

Module 5



Overcoming as a Disciple

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Distribution for Lighthouse Ministries International

<https://bibleschool2.wixsite.com/discipleship>

lmi.bibleschool@gmail.com

+27 66 245 0517 (Whatsapp & Telegram only)



LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On completion of Module 5 you will be able to know what it is to overcome as a disciple

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES :

On completion of this Chapters you will be able to know:

+ Chapter 1

How to remain consecrated and committed unto God

+ Chapter 2

How to be a carrier of His presence

+ Chapter 3

How to keep the fires perpetually burning

+ Chapter 4

That it is all about Jesus

+ Chapter 5

How to stay faithful

MODULE 5

CHAPTER 1

M5C1

Remain Consecrated and Committed unto God

Layout by E Cloete

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT



Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

So far in this discipleship course, we have looked at what it means to be a disciple, how we become a disciple, and what is the mandate of the disciple.

As a disciple of the Lord, we need to continually walk in commitment to the Lord, and we need to stay consecrated unto Him. Our spiritual journey takes us from being a convert to a disciple, but a disciple is one that remains committed and who remains set apart unto the Kingdom of the Lord. The concept of a disciple after all is that we are no longer merely converts but followers, and a follower obeys and remains faithful to His master.

As a disciple we therefore overcome when we continue steadfast in our journey with the Lord.

For it says in 2 Peter 1 (NKJV): 5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. Again, the word “add” is a verb, which implies continual action. We have a responsibility as children of the Lord to play our part in this spiritual walk with the Lord. God does His part, but we have to continue abiding in Him, trusting in Him, submitting in Him so that we may grow and persevere in virtue, knowledge, self-control and godliness. This all speaks of a continual decision of the will and the mind to serve the Lord and to stay committed as His disciple.

Romans 6: 11 Even so consider yourselves also dead to sin and your relation to it broken, but alive to God [living in unbroken fellowship with Him] in Christ Jesus. 12 Let not sin therefore rule as king in your mortal (short-lived, perishable) bodies, to make you yield to its cravings and be subject to its lusts and evil passions. 13 Do not continue offering or yielding your bodily members [and faculties] to sin as instruments (tools) of wickedness. But offer and yield yourselves to God as though you have been raised from the dead to [perpetual] life, and your bodily members [and faculties] to God, presenting them as implements of righteousness.

The Lord is calling for His people to yield and to consecrate themselves to the glory of God. And this should be an ongoing process.

How the Lord is calling for a people, who have been made alive from sin, to present themselves unto God in a constant yearning and longing to have a deeper and unbroken fellowship with the living Lord.

To consecrate speaks of being set apart unto God in one's life and service. How God is calling for a people who will be willing to seek Him in such a manner of faith and love, for we have been made alive were we once dead and so we who are alive can glory in the knowledge that our hope rests in the risen and living Lord Jesus.

A disciple overcomes and stays the course when we remain committed to the cause, and when we remain set apart.

Paul writes in 2 Timothy 4: 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Indeed, Paul finished the race – he therefore overcame the trials, tribulations and the onslaughts that come against any follower of the Lord. We can only finish the race and fight the good fight if we keep on fixing our eyes on the Lord, when we remain committed to the Kingdom and when we remain consecrated. This is again the very concept of discipleship – a disciple only follows the Lord and is committed unto the Lord. If this is not so, then such a person is not a follower of the Lord, therefore not a disciple.

Psalm 119: Blessed are the undefiled in the way, Who walk in the law of the Lord! 2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart! 3 They also do no iniquity; They walk in His ways. 4 You have commanded us To keep Your precepts diligently. 5 Oh, that my ways were directed To keep Your statutes! 6 Then I would not be ashamed, When I look into all Your commandments. 7 I will praise You with uprightness of heart, When I learn Your righteous judgments. 8 I will keep Your statutes ...

Take note how words in Psalm 119 such as “walk”, “keep” and seek” are used, for this speaks of action, and it speak of a continuing motion towards achieving something. Our spiritual walk as a disciple should not be one of passivity, but of continuous growth, continuous commitment and continuously seeking to obey the Lord, to obey His Truth, to obey His commandments and to be continually set apart for His Glory.

A disciple never stagnates, but every day seeks to renew his mind, his heart and to draw closer to the Lord.

For the Lord does not want only 10% of us. He does not want 50, 70 or even 99%. He wants all of us. He wants all our devotion and love. He desires a full commitment. He desires us to be zealous, passionate, and wholly set apart in love and life unto Him. Deuteronomy 4:24: For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

To serve God in the hope and faith and love of being alive in His glory is the true place of consecration. How else but to consecrate ourselves unto God if we truly have sought to die with Jesus in our old ways and then to be resurrected into the fullness of God? And by that death unto the world and our ways, we present to God ourselves as living sacrifices to His glory and for His glory.

Romans 12: 1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Remember, we have been bought with a price. *1 Corinthians 6: 19 Do you not know that your body is the temple (the very sanctuary) of the Holy Spirit Who lives within you, Whom you have received [as a Gift] from God? You are not your own, 20 You were bought with a price [purchased with a preciousness and paid for, made His own]. So then, honor God and bring glory to Him in your body. In the eyes of God, after we have received Jesus, we belong to ourselves no longer. Our Lord Jesus has already paid a price to purchase us, and rightfully we belong to Him. "Whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:8).*

So now, as a new convert, we grow as disciples, and as we grow we honour the price paid and we honour the Lord by honouring Him by laying down our very lives. This therefore speaks of commitment and zealous consecration.

When it comes to consecration, we have to remember that Jesus through His death and resurrection first gave Himself to us so that we may be able to give ourselves to Him. Our life and hope therefore rests in the risen Lord. Indeed, the Lord has died for us and by His Blood we are sanctified and consecrated, meaning He has set our sins apart and He has made us alive from sin.

The sanctification or that holy process of being set apart that took place on the cross and in the empty tomb is solely the work of Christ. It is a completed work that is applied to everyone at the time of salvation. The believer has therefore been placed into this position by God.

This position does not change based on day to day actions. As Hebrews says, "we have been sanctified . . . once for all." Indeed, Christ has already redeemed the believer, justified the believer, and sanctified the believer when He died on the cross, rose the third day, and ascended to the Father.

The work of sanctification within Jesus is finished. But what is left for us to give ourselves fully unto a new life unto God, so that we may bear fruit. Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me" (John 15:1-4).

The bearing of the fruit is therefore the "evidence" and the natural outflow of being alive to Christ. But bearing fruit does not happen overnight. We need to consecrate ourselves to Him and remain in Him before we can bear fruit because of it.

There is no fruit unless there is an abiding in Christ. How we need to pursue the place of abiding in Christ. So even though sanctification in Jesus is secured and is sealed once and for all, we cannot miss the importance of abiding in God, and to abide means a process of surrendering, which involves the physical, mental, and spiritual experiences of our existence on the earth.

This is thus the consecration of us unto Jesus. It is one thing to believe in Jesus, but it is another thing to pursue Him, to draw closer to Him in relationship, to seek Him, to submit to the Spirit and to truly abide in Him. This is the spiritual journey of the disciple, and in this walk and in this continuous surrendering we shall overcome. To submit and to die to the self requires a life completely surrendered to God. To abide requires us to be faithful, obedient and committed to God.

As we are thus sanctified in Christ, we need to remain and abide in Christ, and we do so be remaining and abiding in the Spirit and being consecrated to Christ in the way we live. Only when we have entered into this transaction of completely handing over our life to Him will we know Him even more deeply.

We cannot by works secure our salvation, but if we stay in the Lord then our works and deeds will reflect that we are a people who are dead to the world and alive to God. Indeed, nothing can separate us from the love of the Lord (Romans 8), but we need to remain and to abide and to grow closer to Him – He who has overcome the world and death. God is the constant factor. He has sanctified us, but we need to remain in Spirit and Truth and so bear fruit to His glory.

