



Holy Spirit

Module 3

Processing of Maturing

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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 3 you will be able to know the Processing of Maturing

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES :

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

+ Chapter 1

How to discern the real from the counterfeit

+ Chapter 2

How to grow as a disciple

+ Chapter 3

How we are convicted of our sins and purpose

+ Chapter 4

How to have a life of divine tongues

+ Chapter 5

How to birth and produce Christ

Maturing in the Spirit

Discerning the Real from the Counterfeit

Module 3 Chapter 1



FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT

Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

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The people had therefore failed to discern what is right from wrong, and they had failed to seek and know the Truth of the Lord. In the same chapter in verse 1 it says the following: Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. 2 By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.

The people had therefore failed to discern their ways of apostasy, and had failed to discern right from wrong. Indeed, such days are upon us, and we can only walk in the truth and the knowledge of the Lord when we are led by the Spirit of the Lord.

It says in “1 John 4:1 KJV: Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” Remember, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom, knowledge and counsel and He has come to lead us in all Truth. This same Spirit gives us discernment, which is also one of the gifts, so that we may know what is real and what is false.

The word ‘discern’ and its derivatives are translations of the Greek word anakrino in the New Testament. It means “to distinguish, to separate out by diligent search, to examine.” Discernment is therefore the ability to properly discriminate or make determinations. It is related to wisdom. The Word of God itself is said to discern the thoughts and intentions of one’s heart (Hebrews 4:12). A discerning mind therefore demonstrates wisdom and insight that go beyond what is seen and heard. For example, God’s Word is “spiritually discerned.” To the human mind without the Spirit, the things of God are “foolishness” (1 Corinthians 2:14). The Spirit, then, gives us spiritual discernment.

King Solomon was known for his power of discernment, making many wise decisions and moral judgments (1 Kings 3:9, 11). It also says in 1 Kings 4:29 (AB): Now God gave Solomon [exceptional] wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand of the seashore.

Paul wrote the following: “Philippians 1:10 (KJV) That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.” Believers today are called to be discerning for these are days of the counterfeit and there is great foolishness and deception afoot.

Seeking discernment is a goal for all who desire to walk righteously: It says in Hosea 14: 9 Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein. Just as Solomon sought discernment and wisdom (Proverbs 1:2; 1 Kings 3:9-12) to explore the handiwork of God (Ecclesiastes 1:13) and seek the meaning of life (Ecclesiastes 12:13), so should believers seek “the wisdom that comes from heaven” (James 3:17). We must study the Scriptures which are “able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:15).

The Bible warns of great heresy and apostasy in the church of the last days. It foretells of false teachers, prophets, doctrines of lying spirits and their signs and wonders. For 2000 years, since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ the Bible has been attacked. For hundreds of years now, counterfeit Christian heretics, apostate denominations and false movements have proliferated.

Therefore in times of great deception we are commanded to “Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.” (Romans 12:9). But, unless we have true discernment, how can we determine what is “evil” and what is “good”? So we must be able to discern and distinguish truth from heresy. Wisdom also demands that we properly discriminate between what is “best” and what is merely “good.”

We need to take note and learn what Scripture teaches about the times we live in, the ways in which Christians are being seduced away from Biblical truth, and the methods used by the New Spirituality to usher in the counterfeit Kingdom of God on earth. Jesus said, "My Kingdom is not of this world" (John. 18:36) and "Narrow is the Way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

There is a strategy followed by God and by the devil. The Lord seeks to give us Life and Life in abundance, while the devil's strategy is to kill God in the minds of man or at least the thought that God is the guardian of all truth and morality. Satan plays out his devious game by pretending that he himself no longer exists. The devil's subtle ploy has always been to lead mankind away from the true knowledge of the Lord, thus into a state of destruction. After all, as the thief of John 10:10, he only comes to steal, and to destroy

This serpent is devious, sly and cunning. The devil has always come with a counterfeit truth, a counterfeit way of life and a counterfeit way to become immortalised, and this will deceive and cause many to go astray. We see this in the Garden of Eden, when he promised Adam and Eve that they will be like a god, even though it means disobeying God. He presented an alternative truth, thus a lie, and Adam and Eve adhered to his cruel wishes. Yes they fell, and just so in our days many will be deceived, but those who hold onto God and hold onto His Truth they shall never go astray. This calls for great humility and always pursuing His truth and not ours.

In Matthew 24, the Lord warned that false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. For the last 200 years the world has seen countless of false Messiah's appearing, forming cults and sects. They include Sun Myung Moon, who is believed by members of the Unification Church to be the Messiah and the Second Coming of Christ, fulfilling Jesus' unfinished mission. Then there is Jim Jones, founder of Peoples Temple, which started off as an offshoot of a mainstream Protestant sect before becoming a personality cult as time went on. He claimed to be the reincarnation of Jesus among others.

Of late is David Koresh, who was the leader of a Branch Davidian religious sect in Waco, Texas, though never directly claiming to be Jesus himself, proclaimed that he was the final prophet and "the Son of God, the Lamb". There is actually a very long list of people who have made such claims, and they have led so many people astray. In some cases, such cults and sects have only led to death and disaster (such as with the Branch Davidians), because the devil only comes to steal, to destroy and to kill.

Such ‘charismatic’ leaders have managed to build up a following through persuasive words, supposed deep wisdom and divine knowledge, all the while promising some kind of spiritual freedom, enlightenment and truth. Indeed, they have led people to a different knowledge – one that only destroys. Without the Holy Spirit, we will easily fall in the clutches of deception and be led astray. This is why Jesus warned that even the elect will be led astray. The devil comes with a counterfeit truth that seems so real, and so genuine, that people fall for it hook, line and sinker.

In 2 Corinthians 11:14, it says that Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. This is significant, for there have been testimonies by some of these false Messiahs or spiritual leaders that they have received a direct revelation of God, stemming from an ‘encounter with God’ that appeared as “angel of light”. This happened to David Koresh, and for example Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism. Smith said an angel directed him to a buried book written on golden plates containing the religious history of an ancient people. He then published what he said was a translation of these plates. In the end, this religion, also known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, have led millions astray and away from God through false knowledge. All because many have believed this “angel of light” was the Lord, not realising the devil also comes as such a manifestation.

The world has seen many movements of false wisdom and knowledge leading so many away from the Lord, including Gnosticism (which speaks of a supposed hidden and higher knowledge of divinity) and even the occult (the word stems from the idea that is knowledge of the hidden). And so because of a lack of discernment, we perish for we chase after false knowledge, not separating the real from the counterfeit.

In the end, we can only know what is true, what is real and what is from God when we allow the Holy Spirit to show us, teach us, and reveal the true reality and identity of all things. We live in a world of great deception, and we live in a world of great falseness. The faith of the Mormons is but one of many examples of a counterfeit movement, such as the Jehovah Witnesses, that continually deceives and misdirect.

Problem is, some of the deception is more clear-cut and evident than others. After all, there are so much false doctrines being taught in churches that would appear to be walking in the complete truth of the Lord. Again, we can only know the truth from the counterfeit when we allow the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us.

