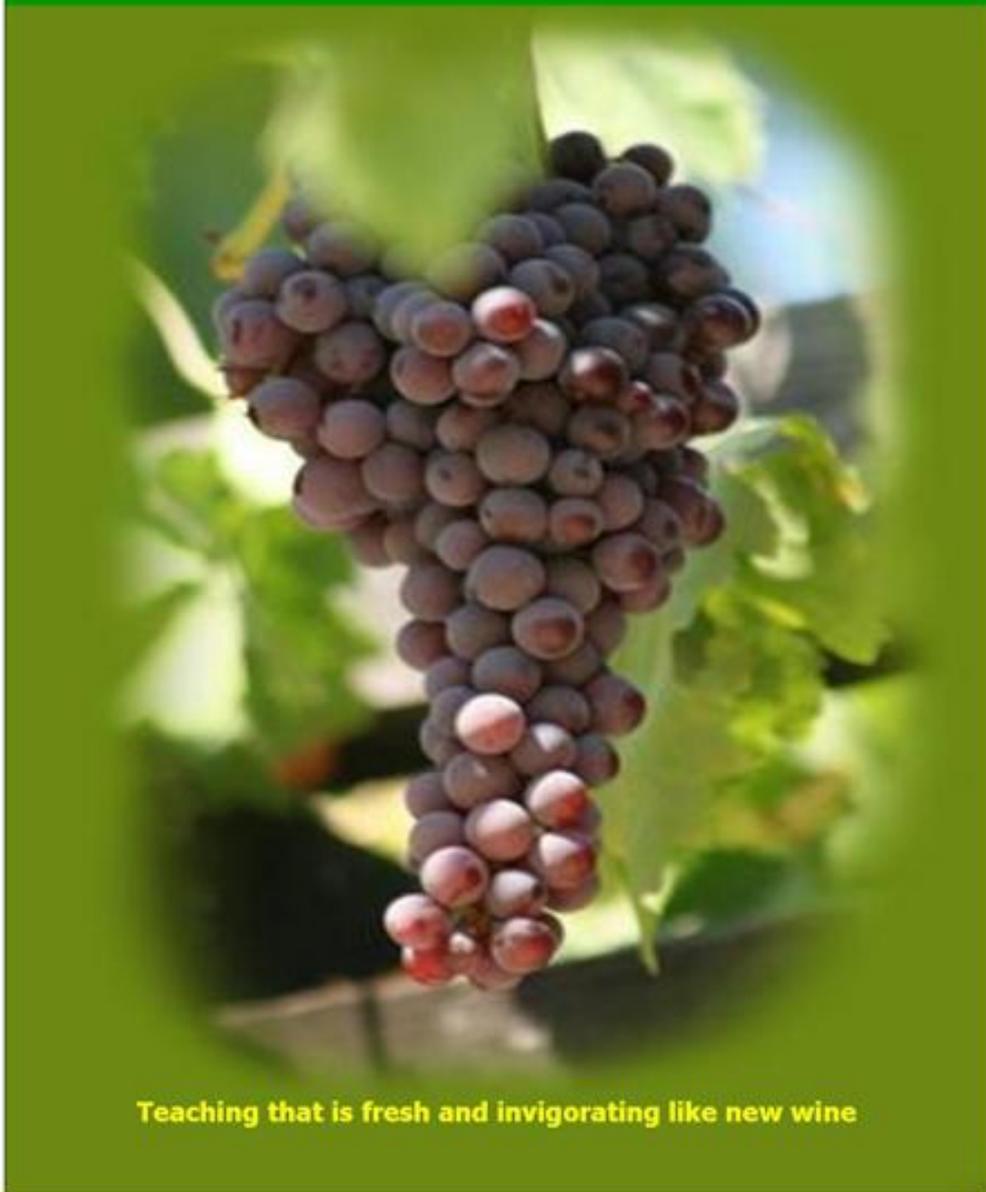


New Wine Teaching



Teaching that is fresh and invigorating like new wine

CONTENTS

What's this book about?

Circumcision of the heart

Inner realm change

Living from the spirit

Abiding and resting in Christ

Are we doing this?

The voice of God

Leadership and ministry

The prophetic in leadership

Prophetic call and commission

Prophetic principles

Being a True Disciple

Principles of a Model Pastor

Revelation parallels Genesis

The Power of Words

The Tabernacle Pattern

Protocols for the Sons of God

Identifying the Absalom spirit

What's this e-book about ?

These seventeen chapters were originally produced as single-sheet topics for individual or group study. Increasingly it became obvious that they needed to be bound together as one volume so that “flow study” could be achieved.

“Flow study” means that the topics can be studied either individually or better still, in sequence, thus forming a “flow” of truth. For this reason the subjects have been grouped together as much as possible in similarity.

Most of the topics are “present hour” truths that call us to deeper understanding and more radical commitment in applying them. It is intended that they will convict us to aim for maturity of spirit and soul. If we take them to heart they will be like fresh wine, bringing joy to our spirit-man!

Take time to seriously consider the truths here and allow the Spirit of Truth to lead us into all truth!

Peter McArthur
The Issachar Ministry
PO Box 4022
Seaton
South Australia
5023

Chapter 1

Circumcision of the heart

1. THE FORMATION OF OUR CHARACTER

Jesus is the exact “*representation*” (= *character*) of the Father’s nature according to Hebrews 1:3.

The meaning of the word is “*a tool used to engrave*”. So if we’re going to be conformed unto Jesus we need to let God engraven our soul and life so that it will become just like His Son’s.