We have all been given a free will to make decisions and choices, but a life alive to God is one where everything we do and say is to His glory. We are called to deny ourselves and carry the cross (Mark 8:34), which means denying the Self so that God is enthroned in our lives. One cannot carry the cross and deny oneself one day and not another. We are called to live as children of the light and to be a holy priesthood which is set apart for Him.

Question is how many of us are abiding and remaining in Jesus, how many of us have truly consecrated ourselves to Him and are we truly bearing fruit in Him in Spirit and Truth?

Let Your will be done oh Lord we pray, according to Matthew 6, but then our will cannot be glorified.

We need to lay down the old man, but for some, perhaps for all, this takes time to walk in His light. A journey consists of many steps, and so it is with our spiritual walk of remaining true and faithful, just as Jesus remains always true and faithful by the act of the cross.

In the end, to remain committed and consecrated speaks of aiming and pursuing godliness.

1 Timothy 6: 11 But as for you, O man of God, flee from all these things; aim at and pursue righteousness (right standing with God and true goodness), godliness (which is the loving fear of God and being Christlike), faith, love, steadfastness (patience), and gentleness of heart.

12 Fight the good fight of the faith; lay hold of the eternal life to which you were summoned and [for which] you confessed the good confession [of faith] before many witnesses. 13 In the presence of God, Who preserves alive all living things, and of Christ Jesus, Who in His testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I [solemnly] charge you 14 To keep all His precepts unsullied and flawless, irreproachable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Anointed One), 15 Which [appearing] will be shown forth in His own proper time by the blessed, only Sovereign (Ruler), the King of kings and the Lord of lords, 16 Who alone has immortality [in the sense of exemption from every kind of death] and lives in unapproachable light, Whom no man has ever seen or can see. Unto Him be honor and everlasting power and dominion. Amen (so be it) ... 20 O Timothy, guard and keep the deposit entrusted [to you]! Turn away from the irreverent babble and godless chatter, with the vain and empty and worldly phrases, and the subtleties and the contradictions in what is falsely called knowledge and spiritual illumination.

Final instructions and words of advice usually contain treasures of worth – such as the instruction given to Paul in his epistle to Timothy the young disciple. Final instructions are like a condensed version of the teacher’s wisdom and knowledge, and portray fundamental truths and treasures of spiritual values.

When it comes to his final instructions, Paul charges Timothy to flee from all things that are not from God and to rather pursue and to aim for righteousness (right standing with God and true goodness), godliness (which is the loving fear of God and being Christlike), faith, love, steadfastness (patience), and gentleness of heart.

Both the verbs flee and pursue speak of action and deliberate decision – it speaks of an action that simply doesn’t happen but it is an action that needs to happen by the will and the conscious decision of the one initiating the action. We are therefore not simply going to wake up one day and by mere chance walk in righteousness, godliness, love, gentleness and faith.

These virtues speak after all about the fruits of the Spirit – therefore the Spirit of God – which implies we need to take a decisive and conscious action by moving closer to God by seeking Him and obeying Him. We need to actively and with purpose submit to His will and intent. To pursue implies a forward motion, but such a journey towards God and such a desire to walk in the Spirit and Truth comes not merely by remaining motionless.

We need to want and desire to pursue all that is right. This is the journey of the disciple if the disciple desires to overcome this world and wishes to remain committed unto the Lord. This implies taking action when it comes to the way we think, what we say, what we do and how we do it. Paul also speaks about keeping all His precepts unsullied and flawless, reproachable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Anointed One).

Again, this speaks of action for the word “keep” is also the word used to imply keeping guard. We have to be mindful, aware, and alert and to be constantly striving every day to walk in the ways of God and in the ways of godliness until the coming of Jesus.

Emphasis is placed here on the continuous journey of pursuing goodness and godliness, for we need to do so until a set period of time which is when the Lord returns, therefore it should be an effort from our part that should never fade in terms of our resolute passion in the pursuit of being children of the Lord.

It says in 1 Peter 5:7-9: 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

As with Paul, Peter places emphasis on the ongoing and active process of being alert, being sober minded, of standing firm and of resisting the ways of the world.

How we need to come to that point of realisation that the Lord is looking at us to also play an active and certain role in our spiritual development – we simply cannot be passive and lethargic but we need to be active, bold and determined to make sure that what we say, do and think is to His glory.

We all experience external pressures that make us walk not according to the ways of the Lord, but for this reason we need to be actively aware of such dangers and pitfalls and instead seek to earnestly walk in His Spirit so that we may walk in true love and hope.

In the end, we have to realise that somewhere along the line we have to decide if we are taking our relationship with God seriously or if we have just been fooling around and playing games.

Somewhere along the line we have to realize this is not some kind of club we have joined or that it is about having a good time with God, but it is about His Name and Kingdom that we carry with us, and we have a responsibility and an accountability through our conduct and speech for the world to see Jesus in us.

To be a disciple is a very serious matter. It is about commitment. It is about being passionate to serve the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

It is about continuing to grow in such a manner and to stay committed so that our light may shine in this dark world of heresy and apostasy.

We are here as God's ambassadors. We are here as His ministers and representatives. We are here to uphold His Name. May we therefore as disciples stay the course, persevere, and may we continue to bring the Lord all the honour and all the glory.

MODULE 5

CHAPTER 2

M5C2

Carriers of His presence – Walking in His Glory

Layout by E Cloete

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

**FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT**



Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

So far we have looked at how in order for us to overcome as a disciple of the Lord we need to remain committed to the Lord, and we need to persevere and endure to the end.

To continue with the same theme in mind, in order for us to overcome as disciples of the Lord is that what we need to continue being vessels of His Glory, meaning we must continue to grow from glory to glory. Process of submission.

A disciple after all is not just someone who follows the Lord in Spirit and Truth, but the disciple lives to the Glory of the Lord and walks in the Glory of the Lord. If this remains our goal, our spiritual walk and our path of commitment then we shall surely overcome as disciples of the Lord.

Let us therefore explore what it means to walk in God's Glory and what is the implication of the Glory for the disciple.

Let us read from *Exodus 33: 18* *And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19* *And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20* *And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 21* *And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22* *And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23* *And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.*

What is God's glory that Moses so yearned for and sought? Is the Lord's glory the same as His presence? Is His glory the same as His Spirit? For the Lord is urging us to grasp and comprehend what is His glory, for if we do not understand His glory, how shall we understand what He has called us for, which is to become disciples that carry His Glory?

The urging of the Spirit – He the one who teaches us in all wisdom and knowledge and truth –

calls us to take hold of the “reality” that we are called to give birth and walk in His glory. This is in light of Him speaking about giving birth to the glory what is already inside of us. And by this birth, the earth will be covered by His glory. It is imperative to understand what His glory is. And yet, we don’t quite yet understand what the glory of the Lord is. Some of us may equate it to power and others to holiness.

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:14–19)

In the passage above we can see that it is according to the wealth of God’s glory that we are strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit, to receive Christ living in our heart by faith, and so we become joined to the source of true love. We then go on to attain what all the saints have attained, that is knowing God through experiencing His love, so that we may be may be filled with all the fullness of God. For this reason we need to walk in God’s glory and give birth to such glory so that by the wealth of His glory we are strengthened through the Sprit who sanctifies us by truth.

This will then empower us to walk as disciples of the Lord.

In John 17 we read the following [Prayer of Jesus]: *22And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. 24Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

Jesus is here speaking about a glory that the Father has given Him, and so He prays that we will also take hold of that glory when we are in Him. The Glory was given unto Jesus – and here we have to understand that Jesus, being the Son of Man, was the first fruit and for Him and through Him all things are made (Colossians 1).

The essence, substance, and weightiness of the Father's essence and nature was birthed into His Son, and just so when we are reborn [rebirthed] we find the glory dwells within by the work of the Spirit.