Take for example 2 Timothy 3 when Paul speaks about the end of days: This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Take note of verse 5: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Apostasy is marked by a lack of power, because there is no power in the counterfeit and fake. Paul is speaking about those who appear to be so religious, so pious and so holy yet they deny the power. What does it mean to deny the power? Well, consider that in Acts 1 the disciples had to wait for the POWER from on high, which is the Holy Spirit. To deny the power means to ultimately deny the Holy Spirit, meaning you are following a religion, an own agenda or a self-designated path, void of the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Paul writes in “2 Corinthians 3: Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? 2 Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: 3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. 6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” The “letter’ as referred to by Paul is the acts of religion, or in this case, the Law of Moses which also held so many in bondage from being free to follow the Lord in Spirit.

We find in so many churches where the letter is being followed – meaning man’s agendas and plans and doctrines – instead of the Sprit.

There is no life in religion, but there is life in the Spirit. To deny the power is to deny the life of God. We bear witness more than ever to all the false doctrines being taught in churches, as warned about in the Book of Jude and 2 Peter 2. Paul noted in Galatians 1 that anyone who preaches a different Gospel (thus a counterfeit Gospel) is accursed. There is no life in the counterfeit, and no blessing, for the counterfeit seeks to enslave, destroy and to eventually led astray.

In Revelation 16 we are reminded of the seducing spirits that would come from the mouth of Satan, of the false prophets and the anti-Christ. These demons have one purpose – to deceive. And they will do so through false wonders and signs. Deception has always been the game of Satan. He sets up a counterfeit kingdom, and he introduces mankind with counterfeit truths and realities so that we follow deceptions and seductions. In order for the devil to get us to turn away from the reality and truth of God, he has presented mankind with alternatives to such Truth.

When Moses was up on the mountain to receive the Law from the Lord, the devil surely persuaded the people in the valley to cry out for another god to lead them to victory. And so they set up a golden calf, believing the lie that counterfeit god will save them. Thus they fell for a counterfeit truth, and for their disobedience many were punished.

These deceptions and seductions of the devil have indeed blinded mankind, and have allowed mankind to search for a dark knowledge that only deceives and seduces and corrupts our spiritual and moral fortitude.

Satan is the great counterfeiter. He copies what the Lord does, as he is very knowledgeable of the ways of God. The encounter between Moses and the Egyptian magician shows how Satan has right from the beginning of time taught people the art of the dark knowledge – how else would the magicians know how to mimic what Moses was doing? The Scriptures after all speaks about their enchantments and secret arts.

Satan has been empowering mankind with all kinds of ‘illegal’, ‘forbidden’ and ‘immoral’ knowledge since the days of Adam and Eve.

He has forever been leading mankind down a different path and encouraging mankind to accept a counterfeit truth and reality. Along the ways he has empowered man so that man can walk in the realm of darkness, learn to defy God, and become his own master.

Satan may have been disarmed on the Cross, but only those who walk in the Blood of Jesus will enjoy victory of Satan's schemes and ploys.

Yes the devil is a fallen angel, but he knows about moving beyond space and time and dimensions. He knows about manipulating nature, and so he teaches mankind the art of changing shapes. He teaches mankind how to move beyond time and space (such as astral travelling), and he teaches mankind the forbidden of the spiritual realm. Ultimately, he empowers mankind to walk in corrupted 'power', because any power corrupts and the more power a man has, the greater his rebellion. He has forever since the days of Adam and Eve taught mankind to accept a different alternative and reality to worshipping God – and this meant ultimately worshipping the serpent.

Paul writes in 2 Thessalonians 2: 9 The coming [of the lawless one, the antichrist] is through the activity and working of Satan and will be attended by great power and with all sorts of [pretended] miracles and signs and delusive marvels—[all of them] lying wonders - 10 And by unlimited seduction to evil and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing (going to perdition) because they did not welcome the Truth but refused to love it that they might be saved.

We also read in Revelation 13: 13 He performs great signs (startling miracles), even making fire fall from the sky to the earth in men's sight. 14 And because of the signs (miracles) which he is allowed to perform in the presence of the [first] beast, he deceives those who inhabit the earth, commanding them to erect a statue (an image) in the likeness of the beast who was wounded by the [small] sword and still lived. 15 And he is permitted [also] to impart the breath of life into the beast's image, so that the statue of the beast could actually talk and cause to be put to death those who would not bow down and worship the image of the beast

And also Revelation 16: 13 And I saw three loathsome spirits like frogs, [leaping] from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For really they are the spirits of demons that perform signs (wonders, miracles). And they go forth to the rulers and leaders all over the world, to gather them together for war on the great day of God the Almighty.

It remains clear that right until the end, Satan will be deceiving people through his own signs, wonders and miracles. He will manipulate people to believe a lie, to believe a counterfeit truth and a counterfeit reality. He will use dark knowledge to corrupt mankind. He will also teach mankind so that mankind will corrupt itself as an act of rebellion.

People these days love signs, wonders and miracles. It is part of our entertainment. We are a power hungry society. Satan knows this, so through his own brand of sorcery he entertains, astounds, and lures people into his counterfeit world. Yet his so-called display of power is a counterfeit of the true power of the Lord. John 4:48: Then Jesus said to him, Unless you see signs and miracles happen, you [people] never will believe (trust, have faith) at all.

There is a fine line between the counterfeit and the real, so behold and take hold of this truth, that in this stirring of the supernatural that as God works so the enemy seeks to counterfeit. We need therefore the Holy Spirit to lead us in all Truth, and to know what Truth is and what deception is.

We should walk in discernment and we should test every spirit. There is at times a lack of discernment, and at times an existence of ignorance, or at times an intentional display of occult power, but the Bride should and must be able to take heed and take hold of the purpose of the workings of God and discern the counterfeit workings of the devil.

The crux of the matter comes down to Mark 13:21 At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. 22For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible. 23So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.

Can we see what God is saying? If we are not so in the move of God and seeking Him above else, we will create room for the counterfeiter to work his deception. The devil will try and deceive us if we remain not in Him, yet those who are in the Spirit shouldn't be deceived by such work of deception. And indeed they shouldn't be, for the true child of God walks in spirit and truth, and not in deception. After all, the Spirit has come to lead us in all truth.

If we move without the Spirit, we are going to stumble, fall, err and fall away. And this is exactly what is happening in our times – there are too many ifs and buts when it comes to the Scriptures.

But praise the Lord, for He sent the Spirit to guide us in all truth (John 16), so that we stay true to the teachings of Jesus, true to the Truth as settled in heaven and the truth of Logos and Rhema. If we fail to heed the Spirit in all things and in all knowledge and wisdom and understanding when it comes to the Word, then we open ourselves to all kinds of interpretations, analysis's, confusions, contradicting dogmas and doctrines and also bewitching and deceiving teachings. In the Spirit we can discern what is real and what is false, what is common and uncommon, what is pure and impure, what is evil and what is good, and what is the Lord's will and not the will of the Lord.

If we remain in the Spirit, we shall walk in the truth of the Lord, and then we shall not perish. Again, let is be stressed, through knowledge and discernment the righteous will be rescued. This calls for discerning the truth and walking in the truth. For the Spirit was sent for the purpose to guide us in all truth. I John 2: 24 As for you, see that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what he promised us—eternal life. 26 I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. 27 As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

Indeed, how we need to be so careful in all our spiritual operations, as we serve God that we remain grounded and rooted in Spirit and Truth for the devil roams like a roaring lion and seeks open doors through which he can operate. Satan is the great counterfeiter.