God uses the circumstances of life to form us into His shape: He is the potter we are the clay. This begins when we are Born Again and made “holy”. The word “holy” simply means “*to be set apart*”.

God takes us and sets us apart to make us into the form or shape He desires.

This is why the formation of our character is important. We need to cooperate with the Lord in becoming more like Jesus. Read what Paul says in 2 Cor. 7:1

2. THE HEART

In Scripture the heart is linked to our inner-man, our spirit-life. This is why we are told to guard our heart. Prov. 4:23

Our human character is formed by our upbringing, education, experiences of life, etc. But our Christian character is molded by the Holy Spirit. Our spiritual union with God brings forth holy (=“*separated*”) fruit in our lives.

So it can be said that our Christian character is grown and nurtured within our spirit-man, the heart. Therefore whatever is in our heart will *determine* our character. What comes out of our heart will *reveal* to others what our character is really like!

We need to control what goes into the heart. Self-discipline, spiritual regulation and guarding our inner life are ways of protecting the development of the inner man.

There is a need to re-order our life so that:

*The spirit is king
The soul is servant
The body is slave*

The formation of the Christian life is a lost art in modern Christianity. The Hebrews, the early Christians and even those at the time of the Reformation, all had a sense of “developing the Inner Life”. John Wesley had such a method of it that his followers were even called “*Methodists*”. His early assembly of Christian friends called themselves “*The Holy Club*” (= the separated ones).

The attitudes needed to bring about this Christian Formation of the inner man can be found in the Beatitudes (Matt 5: 3-8) and in the list of the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5: 22).

3. REVELATION IS NEEDED

Revelation is needed in order for us to see we need change. Without God showing us our needs we are lost. So many of us try to keep on pleasing Him by reverting to religion and works.

Once revelation comes and we see the need to be changed and revived our next step is to obey. It is here that so many Christians fail.

They don't fail because of insincerity or lack of zeal; they fail because they look to "works" rather than to the person of Jesus.

When revelation does its convicting work, our part is to *look away to Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*, not to some method, work or religious thing that will bring us into further bondage.

We will grow in character by learning to look upon Jesus and to behold Him. The better we know Jesus the more our spirit-man will yearn to be like Him. This is an automatic process based on God's spiritual laws.

Remember that the work of change going on within us is not our work, it's God's work! Our work is to bend and to be pliable to Him.

The Adamic nature that fights for control over our life has already been put to death on the Cross. The life that is now within us is the Seed that the Father placed there through the New Birth.

It is our duty, privilege and even joy, to cooperate with our Father as He brings this seed to full maturity in us!

4. BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND Eph. 4:22-24

Throughout the centuries, but particularly in the 20th, Christians have tried to renew their minds using all sorts of spiritual disciplines and methods. Most have failed – because they were based on man's works to try to improve himself.

God doesn't want to improve us, He wants to transform us!

Therefore the only place we can find such change is before His throne. Certainly there are things we have to do and habits we have to confront and put away. But the most vital aspect of circumcising the heart and becoming more like Jesus is to spend time with God, sitting in His presence and allowing His quiet but steady work to act upon our hearts.

This will require a measure of humility Rom. 12:1-3

Currently the Holy Spirit is calling the Lord's people to "come in" and sit with the Father. Many ministries are finding they're being called to put aside unnecessary issues and to be single-minded.

We will not stand in what is coming unless we have aligned ourselves with the Father and allowed Him to do His work in the inner man of our heart. Our ministry anointing

might be wonderful and good, but it alone will not see us through the days that lie ahead.

The more we guard and nurture the heart the more we will conform to the image of Christ Jesus our pattern.

Chapter 2

Inner Realm Change

1. THE HEART'S DESIRE

There is one consistent and eternal sign of people who walk with God: they are **open to inner change**.

There heart condition is a willingness to be transformed into something greater and more glorious!

Single-mindedness of heart, seeking God's heart purposes is their greatest and all-consuming desire.

Friendship with the Lord!

God's heart is seeking our hearts. He is wooing us.

Only an encounter with the Living God will change us. That's why He seeks us, for He knows that in our own natural flesh we do not truly desire Him. "**He first loved us.**"

The prophets are telling us that great change is about to come, upon the earth and in the hearts of all people. But a greater more eternal change is also on the horizon, the Restoration of God's people into **Sons of the Most High God** (= *El Elyon*).

2. YIELDING TO GOD

The time is ripe for us to **yield more** and more to God. To lay aside any preconceived ideas and traditions that are likely to make us stray.

Lay aside the false and embrace the real! God wants to show us how He sees us. This will require humbleness of heart and strength of character.

Sincerity of heart. The word sincere means "*without wax*". It refers to a potter who having made a vessel found it has cracks. To deceive his customers he would put wax in the crack and cover the defect. To be sincere means nothing is flawed, nothing covered up, nothing is deceptive. God is looking for such vessels amongst His people.

This is why God is putting His people through a time of testing. Vessels that are not sincere, vessels that have hidden defects will not be able to carry the anointing that's going to be poured out on the earth.

The Lord is building His House, but it will not have any flaws in it. All the things we're going through and yet to go through are for one purpose only: to equip us a holy vessels.

He has provided for us a **full measure of grace** to be prepared. Some will run *from* the fire that's coming, others will run *to* it. Which one are you?

3. RESTORATION OF OUR HEARTS

We need to know our destiny, for without that vision before us we will be left directionless. Prov. 29:18

God has determined a goal for us, and He wants us to keep this within our hearts and remember it. Deut. 6: 20-23.