Colossians 1: 15He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. 22But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

We read 2 Corinthians 3 of the glory of the New Covenant: *7Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, 8will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. 11And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!*

12Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. 14But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.

15Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

It is therefore clear by Paul's writing that it is those who turn to Jesus and thus to the Spirit that they will begin to walk in Glory which should be reflected in our spiritual walk. Yet, how often do we not miss verse 18, which speaks of an ever-increasing glory and a transformation – this applies a process of self-denial, a journey of sanctification, an abandonment unto God, and the continuous seeking after truth.

This is after all the walk of the disciple – a journey of continuous self-denial, of abandonment unto God and to continually seeking Him above all. We then shall overcome if we do so.

This implies a process of turning away from those things that blind us spiritually, so that we may spiritually discern [see] and move in God's glory. For this reason it says in John 3 that only those who have been born of the Spirit will truly see the Kingdom of God. We cannot move in God's glory as disciples without moving beyond the Self, beyond the traditions and the customs of our way that veils us from His substance, weightiness and nature.

Yet, what is this glory that the Lord has placed in us and what does He want us to give birth? The original meaning of glory has to do with weightiness. The Hebrew word for "glory", which is *Kabowd* basically, means weight.

In science it would be the mass of an object of matter.

It is the substance of a person or thing. For God, it is who He is, His character and power. We know that God is love, (1st John 4:16); love is God's character and power. God's glory manifests and reveals His love. The glory of God summarizes the seriousness, the perfection, and the infinite significance of all of the attributes of God.

It sums up who He is, in the awesome brightness and weightiness of all His perfections. The original meaning of the term glory was thus brightness, clearness, effulgence: from that it has come to signify honour, renown; and again, that which renders honourable, or demands honour, or renown, reverence, adoration, and worship--that which is worthy of confidence and trust.

The glory of God is essential and declarative. By essential glory is meant that in Him which is glorious--that in His character which demands honour, worship, and adoration. His declarative glory is the showing forth, the revealing, the manifesting, the glory of his character--His essential glory--to His creatures.

To understand more of God's glory, we have to look at God's reply when Moses asked for it. This was God's reply, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (Exodus 33:19).

God told Moses to stand on a rock that was near Him. This symbolizes Jesus the Christ, our rock. And the Lord said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. (Exodus 33:21-22).

To stand upon the rock is symbolic of coming to Christ and putting your trust in Him, your weight upon Him. As God's glory passed by He put Moses in the cleft of the rock, symbolizing to be in Christ. It is God the Father who positions you in Christ, adopting you as His child. This is the place where God's glory is revealed and received, the place we receive manifestations and revelations of the Father's love and power.

And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth" (Exodus 34:6). The word merciful is the Hebrew word rachum; it means to be full of compassion. This is the first word that God used to describe His glory. It reveals much about God's glory and character. It reveals the highest form of love, the kind of love God is.

Rachum is only used in reference to God. Because of the New Covenant, purchased by the blood of Jesus, we can now experience this holy love of God through the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:1-5). This love from God is fruit from the tree of life (Revelation 2:4-7).

The word gracious in Exodus 34:6 means to show favour, mercy, kindness, and forgiveness; longsuffering means to be patient; goodness means to show loving kindness; truth means to be faithful and trustworthy. All of these characteristics are seen as characteristics of love in Corinthians 1: 13.

They are also seen in the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in (Galatians 5:22). But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. Likewise, in Exodus 34:6 the first thing that God reveals about His character is that He is rachum-“full of compassion”.

All of the other characteristics of Exodus 34 are contained in this compassionate love of God.

So what are we being told of Gods’ glory? His glory is the weight and substance of the supreme God – this same God who is full of love, compassion, grace, mercy, kindness and power. This glory is the illumination of His very essence, made known to us by the Spirit so that we may know Him more. We are also called God’s vessels of compassion – us who were created to receive revelation of His glory. That He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy (compassion), which He had prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles (Romans 9:23–24)

And this is what Moses sought - that God would reveal Himself to his mind so that he might know Him and so that he might have a clear and powerful apprehension of those things which constitute His glory.

Moses was therefore making his desire known for more than he knew of God. He knew comparatively little of God. Something indeed he had known of Him, but he wished to know more –

a desire to know that which makes God worthy of the homage and adoration of His creatures, and especially he desired to be so subdued by this knowledge and so subdued that his confidence might be perfect in Him, so that he might never fail in his trust and leaning upon the Lord.

What then does it mean to carry His glory?

It places our focus on God and makes us God conscious of His holiness, purity, of His character, nature and love. If we truly carry His glory, it will redefine the way we operate and function – for those who allow the Spirit to take them from glory to glory, mean certain abandonment unto God and an alienation from the Self.

Our motivations, intent and thoughts will be centred on His Will, His compassion, His love and desire to see a lost world saved. It will place our hearts in alignment with His. We become God conscious and not self-conscious in all that we do, say and think.

How we need as disciples to urgently recapture the centrality of glorifying God in our lives and work. This should after all be the entire focus of the disciple – walking in the Glory of God!

Too much of what passes for evangelical Christianity is man-centred or even self-centred. God is reduced to a means to some other end, whether it be my own self-fulfilment or the welfare of others. The results are disastrous for worship, for discipleship, and for witness. Worship either becomes tepid, or it becomes an experience we offer to people as a sort of consumer product rather than adoration and consecration we offer to God.

Discipleship becomes a self-help program that leaves huge areas of life untouched, rather than a life-long love affair with God that lays every area of life on the altar to be consecrated to Him and to be conformed to His image.

If the glory of God is our supreme passion, this will redefine both the goal of our task and the manner in which we pursue that task. The goal of our task is that the earth be filled with the knowledge of His glory as the waters cover the sea.

Our passion is to see Him receive the glory that is due His Name from every tribe, tongue, people and nation. Everything else is simply a means to that end. We are not seeking to add numbers that we can report to the organization; we are seeking to add worshippers to the choir of heaven, who will live every area of their lives to the praise of His glory.

This focus invests a new, holy seriousness to discipleship and the life of the church. We are not content unless His glory is proclaimed, reflected, upheld and adored among the people to whom He has called us. The task is not about us, and it's not even ultimately about the nations. The focus is on Him.

A passion for the glory of God will also redefine the manner in which we pursue our task. If our supreme goal is to glorify Him, we will not be able to separate our personal lives from our work lives. Jesus has given us the same glory, the same love, which the Father gave Him. The glory of God and the Father's love is now within us because of the New Covenant. This glory unifies Christ body of believers and sanctifies us to be God's holy habitation.

We glorify Him when we honour His Glory by walking in such glory.

We cannot add to His glory, for He is already perfectly and infinitely glorious. Rather, for us to glorify God means for us to ascribe the glory that is due His Name in worship. It means that we acknowledge His glory by living as though His perfections are as serious and significant as they really are, so that we reflect His glory through a pure mirror.

It means that nothing horrifies us more than the thought of bringing dishonour to His glorious Name, and nothing delights us more than to feel His pleasure as we live to the praise of His glory.

It also means that we declare His glory among the nations, inviting others to join us in our love affair with His glorious perfection. Glorifying God thus consumes and defines every aspect of our life and witness as well as our worship.

The Glory of the Lord was beautifully demonstrated in Matthew 17 when Jesus was transfigured into the fullness of His glory: *1And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, 2And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. 3And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. 4Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 5While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. 6And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. 7And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. 8And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only. 9And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.*

When we therefore look to Jesus the knowledge of the glory of God is revealed. For it is God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6).

The signs, wonders, and miracles that Jesus did were manifestations of the glory of God, manifestations of His love and power. This beginning of signs Jesus did in Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. (John 2:11)

How we need to cry out and yearn and seek and pursue the Glory of the Lord as His Bride! How we must cry out for it, pray for it, seek it, and long for it, for it is a terrible prospect to be left without the Lord's Glory. There is indeed no joy, no love, no hope and no peace and no blessing without His Glory. How we need to crave for it, how we need to take hold of it and carry it so close to our hearts.