He is not only the counterfeiter in terms of exchanging God's truth with his own, but he is also the greater worker of iniquity and alas, setting up a false reality within which man operates. As the author of 1 John 2 alluded to, the anointing of God is real. His Spirit is real. His Kingdom is real. And above all, His Truth is real and everlasting.

There is no other truth except the truth of God. Every move of mankind, be it religious, be it political, be it social, be it scientific, be it artistic, be it philosophical, or be it adventurous, is not real if it upholds not to the Truth of God.

So the Lord gave His Word – not just the Scriptures – but Jesus. He gave us not only the logos, but the Rhema by the work of the Spirit to lead us in all truth.

Indeed, if we abide in the Lord then the Lord shall abide in us, and then we shall move in the true power and not the counterfeit. Let us then remain in the Lord, thus in the Spirit, so that we may know what is real and true to His Glory, lest we eat from the hand of the devil and fail to drink from the true cup of the Lord.

Maturing in the Spirit

Growing as a Disciple

Module 3 Chapter 2



FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT

Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

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This is the same with the Lord. We can only truly know and perceive and understand and comprehend the deeper truths of God and His divine wisdom when we grow spiritually mature and develop the capacity to understand. God after all will always speak to us – but are we listening to Him as a toddler or as someone who can understand, comprehend and perceive? The Lord will always be there with us, but we cannot expect the Lord to always hold our hand. We need to learn to walk on our own, move in His Spirit and to become mature disciples helping others to mature spiritually.

And just like one's growth in body and soul, so often we think that we know all that we need to know. In our teenage years we believe we have all knowledge. When we reach our twenties we realised we knew very little when we were in our teens. And so as our journey progresses through life, we keep learning and we become little wiser as our experiences mould and shape our character.

This is the same with our spiritual journey. We must never think that we are now mature 'enough' spiritually. There is always more to learn from God. There is always more to know about Him. There is always more room to know Him. There are always more opportunities to expand our capacity to become spiritually wiser in His service. A disciple needs to grow in maturity, and therefore grow in the wisdom of the Lord, grow in discernment and understanding the Word of God.

The author of Hebrews [most likely Luke] wrote in chapter 6 the following: 1Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3And God permitting, we will do so. We therefore read of an urgent plea by the author that one needs to move on to the deeper truths of the Lord by shedding our 'spiritual nappies'.

We have all access to the Word of the Lord, especially in the western societies. To lay the foundation of our faith, which happens in the infancy of our spiritual growth, is therefore an elementary step, but beyond that we need to grow, expand and be filled more and more by the Spirit.

This can only happen when we continually read the Bible and study it. It is essential for spiritual growth. As believers, it is essential that we read, memorize, study and meditate on the Word of God.

It is written in Psalm 119: 14 I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches. 15 I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways. 16 I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word. The only way to know God's truth, His commandments, His precepts and His Kingdom is to read the Word. Yet, we can only truly understand the Word and apply the Word when we listen to God and when we allow the Spirit of the Lord to teach and show us the depth of the Word. This therefore implies spiritually growing so that we may know the voice of the Good Shepherd (John 10), and this implies being filled/baptised by the Holy Spirit.

Once we are led by the Word and by the Spirit, we will be led in the truth of the Lord, and we will be led to understand His Kingdom and how to pursue the ways of the Lord. Our spiritual journey after all is about knowing God. We may argue that one can never really know Him, which is true, but He has made it possible for us to have a living relationship with Him.

For all eternity we may learn to know the Lord, but here on earth we must seek Him, we must hunger for more of Him for this is a God who is alive and who speaks and acts and who is personally involved in our lives. And as we grow in the Lord and we know Him more intimately, then truly we shall no longer speak and act like children spiritually.

Spiritually maturity still calls us to walk in faith like a child but at the same time to put away childish things. A time comes when we must stop thinking, acting and speaking as a spiritual child but as a mature disciple of the Lord. Our behaviour, our attitude, our mind-set and our approach to this world will be a reflection of spiritual maturity and not the spiritual nature of a mere child.

And this is so sorely needed ... for this world needs the spiritual mature whose very behaviour and attitude and deeds and words reflect the Lord Jesus and by that authority will bring the lost to the light.

But if we remain as children spiritually, our deeds and words and behaviours will be inconsistent and volatile. Paul wrote in Ephesians 6: 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Paul therefore made the urgent plea for spiritual growth so that we may attain the fullness of Christ. And the result - we will then no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

After all, we live a world where many false teachings, false doctrines and false Messiahs have come to deceive the flock of the Lord. And we can easily be deceived and be led astray as long as remain spiritually immature. As we grow spiritually mature, we grow in the understanding and comprehension of the Spirit that we will know what is from Him and what is not from Him. We shall know Him and His ways, and we will also know what is from the world and the devil. And so we read of the work of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 2: 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

Indeed, this is the work of the Holy Spirit – to guide us in the ways of the Lord, so that we know His ways, His Truth and His Kingdom. He has come to lead us on our spiritual journey so that we may mature and become spiritually grown up in the service of the Lord. For then we shall leave behind the elementary teachings and seek the deeper wisdom, truth and understanding of the Kingdom. This can only be done in the Holy Spirit.

Let us therefore make every effort to grow spiritually, and we can only do so as we seek Him, His truth and His love. May we grow spiritually to His glory and service so that we will stand for the truth, and that we may guard against the ways of the devil that destroys and deceives. Galatians 5:16-18, 24-26: "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law..."

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."

There is thus the necessity to grow spiritually. The end goal of such a journey and such a process is to walk closer with God and to know Him more intimately. This is the goal of the disciple – to grow. To grow spiritually is detailed in 2 Peter 1:3-8: "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For 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."

Take note, it says "for if you possess these qualities in increasing measure". When you refer to increasing measure, this applies a forward motion and a momentum of growth. We are not expected to remain stagnant in our spiritual walk with God, but we must continue in increasing measure to grow in goodness, perseverance, kindness, love and knowledge and self-control.

If we truly grow in increasing measure, then we shall also be effective and productive for the Kingdom. So a disciple needs to grow, and develop spiritually, in order to serve the King proficiently.

To grow spiritually will lead to an increase in our knowledge and understanding of God's Word, a decrease in our frequency and severity of sin, an increase in our practice of Christ-like qualities, and an increase in our faith and trust in God. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul says, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." Therefore the best description of spiritual growth is to live in the image of Jesus.

Spiritual growth, however, cannot take place if one hasn't first and foremost made a committed choice to follow Jesus. For when we follow the Lord then the Holy Spirit lives inside of us (John 14:16-17). And it is the Holy Spirit who has come to lead us in all truth and to lead us in the ways of Jesus to the glory of the Father. When we walk in the Spirit and Truth, then our old nature, which is dominated by sin, is replaced with a new nature that is under the influence of God's Spirit.

Spiritual growth can only occur in a person who knows the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her Saviour and who has allowed the Spirit to become the dominant teacher and guiding truth. Walking in the Spirit is allowing God to be in control of our lives and it allows the Spirit to change us in the image of the Lord (Ephesians 5:18). This is brought about by consciously choosing by faith to rely on the Holy Spirit to guide in thought, word, and deed (Romans 6:11-14).