There is a truth and promise for us here. Jesus didn't save us just so we could wander directionless in the wilderness. God is determined to take you somewhere. In order for this to be fully accomplished our hearts need to be restored.

He has brought us out of the darkness and translated us into His light! Alleluia!

It is God's desire for us to **enter into His rest**; to experience His presence. He is determined that this should happen. But where are the people who desire this with all their heart?

He has brought us out and He will take us in. Luke 12:32

This is a tangible experience, and not something just to be enjoyed once we die and go to the heaven.

God is determined for us to rejoice and enter into His pleasure and purpose. Jesus even said that the stones and rocks cannot contain this truth from being proclaimed. Luke 19:40

There is **a choice to be made** in this hour. Do we want to be part of His entering in? Do we have the faith? Heb. 3:19

4. A REGENERATE HEART

Unregenerate hearts are like the stones God used for the Ten Commandments. But God's desire was for these to be written upon hearts of flesh (Jer. 31:33). Unregenerate hearts obey out of duty and compulsion; hearts of flesh serve Him out of love and desire.

The Spirit of the Lord needs to enter into our hearts and melt them. We need change in the Inner Realm.

God has been writing on the stony condition of the Church for a long time but now He wants to etch it on soft hearts, willing to receive it and respond to His wooing.

Much restoration is happening in the Church, but the greatest restoration needs to be in the inner realm of our heart (=spirit-man). Psa. 40:6

This is a great revelation and truth. God doesn't want our services, our missionary outreach, our finance, our numbers, our sweat – He wants our hearts!

Psa 84:5 “How blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, in whose heart are the highways to Zion!”

Are our hearts fixed on God's purposes? Are we changed so much within the Inner Realms of the heart that God can build His highways there? God's desire has never changed. He desires to have many sons, who live from the inside out!

Chapter 3

Living from the Spirit

1. THE SPIRITUAL MAN

The Spiritual Man lives from his spirit, not from his mind life, the soul.

We need to learn how to come into an “*Assembly of Believers*” and not just be individuals in a Meeting.

Be a congregation of **one spirit**, mind and heart.

When we meet in true spiritual unity there is a sense of the **quality** of the Holy Spirit’s presence

There are “*laws of unity*” which have nothing to do with agreement of doctrines but are “*spiritual laws*”. Our growth in the Spirit depends on how much **spiritual substance or character** we have.

We need the “discerning of spirits”. *But he who is spiritual judges (=discerns) all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.* (1 Cor 2:15)

Such a spiritual man is beyond human and soulish judging because he is a “mystery” to people. He lives *in* and *from* a different realm, the spiritual!

Our minds might think *like Jesus* but it still cannot produce “life” or comprehend the things of God.

2. THE MIND OF CHRIST

We have the mind of Christ: *For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.* (1 Cor 2:16).

This mind is not in our soul but in our **spiritual life**. It is gained both by being Born Again and by habitually abiding in the presence of the Lord.

The mind of man cannot receive the things of God (1 Cor 2:14), if they do try to hold these it can only be done so by memorizing them in our minds, not our spirits.

By abiding in the presence of the Lord we can begin to receive all He has for us. The fruit of this will show in the **divine effect** our words and actions leave behind us as a deposit.

Jesus always left a supernatural effect and deposit.

If we don’t have such an effect it means our soul is displacing Jesus. The mind sets itself up as “God” in the Temple of God. But if we walk in the Spirit we’ll never have failures.

3. BECOME A FATHER PLEASER 2 Cor. 5:9

Jesus was a **Father Pleaser** (John 5:19 and 8:29).

Since the Father is a spirit we cannot know Him except by the spirit and we cannot "see" Him except by spiritual eyes.

Pleasing the Father is doing the things He shows us and saying the things He speaks to us (Jhn 5:19 compare Lk 2:49).

Enoch's testimony was that he pleased God: "**for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.**" (Heb. 11:5)

Faith pleases God: "**But without faith it is impossible to please Him**" (Heb 11:6)

The flesh cannot please God: "**So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.**" (Rom 8:8).

Jesus lost nothing even though He gave the Father all the glory! When we please the Father rather than ourselves we will in fact benefit much more than we can ever hope for.

This is a **spiritual secret** that the spiritual man has learnt, to please the Father even to the hating of his own needs.

4. MIND OR SPIRIT?

All our Knowledge and Learning cannot produce spiritual results. We can learn *about* truths but they won't work.

If we don't learn how to distinguish (=divide) our soul and spirit, then our minds will play "God" and attempt to direct and control us.

The mind/soul might even "talk like God" and sound "spiritual" but it won't **be** Him. Many Christians fall into deception about hearing the voice of God thinking He has spoken to them when in fact it's been their own soul "playing God".

5. EXPERIENCE BY THE SPIRIT

It's with our spirit that we experience God. Growing up in Christ isn't "learning" but experiencing.

During a message or sermon "*lean forward in your spirit into*" the teaching. Never become passive in your spirit-man.

The Holy Spirit has much to say when listening to a preacher, teacher, etc. We should be able to draw 10 times more from the preacher than he's in fact saying, but the Holy Spirit.

Learn to mix the Word with Faith. This is not an ability of the mind but of the spirit: "**but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it.**" (Heb 4:2).

The consequences of not doing this is that the Israelites died! There are drastic consequences when we don't live from the spirit.

We grow through intimacy, both in the natural and spiritual realms. Intimate acts are done in a private, secret place. So too in the spiritual realm – intimacy with God is found in the secret place in the prayer closet (Mtt 6:6).