To carry His glory is in the deep revelation and reality of walking in His love, compassion, truth, holiness and purity.

When we walk in His glory, being God conscious and God centred, we give Him the praise and there the Kingdom will be manifested through the sons and daughters of the Living God! And where there is light, then darkness recedes.

Where there is love, hatred disperses. Where there is forgiveness, bitterness and envy disintegrates. Can we see how, if we truly walk in His Glory, then the knowledge of His Glory – which is His love, compassion, passion and hope – will touch every heart and every spirit in this world. Glory to God!

Yet, it is the exaltation of the Self and of idolatry, spiritual adultery, rebellion, iniquity and the wisdom of this world that glorifies not God. How we need to walk humility and submission move away from such self-glorifying nature as we seek Him with all our hearts, minds and strength.

2 Corinthians 4: 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So then death is working in us, but life in you.

In order to be a pleasing offering unto God, we need to submit, yield to His will and way; otherwise our rebellion will eventually be a stench and defile us.

It is always the intent of God for us to live holy and pure, but we need Him to purify and refine us. We need to allow Him to work in our lives to His glory and for His glory. Ultimately, through the process of the fire and the water baptism, we prepare ourselves to be vessels of honour and glory.

We prepare ourselves to be no longer filled with the things of the world but to become carriers of God's true treasures such as His holiness, knowledge, wisdom and strength.

When we truly walk in His Glory, embracing His truth and commandments, blessings will flow out of us, and there will be enough blessing within our life for the overflow of the spiritual and physical bread! Let us walk then to His glory, from glory to glory, so that His Life may abound and overflow to touch a broken world.

Remember, the Lord's Glory speaks of the weightiness of His character and nature. It speaks of the very reverence and honour to His Greatness and to the Brightness of His beauty. We are called to walk in such weightiness and for His Glory to manifest in us as His disciples.

MODULE 5

CHAPTER 3

M5C3

Keep the fires
perpetually
burning

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT



Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

So far in this module we have looked at how to overcome as a disciple, which means staying committed to God, staying consecrated and carrying His Presence as a living sacrifice unto His Glory.

More than ever we need to understand that as disciples of the Lord we can only overcome when we allow God's presence to keep burning within us, and when we continually seek Him. We can therefore only overcome through persistence, persevering and staying close to the Lord.

It says in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 (NKJV): Do not quench the Spirit. This is a call for any disciple to keep walking in the Spirit, to keep obeying the Lord and to keep listening to Him, for this is the only way to truly grow in maturity and to overcome. The Holy Spirit is a fire dwelling in each believer. He wants to express Himself in our actions and attitudes. When believers do not allow the Spirit to be seen in our actions, when we do what we know is wrong, we suppress or quench the Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 also tells us that we should not grieve the Spirit. We grieve the Spirit by living like the pagans (4:17-19), by lying (4:25), by being angry (4:26-27), by stealing (4:28), by cursing (4:29), by being bitter (4:31), by being unforgiving (4:32), and by being sexually immoral (5:3-5). Again, this implies that as disciple we must keep on leading a holy and pure lifestyle, dedicated continually to the Lord, growing from glory to glory.

Both quenching and grieving the Spirit are similar in their effects. Both hinder a godly lifestyle as a disciple. Both happen when a believer sins against God and follows his or her own worldly desires. The only correct road to follow is the road that leads the believer closer to God and purity, and farther away from the world and sin.

As believers, we are called to therefore keep the fires perpetually burning, meaning staying on course, and submitted and yielded to the Lord. To understand about keeping the fires burning, we need to also study

Leviticus 6, which deals with the Law of the Burnt Offering: *8 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*

9 “Command Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth upon the altar all night until morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. 10 And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the ashes of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. 11 Then he shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. 12 And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. 13 A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.

The Lord said to the priests to keep the fires on the altar of burned offering burning – this was a sign of the continuous presence of the Lord (Number 15). Some translations speak of perpetually burning, meaning constant with the implication of everlasting. The burning fires also served as a day and night sweet aroma to the Lord and served as an indication of the people’s commitment to serving and worshipping the Great I AM.

The Altar of Burned Offering was a place of sacrifice and worship, and upon the altar was sprinkled anointing oil, blood while fire burned continuously. The offering was made as an act of voluntary worship (as seen in the days of Abraham and Isaac), of dedication, fellowship and repentance of sin.

What then is the modern-day spiritual worship of the altar? It is the cross. Upon the cross hung the Messiah by whose blood there was a remittance of sin (repentance), yet His sacrifice also served as a voluntary act of worship and dedication. He is also the Anointed One. By His sprinkled blood we are free and by His blood there is the sacrifice made one and for all. The entire altar of burned offering is therefore a spiritual type of Jesus’ sacrifice and victory on the cross.

Therefore, to keep the fires burning, as instructed to the priests, imply that we as disciples of the Lord must continually carry the cross and deny ourselves continually. Remember what Jesus said about what it means to be a disciple?

It says in Luke 14: 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. We must be perpetually be on fire for the Lord, meaning constant, without ceasing until everlasting.

Think about it – God instructed the priests NEVER to let the fires go out. There must be a continual action, commitment and a continual process of commitment to keep the fires burning as a sign of God’s Presence and the people’s commitment to the Lord. They could slack in their duty. Just so, we as disciples of the Lord can never become slack or weary in our walk with the Lord. For the Scriptures says we must give the devil no foothold (Ephesians 4:27). We must therefore be disciples who continually strive to be more like the Lord, to persevere in holiness and to always seek Him above all else as our true king.

It says in Psalm 24: Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. We also see the theme of purity stressed in the Beatitudes as delivered by Jesus in Matthew 5. There is no substitute for holiness and purity. Disciples of the Lord are called to walk in such a manner, growing from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Let us understand if the Lord asks us to keep the fires burning on the altar in a spiritual context for the here and now, He is asking us to keep the fires burning of being a disciple that constantly preserves to carry the cross and deny the Self. We must therefore day and night not grow weary of laying down our old ways, denying the world, resisting the devil and not cease in doing good. We must therefore day and night be walking in constant dedication, worship and repentance unto the Lord.

How then do we keep the fires burning and what does this imply?

Firstly, the coals that were taken from the Altar of Burned Offering served as the coals to be placed on the Altar of Incense. The Altar of Incense served as a symbolic lifting of prayers to the heavens, becoming like a sweet aroma to the Lord. If we want to keep the fires burning, then this means constant prayer (Ephesians 6), constant dedication, constant worship and constantly walking in His ways.

Coals in the Bible speak of purification (repentance) but also judgment. In Isaiah 6, the angel of the Lord touched the lips of the prophet to bring forth purification and remittance of sin. Now Isaiah can pray and speak prophetically day and night just as if he had become the Altar of Incense.

Isaiah 6: And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 5And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" 6Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. 7And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

Now, here is the wonderful thing – when Jesus alluded to carrying the cross, He already knew of Simon who helped Him carry the cross. We do not carry alone the cross, but we walk in His presence and shadow. And when we carry the cross, we are covered by His shadow just as the Lord shadowed Simon – we are covered by the oil and blood stained beams of the cross – we are therefore under His covering. Psalm 91 – shadow of His wings.

As we carry the cross, our backs bend in voluntary submission and worship, we stand UNDER the Covenant of the Blood, as shed on the cross. By keeping the fires burning and carrying the cross night and day, from early to late, we are honouring the Covenant and come under God's order. As we carry the cross, we also sacrifice our time, our agendas, our way and ourselves. We come UNDER His will and way and glory.

When we therefore keep the fires burning on the altar, meaning we walk day and night in His Covenant as living sacrifices, we will therefore also generate coals of fires spiritually to serve as a sweet aroma unto the Lord. By keeping the fires burning, we become a sweet aroma unto the Lord.

