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The Virtues of God (Ken Walston – Kenna Outreach Ministries)

Shalom…from Ken, an Elder in the Church, who by Faith has been called by the Great God and Saviour, Yeshua A*DONAI*, to be a Believer and Teacher for the edification of the Believers of the Way, the Church or Body of Messiah. I am led by the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*) to write you and reveal what the Lord God is saying…

We (*Human Beings*) are the highest order of creation, for we are all created in the image of God. We are the only part of the creation (*both in Heaven and the physical universe*) whereby Faith can be exercised, and therefore the act of Faith be honoured as an expression to the true Nature and Will of God the Father. Only mankind has been given the act of exercising Faith…it is the essence of an expression given from the spirit of man (heartfelt) unto the presence of God the Father. It has been given by order of God that all creation have a free will of choice; but because of our unique position within the creation, we are given the right to express Faith as an act of worship and covenant with God.

Out of the three (3) Virtues of God (Faith, Hope and Love) Hope and Love can only be expressed through the act of Faith. Even though Love is the greatest virtue, it cannot be expressed without the act of Faith. Faith is the greatest single act a Human Being can give towards God. The beginning of our salvation is through the act of Faith… Faith in Yeshua ADONAI, "*For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have Eternal Life…for whomever believes in the Son of God has Eternal Life*". In this testimony God shows that Love is the greatest virtue, and that His giving is the Hope, whereby our act of Faith in believing is when we receive Eternal Life. It shows that God loved us first, then we, through our expression of Faith received and loved Him back. Nevertheless, the expression of Faith we exercise must be equal to the Nature of God's expression of Faith. In order for our Faith to be received by God so that He may act upon it and give honour unto Himself through it, our Faith must be expressed within the virtue that God expresses it. The way in which God expresses the virtue of Faith is without *Any Doubt*. The mystery in this, is that God honours Himself through the act of a Virtue which expresses the essence of His Holiness.

The essence of God is felt throughout the physical universe; but the presence of God is extended from Heaven (Spirit) to the earth through mankind. Therefore, the Presence of God stands before mankind and the Spirit of God comes through mankind by the Virtue of Faith in Yeshua ADONAI, which is given to us through the Virtue of Love from God the Father. Faith is the kinetic energy that enables us to request and receive ALL things from God, He reacts to the Virtue of Faith which has *No Doubt* in both requesting and receiving.

In the scheme of Creation, there is One Thing that God has endorsed as an absolute point of worship, and that is Praise. In the Psalms both King David and his son Solomon expounded on Praise as being the highest order of worship, and throughout the Bible, Praise is a constant reminder of God's pleasure with His people. In the purest sense of how God expresses His desire for us to Praise Him, it is based on Righteousness directed towards Him out of an expression from our hearts through the Virtue of Faith. Where we give and He receives, when our spirit literally joins with God's Spirit through an act He has designated as being Holy and Righteous and can only be linked by Faith. Because God knows the hearts of all men, He set

NO restrictions on how mankind would Praise Him. No act of true expression has been forbidden. When God established His first Covenant with His people (Israel) it was based on strict adherence to the rituals and physical tasks laid out in the Law (*Torah*) that God had given through Moses. Worship in its purest form came by way of obedience and strict following to the Law of Moses. It was based around offerings and sacrifices ranging from Tithe Offerings to Burnt Animal Sacrifices. It was not based on Faith (for nothing in the Law is based on Faith) but upon Obedience. [Command and requirement (God) > obedience and fulfillment (Man)]. The outcome [Reward or Punishment] became the foundation for the social standards by which we (all mankind) would base our cultural institutions and laws.