Learning how to grow spiritually is a life-long journey, which also occurs as you read and apply God's Word. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

As one walks in the Spirit and lives by the Word, we will draw closer to God for within us will spring forth the produce of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

It is so important for us to submit to the Spirit's leading, for it the Spirit who produces the fruit of spiritual growth in our lives. And as we grow spiritually, we will become like Paul who walked after the example of Jesus, and therefore will be true ambassadors of the Lord.

Considering that fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, it stands to logic that if we become more loving, more joyful, more kind and more self-controlled (in increasing measure) then spiritual growth is genuinely occurring. God, however, works in different people in different ways. Some people grow rapidly, while others grow slowly, but steadily. Our focus should not be on comparing ourselves with others, but on comparing ourselves with God's Word.

The Scriptures acts us a mirror to show us what we are like spiritually and to shine light on the areas that need to experience and learn spiritual growth. James 1:23-25: Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it - he will be blessed in what he does."

As mentioned, we cannot move in spiritual maturity unless we are led by the Spirit of the Lord, for the Spirit leads us in all truth and to be closer to the Lord (John 16). We cannot understand the ways of the Lord or the Scriptures or the Kingdom without the Spirit of the Lord to lead us in all understanding, wisdom and knowledge. Our natural reasoning will never lead us to spiritual truth. We cannot mature without the Spirit guiding and leading us. A mature disciple is someone who is baptized in the Spirit, for the Spirit of the Lord will lead you in all wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

Before we can understand the truth, we need our minds transformed from their natural, earthly perspective, until we can see with the eyes of Christ, hear with His ears, and understand with His heart. For true disciples, this is the ultimate pursuit. For us to therefore follow God, to live out our callings, we need to be reborn in the Spirit.

Only through a birth in the Holy Spirit and a submission unto the Lord give we truly walk in love, fear, obedience, truth and glory. 2 Corinthians 3: 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Only the Spirit of the Lord can lead us into the liberty of true service by stripping away the bondages of religion, tradition, legalisms, old habits, and the strongholds of our spirit and soul. If we behold the glory of the Lord through all of the veils of our traditions and mind-sets, we will distort His glory and twist God into our image. One of the biggest presumptions we can hold onto is to think that God sees everything just like we do or thinks about everything just like we do. We forget His ways and thoughts are higher than ours.

A spiritual maturing that we must undergo is to first have the humility to see the veils we're wearing, which are distorting what we see, and then to have our minds renewed and the veils removed so that we see and hear clearly what the Spirit is saying. We after all can only be led by the Spirit if we hear the Spirit, and we can only change and be transformed by obeying what we are hearing. We need to be reborn, and we need the Spirit of the Lord to strip away our stubbornness, pride and arrogance to walk in His Glory.

One of the key passages regarding a life in the Spirit is Romans 8: New King James Version (NKJV): Free from Indwelling Sin: 8 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

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. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

As disciples of the Lord, we can therefore only mature when we are led by the Spirit, when the Word of God being Jesus (John 1:1) is our foundation and when we continue to draw closer to the Lord in fellowship and in submission. Then we shall grow and mature. Let us therefore pay diligent attention to the Word of the Lord, let us pursue yielding to the Spirit and let us seek to be disciples who yearn to be more like the Lord. This is the way of the disciple. One who walks as a worshipper in Spirit and Truth, and such Truth comes by the Word and by the Spirit.

Let us then draw closer to the Holy Spirit, and let our knowledge and faith be certain and let the assurance of His touch and Word guide us in the eternal way of Jesus. For it is written in Romans 14: 16 Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil; 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men. Indeed, in churches these days, there is the clear necessity to grow spiritually. The end goal of such a journey and such a process is to walk closer with God and to know Him more intimately.

It is the goal of Galatians 5: 24-26: 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

In the end, as one walks in the Spirit and lives by the Word, we will draw closer to God for within us will produce more and more the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). It is so important for us to submit to the Spirit's leading, for it is the Spirit who produces the fruit of spiritual growth in our lives. And as we grow spiritually, we will become like Paul who walked after the example of Jesus, and therefore will be true ambassadors of the Lord.

Maturing in the Spirit

Convicted of our Sins and our Purpose

Module 3 *Chapter 3*



FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT

bibleschool@lighthouseministriesint.com

After all, the work of the Holy Spirit is to convict, yes of righteousness and judgment, but also of sin. It says in 1 John 1:8 NIV: If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. We all sin, this is the reality, yet sin remains unacceptable to God. Under the Blood of the Lamb, we can repent and learn from such folly, yet more than ever there is the trend in the church to rather justify sin, therefore there is no repentance. Even worse, we have become so desensitized to sin that we are no longer aware or conscious of its existence.

For surely, we are called to lead such a life as believers in the Spirit of God that when we sin, then we shall know it by the conviction of the Holy Spirit, to repent and correct our ways! When our sins have become iniquity, where we continuously and habitually embrace the sin, then surely the Holy Spirit must convict us! We must fall on our knees and cry out to God! Yet we no longer weep. We no longer cry out in repentance.

Yes, we just want God's goodness, forgetting out God is a jealous God and an consuming fire who does not tolerate sin or idolatry.

Surely, the Holy Spirit must convict us when we behave like the world, when we walk in the carnal nature of the flesh, and when we drift away from the holiness and purity of God. But this is no longer happening! Every day across the globe men and women who proclaim they follow God preach and teach not sound doctrine, but heresies, fables and myths, all for self-gain and self-profit. It is done in good conscience! Where is the conviction? Where is the holy burning fire of conviction of the Holy Spirit to burn is us so that we know, yes know, we are teaching and preaching not the truth and not the will of Kingdom! Where is the weeping for we are accursed when our tongues speak not the truth of God (Galatians 1:9). It is thus absent.

Across the globe, false word is spoken, not here and there, but a constant stream of deception and lies, disguised as prophecy but it is nothing more than divination. Where is the conviction? This is the same God of old, who spoke against the false prophets in Ezekiel 13: 8 'Therefore thus says the Lord God: "Because you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I am indeed against you," says the Lord God'.

Constantly we hear stories of pastors and so-called prophets who tell congregants to drink poison, eat grass, and walk on all fours like a sheep.

Where is the conviction? Pastors and spiritual leaders look the congregants in the eye and tell them lies about financial prosperity, knowing it is only to benefit them and not the Kingdom of God. And they cry out “so says the Lord” yet the Lord has not spoken! Yes, they know full well they spew nonsense and rubbish, as so they distort the Word and manipulate, all the while they look the Lord in the eyes and babble forth to trick and deceive. Where is the conviction? Spiritual abuse is common, yet where is the conviction?

Christian families and marriages fall apart, yet where is the conviction when we behave as marriage partners and as parents like the world? Where is the holy fire of God’s conviction when the man treats the women like a dirt rag, or the woman no longer can respect her husband, or when parents treat their children with cruelty and violence? Where is the conviction? And so Christians willingly commit adultery, climb in the bed with prostitutes, doing so without thought as they stare the Lord in the eyes. Where is the conviction? Where is the repentance? Where is the correction of our fallen ways?

Paul spoke in Ephesians 4, 5 and Colossians 3 on our conduct. Can we truly say we have lived up to such standards of moral and holy living? And is written in Ephesians 4: 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.