Remember, the fires cannot go out otherwise there will be no coals. No coals mean no sweet aroma will be lifted to heaven. This is why it says we must not quench the fire of the Holy Spirit.

Now to continue with the theme of light and fire – in the Holy Place stood the Lampstand. This is the light of the Holy Spirit guiding us home. We are warned that those who serve not the Lord will have their lamp stand removed. So we must yield and submit by keeping the fires burning through prayer and dedication and repentance and worship, under the covering of the Covenant of Blood, while at the same time submitting and surrendering to the inner light and illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Question is, how many times do we not grow tired of carrying the cross and how many times do we not let the fires grow cold and how many times do we not shun the light of the Holy Spirit? For this reason we need to be in constant fellowship with Him, praying, seeking Him, denying ourselves and walking in His presence.

Romans 5: (New International Version) 3Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

Paul, the author of the epistle of Romans, encouraged the followers of Jesus to persevere in times of suffering (the world hates the disciples), for they were living in times of great tribulation, uncertainty, wars, persecution and hardships (much like today). Paul, who himself had gone through so many trials, understood that we grow closer to God and we become more like Him, blessed and assured in His presence, if we continually endeavour to stand strong in to His glory in the midst of a world shrouded in darkness.

Perseverance is defined as the steady persistence in adhering to a course of action, a belief, or a purpose, therefore steadfastness. Perseverance implies action. It implies endurance. It implies dedication. It implies that we shall and must keep on going even though it feels at times that the mountains crash into the sea and the heavens is about to crash down upon us.

Perseverance implies a clear choice of pursuing God unto the end, seeking His will, and only in the strength of the Spirit can we overcome the toils and snares that wait upon our path. Only in God can we walk in love and stand on His promises even when a veil of tears blinds us.

Hebrews 12: (NIV) says 1Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

What an awesome assurance! Yes, we can endure because Jesus endured, even on the cross. Yes, we can run the race to the glory of the Lord for the Lord is with us and never forsakes us. Yes, we can complete our journey with joy and gladness for He is God and we are His children. Yes, we can run and not grow faint, and yes, we can run and not grow weary for we are filled by the Holy Spirit, redeemed by the Blood of Jesus and we are known by Majesty.

This life is harsh, and daily we feel the pressure of coping, but in His strength and might we can persevere in our faith. We can persevere to be light of the world, we can persevere to be the salt of the earth, we can persevere to glorify Him, and we can persevere and overcome on our journey to be carriers of the Good News. We can for He is I AM!

And indeed, as Paul wrote, if we endure, if we persist, if we keep on being bold, if we fight the good faith of faith, if we stand on the solid rock of Jesus, then we shall become more like our Lord in character. For our spiritual fruits attest to us being children of God, not our works. No matter what works we do, if it is without the character of Jesus it could easily fool and deceive.

Character is the key to making an eternal difference. For only through character, implying the way we behave, the way we react, and our attitude serves as the key to what extent we have submitted and allowed God to change us.

To persevere means therefore to adhere to a course of action, a belief, or a purpose with steadfastness. Persistence is refusing to give up or let go - to endure. We need to therefore endure on the course of action of living a life that brings glory to God. We must endure in our faith and we must endure in our purpose to be the light and the salt of the world.

We must endure as disciples of the Lord, for then we shall fulfil the Great Commission. *2 Peter 1: 5For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Indeed, let us persist in doing good, let us persist in walking in love, let us persist in being in nature kind, gentle, caring, forgiving and let us keep on seeking to uplift, encourage and to edify. Let us resolve to walk in goodness, in His knowledge, in godliness and in hope.

It says in James 5:11 that those who persevered are blessed for truly the testing of our faith develops perseverance. Let us therefore endeavour to be true ambassadors of God on earth and let us persevere in doing well and being a light shining brightly.

Let us rather be the solution than the problem. And indeed, we can persist and we can persevere for the Lord is with us and He smiles upon those who seek Him and who shares His love with this world.

Let us then take a moment and consider that the greatest change we can make is in choosing to actively seek Him, His will, His glory and His majesty.

For then we shall be carried in His arms, and when the storms rage we can take shelter under His shadow and when the mountain quake, then we shall not fear. And above all, let us trust and have faith in God for He is and will forever be in control. Let us be still and know He is God and the righteous shall prosper.

We must therefore keep on striving to be holy for He is holy. We must continually strive to be vessels of His Glory. *2 Corinthians 4: 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. 8 We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— 10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 11 For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So then death is working in us, but life in you.*

We must continue to be a pleasing offering unto God. *Ephesians 4: 17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; 19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

Finally, let us remember *2 Corinthians 5: 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

Indeed, as disciples we are a new creation, so let us walk in such a manner to the Glory of the Lord so that as disciples we can lead so many who are still spiritually lost to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus. Indeed, let the fires of His Presence keep burning in us as His disciples so that the world may know our Lord Jesus is alive, real and still the hope of glory!

MODULE 5

CHAPTER 4

M5C4

It is all about Jesus

Layout by E Cloete

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

**FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT**



lmi.bibleschool@gmail.com

As we come to the end of this course, let us remember once again what it means to be a disciple. Let us remember the word ‘disciple’ in Greek is transliterated mathetes (literally, the learning one) and is derived from the verb manthano which means “to learn”.

It occurs about 264 times in the Gospels and Acts. It means ‘One who learns instruction from another’ or a disciple is likened to an apprentice who learns from his master tradesman. He can also be likened to an imitator of his teacher. Gleaning the information from the Greek words one finds that a disciple is a person that not only gains knowledge from the teacher but also acts upon it. So in essence, a disciple is one that learns from the Teacher and then acts upon it.

We need to understand, a disciple follows, and a disciple learns from the Teacher. The disciple never replaces the one true Teacher or takes the role of the teacher. Jesus remains our Teacher and our Lord. We never must assume the role of Teacher but remain a follower in the service of our King and His Kingdom. Discipleship is ALL about Jesus, and not the self. It is not about our ministry, or our plans or agenda, but is about Jesus and His Glory.

The theme “to follow” is also the key to be a successful disciple. In *Matthew 4 we read: Jesus Calls His First Disciples - 18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 20 At once they left their nets and followed him.*

So, discipleship is all about ‘following’, ‘learning’ or becoming more like the Master. And who are we following, and from who are we learning? Is it not Jesus? Since Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith, we must be reminded that to overcome as a disciple then our focus should always be on Jesus, and that everything we do should be to the Glory and for the Glory of our Teacher and Master – Jesus.

It says in *Revelation 12: 11 They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*

Remember the words of Jesus when He said that those who truly wish to follow Him must deny the Self and carry the cross? The words of Jesus are surely echoed in Revelations 12, which also speaks about triumphing by the blood of the Lamb, which again takes us back to the central importance of Jesus. For the entire life of a disciple, and his very existence, should be about Jesus, and so everything we do and say should be a testimony about His goodness, His Glory, His beauty, His sacrifice, His triumph on the cross and that He is the Lord of life and resurrection.

As a disciple of God, if we truly wish to overcome, then we have to cultivate a true relationship with the Lord and be careful that we do not fall into the trap of religion. We are not called to follow a system of rituals and traditions, but we as disciples are called to follow the Lord and the Lord alone. He should remain always our Teacher, Rabbi, Master and Lord.

Sadly, one of the greatest mistake's mankind keeps on making, caused by spiritual deception, is to run after a religion and not after the Source – Jesus. We can only overcome when we as disciples keep following Jesus, not man, and all that we do is to glorify Him as we seek to become more like Him in character, nature and even behaviour.

A lot of people do not even realise that it is so easy to follow Christianity as a religion by following its rules, regulations, dogma and theory without even following God Himself. It is the case of seeking a religious life that seem godly and that seems pure and right, but there is a huge difference between actually worshipping God as a Person and treating the religion as a philosophical lifestyle. After all, the very definition of being a disciple is one where we follow Jesus and no other person.