Throughout our histories, mankind has mischaracterized what God has demonstrated and relayed as a Holy Virtue (Faith) and turned it into a man-made virtue based around the outcome of obedience to the Law. We institutionalize every aspect of our existence. We flatter ourselves with degrees of education and call it knowledge. We adorn the wisdom of leadership who self-sacrifice, long study, endure hardship and live in solitude and call that Godly. What was given by God as a Virtue through His Spirit to mankind, is turned into dogma, rituals, and pride. Because mankind is in a fallen state with God, we are engulfed with a sin consciousness as a natural mental state of Being, therefore we equate 'Good Works' with Holy Deeds. These become self-righteous acts, which perpetrate more and more ritual and eventually become spiritual (religious) in order to satisfy unresolved mysteries of our existence. As these evolve through social evolution (customs and culture) fulfillment of dogma and ritual becomes a substitute for Faith, and that which is tangible (physical creation) becomes the point of focus for worship. The result becomes blasphemy in the Sight of God because the Virtue of Faith, which requires no physical evidence of God for worship, has been replaced by the need to produce a physical image or icon in order to worship. Case in point, as decreed by God through His written testimony within the Bible, "*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*". There is NO substitution for the Virtue of Faith in order to fulfill the Will of God. It is based on the principle and fact that what is unseen (Spirit) created all things that can be seen (Physical Universe) and was done through a Command by the Creator (God) as the result of Faith (*without any Doubt*).

Our physical worship towards God must be in regard to the inner sanctuary of our Faith. The physical Temple of God, which stores both His Spirit and the Covenant, is our physical body once we receive Salvation through Yeshua ADONAI and are Born Again. There are only three (3) outward signs of this happening; 1) our Confession as being a sinner, 2) our Baptism (through the Holy Spirit), 3) our Testimony in Faith. The redemption of our Being is unseen (Spirit) but the manifestation of it is through the testimony we project as a living witness through the Virtue of Faith in Yeshua *ADONAI*.

As humans born into a fallen state, our flesh (body) has had control over the emotions and character of our Being. There is transference of this character into our redeemed state because of the free will God has empowered us with. Our quest to be right with God can in many instances create situations which overindulge our desire to stand in Faith, thus what should be developing into a state of righteousness through Faith, develops into acts of self-righteousness through pride. The typical scenario for this is in the assembly of Believers where pride enters into acts of worship. There is an oblique result and outcome that relates to the overt physical displays of sensational emotionalism given when people come together in open forums of worship towards God, especially if a T.V. camera is in front of them. The Sunday morning worship service becomes the Broadway Production which keeps them coming back week after week…it's the hour of entertainment and production, not the 30 minutes of prepared speech afterwards that makes the Sunday Mornings worth getting all dressed up for. Notice too, that not only is Tithing a constant reminder to the assembly faithful by means of guilt (using verses of Scripture as commands of obedience); but the shear elegance and social stance of the production and the facility hits an accord with pride and ego for one to sustain such a holy cause. The bottom-line is

that the Church is "Big Business" and a "Social Status" Icon, and the order of business is made quite clear in the ritual and process. The first hour is spent enjoying either a well-rehearsed musical production or drama production (or both), in most cases usually followed by a solo act (vocalist or musician), then church business and social announcements, then it's time to pay, the "Offering" is taken (*the term Offering or Tithing legally maintains the standing of a Not for Profit or Non-Profit Organization with the IRS…so does the term Donations*), any place else for such a social event you'd have to buy a Ticket (*which would be considered Income and taxable*). If the Offerings have not been as high as the projected budget forecast, then the Pastor or chosen announcer will give a stern reminder that God demands our Tithing, and in not doing so means we are cheating God out of what is His…sometimes in frustration they'll mention that nothing is free, and our donations pay the bills and keeps the building projects going. What that means from a corporate sense: this buys more land and buildings which the church corporation owns and controls; and pays the salaries for the full-time staff (Pastor, Secretary, Business Manager, Associate Pastor, Youth Pastor, and Facility Maintenance), and all publications and printing. If the ministry is a T.V. or Radio production, then there is the cost involved with the full support of that as well and in most instances the cost associated with this is more intense than the basic pastoral church service. Once all the business aspects have been taken care of, then comes the sermon or message, which is usually regimented to a strict 30-minute allotment. Then it's over and everyone somehow feels a fulfillment of obligation as a holy deed towards God. The inference here is in creating a Corporate Church and Religious Institution based on Dogmatic Rituals and Carnality which resembles the appearance of holiness; but produces Pandemonium, far removed from the Virtue of Faith, and has allowed the Church to prophetically fulfill its place in the Last Days of the End-Times as the Church of Laodicea *(Revelation 3:14-21)*.