Living in the Spirit and living from our spirit-man is ***living and walking, saying and hearing, thinking and speaking, and working by faculties and senses that are non-existent in the natural man.*** Exercise these spiritual senses (Heb 5:14).

Chapter 4

Abiding and Resting in Christ

1. ABIDING IN HIS REST

Believing is not Abiding. To abide in Christ is to “rest” in Him.

This rest is a **place** as well as a condition. The secret place of the heart (= *spirit, inner man*) is where we can rest and abide in God.

God’s rest is actually a spiritual place. “..*although the works were finished from the foundation of the world*” (Heb 4:3b). It has been prepared for us and finished. All we have to do is enter it!

And we should have a concern that we *might not enter* into that rest (Heb. 4:1 and 11).

It is **belief** that allows us to enter (Heb. 4:3) and this is linked directly to **obedience** (Heb. 3:18-19).

What is God’s rest? **It is the ability of inner character and power to perform the works of God without any energy of your own or without any failure.** This is how Jesus ministered (eg: John 5: 19 and 12: 50)

So it’s not a “restful” condition but an “active” one, but not one of our own work. It is the Lord at work in us!

2. BEHOLDING HIM

First of all, don’t think “mentally” because God thinks “spiritually” and so should we (Isa. 55: 8-9).

Always remember that shallowness will drag you down and keep you from entering into more of God. Comfort always halts striving.

Luke 5:16 / do we do this? Only what we do on a daily basis will pay off. This is a spiritual law in relation to prayer.

Continuity will build up and increase.

We need to become what we believe. The evidence of Abiding in Christ is that we increasingly have no failures! Most of what we believe doesn’t work due to lack of applied faith.

”And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jer 29: 13) What is this seeking the Lord with all your heart?

It is understanding that we will reap what we sow. there is a definite link between what we “give” to the Lord and what we we’re rewarded as a result of this. Time with the Lord always pays off – not that this should be our motivation, but it nevertheless is a spiritual law.

Beholding Him is fixing our mind on Him in the secret place. This is the inner man, our spirit, heart. For the Hebrew writers the heart was in fact the “belly” of a person. Compare John 7:38

Meditate on (= *behold*) the Lord in the inner realm of your spirit. This is not a New Age or Hindu technique – it’s learning to constantly focus on our God. The Hebrew word for meditate means to “*chew over*” or “*to revolve in the mind*”.

Looking (away) unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.
(Heb 12: 2)

3. IN HIS IMAGE

The evidence that we’re Abiding in Christ, resting in Him and growing to be more like Him, is that we begin to do the works of Jesus with consistent performance. Failure and discouragement effect us less and less.

What deposit do we leave behind us after we’ve ministered? Do we impart life to others?

Becoming more like Jesus in His image is daily denying your self-life (Luke 9: 23) Being an overcomer is vital. We need to work at this – we start by beholding the Lord in the secret place (Matt 6: 6). We need to discern the three areas of our Body, Soul and Spirit. Each has “compartments”. This will help us live from our spirit and not the soul.

Body	Soul	Spirit
1. Flesh 2. Blood 3. Bones	1. Intellect 2. Emotion 3. Will	1. Conscious faculty 2. Communion faculty 3. Intuitive faculty

Learn to divide the **intuitive faculty** (number 3 of the spirit) from the **intellectual faculty** (number 1 of the soul) in order to walk with God. This is how Jesus lived and ministered.

Intuition is knowing without learning. It is something gained entirely by communion with the Father and being taught by the Holy Spirit.

The Communion (or *Contacting, Communicating*) faculty allows you to **SEE** what the Father is doing. The Intuitive faculty lets you **HEAR** what He’s saying. Just like Jesus. In His image!

4. SINGLE-MINDED

Be **single-minded** about becoming like Jesus. (Compare Matt 6:33 Psa 27:4 Jer 29:13 Heb 3:14 Heb 11:6)

Be concerned to have a certain **quality about living spiritually**, for at the Bema Seat of Christ it will be weighed. Our daily life needs to be lived in holiness and righteousness.

Learn to be single-minded about the spiritual laws of the heart otherwise we'll live according to the dictates of the mind – and our mind cannot receive spiritual truths.

There are keys to the Kingdom, but **the greatest key** is having a habitual, intimate relationship with Jesus. When we come to this place we'll receive the wisdom of God for daily living and Revelation works that will empower us (Eph. 1: 17).

When our heart is single-minded and focused God actively works within our spirit to bring about **Wisdom**. Wisdom is “applied knowledge”.

Practicing being single-minded is not a mental technique but a spiritual one. We have a responsibility to grow up into Christ.

Becoming single-minded about our relationship with Jesus will result in **the Seven Spirits of God** (Isa. 11:2) being perfected within us – it is then that we truly abide and rest in Christ.

Chapter 5

Are we doing this?

1. WHAT DOES THE WORD SAY?

*"**Watch therefore and pray always** that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." Luke 21:36*

Are we doing this? The Lord has told us to "be" about a number of things that are for our spiritual and physical benefit. In some cases ignoring them will be to the detriment of our lives.

Possibly the greatest threat to today's Church is the laxity with which we treat the Word. For example, how many of us are habitually watching and praying to escape the things that are coming? (Luke 21: 36). Are we serious about this?

*"**But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers**". 1 Pet 4:7. Here we are quite specifically told to *do* something: be watchful, be at prayer, be serious about it. Are we?*

2. PAY ATTENTION

There are a number of scriptures that urge us to be alert. Each one of these texts insists that we pay attention to what the Spirit is saying through the text. Meditate on these verses.