There is a vast difference between following God and following a religion. In the one case you have Divinity as a Being taking hold of you and the other is man taking hold of a doctrine and ideals and truths to ultimately suit his needs. A faith where one takes hold of God is a faith of immense power and authority. The other – a religion – is dead in power and authority. And so it says that the spirit gives life but the letter of

the law kills. We can only become true believers walking in the supernatural if we abide in God and not in a religion. That is where we need to walk.

You see, it is all about following Jesus for He is the Way, Truth and Life. He is the creator, the author and the glory. *Ephesians 2: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

The answer to everything is Jesus, the Son of the Living God. His pure love for us and our pure love for Him is all that is important, and it is all that matters.

Oh, glorious Jesus, you are all and everything, for all has been made for you, unto you, through you, in you and all is upheld by thee! Jesus should be the all and everything of a disciple. He should be on our minds, on our lips, and on our hearts every waking minute of the day.

For millenniums the world has been led away from Jesus by following many different other voices, so many different paths, so many false ways and so many false shepherds. Yet, Jesus is the only Voice that we must listen to, He is the only Way, He is the only Shepherd, and He is the only answer and the only way to the throne room of God the Father.

Let us always remember *John 10: "I assure you and most solemnly say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up from some other place [on the stone wall], that one is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep [the protector and provider]. 3 The doorkeeper opens [the gate] for this man, and the sheep hear his voice and pay attention to it. And [knowing that they listen] he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out [to pasture]. 4 When he has brought all his own sheep outside, he walks on ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice and recognize his call. 5 They will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."*

Again, the emphasis is here on 'following' and those who 'follow' will know the voice of the true Shepherd. A disciple can only overcome when he continues to follow Jesus and keeps on hearing the voice of the true Shepherd, for then we also live in the reality of Psalm 23.

For centuries the voice of man has tried to replace the voice of the Lord in providing truth, but there is only one true voice and vision. Jesus is Wisdom, yet all the false wisdom presented through thousand ages has drawn us away from the Lord. Oh, it is all about Jesus, yet all that is false has now for so long drawn our eyes from the truth and the answer, the salvation and the glory!

God does not call us to build on any other foundation but on the only foundation of Jesus. When the people are led back to the throne room of the Lord, there will be praise, there will be worship, there will be a humble heart and a contrite spirit, there will be truth and there will be victory!

Let us always be reminded of *Matthew 7: 24* “*So everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, will be like a wise man [a far-sighted, practical, and sensible man] who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods and torrents came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them, will be like a foolish (stupid) man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods and torrents came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great and complete was its fall.*”

You see, as disciples of the Lord we will only overcome, and we will only fulfil the Great Commission if we continue to follow Jesus, and when we allow Him to be our King and Master all day, every day. This can only happen when our lives are continually build upon the true and sure foundation of Jesus, for then the winds will come and the storms will blow but we shall remain standing.

It says in *Ephesians 4: 14* *So that we are no longer children [spiritually immature], tossed back and forth [like ships on a stormy sea] and carried about by every wind of [shifting] doctrine, by the cunning and trickery of [unscrupulous] men, by the deceitful scheming of people ready to do anything [for personal profit].*

Paul here writes about the importance of being equipped and about maturity, when means maturity in Jesus and being equipped by the Holy Spirit to be a follower of our Lord Jesus. For when we are truly equipped and when we are mature in Christ as a disciple, then we shall not be carried away by every wind of shifting doctrine. Truly, we can only overcome when we remain in the Truth, therefore in Jesus, who must be our Rock and our Foundation all the time. This is the only way to overcome for He must remain our testimony and our hope of glory.

For God is faithful and true, yet the world and His people have for too long not adhered to His Voice and His Wisdom. For too long our eyes have not been turned upon Jesus and for too long we have failed to build on the only foundation which is Jesus. We have preached and taught so many doctrines, built on so many other foundations, yet the only true and everlasting foundation of Jesus has been discarded.

Anything that draws our fully devoted love from the Lord is idolatry. When we look at ourselves, there is either condemnation or commendation. When we look at ourselves and not God, our failures and weaknesses either overcome us, or our pride and hunger to be gods overcome us.

When we look at ourselves, there is the world and imperfection, there is the reminder of the flesh and our past, and there is the control of the emotion, the gratification of the senses and the sharp realization we are but human.

Yet, when we look not at ourselves, casting away self-absorption and self-centeredness, but looking upon Jesus, beholding Him in all His holiness and splendour, we see the author and finisher of our faith.

We then behold the majesty and the glory, we see the resurrection and the life, and we bow before the Rose of Sharon, the Lilly of the Valley, the Lion of Judah and the Lamb who is worthy to open the seals. We behold the truth and the power, and we know, yes we know, He is God and He is Lord!

So as a disciple we must always behold Jesus, and look at the world and at ourselves through His eyes. For then we shall triumph and overcome, for indeed our Lord is greater than He who is in this world!

With our eyes upon Jesus, this world fades, our past and future fades, for only the here and now is where we long to live and breathe. With our eyes upon Jesus, we see His plans, His ways, His perfection and His beauty.

With our eyes upon Jesus, we know in our hearts that His grace and mercy is new every morning. Truly, His grace is sufficient for us. His grace makes us strong when we are weak and by His love we are forgiven and strengthened to reign with Him.

With our eyes upon Jesus, there is peace, there is hope, there is comfort, there is joy and there is the cry of the heart just to worship and serve. All the shackles and burdens shatter. All that remains is His perfect and pleasing will. Oh, let us lay down our ways and follow completely His will! Oh, with our eyes upon Jesus, there is only one desire and only longing: to worship Him and to glorify Him.

There is the only desire to live and please Him! Oh, by the power of His love, by the power of His grace, by the power of His touch, we bow the knee, our hearts melt, and we know that He is God and we are but man!

With our eyes upon Jesus, everything in this world pales in comparison and fades away. At His feet, we lay down our crowns, we lay down our plans, our ways, our deeds and our pride and we surrender. At the feet of God, our longing is stilled, our thirst and hunger quenched, and we can be at peace.

O, the Lord says be still and know that He is God. Let us be still, our eyes upon Jesus, our hearts upon Him, beholding Him, crying out for Him, seeking His touch and love, for then we will be satisfied and then we will be free.

Let us behold Him, love Him and cherish Him. He seeks our heart and He seeks our love. With our eyes upon Jesus, there is settled faith, there is certainty, there is assurance and there is comfort. With our eyes upon Jesus, there is trust, there is calmness, for we know no matter what storm, no matter the trials and tribulations, no matter the days of splendid joy or the days of fire, our Lord Jesus is faithful and true, always walking with us.

Yes, He is the answer and the truth. He is the Life and the Way. There is no other foundation and there is nothing else. He desires our comfort, our love, our worship and praise. He desires our heart and spirit, all of it, so He calls for obedience and submission. With our eyes upon Him, with our eyes beholding the cross and the empty tomb, how else but to abandon all to walk in His love?

Yes, for the disciple it should always be about Jesus. It starts with Him and it continues for all eternity to be about Him. For Jesus is the Righteous King and the only one to be praised and worshiped. Let us hear His voice as disciples and let us follow His Wisdom and bow the knee to Him alone as our only Shepherd. For then we shall overcome and fulfil the mandate of the disciple.

Let us always remember we are God's children, His sons and daughters of faith, therefore His disciples. Let us remember that we are filled with the resurrection power of Jesus, working through and in the Holy Spirit, that we are able to do all that God has called us to do, that we are victorious, alive, free, brought into light, bought by the precious Blood, cleansed, consecrated, sanctified, adopted, anointed, called and blessed. This should be the mind-set of the disciple, for then we shall be victorious to His Glory, and never to our own glory.

