

## “The Year of the Spirit of the Lord”

If you are setting a table for a meal, it could mean that you’re eating with loved ones, by yourself, or you might be expecting a guest or guests. I wish to speak to you about setting your spiritual table for 2024. If you want to dine with somebody who doesn’t live with you, then you need to invite them. Give them a call, text, speak with them personally. Our Lord Jesus gave us such an invitation in **Rev. 3:20 TPT**, “Behold, I’m standing at the door, knocking.” (TPT: “Aramaic: “I have been standing at the door, knocking.” Jesus knocking on the door points us to the process of an ancient Jewish wedding invitation. In the days of Jesus, a bridegroom and his father would come to the door of the bride-to-be carrying the betrothal cup of wine and the bride price. Standing out-side, they would knock. If she fully opened the door, she was saying, Yes, I will be your bride.” Jesus and His Father, in the same way, are knocking on the doors of our hearts, inviting us to be the bride of Christ.” Is your heart fully open to Jesus today or perhaps half-way closed? Let’s open up!

After Jesus rose from the dead, He met with His disciples behind **closed doors** to give instructions for a great promised event about to happen. Since they already knew Him, He didn’t have to knock on their door, be-hind which they were discussing the Lord’s appear on the Emmaus road.

**Luke 24:36-49** *“While they were still discussing all of this, Jesus suddenly manifested right in front of their eyes! Startled and terrified, the disciples were convinced they were seeing a ghost. Standing there among them He said, “Be at peace. I am the living God. Don’t be afraid.*

*38. Why would you be so frightened? Don’t let doubt or fear enter your hearts (Aram. “imagination”), for I AM! 39. Come and gaze upon my pierced hands and feet. See for yourselves, it is I, standing here alive. Touch me and know that My wounds are real. See that I have a body of flesh and bone.” 40. He showed them His pierced hands and feet and*

*let them touch His wounds. 41. The disciples were ecstatic yet dumbfounded, un-able to fully comprehend it."*

**Jesus doesn't not want us living in fear, esp. the fear of death. Heb.3:15 TPT says, "By embracing death Jesus sets free those who live their entire lives in bondage ("slavery") to the **tormenting dread of death.**" T.D.D.**

Jesus came to His disciples then & now to set us free! **John 8:31-32 NKJV** "Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide (TPT: "continue to embrace") in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

32. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall **make you free.**"\*

**WW** \*"Gk. *eleuthero*: to liberate, acquit, set free, deliver. In the NT the word is used exclusively for Jesus' setting believers at liberty from the dominion of sin." **Rom. 8:2 NKJV** "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has **made me free** from the law of sin and death." TPT "For the "law" of the Spirit of life flowing through the anointing of Jesus has liberated us (Gk. "sets me free" or "sets you [singular] free) from the "law" of sin and death." Jesus showed His disciples that He was risen in order to set them free from death, knowing they would rise as well!

**It is the Spirit of the Word that, once revealed, sets us free.**

Voice of the Martyrs, whose material we have in the foyer, published a new 366 Day Devotional called Whom Shall I Fear? Fearing God: One Acceptable Fear. The ministry was founded by Richard & Sabina Wurmbbrand of Romania. "Richard...wrote about a sister [in the Lord] named Nijole, who was arrested, tried, and sentenced to prison – and later deported to Siberia in the 1970's – for her Christian activity in Communist Soviet Lithuania. **Her fear of the Lord** freed her to say the following words when she was in court:

"Truth needs no defense because it is all-powerful and unconquer-able. Only deceit and lies, being powerless before truth, need weapons, soldiers, and prisons to prolong their infamous rule for a while. A partial government digs its own grave. I am on the right side

and am ready to lose liberty for truth. I will give gladly even my life.... Without fearing prisons, we [Christians] have to condemn all actions which lead to injustice and humiliation. We must distinguish what is written by men from what is commanded by God. We owe to Caesar only what remains after having given to God what is His due. *The most important thing in life is to **free heart and mind from fear** because yielding to evil is the greatest sin.*"

**Let's purpose in 2024 to become free from the fear of man by fearing God & God alone!**

Nijole went on to say, "This is the happiest day of my life. I am tried for the cause of truth and love toward men. What cause could be more important? I have an enviable fate, a glorious destiny. My condemnation will be my triumph....How could I not rejoice when God Almighty has promised that light will overcome darkness and truth will overcome error and lies. May God give us the assurance that His last judgment will be favorable to all of us. I will ask this in prayer for you every day of my life.... We must condemn evil, but we must love the man, even the one in error. This you can learn only at the school of Jesus Christ, who is the only truth for all, the only way, and the only life. Good Jesus, your kingdom come into our souls." Amen to that!

Saints, only the Spirit of the Lord can cause a person like Nijole, or you and me, to be able to stand freely for truth in an increasingly immoral world of compromise and shame. **2 Cor. 3:17 NKJV** says, "*Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*" This liberty is unveiled access to God in Christ (2 Cor. 3:14). So, by the Spirit of the Lord, let us do as **Heb. 4:16 TPT** says, "*So now we come freely and boldly to where love is enthroned, to receive mercy's kiss & discover the grace we urgently need to strengthen us in our time of weakness (Aram. "tribulation").*"

Remember **Zech 4:6 NKJV**, "*This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD Almighty."*"

**SFLB** note: Zerubbabel is responsible for rebuilding the temple, but he is forbidden to trust the resources of man to accomplish the task. So today God's holy temple, the church, must be built and sustained, not by wealth, by members, by virtue, nor by sheer strength, but **by My Spirit.** **So let's trust in God's Spirit this year!**