*"**Looking for** the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13)*

*"**Looking for** and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, **look for** new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, **looking forward to these things**, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Pet 3:12-14)*

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but **having seen them afar off** were assured of them, **embraced them and confessed** that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb 11:13)*

*"**Set your mind on things above**, not on things on the earth" (Col 3:2)*

*"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which **we also eagerly wait** for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil 3:20)*

*"**So likewise you**, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, **say**, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do'." (Luke 17:10)*

Are we doing these things?

3. ACTING ON OUR BELIEF

The Word is given for our edification (= *building up*). If we don't act out what it clearly says, we will not grow to our full stature (Eph. 4: 13).

For instance, we might fully believe in a literal, personal and physical return of Jesus to earth. But if we're not "*looking for it*" and "*eagerly awaiting*" His return, then we are NOT fully believing the Word! To "believe" in Greek means more than to give mental assent; it also means to "act on".

In fact 2 Peter 3: 12 says that we should be looking for the return of Jesus and in doing so we actually hasten His coming. Now that's challenging theology! But that's what the Bible says.

If we're actively looking for the Lord's return, eagerly desiring it, and looking forward to it happening, then we're helping it to come about. I don't understand all the meaning behind it but that's what the Word of God says – we hasten His return.

So on this level alone we can see that we're being commanded by God to do something. So there must be other verses that are "directive texts" that we've probably overlooked as well.

Paul encourages us to keep a right focus, on heavenly issues not on earthly concerns. Even on this level, if we did this and acted on the Word we'd be a whole lot better off. How many times a day do we lose our focus and let the world redirect our gaze? The Word is giving us the antidote – ***set your mind on things above*** (Col. 3: 2).

4. NEXT STEP

Most of the difficulties we face revolve around not bridging the gap between "doctrine" and "application".

We believe alright but often find it hard to act out that belief and apply it to our daily walk. This is one of the most glaring omissions in training and equipping today's saints. We know an awful lot about doctrines and teachings, but not so much on how to apply them so that they bring us to maturity.

The Jewish (and therefore Biblical) concept of equipping was to teach "on the job" - hence Jesus' statement "*Come follow me*" and see what I do. There are plenty out there who will teach you, but not so many who will show you how to apply that teaching.

I believe that this will be rectified in the coming release of the Five Fold ministry. But even if we didn't have the Biblical concept of leadership (ie. local Elders and trans-local Five Fold ministry), we still have the Word to instruct us.

As seen earlier, there are a number of texts that insist that we "perform" them. **Doing what they say.** I encourage and challenge you to re-read those Scriptures and begin to do what they say. **The rewards come only when we do what the Word says should be done.**

Chapter 6

The Voice of God

1. PREPARING TO HEAR

In order to clearly hear the Voice of God we must clean up our inner thoughts and take control over our mind. We need to **take captive our own thoughts** and imaginations. (2 Cor. 10:5).

The best preparation to hear the Lord's voice is to stop the **incessant chattering** away in our own mind first.

This can be done by having a **single-minded focus** on the Lord and eternal things. Learn to "*prayer without ceasing*" (1 Thess 5: 17) and by "*beholding the Lord*". This will quieten the wandering thoughts of the mind.

Next, learn to act immediately on a convicting word from the Holy Spirit. Whenever you **feel a conviction of sin, deal with it** immediately. Do not allow it to fester into something worse – particularly apathy. Rebellion follows!

We need to acquire the habit of allowing our actions to link up with our thoughts. **Harmony of spirit and soul** is an important step in clearly hearing the Voice of God.

2. IS THERE ANY PATTERN?

Experience and history shows a **clear pattern** of how men and women through the centuries have come to know the voice of God without confusion, struggle or deceit.

The most common denominator of all such mature Christians has been this: **spend at least one uninterrupted hour a day sitting in the presence of the Lord**. But avoid being "passive". Do not empty your mind; this is occultism and New Age.

This hour or so should be apart from a time of intercession or supplication when you might be asking God for something. And it's apart from your time of devotional reading time or study time.

Having given prime time to sitting in the presence of the Lord, these mature Christians then "practice" the art of "**on and off praying**", speaking to the Lord throughout the day in short uncomplicated prayers (often called *arrow prayers*).

This kind of prayer was used often by such men as Wesley, Moody and Finney. The fruit of living in the Spirit like this is seen in their lives and ministries even down to the present day.

Doing this will make you very receptive to the Holy Spirit and you will begin to find the Voice of God to be much more distinct. This is a two-fold approach in preparing to hear His Voice.

First, spend some time (perhaps one hour) in which you quietly focus in on the Lord and just learn to sit and relax at His feet.

Second, learn to extend that “atmosphere” of being with Him into your daily life. This is done by continually keeping your focus God-directed. Both of these will gradually prepare your heart to clearly hear the Voice of the Lord. It does work!

3. LEARN TO IDENTIFY THE VOICE

Think back on some occasion when you thought you heard God speak, and when you then saw the situation come to pass. Think now: what were you feeling at the time when you thought you heard God speak? Learn to pick up the sensations you were having when the voice came.

Next time you think you hear God’s voice use this past experience as a kind of litmus test. Was the feeling or sensation similar to your previous experience? If it was it’s most probable God speaking again.

I’m not saying you are to simply go by feelings but they can assist you to make a correct diagnosis when attempting to identify His voice. You know the past experience proved to be of God’s making thus validating the voice you had heard. So when that sensation comes again accompanied by a similar voice it may well be the Lord speaking to you.