It is time to get rid of the old and fallen ways! It is time to get back to God! It is time to walk in the glory and the holiness of God, as children of God, who by their very breath give God all the glory and all the honour! God forgive us where we cling to the old man and our fallen ways. And so it says in 1 Peter 1: 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

Where is the conviction when we as believers scream and shout in anger, spewing vile words, when we lift our hands in violence, or when our thoughts and heart become polluted with the darkness and the lawlessness of this world?

Day in and day, believers behave just like the world. Destructive, abusive, immoral, unholy, impure, and we do so without repenting and without turning back to God.

Any wonder we are in such days of great apostasy and such days of such spiritual anarchy? And so we pray for revival in our churches and nations, yet we are spiritually 'dead'. Have we forgotten 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.

The problem is the not the Holy Spirit. We as believers have become puffed up in arrogance, full of pride and selfish desires and ambition, holding on to our crowns that we no longer yield, submit and bow before God. We want our will to be done, yet where is the cry "God let thy Kingdom come and let thy will be done!" If we did, we would be convicted. As soon as we raise our voice in anger, then we must be convicted. As soon as we want to get in bed with another who is not our wife, then the holy fire of God must burn so that we fall on our knees and cry "God forgive me".

Yet we no longer fear God. Are we truly even led by the Spirit of God? Are we truly yielded? Do we know the Spirit of God? Then where is the conviction? Or has our hearts become so calloused, so hard, so stubborn and so unyielding that we cannot repent anymore? Have we become so arrogant, so full of pride, so full of ourselves, we now ignore God, and His conviction?

We convince ourselves we no longer need to repent. And the result? A lawless and a backslidden church! God is holy and pure, and He is calling for a Bride without spot and wrinkle!

Such a Bride walks in the power of God, in the fire of the Holy Spirit, never flinching, never backing down, looking the devil in the eyes and tearing down strongholds, and declaring the intended wisdom of God without shame or compromise! Such a Bride drinks only from the cup of the Lord, and seeks only the truth, the way and the life of the living and eternal God! A Bride walking in the power of God, convicted, and seeking His holiness, Kingdom and righteousness and His will above all!

For if we are truly led by the Holy Spirit, we shall immediately be convicted when saying anything that does not glorify God, and we shall be convicted when we act and when we conduct ourselves not to His glory, and when our words and teachings is a curse instead of the truth of God. Where is the conviction? Paul says to Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:12 be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Are we truly an example? Or do we look like the world?

In Joel 2:17 we read: 17 Let the priests, who minister to the Lord, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say, "Spare Your people, O Lord, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' "

It is time we weep again before the Lord. Weep for our sins. Weep for our arrogance. Weep for our pride. Weep for our conduct. Weep and cry out to God to forgive us. For our hearts are hardened and we have lost our way. We need to weep! We need to cry out to God! We must cry out that we want Him to be the King in our lives! For the world look at the church and says "Where is your God?" They say so for we have become like the world - backslidden, rebellious, and flirting with idolatry and flirting with the love for the world and the love for the Self. Do we still exude the sweet aroma of God, or have our hearts and our ways become stubborn and hard? It is time to weep. It is time to cry out for God to light the fire again.

It is time for us to yield, to submit, and to cry out to God and for the Holy Spirit to convict us, so that we may repent, turn and be healed (Ezekiel 18:32). It is time to fear God again, to walk in holiness and to live!

Convicted in our Pursuit of God

While the conviction of Spirit of the Lord deals with our sin, at the same time we need to realise the Spirit of the Lord also deals with the conviction of our purpose.

Is there therefore truly a conviction in our heart to serve God, a conviction to pursue Him, a conviction to love Him, a conviction to run the race He has set before us, a conviction to fulfil the Great Commission and a conviction to preach His Truth? Does such a conviction drive us, no matter the trials, no matter the cost or the prize to pay?

Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:10: Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble. In order to fulfil our calling and our election, in order not to stumble, we need to be convicted of such a calling and an election. If God has called you to be an evangelist, is there truly a conviction of your heart to fulfil such a calling? Are you prepared to sacrifice all for that calling and election? Or if God has called you to preach and teach the Gospel no matter the cost, is there truly a mighty conviction of God to run the race, to pursue such a mandate or are we left distracted, and without conviction?

Brothers and sisters of our Lord, is there truly a conviction in our heart for what God has called us to do? Is there a burning conviction to pursue such a purpose, and to make your election and calling sure? For if we pursue and strive towards such a purpose in the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we shall surely not stumble for our gaze is set upon Jesus.

And so Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9: Striving for a Crown: 24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Paul writes here about temperate in all things, in other words, exercising self-control to reach such a prize. He speaks about running with certainty, thus conviction, and he speaks about practising discipline (note not legalism) to the point of subjection. This is a man who understood about conviction and about being driven to complete what God placed before him.

This is why he wrote in 2 Timothy 1: Amplified Bible (AMP): 14 Guard [with greatest care] and keep unchanged, the treasure [that precious truth] which has been entrusted to you [that is, the good news about salvation through personal faith in Christ Jesus], through [the help of] the Holy Spirit who dwells in us and also 2 Timothy 1:7: For God did not give us a spirit of timidity or cowardice or fear, but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of sound judgment and personal discipline [abilities that result in a calm, well-balanced mind and self-control].

Our conviction needs to be accompanied with fruitful growth in the faith as we are led by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Peter 1: 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. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Based on what Peter wrote regarding virtue that he then admonished believers to be even more diligent to make their call and election sure.

And yes, with the conviction of the Holy Spirit burning within us, we can complete the race; we can set aside all hindrances and challenges and embrace what God has called us to do. Hebrews 12: The Race of Faith: 12 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Yes, may we look upon Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, and run this race with conviction!

For God shall lead us by the rod and the staff, and prepare a table for us in the midst of our enemies! In the power of the Holy Spirit and by the conviction of His Presence, we shall then not stumble.

Paul wrote the famous Scripture in Ephesians 6: 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth ...

While we all know this Scripture as it deals with the spiritual armour of God, just as important is to note how Paul continually spoke about standing one's ground. We need to stand in the conviction of our faith, our calling, our election and our hope so that we may stand against the wiles of the devil.

Remember this is a man who endured every hardship and suffering you can imagine in his service to God. His journey is spelled out in 2 Corinthians 11: 22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? 30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.

Despite all of this, Paul wrote about standing one's ground.

Why?

Because he was convicted of God's greatness, God's goodness, God's redemption and salvation! He was convicted by the Holy Spirit that the Gospel is the Good News, that he has been sent to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles and such news is the message of the cross that sets the captives free and binds up the broken hearted. Yes, this was a man convicted of his own mortality, of his own humanity and weaknesses, yet he persisted, yet he endured because of conviction.

Of the conviction of preaching the Gospel at all cost we read in Ephesians 3: 8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. 13 Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Glory to God! Paul suffered it all to preach the manifested wisdom of God, and making known to the world of the redemption by the Blood. Remember, Paul was opposed not just by fellow disciples, but by the Roman Empire, and the pagan ways of Greece and Asia Minor. Yet he endured, yes, he endured and ran the race because he was convicted that no matter the cost the Gospel needed to be preached! He made sure of his calling and election, he ran the race and endured it all to the glory of God.

And so at the end he writes: 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.

This is conviction! He has come to the end of it all, he has fought the good fight, and he has kept the faith in order to receive his crown of righteousness.