His Spirit moves us to greater heights and destinies. We are magnificent, not yet perfect, not yet pure, but broken in humility, filled with praise, filled with a new song for the Lord, filled with great wisdom and knowledge, all to the glory of the Lord! We shall not be condemned, we shall not be ridiculed, we shall not be pushed back, and we shall not be made to feel weak in error. We are after all disciples of the Lord.

Yes, at His feet there is surrender, there is forgiveness and there is peace. He is the fulfilment of the Law and the mediator of the New Covenant. By His blood we are free! With our eyes upon Him, there is vision and understanding.

Let us surrender as His disciples, for He is the answer to all and everything, for all ages and all ages to come. He is love and He is compassion. He is the Alfa and the Omega. He is the authority and life. He is Lord over all.

And so for the disciple the journey with the Lord remains a spiritual awakening, from the day we kneel before Him, to the day we truly follow Him to the day that we truly learn to serve Him. There is no greater adventure and no greater exploration to undertake under the sun than to embark on the divine journey of discovering God and having a relationship with Him.

And such is the desire of the Lord – that we all undertake such a journey, for it is greater than climbing the highest mountains, river rafting down the longest rivers, navigating the vastest of oceans or conquering the greatest of lands.

God is huge, powerful and beyond words. What a great discovery when we draw closer to Him and when we seek and pursue Him.

Indeed, let us be reminded of Hebrews 6: 19 We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

For the disciple, we can be assured and be at peace for the Living Lord, by His Word, will forever be our life anchor – immovable, infallible, incorruptible and always faithful! This is the hope for the disciple, and the reason why we shall overcome.

What a hope and what a blessing to know that God, the defender of Israel and the defender of His children, is indeed with us and not against us (Romans 8:31), and that in the storms and in the still waters, He remains our anchor that grounds us and that keeps us steady and who will keep us on course.

Let us praise the Lord and be thankful in this day, lifting up our voices in psalms and hymns, for Jesus died and rose from the grave, tearing the veil before the Holy of Holies so that we the redeemed by His blood are saved, and that we have access to the throne room of God and that this Mighty God truly and undoubtedly anchors us.

No matter the storms, no matter the winds of life, no matter the lashing rains of trouble and strife, no matter the heat of the sun, God anchors us, God keeps us from sinking and God keeps us from being shattered against the rocks of our hardships. He is our Rock and the Fortress for the disciple.

When God is our rock and our fortress, when He is our anchor and when He is our hope, then the challenges, the obstacles, the fears and the worry of this life pales. God is our refuge, and under His wing we take shelter (Psalm 91) and we can know

that nothing will separate us from His love (Romans 8:37-39). This is the hope of the disciple. For indeed, with God as our rock and our anchor, we can rejoice with David when he said in Psalm 23: 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Let us as disciples be filled with hope and courage, for we can hold onto God as He holds onto us. Let us continue on the path that God has set before us, for then we shall overcome, we shall serve Him in Spirit and Truth and as disciples we will let His light shine.

Deuteronomy 32: 3 I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! 4 He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

MODULE 5

CHAPTER 5

M5C5

**Stay faithful to
see, perceive,
hear and
understand**

Layout by E Cloete

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

**FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT**



Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

In our journey of growing and overcoming as disciples of the Lord, the necessity of knowing the will of the Lord is of great importance. And this implies knowing the Kingdom.

After all, a disciple is called to have a kingdom mind-set. In the Lord's Prayer, the disciples were taught to pray that the Lord's Kingdom must come on earth as it is in heaven, meaning we have to lay down our own crowns in order to serve the King of kings. Our heart's desire must be to seek His Kingdom be manifested here on earth, as it is in heaven.

In Mark 4 we read the following: *And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. 10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. 11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: 12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them*

Jesus at the time was teaching to the crowds, and He spoke of many parables. Specifically, in Mark 4, He was dealing with the parable of the sower. When the disciples asked the Lord for an explanation, He told them that the mystery of the Kingdom is given unto them, meaning unto the disciples.

Jesus then spoke and said to those OUTSIDE will not understand that they will not perceive and they will not understand. What they therefore will not perceive or understand is the Kingdom of God. Now the greatest mystery that was truly revealed to the disciples is that Jesus is the Messiah and the true Saviour of the world.

While this may be the greatest mystery at the time that was to be revealed, disciples in general need to know the fullness, the truth and the ways of the Kingdom. After all, we are called to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, to first seek the Kingdom and His Righteousness and to pray for His Kingdom to come on earth as in heaven.

How can we pray or seek for something that we do not understand or perceive? A disciple needs to grow in maturity in order to know, perceive and understand the Kingdom in order to move in the ways of the Kingdom.

So here we find in Mark 4 that Jesus says that to the DISCIPLES the Kingdom is revealed. Therefore, only those who are true disciples of the Lord will know the will of the Lord, shall know the Kingdom of the Lord and walk in the ways of the Kingdom. For the rest, the outsiders, they will continually see but not perceive and hear but not listen.

Let us understand, in verse 9, the disciples were told that those who has an ear to hear. This is exactly what is says in Revelations chapters 2 and 3, when it comes to the seven churches.

It says ... “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

We are admonished to hear what the Spirit of the Lord says, but we can only hear what the Spirit says once we have been reborn in the Spirit (John 3). Therefore, we can only hear what God speaks to us once we have completely yielded and submitted to the Lord, and so become worshippers in spirit and truth.

After all, it says in 1 Corinthians 2: 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. 16 For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

This is the path of the disciple – to be baptized in water and to be baptized in the Spirit of the Lord. For then we are committed to the Lord, and we seek to serve the Lord by following Him in the power of the Holy Spirit and in His Truth. And as we are led by the Spirit, we shall “have the mind of Christ” in order to perceive, to understand and to know the Kingdom. Remember, Jesus said Himself that a true disciple denies the Self and carries the cross.

So a true disciple will truly lay it all down for the glory of the Lord and such a disciple seeks the way and the truth of the Lord.

When it comes to hearing, this connects with the teaching of Jesus about the Good Shepherd in John 10 when He said that those who truly know the Lord shall know His voice.

In Mark 4, Jesus said to that those who have an ear to hear, meaning that those who truly can hear the Lord will understand and perceive, for they know the voice of the Master. Therefore, by implication, a true disciple hears the voice of God, and therefore by hearing knows the will of the Lord and can therefore seek the will. And as we seek the will of the Lord, we seek His Kingdom and His Righteousness. And since if we do so and the rest shall be added, then surely this is a process of overcoming!

Now, returning to the seven letters to the churches in Revelations, the chapters begin with listening to the Spirit and ending with “those who overcome”. So if we can hear the Lord and take heed and act upon it, then surely we shall overcome. And they that overcome will eat from the tree of life; they will be given some of the hidden manna to eat; will be given power over the nations; shall be clothed in white garments; their names will not blotted out from the Book of Life; will be made to be a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go out no more; they will be granted to sit with the Lord.

In 2 Timothy 4 it says the following: *3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

In Mark 4 we read how those on the outside are not perceiving or hearing, while in Isaiah 6 the people have turned away from the Lord because they have not heard with their ears, which leads them to understand with their heart.

In 2 Timothy 4 it speak of those who will also not listen to the truth of the Lord, thus if you cannot hear what God says then there is no understanding.

If there is no understanding, then how can you perceive or know? 2 Timothy 4 speaks very much of those who are standing on the outside, for they have chosen a different path – one of listening to man and not to God primarily.

And once this happens, we depart from wisdom, for we fear no longer God. After all, to fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Job 28:28).

In John 3, the Lord teaches us that those who are reborn in the Spirit will “see” the Kingdom of God. Here the Lord is referring to spiritual sight, spiritual understanding and spiritual wisdom. Saul, who became the Apostle Paul, was struck blind on the Road to Damascus. Saul at the time was blind to the truth, and could not see the Kingdom of God nor understand or perceive.

