of the mightiest armies on earth, drove the Greeks from the land, reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and rededicated it to the service of God.

When they sought to light the Temple's Menorah (the seven-branched temple candelabrum), they found only a single cruse of olive oil that had escaped contamination by the Greeks. Miraculously, they lit the menorah and the one-day supply of oil lasted for eight days, until new oil could be prepared under conditions of ritual purity.

**Revelations 1:12-13** And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

**I Samuel 3:33** And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

**\*\*\* The fire in the Temple Lamp - New Testament Applicability: The Holy Presence of God inside the heart of the Believer—Inner Fire of the Presence of God & The PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER**

**Timothy 1:8** Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.: NOTICE THE WORD: — THOU—THOU Stir up the Gift

### **3) The Fire of Incense on the Incense Table before the Vail of the Holy of Holies**

**Exodus 30:6-10** And thou shalt put it (THE INCENSE TABLE) before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD.

**Psalms 141:1-2** LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

**Revelation 8:3-4** And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

**\*\*\* The fire in the Temple Incense Table - New Testament Applicability: PRAYER, PRAISE, WORSHIP from the heart of the Believer toward GOD!**

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## **IV. HOW DO WE MAINTAIN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?**

**Remember The Parable of the Sower – The Good Hearers – Keep it & Bring Forth Fruit w/Patience!**

**Luke 8:11-15** Now the parable is this: -- **The seed is the word of God.** (1) Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. (2) They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. (3) And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. (4) But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

**The Reason People miss out with God in the end are various BUT it is always their fault, never God's!**

**They Failed to Properly Maintain their Relationship! They Fail in CHRISTIAN MAINTENANCE!**

**(1). There are REALLY only 2 Commandments to maintain!**

**Matthew 22:37-40** Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ***On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.***

HOW TO MAINTAIN A FERVENT LOVE??? **NEVERTHELESS** I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works

(2). The Holy Spirit is a **REQUIRED SOURCE** of Power in maintaining our relationship with God  
**II Timothy 1:11** I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that **he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. GOD IS OUR SOLE SOURCE OF POWER!**

**Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

(3) Remember to Practice the Christian Fundamentals: **DEVELOP FAITHFUL HABITS!**

- *Pray Often*
- *Bible Reading Often*
- *Give Thanks and Praise to God Often*
- *Faithful Service to God's House*
- *Give of your substance in offerings and tithes*
- *MAINTAIN THE HEART OF A SERVANT --- Serve God and help others*

**Luke 17:7-10** But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

**VII. CLOSING: TODAY - A Season of Apostacy – many are TURNING AWAY from the teaching of Discipleship and Biblical Truth!**

**II Timothy 1:15** This thou knowest all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes (Phygellus - fig-u-less) (Hermogenes – her-mod-ga-nese)

**Special observation after more than 40 years of ministry:**

- ❖ I have witnessed multitudes of fellow Christians who have allowed their “Fire” or their Relationship with God to grow cold and go out - Most of them are no longer a part of the church!
- ❖ I have seen some Christians become alcoholics, broken up their homes, lost everything to drugs, destroyed their children’s faith, ruined the faith of others who had confidence in them, and split-up churches due to the issue of Christian Maintenance!
- ❖ I have even known pastors & deacons who have taken their own lives because they had allowed their “Fire” to go out!
- ❖ No Christian is exempted: **PREACHERS, PREACHER’S WIVES, DEACONS, BOARD MEMBERS, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, MUSICIANS, REGULAR CHURCH MEMBERS, ALL PEOPLE ARE IN DANGER** within the church!

*A Season of Apostacy isn’t an excuse to do what many are doing today!*

*LET US CONTINUALLY BE ATTENTIVE TO THE FIRES OF OUR REALATIONSHIP W/ GOD LET US BE CAREFUL TO MAINTAIN OUR RELATIONSHIP AT A “BLAZING or ROARING FIRE LEVEL”*

**I Corinthians 9:24-27** Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.