Paul was a man driven and convicted because he not only preached the Gospel, but he believed it and he was willing to give his very life to glorify God. Do we truly believe the Gospel? Are we still convicted of the message of the cross and the Blood?

Also remember, the ‘pouring out of a drink offering’ is a metaphor for the blood Jesus spilled on the cross. Jesus spoke to this directly in Luke 22:20 when He instituted the New Covenant. He picked up a cup of wine and said, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.” Jesus’ sacrifice fulfilled the need of a drink offering, His blood literally pouring out when the soldier pierced His side with a spear (John 19:33).

Paul even endured the “thorn in the flesh” (2 Corinthians 12:7) “to keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations.” He called it “a messenger of Satan” that had a purpose of “torment.” Many explanations have been put forward, but whether Paul is referring to a physical, spiritual, or emotional affliction—or something else entirely—has never been answered with satisfaction. Whatever it was, God’s goal in allowing the thorn in the flesh was to keep Paul humble. Indeed, Paul remained humble in his pursuit of God, because of the conviction of the Holy Spirit to only seek to glorify God.

In 2 Corinthians 14 he writes: 5 Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified. 6 But I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified ... 8 For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. 9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be made complete. 11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 9 of the danger of being disqualified, as he mentions again in chapter 14. Paul’s concern was therefore the danger of falling away, thus abandoning the Lord, abandoning the path God has set one on, and departing from one’s calling and election. We can therefore only stay the course when we are convicted of the Truth of the Lord, and such conviction comes by the Spirit who was poured out to lead us in all truth (John 16) with the Truth being Jesus.

Again, we find here the mention of Paul's humility, and his urging for believers to be complete, to be united and to walk in peace. The Amplified translates 'complete' as fully restored, growing and maturing in godly character and spirit—pleasing your heavenly Father by the life you live.

May we therefore walk in such a conviction – a conviction of God's Truth, the conviction of the power of the cross and the Blood, the conviction of the Gospel, the conviction of abiding in the Lord (unity) and abiding in love and unity with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let us remain humble, let us remain true to the Lord and may we with conviction run this race because God's Word is True and God shall be with us.

And may we stand our ground, yes stand, no matter the cost, no matter what we endure! May we stand no matter what the enemy throws against us. Jesus stood His ground in the wilderness when the devil tempted Him. And so by His strength and grace (2 Corinthians 12:9) and conviction we can stand and fight the good fight of faith.

So let us stand, be vigilant, be alert, and with boldness and humility declare the intended wisdom of God!

Maturing in the Spirit

A Life of Divine Tongues

Module 3 Chapter 4



Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT

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At one stage about twenty years ago there was still a lot of emphasis on speaking in tongues. You will often find it in prayer meetings, or just in general fellowship of believers. Now it is fading away – rapidly. It seems as if people are afraid to speak in tongues. For what reason? Is it supposedly offensive? Do people feel afraid of being ridiculed or mocked?

Just so singing in tongues is even rarer and almost unheard of. More and more Christians seem to be uncomfortable and unfamiliar with this realm. This neglect is hurting the church. This de-emphasis is diminishing her power and effectiveness. And this is exactly what the devil wants. The use, value, and scope of tongues is so vast that it is difficult to sometimes put into words. If we are not careful some of these things will fade away in this new generation. Kenneth E. Hagin wrote a great book on speaking in tongues - *Tongues: Beyond The Upper Room*. Yet the changing trends in churches these days have allowed the disciple to move away from the reality of speaking in tongues, and the necessity of it. We have allowed the devil to deceive us that tongues is no longer needed, or is a non-reality of that it is simply gibberish, thus foolishness. How wrong we are!

Let me put it bluntly. Every believer who has been truly baptised in the Holy Spirit can, if desired and pursued, speak in tongues. Why? Because it is not a gift, but the actual manifestation and operation of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit within a believer. For it is not man trying to be clever when speaking in tongues, but it is God speaking through man, thus man is under the complete submission of the divine Great I AM.

Paul wrote in “1 Corinthians 2: 4 And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” You have to consider that Paul is also referring to speaking in tongues, even preaching in it, because through interpretation it benefits all the recipients. Such is the nature of tongues – the heavenly speech of God – for it is full of power and wisdom. It is after all God speaking, thus the Spirit in operation, thus the fulfilment of Isaiah 11 which speaks of the Spirit of power, of might, of counsel, of wisdom and knowledge. Such is the nature of tongues when we speak, for it is manifestation of the fullness of the Spirit.

The problem lies with the intent, the desire and the pursuit. After all, it is a question of commitment, of submission, of yielding and denying the Self in order for the Glory of God to manifest. And yes, there is also the question of fear, of doubt, of ignorance and of concern when it comes to speak in tongues. After all, this is a rather strange concept – God speaking through His creation. For God only uses the tongue of man to utter truth, and such truth is void of man’s interpretation, ideas and perceptions. This is pure word spoken by a pure God, for the sake of edification and as a means of devotion.

Remember, God will not force anything on anyone. God will not force anyone to yield and submit, and thus the Spirit to move and allow for God to speak. The servant has to be willing to yield and submit. After all, it is still the tongue and the voice of the servant, yet the words belong to God.

The Bible therefore distinguishes between spiritual prayer and our native language prayer: “I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding” (1 Corinthians 14:15). While we may not understand the words we are speaking, spiritual language is not meaningless or gibberish; it is begotten by the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit has among its wonderful purposes the dwelling of God in us, the perfecting of His life in us through His Word in our spirit, through His power in our life. Tongues is the peculiar manifestation of God accompanying the coming of God the Holy Spirit into the life. With the baptism of the Spirit, God is taking possession of the inner spirit of man. While we still disconnected with God, the spirit remains dumb to the ways of the kingdom, unable to express itself to the greatness of God, until God through the Holy Ghost releases the spirit, and the voice of the spirit is restored to speak the ways of the Kingdom.

The Lord also said the following in Mark 16: 14 Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. 15 And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Take note of verse 17: And these signs will FOLLOW those who believe

So signs will FOLLOW who? Yes, those who believe in Jesus, therefore who are a follower of the Lord. Thus a true disciple. Take note thus the Lord said what WILL follow is the following: Speak in new tongues. This cannot refer to the gift on languages, for no all the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 is in operational in all people. Believers are equipped differently. But here we read that if you are follow the Lord, therefore born again (John 3) you WILL speak in new tongues. It is not something that might happen or may be granted, but it shall happen because a reborn follower of the Lord is baptised in the fullness of the Spirit that declares the mind of God (Corinthians 2:11).

So why are not more disciples' speaking in tongues? Simply because of so many misunderstandings and erroneous teachings on this. As mentioned, there is a difference between the prayer language of tongues and the gift of tongues. The prayer language which comes by the infilling of the Spirit is mostly for edifying the Self, even though you may be praying for a situation or a person as the Spirit leads.

The reality is that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is accompanied by speaking in tongues when the Holy Spirit comes upon the believer. Along with tongues, other spiritual manifestations come upon the believer once they've received the Spirit's baptism. These are the gifts of the Spirit, which are different to the ascension gifts of Jesus (known as the five-fold ministry). Speaking in tongues is a primary evidence that one has received the promise of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus prophesied about and the Father promised.