This might seem a strange way to identify His voice, but its surprisingly common. It’s just that a lot of people don’t link the two – God’s voice, and what they were feeling or sensing at the time. My own experience has proved this truth over and over.

Eventually you become so fine-tuned to the Lord’s voice that you no longer pay attention to the sensation that accompanies it. This is a sign of spiritual growth. Identifying the sensation is solely to help you be confident about what voice you’re hearing.

Remember too that God’s voice might be urgent but never pushy. The Lord might *hasten* you to do something but Satan will *drive* you! Learn to know the difference.

4. A RECEPTIVE HEART

While there is no formula for hearing God’s voice or making Him communicate with us, there are some basic ground rules that will make us more sensitive to His voice.

First, love Him more deeply and intimately.

Second, desire to know Him more intently and personally.

Third, seek Him above everything else.

If we keep these 3 attitudes in our heart we’ll become much more sensitive to the voice of the Spirit. Taste and see!

5. STEPS THAT WILL IMPROVE YOUR SENSITIVITY

Approach Him with an open heart, willing to listen to whatever He might speak. Don’t approach Him with your mind already imaging what He might say.

Don't ask God to speak to you about something that's already quite clear in Scripture. He's already spoken.

Don't limit God to your viewpoint. He's not confined to answer you according to your view. It might be quite different!

When you do hear God speak, obey Him.

Show your love to Him through worship and serving others.

Work at deepening your trust and faith in the Lord, no matter what. A genuine Spirit-led lifestyle is a great asset in knowing His voice. (Gal. 5: 25 and 1 Cor. 10: 31)

Honour and love God above everything and everyone else.

Chapter 7

Leadership and Ministry

1. THE PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP – MINISTRY

Ministry isn't just about actions and words. It's an impartation of life. This should be the one aim of all leadership ministries.

What we "have" goes out from us to another person.

Godly character originates in the Presence (literally = "face") of God.

It's from the "secret place" that true leadership and motivation spring. Our unction to lead arises out of abiding in this place. Anything that substitutes this will bring death! Don't feed them knowledge (*Gen. 2:17*), people need, and want, Life!

When others submit to our leadership, when they receive "ministry" from us it can effect their spirit, soul, body or a combination of 2 or 3 of these.

This is why leadership is an act of Serving. You are giving of yourself to others. You actually "serve them up" a portion of yourself! Do you really want to give someone else a part of what you're really like inside?

Who we are in the Secret Place with God determines our ministry destiny. People subconsciously (or consciously!) are looking to see Jesus in us!

2. TOUCHING THE HEART

Our leadership *must* touch the heart if it is to bring life to others. Leadership is not about "leading" people; it's about bringing them to a place of life in Christ (= life in the Anointing).

The quality of our leadership is determined by what *deposit* of spiritual life we leave behind after we've gone. It isn't always the case we'll be recognised as good leaders while we're still in the position of Leader!

God's life flows between people in the realm of our spirit man. If there's no such flow happening between hearts, even though there might be a genuine impartation of help and assistance to the recipient's body or soul, there has been no *spiritual life* imparted.

Aim always to do this. No matter how often you fail in it, aim for it. See it as your goal; to be remembered as a leader who imparted life to others.

Like it or not, our ministry will reproduce itself in the life of others! A sobering thought. Each ministry tends to reproduce itself in others. Some ministries and leaders actually try to duplicate themselves in others; they knowingly or unknowingly produce clones.

Always be on guard that you're not out to duplicate yourself in others. Reproducing what life you have in others is acceptable, but don't clone yourself.

3. IT IS GOD'S HOUSE

As we lead God's people we must realise that the House of God is being built **in the Heavens**.

It's expression will be manifest *on* the earth, but the reality of it is *in* the Heavens.

We are to learn to minister from a position of being seated with Christ. We must have a **perspective, authority** and a **sense of destiny** established in the heavens if we are to build successfully on the earth. (1 Cor. 3:10 *let each one take heed how he builds*).

We are **servants** and **builders**. Our heart attitude is vital. A sign of Godly leadership is when we see lives built and joined together through the Holy Spirit.

Man's ability to lead will bring people into bondage and eventually destroy them. **Godly leadership builds and strengthens**. This can be used as a thermometer to check the validity of our leadership.

As we are faithful and obedient to God's call on our lives, He will extend our sphere of leadership. Recognise your boundaries at each stage of growth as a Leader. Do not go beyond them until God has released you into that new level. One sign of mature leadership is **practical wisdom!**

Aim for quality of leadership; avoid the desire to want to be recognised as someone who is important, has a calling, is a good leader, etc.

Sadly, it's pride or the lack of recognition that's **the** greatest fault of Christian leadership today.

4. THE PRICE!

Everything that we do as leaders **will be tested by God**. He will do this to see whether our work is good or bad, fruitful or barren. He does this for our benefit, so we can see if we've built properly or not.

God wants something that will stand. There is darkness ahead of us, so He will test and refine what we do as leaders. Only what He approves of will stand in that day (Heb. 12:26-27 – "*Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven.*" Now this, "*Yet once more,*" indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken **may remain.**)

So there is a price to pay. No-one should even think of becoming a leader of God's people unless they're willing to lay down their own ambition and pay the price. If you don't it will catch up with you and haunt your ministry all the days of your life!

In the end there is one basic, eternal and life imparting truth that stands out above all other leadership qualities and principles; **we can only pass on to others what we have experienced in our own lives through the grace of God.**

Chapter 8

The Prophetic in Leadership

1. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “THE PROPHETIC”?