He was a murderer, for he was blinded by religion. In essence, Paul at the time could not yet see or perceive because he was not yet a true disciple of the Lord. And so the Lord spoke to Him to remind Him that it is He the Lord that Paul was persecuting. Once the eyes of Paul had opened he saw and perceived spiritually.

Let us also be reminded of 1 Corinthians 2 that by the leading of the Holy Spirit we can understand the mind of the Lord. Thus, this speaks about a state of understanding, perceiving and knowing the Kingdom and the ways of the Kingdom.

So to return to Mark 4, the Lord makes it clear that His disciples will see and perceive the Kingdom. Why? Because in today’s context, a disciples is one that is led by the Spirit of the Lord, who knows the Lord and thus knows the Kingdom.

A disciple will see and perceive because He is led by the Spirit that as poured out on Pentecost to empower and to equip the disciples to be witnesses of the Kingdom unto the ends of the earth. Yet you cannot be witness of the Kingdom unless you know the Kingdom, and you surely cannot overcome unless you see and understand and perceive as the Lord leads!

The Lord speaks to His disciples in Mark 4 and says that those who are on the outside will not perceive or see. Now, there are various ways of looking at this. Is He

speaking of unbelievers, therefore those in the world who have never known the Lord?

Remember, Jesus said to His disciples – therefore those who worship in spirit and truth- that they shall know the mysteries of the Kingdom.

The reality and truth is, anybody who is not true disciple of the Lord will not know, understand or perceive the reality or the truth or the magnitude or the power of the Kingdom. So yes, you can be a believer, but not a follower, you can even be a Christian, but not a disciple. It comes down to relationship versus religion, traditions and legalisms.

To be a disciple calls for a life led by the Spirit.

It says in *Romans 8: 9* *But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.* The writings of Paul connects with the teachings of John 3 that calls for believers to be reborn in the Spirit. So clearly the Lord is showing us that a disciple will walking in the Spirit.

In the same chapter it reads: *13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba,[e] Father."*

Glory to God, for a disciple who is led by the Spirit shall know the ways of the Kingdom, and such ways is about joy, love, hope, purity, peace and righteousness. After all, it says *John 13:35: By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

A disciples loves, for a disciples abides in the Lord (John 15 verse 1) who IS LOVE.

Paul summarised the importance of love in 1 Corinthians 13.

A true disciple walks in the Spirit, is committed to the Lord, has laid down the self, seeks no other kingdom, and lives only for the Lord. For a true disciple hears what God says, and a true disciple by the leading of the Holy Spirit will perceive, will know and understand the Kingdom.

In other words, a true disciple is a reborn follower of the Lord. This is not someone who walks according to religion but is someone who truly knows the Master.

Let us also remember, since a disciple has laid down the Self and taken up the cross, the disciples is completely submitted to the Spirit of the Lord. A disciple will walk in the truth for the Spirit of the Lord comes to lead us in all truth (John 16).

And let us also remember, that since a disciple is led by the Spirit of the Lord, such a disciple shall walk in the wisdom, knowledge, understanding and counsel of the Lord (Isaiah 11).

To fully understand what Jesus was saying in Mark 4, we read the following in Deuteronomy 29: These are the words of the covenant which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb. *2 Now Moses called all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh and to all his servants and to all his land— 3 the great trials which your eyes have seen, the signs, and those great wonders. 4 Yet the Lord has not given you a heart to perceive and eyes to see and ears to hear, to this very day.*

Now, why did the people not perceive or eyes to see or ears to hear? We have to understand Deuteronomy reflects back on the journey through the wilderness. Deuteronomy contains the sermons of Moses that were given during the 40-day period prior to Israel's entering the Promised Land.

At the time a new generation of Israelites was about to enter the Promised Land. This multitude had not experienced the miracle at the Red Sea or heard the law given at Sinai, and they were about to enter a new land with many dangers and temptations.

The book of Deuteronomy was given to remind them of God's law and God's power. It also reminded the people of the constant disobedience and rebellion during the 40 year journey.

The problem therefore was that despite all God had done, the people had not totally committed themselves to the Lord. They had rebelled with the golden calf, and then there was the Korah rebellion (Numbers 16).

We also read in the same chapter of Deuteronomy 29: *“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.”*

Moses reminded the people that all the secret things belong to God, and what has been revealed has been revealed to those who truly have remained faithful. The purpose of such a revelation is for the purpose of obedience, loyalty and faithful.

We can also read what it says in *Isaiah 6: 9* And He said, *“Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ 10 “Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”*

So here the Lord spoke to Isaiah that healing will come when they return unto the Lord. Why? Because the Lord is a Lord of life, but there is death apart from God. So the Lord called the people back to Him, so that they may begin to perceive, understand and know His heart and will for them. God wants His children to live in fullness, but we need to yield and submit.

As in the days of Moses, those who lived in the land at the time of Isaiah were also not perceiving or hearing or seeing. Why? Because they were disobedient to God and they had rebelled and had fallen into idolatry and apostasy! This was the same situation back in the days of Moses. So therefore, those who walk in rebellion, disobedience, apostasy and idolatry will not truly be able to hear, perceive and see

spiritually the truths and ways of the Kingdom. Rebellion, disobedience, apostasy and idolatry should and is not the way of the disciple.

A true disciple follows Jesus who is the Way, Truth and Life.

Let us read the following (speaking of Paul) in Acts 28: *23 So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. 25 So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, 26 saying, 'Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; 27 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them."'*

Paul quoted Isaiah, who heard the same words as spoken by the Lord through Moses. In the days of Paul, it was a matter of unbelief, therefore arrogance, pride and self-centeredness that prevented some from perceiving, hearing and seeing the truth as preached by Paul. For those who truly follow the Lord, and for those who belief and hold onto His truth, will surely perceive, know, understand, and "see" the truth and ways of the Kingdom!

To perceive is of great importance, for by perception we know the difference between the real and the counterfeit. It says for example in Acts 10:34 [Preaching to Cornelius' Household] Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality ... And also Acts 17:22 [Addressing the Areopagus]

Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious.

In Proverbs 1 we read concerning the Beginning of Knowledge: *1 The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: 2 To know wisdom and instruction, To perceive the words of understanding, 3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, Justice, judgment, and equity; 4 To give prudence to the simple, To the young man knowledge and discretion—*

5 A wise man will hear and increase learning, And a man of understanding will attain wise counsel. 7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction.

We disciples of the Lord must pursue truth, and we must pursue wisdom, knowledge and understanding. This all comes by a life submitted to the Lord as we are led by the Spirit of the Lord.

For by wisdom and knowledge comes understanding, discernment, and we shall walk in the counsel of the Lord to His Glory.

Of the Lord it says “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3). So as we as disciples abide in the Lord according to John 15, we shall abide in the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

It was such treasures that those on the OUTSIDE could not understand in Mark 4, for they were not abiding in the Lord.

Paul also wrote about such treasures in *Ephesians 3: 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

The disciple is called to walk in the fullness of the Lord by the Spirit of the Lord, for then shall walk in wisdom, knowledge and understanding. We shall perceive the ways

and truths of the Kingdom. Yet those on the OUTSIDE – thus the unbelieving, whose hearts are hard to the truth of God and those who walk not in the truth will not be able to perceive or hear or see.

Of such outsiders we also read about when it comes to the New Jerusalem. It says in *Revelations 22: 15* *But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.*

Thus, the outsider is the one who never enter the gates of the New Jerusalem because of their rebellion, disobedience and self-exaltation.

Indeed, those on the OUTSIDE, thus not abiding in the Lord, shall turn their attention away from the Lord, and will not be able to hear the truth of the Lord, perceive it, understand it or recognise it.

Yet for those abiding IN the Lord (John 15) they shall know, perceive, see, understand and know. May we continue to abide in the Lord as His disciples in order to perceive, to hear, to see and to grow spiritually to His Glory.

And by knowing, perceiving, understanding and seeing, we shall overcome, and we shall be victorious.