With the Pentecostal Movement, many were told the only true sign that someone is Spirit filled is when they are speaking in tongues. This also caused a lot of problems, leaving some people uncertain or even ashamed if they were not speaking in tongues.

This, however, didn't mean they were not filled by the Spirit. It simply meant they were uncertain of how to speak as the Spirit leads and utters. Greater equipping needs to thus happen in the church regarding speaking in tongues.

Because speaking in tongues is the very first manifestation recorded in Scripture with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, many conclude that those who believe in Christ should all receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. Problem is, for some it happens quickly, as they yield, for others it is part of the growth of the disciple. Again, what happened with Pentecost was the speaking in earthly languages, not the prayer tongue. Take a look at Acts 19: 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

In Acts 19, it was immediate and spontaneous. The Spirit upon the Lord infilled them, and they spoke with the divine tongue of the Spirit. There is absolute no indication this is the gift of tongues, but simply that they spoke in tongues (prayer language) as soon as they were baptised. This is therefore more evidence that all those who believe and are baptized can speak in tongues, yet our mind, or the opinion of others or even the devil keeps us from such blessed power and truth.

It is also true that when someone says they are filled by the Spirit yet cannot speak in tongues, then so often we will label such a person as not really having been baptised. This is of course wrong, because tongues do not occur naturally without any kind of intent or purpose. It is supernatural, and is activated supernaturally, so that when we speak it still occurs naturally. Yet to activate implies intent, purpose and clear driven desire.

As mentioned, the type of tongue that was first manifested in the book of Acts at the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit was actual languages of men. Acts 2:7-8 New King James Version (NKJV): 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?"

In other words, the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the supernatural ability to speak in languages they had never learned. This miracle brought in 3000 people to Christ as the multitude heard the gospel preached in their own native languages. In the same chapter of 1 Corinthians 14 we read: Tongues a Sign to Unbelievers: 20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature. 21 In the law it is written: "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; And yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the Lord. 22 Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe. 23 Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind? 24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is convicted by all. 25 And thus the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and report that God is truly among you.

What happened at Pentecost was the gift of languages that touches the hearts of thousands of unbelievers. For the unbelievers saw the manifested power of God, and since faith comes by hearing they were surely stirred to worshipping God! Yes, they heard their own tongue, as so the gift of tongues, thus the earthly languages, touched the heart of the unbeliever.

There is also the benefit to the believer is the ability to speak directly to God by praying in tongues. The Holy Spirit actually helps the believer to pray the burden that is upon God's heart. This usually manifests in the form of a strong Spirit of intercession as the Spirit of God grabs hold of the heart of the believer and begins to pray the very thing that God is focusing and impressing upon. This type of tongue manifests with a groaning deep within the spirit of the believer. The believer does not know how to express what he's sensing, therefore praying tongues is the perfect way in which one can give voice to and release the prayer into the spiritual realm that the prayer may be answered.

It says in Romans 8:26-27: Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

We are also reminded of what it says in Ephesians 6:18 “. . .praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” Praying with all prayer is the implication of also praying with your prayer tongue, not just in an earthly language.

God has ordained the speaking in an unknown tongue unto Himself as a wonderful, supernatural means of communication in the Spirit. Again, we are not talking about the gift of tongues, which is earthly languages. As we speak to Him in the unknown tongue we speak wonderful mysteries in the Spirit. In Romans 8:27 we read, “He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”

Many times as we speak unto God in an unknown tongue we are in intercession and as we pray thus in the Spirit we pray according to the will of God. And there is such a thing as the Spirit making intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. It is necessary that we have a great desire for the indwelling presence of the Spirit and for spiritual gifts. We must thirst after them and covet them earnestly because the gifts are necessary and important, that we, by the grace of God having received the gifts, may be used for God’s glory.

Tongues for the individual is important because we must be edified before we can edify the church. Only the Spirit of the Lord can truly edify a believer of God to preach and teach in boldness, or to fulfil His calling in such fire of conviction. And such edification is alive as we speak in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the breath of the Word, and He illuminates it to us the more we yield and submit. Speaking in tongues is one such means to continually yield and submit, and thus greater the edification and illumination.

It says in John 16 when the Spirit comes He shall teach us in all things, and such knowledge, wisdom and clarity is loosened and made clear as we yield and submit, which comes by speaking in the Spirit by the tongue of the Lord. And truly, once we are edified we can edify the church.

In 1 John 2:20 we read, “But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.” In verse 27 we read, “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man should teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”

The Word says we have an unction and there is an anointing. The Holy Spirit abides in us and teaches us in all things. The unction is the one to speak God’s will, His Truth and to be edified in His Presence. And by the anointing, we are all taught all things, and we are strengthened in the Truth. A powerful benefit of tongues is the ability to edify oneself by simply praying aloud in the spirit, or in tongues. The believer is edified not necessarily because he understands what he is saying, but because his spirit-man is being stirred up (strengthened) by the Spirit of God while in the process of speaking in a language not known to himself and without the understanding of the mind.

It says in “Jude 1:20: But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit”. We must yield to the Spirit’s presence and power so that we find ourself speaking unto God in the Spirit and thus edified by doing this. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 14: “What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also ...”

If you therefore pray in an unknown tongue in the Spirit you do not know what you are praying; you have no understanding of it. It is unfruitful to those round about you; but you have the same power to pray with the understanding under the unction of the Spirit as you have to pray in an unknown tongue. May God bring us into the blessed place where we may live, walk, pray and sing in the Spirit, and pray and sing with the understanding also. It is a wonderful thing to pray in the Spirit and to sing in the Spirit, praying in tongues and singing in tongues.

It also says in 1 Corinthians 14: 26 How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. 28 But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God.

Here is a clear we are speaking of the prayer language. For if the prayer language benefits none because of a lack of interpretation, then let the person continue speaking to only edify himself. Yet where the prayer language can benefit others, let there be a public interpretation. In the ministry of John G Lake and Smith Wigglesworth this often happened.

Throughout history, there have been some mind-blowing testimonies of the miracle working power of God that was manifested through those who strongly believed and practiced praying in tongues. Why are we not seeing and hearing more testimonies like this today? It's simple. Because we are not praying very much in other tongues. The Lord told Kenneth E. Hagin that the greatest move of God would come through the combination of the solid foundation of the Word that's been built over the last few decades and the power of the Holy Ghost that will be manifested as we learn to enter into this deeper realm of prayer.

It says in 1 Corinthians 14: Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. 3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. 4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 5 I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

Here Paul makes it well known and clear speaking in prayer tongue edifies the self. This therefore cannot be part of the gifts of the Spirit. Paul writes in “1 Corinthians 12: 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all”

Thus, the prayer tongue is primarily for the profit of oneself, and the gifts for the Church and even for all. Paul also write “1 Corinthians 13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels” Here Paul makes it clear there is both the tongues of man and of angels. The tongue of man is the languages of the earth, and the tongue of angels is the divine language(s) of the Kingdom.

Other benefits of speaking in tongues is that it helps us to discern mysteries (2 Corinthians 2:7-13), to speak directly to God (1 Corinthians 14:3), to Intercede by the Spirit's guidance (Romans 8:26) and to sing praises to God (1 Corinthians 14:15).