The term “*prophet*” and “*the prophetic*” these days has come to mean virtually the same thing – something to do with giving correct Words to encourage and build up. But there is a vast difference between the two terms.

“*Prophet*” has a fairly narrow term of reference, but “*the prophetic*” covers a much greater area. It basically means **an anointed ministry, that in revealing divine direction during a given season, points you to new life in God.**

It may not even include a single Prophetic Word! And the person giving the counsel of God may not even hold the office of Prophet!

Rather, it is a person who is open to the voice of the Holy Spirit and who knows how to offer a Rhema Word of counsel from the throne room of heaven – without taint.

Note that I say “*counsel*” and not “*advice*”. Avoid Christians who give you advice. That is man’s view of a matter, and it may sound reasonable, logical, sensible and even a little “spiritual”. But it’s still Man and not God.

So the Prophetic Person speaks from God’s mind, thereby avoiding the “advice” of the human mind and experience (Prov. 16: 1 and 9).

2. THE ROLE OF THE PROPHETIC PERSON

Let’s look again at my definition of *The Prophetic* – (1) **an anointed ministry**, (2) **that in revealing divine direction** (3) **during a given season**, (4) **opens you to new life in God.**

There are four points in this that are vital to understand:

- 1 an anointed ministry
- 2 revealing divine direction
- 3 during a given season
- 4 that opens you to new life in God.

First, the ministry or person needs to be Anointed. The word means to be “*enchristened*” and refers to being Christ-like. [Strong’s G5548 – *chrío*] has the idea of contact, to smear or rub with oil, and by implication to consecrate].

In other words the person needs to be in contact with The Christ, to be smeared and covered with the same anointing that Jesus had, and to be set aside (consecrated) to that calling and work. We need to look for such an heart attitude in the person we are intending to trust, minister or allow us to lead.

Second, the prophetic person will not give advice, but reveal to you God's direction for that moment or next stage of your life. They will reveal ("*take off the cover, disclose*") what God wants you to see and know.

They will not add their bit to it nor attempt to direct you – they will "take off the cover" over your mind, life and spiritual eyes, allowing you to see what God alone wants.

The Prophetic Person must never be tempted to "give direction" but must allow God to speak, and God alone.

Third, the revealing of God's ways comes during set seasons, and rarely as regular occurrences. The Lord has given us the natural seasons, the seasons of one's life, and even the seasonal feasts of Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, as parables of how He works in us.

He uses seasons or "stages" to instruct us because the in-between times are meant for us to learn how to apply the teaching and lesson presented by Him.

A wise person will take advantage of these seasons of God and draw as much as possible from them. To ignore them brings us into disobedience and stunts our spiritual growth.

Each season has its own spiritual character just like the natural seasons can be identified by how much heat, cold, rain, snow etc is in them. The Prophetic will speak revelation into these seasons of our life. It's vital that we listen to the Rhema Word and act on it. We will not advance to the next season of our spiritual development until we've lived through the season God gives at that appointed time. We cannot short circuit God's dealings with us!

Have you noticed that prophetic ministries have the knack of turning up at just the right season and imparting a Word that brings change? This is a noticeable feature of their calling.

Fourth, the ministry of The Prophetic will always lead you into a new realm in God. It imparts life and it transforms. This is one way you can gauge the validity of a prophetic ministry – have they deposited truth and change?

3. LEADING WITH THE PROPHETIC

Don't be tempted to see the prophetic as some sort of wonder tool that will bring instant revelation and guidance to those you're shepherding. Keep your eyes on Jesus, not the prophetic – no matter how anointed and effective it might be.

Allow others to see that you model this lifestyle by sharing your own experiences of how the prophetic has helped you. They need to know they can trust this type of guidance. Once a person has received counsel from you on a matter, you will need to "re-adjust" them from time to time as they begin to apply the Truth in their situation. This may happen a number of times before it "clicks". Be patient.

Keep humble in all this. Often those you're shepherding will perceive your prophetic guidance as great wisdom, and may be tempted to idolize you.

Some pointers from my own experience that may help:

Speak and minister with authority, but not pride!

Try to bring the person to a place of accountability regarding the counsel you've given.

Be wary of their words as they're often couched in spiritual jargon, but behind it can be self-interest, ambition and a hasty spirit.

Look for the motives behind their heart.

Don't be afraid to be bold in declaring what you know God is saying to the person.

Check your own spirit so you know it's not your advice you're giving but what God wants to say.

Use the occasion to teach *and* impart God's ways to the person (Psa. 25:4).

Chapter 9

Prophetic Call and Commission

1. EZEKIEL'S CALLING

This study is based on the life of Ezekiel chpts 2 and 3. Ezekiel, meaning *God will strengthen*, serves as an example of the call on a prophetic person. We will look at his **Calling, Preparation and Commissioning**.

He is told his prophetic life will be one of hardship and persecution (Ezek. 2:6)

His message comes directly from God in scroll-form and he's told to eat it (Ezek 3:1-2 / Compare Rev 10:9)

There would be times of silence imposed upon him. (Ezek 3:26 / 24:27 / 33:22).

He would be given a heavy burden of being responsible for the destiny or doom of his [people. He could be relieved of it only if he faithfully declared the prophetic word.