Sadly, the Church of Laodicea is the Church (*Body of Christ*) in this present dispensation, a Lukewarm condition produced because of a rejection of Faith but an adherence to satisfying the flesh (*with an outward appearance of holiness but within all corruption and dead man's bones*), and because of it the Lord will spit this Church out of His mouth…He will reject the Corporate Church, He will reject Religious Institutions, He will reject the pandemonium and those who oppress Faith, He will reject the Proud and Boastful even if they claim it in the Name of the Lord from the Pulpit, and He will reject the man-made institution of the Church which in their greed and self-indulgence place a burden of guilt in trying to control the faithfulness of Tithes and Offerings. Thus says the Lord, "*I will reject those who have demanded Tithing and laid a burden of oppression upon My Namesake, for I the Lord have asked each man to come before my table with a clean and open heart of sacrifice. The gift of burden is not welcomed to be placed at my door!*", thus says the Lord God. The absolute result of our actions only satisfies our flesh and carnality if it is not exercised from the heart (*spirit*) and soul (*mind*) enacted through the Virtue of Faith. God is worthy to be Praised and Glorified. The first and most precious commandment of God is to Love the Lord your God above All things…with all of your body (flesh), soul (*mind*) and heart (*spirit*). Once again, God has empowered us with the Virtue of His own Holiness and a command He set forth which is sustained, to this very moment by His own Will, through unwavering Faith (*without doubt*). ALL flesh (Creation) is corrupted and in the Sight of God is sin. The soul (*mind*) is the central control point of the Human Being. It is fed constantly with information and emotions from either the desires of the flesh (*sin*) or of the heart (*spirit*). The mind determines how the Human Being will react to the information and emotions from these two sources. The desires of the flesh are outside of the Virtues which God has established through Faith. The flesh is outside of the Perfect Will of God because from inception the first Human Being (Adam) was transformed into sin because of his own desire to follow his flesh through an act of disobedience and blasphemy. Sin engulfed and morphed his entire being (body, soul and spirit), from the highest level of creation in perfection (*standing in the Presence of God*), to the highest level of creation in a fallen state (*separated from the Presence of God*).

Therefore, how should we act as a renewed creature and follower of Yeshua *Adonai*. The only answer that God will accept and not bring before His Judgment is FAITH *(without having any Doubt).* It's not found in going to Church, for WE who are in Yeshua A*donai* are the Church, and as a collective assembly of Believers we are His Body *(the Body of Yeshua).* Adonai told us to not forbid ourselves from assembling together for the purpose of worshiping God, but rather He commanded us to go throughout ALL of the earth and proclaim the 'Good News' that He has risen from death and sits at the Right Hand of the Father, for He is Lord and God (ADONAI)…that HE brings salvation to Everyone who will call upon His Name and believe in Him, and that if anyone will do this, they will have Life Eternal! The Lord DID NOT mean for us to become complacent in our testimony of this 'Good News' so that we end up in the assembly gathered together only and not doing the proclaiming throughout the earth. As a collective worldwide body, the Lord has established leadership by way of callings (Ephesians 4:11-12) to build the Body Assembly into individual living testimonies, which shall proclaim the 'Good News' about Yeshua *Adonai*. Our regard should not be to go to church each Sunday and put in an hour or two, hear a prepared speech regarding some bible history or political/social context, and then go to lunch. Our assemblage should be for worship and in order for the Church Leadership to boost our Faith and direct us in the Ways of the Spirit who teaches us ALL Things (*1John 2:26-27*) so that we may be a living witness for the Lord at all times.

The caveat to all of this is FAITH (*without any Doubt*)…Nothing can be requested, received or executed without Faith. The Lord God holds EACH person accountable for their actions according to their Faith. No one will be standing before the Lord in righteousness, inexcusable of sin because they went to church regularly or was a Church Member, or because they paid tithes and gave offerings, or gave regularly to a TV Evangelist, or because they handed out food at a mission during a holiday season, or because of… Anything Except FAITH! …in Yeshua ADONAI AMEN.