Also, take note in 1 Corinthians 14 in verse 2 that we speak not to men but to God. This is in reference to our 'spiritual' language by the Spirit. The gift is different, for it is not only to glorify God, but to also speak to men and to bring a message of encouragement, edification, hope, and of God's Truth. In "1 Corinthians 14: 18 Paul writes: I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all". This therefore cannot imply the gift, for a gift does not operate all the time, only when needed. Paul thus clearly states he speaks a lot on tongues, thus it has to be for the sake of self-edification and as part of his devotion.

To speak in one's prayer tongue also has hardly to do about spiritual warfare. So many people would love to think they speak to the devil when speaking in tongues, trying to chase the devil away. Yet, Paul makes it clear we speak to God and to God alone. Sure, God can lead us in prayer to speak certain truths in regard to deliverance and warfare in our prayer tongue, but a prayer tongue will never ever address the devil or any other demon directly. Scriptures like 2 Corinthians 10 and Ephesians 6 is clear how we engage in spiritual warfare, including prayer.

The gift of tongues, in contrast, is primarily for the purpose of edification and upliftment of the church, for it a powerful means of evangelising. For this reason there is also the interpretation of tongues, for such a word by another language is the purpose to uplift, to encourage and to glorify God. Yet, at the same time, the Lord can also provide the interpretation of the prayer language when it has the purpose of uplifting or edifying.

In conclusion, when you pray in tongues, your spirit is in direct contact with God, who is a Spirit. When you speak in tongues, you are talking to Him by divine, supernatural means. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 14:14, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, MY SPIRIT PRAYETH, but my understanding is unfruitful." Notice he said, "My spirit prays." The Amplified Bible reads, "My spirit [by the Holy Spirit within me] prays" God is a Spirit.

Based on this truth, this means that when we speak with tongues this keeps us continually aware of the Holy Spirit's indwelling Presence. Continuing to pray and to worship God in tongues helps us to be ever-conscious of His indwelling Presence. And if you are conscious of the indwelling Presence of the Holy Ghost every day that is bound to affect the way you think and live.

By being Christ-conscious, you then eliminate the possibility of selfishness entering your prayer life. Paul wrote to the Church at Rome, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought. . ." (Romans 8:26). He didn't say we didn't know how to pray, because we are instructed to pray to the Father in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:23–24).

The Spirit is sent to help us pray. Speaking with other tongues is praying as the Spirit gives utterance. It is Spirit-directed praying. And it eliminates the possibility of selfishness in our prayers.

Also take note that speaking in tongues stimulates faith and helps us learn how to trust God more fully.

Lastly, another reason why every believer should speak with tongues is found in James 3:8. "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison," Yielding your tongue to the Holy Spirit to speak with other tongues is a big step toward being able to fully yield all of your members to God; for if you can yield your tongue, you can yield any member of your body to God.

Maturing in the Spirit

Birthing and Producing Christ

Module 3 Chapter 5



Imi.bibleschool@gmail.com

FJ VAN DEN HEEVER
R ENGELBRECHT

Layout E Cloete

You see, when the Holy Spirit comes upon a person, and when the Holy Spirit infills a person to such a mighty extent and degree that the Highest overshadows you, as what happened to Mary, then the result of that “overshadowing” and the result of that move of the Holy Spirit is that you WILL produce and give “birth” to Christ!

Now, let us understand we are not talking here about giving physical birth to the Son of God as Mary gave birth miraculously, but we are talking here about what happens when the Holy Spirit overshadows a believer to the extent that the Spirit dwells and abides in the person. For in Mary the Spirit of the Lord conceived the Son of God, and just so when we surrender, submit, yield and abandon ourselves to the overshadowing and the infilling anointing and power of the Holy Spirit then the Holy Spirit will also conceive the very nature and the character and the way and the truth and the life and the glory and the majesty of Christ within us.

When we are so filled, baptised, overshadowed and overcome by the Anointing, then the old truly dies and the new creation comes alive in the resurrection power of the Spirit. And then we shall walk and talk and conduct ourselves in such a manner that all that we do is to glorify the Lord.

And hear what the Lord is also saying to us (prophetic understanding): And just as Mary was overshadowed by the Spirit of the Lord, she experienced the supernatural and the miraculous. Just so, when we allow ourselves to be overshadowed, and when we truly walk in the anointing of the Spirit, we shall see the supernatural manifestation of the glorious, of the impossible and the mighty. For the angel said to Mary: “For with God nothing will be impossible”.

For the believer who walks in the anointing, emerged under the shadow of the Glorious, and who walks in the will and the way of the Lord, shall find nothing is impossible for God’s mandate and ordination to be fulfilled to His Glory! Of the miraculous and the supernatural, Jesus said in Mark 16: 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

Jesus was speaking to those who follow and believe – thus any disciple! Such disciples will seek the path of being worshippers in spirit and truth. And yes, the supernatural will FOLLOW those believe, for just as the miraculous became natural with Mary, as it was natural with Jesus, the supernatural becomes a natural way of living and operating for those who are OVERSHADOWED by the Spirit of the living Lord.

This is after all the work of the Holy Spirit. For He comes to conform our moral fortitude, our character, our nature, our way of thinking, our way of operating, our behaviour, our attitude, and our perceptions so that we are CHRIST-CENTERED, CHRIST-FOCUSSED, CHRIST-CONSCIOUS AND CHRIST ABIDING AND CHRIST-GLORIFYING!

Thus the work of the Spirit is to produce Christ within a believer, so that the believer may walk in the Truth of the Lord, in the life of the Lord, in the light of the Lord and the way of the Lord. Praise the Lord!

And so it says in “Psalm 91: He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Glory to God. We are called to dwell and abide in the Lord (John 15), so that His shadow will overpower us, thus so that His Holy Spirit will be upon us, just as the angel spoke to Mary that the Spirit will overshadow her. We need to be so overshadowed by the Spirit to conceive the nature of Christ just as the cherubim spread their two wings over the place of the ark, overshadowing the ark and its poles (1 Kings 8:7).

On the day of transfiguration on the Mount, Jesus was overshadowed by the Glory of God, and just so we need to be walking in such a manner that we are overshadowed by the Spirit of the Lord, thus submitted and yielded for then we shall walk in the glory of God. By the overshadowing, our lives will testify and give praise to the greatness of Jesus, to His Life, to Hope and to the quickening power of His resurrection.

We must lead such a life of being overshadowed that the Holy Spirit within and upon us changes the spiritual atmosphere around us. It must be tangible in our lives, even contagious and affectious! We read in Luke 1: 39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah,

40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Mary was overshadowed by the Spirit of the Lord to conceive Christ within her to such a degree that even the baby – John the Baptist – and Elizabeth was touched by the glory of God! Indeed, when we yield and submit to the Spirit then we shall walk in the power of the Lord, and the power of the Kingdom and such power is the power to change, to heal, to deliver and to save.

May we indeed be disciples who yearn to be overshadowed by the Spirit, so that we walk in the anointing to set the captives free, to preach the Good News and to bind up the broken-hearted.

May we be so overshadowed and may we be so abiding and yielding to the Spirit – which is the Power from on High – that all that people see in our lives is Christ, for this is the work of the Spirit within the believer.

May we bring forth, and birth by the Living Waters of the Spirit the goodness, the greatness, the majesty and the glory of Christ as we follow our Lord.