Only after his mission would he be recognised as a prophet from God (Ezek 2:5)

2. THE PREPARATION Ezek 1:28 and 2:1-2.

The preparation of a prophet requires him:

1. **to be made weak** in his own strength before he can become strong in God's strength.
2. to **lie prostrate** before God before he can stand before God.
3. to be **emptied of self** before he can be enabled by God.
4. to place **worship before service**.
5. to learn that **abasement of self** precedes being exalted by God.

Note that God's intention here is the **formation of the soul** first, rather than the giving of the spiritual gift. The gifting requires **an ordered soul** for it to come to maturity.

3. PROGRESSION OF THE CALLING

There seems to be a **4 fold** progression in a prophet's calling. This is based on the Biblical accounts of many of God's prophets, as well as a common theme among those called by Him today.

1. God **gives His word** to His chosen person
2. The Spirit of God **enters into His chosen one**
3. God's person **stands up** knowing his destiny
4. God's person **hears the call** and commission.

There comes a time when God's person begins to stand up and do the work he's called to. get the timing wrong and it becomes self-promotion.

The sequence of events in Ezek 2:1-7 and 8-10 is important:

1. God **prepares** His prophet with a divine encounter.
2. When this work has been established God requires the actual **work to be done**.

4. THE COMMISSION

There is a **Five Fold Commission** found in chapters 2 & 3 of Ezekiel.

1. (2:1-10) As a **prophet**
2. (3:1-9) As a **fearless denunciator**
3. (3:10-15) As **God's mouthpiece**
4. (3:16-21) As a **watchman**
5. (3:22-27) As a **faithful herald**

Not every prophetic person will be commissioned with this five fold calling, but each characteristic will be evident at different times and in varying degrees during a ministry. Note the difference between being commissioned as a *Prophet* and being called to be *God's mouthpiece*. The former is a **general** calling; the latter is a **specific** calling to a special group (in this case the Exiles in Babylon).

This is a principle to consider. A prophetic person needs to clarify from time to time to whom they are called to speak.

An important principle is also found in Ezekiel 2:8. Prophets are themselves to **personally digest the word** before speaking it out. Often the hearers will discern the difference and judge it on that basis.

The implication of this is for the prophet to spend time reflecting and digesting the word given by God. Having waited on the Lord in this way helps the person from falling into pride and enables them to deliver the word in humility of spirit.

5. HALLMARKS OF A PROPHETIC MINISTRY

There seem to be at least **seven hallmarks** of a person entering into a prophetic ministry. These are based on Ezek. 2:8 – 3:16. The seven hallmarks are outlined on the next page. A close look at them will provide some extremely helpful insight about prophetic ministry in general. If understood and enacted upon, these seven hallmarks of a prophetic ministry will lead to a maturity of both spirit and soul.

1	2:8-10	The prophet participates in the sufferings of his own people. He understands them and identifies with them whether he likes it or not!
2	3:1-3	The prophet must feed on his own message eating what he gives to others.
3	3:4	The prophet is to speak with God's words and not any of his own making.
4	3:8-9	The prophet receives the fortitude to withstand all kinds of hostile opposition. Grace is given for his special task.
5	3:14	The prophet has God's hand upon him and woe to those who lay a hostile act on the messenger of the living God!
6	3:15	The prophet sits where they sit, on the level of the people, not lording it over them.
7	3:16	The prophet's ministry begins with silence, not words.

So we can see from Ezekiel's life and calling that there are many issues to be mediated upon. Any person called to the prophetic should take heed of what God has purposely revealed in His Word pertaining to a prophet's call – and humbly regard them as worthy of imitation.

Chapter 10

Prophetic Principles

1. THE PROPHET'S SPIRIT

Prophets prepare the way of the Lord. But they also prepare the people *for* the Lord. God's prophets are preparing the Church to become the Perfected (= mature) Body of Christ. Therefore they must not be loners; teamwork ministry is vital (See Acts 11:27 / 13:1 / 15:32 / Eph 2: 20 / Rev 18:20).

The character of the Prophet is important. It is the character of the prophet that carries the anointing. Anointing by itself will not carry you through into mature ministry.

During this preparation time God will hide the prophetic person away until they have been purified.

This hiding away deals with the prophet's inner life and is as much for his own protection as for his preparation.

God took Elijah to the brook called Cherith. The word means "*to cut off*". Elijah was cut off from public view. He was cut off from relying too much on any natural talent he might have had. He was also cut off from anything that might adversely affect his future ministry.

Before the prophet gains much acceptance things are likely to get worse before they get better. Be alert about this. Non-recognition of a prophetic ministry has been the downfall of many who wanted instant acceptance and a pulpit.

Many prophetic people suffer from bouts of rejection, at least at the beginning of their ministry. Watch this, because blaming others, self-justification and repressed hurt will act like a cancer in the prophet's heart.

Learn submission, even if the Eldership are in the wrong. Flee from Balaam's sin of seeking greed, power, gain and popularity.

Stick to Biblical principles and persevere with them. Be patient as you learn about how the Spirit sets you within the context of the local Body.

Be accountable for what you say. Some prophetic ministries will say extravagant things but not take accountability for them when things don't turn out right. Have integrity!

Don't justify your ministry. If you believe you have done what God wanted, let Him vindicate you. Remain humble and admit error if there was any. But don't excuse the work of the Holy Spirit.

Seek wise counsel from more mature ministries. Don't think you can go it alone. Join or belong to a Prophetic Presbytery. Be cautious about prophesying about romances, marriages, births and genders of children.

When giving a prophetic word ensure that there is a witness there, or at least, record the word on a disk.

2. RECEIVING THE MANTLE

Learn to submit to God's chosen government and leadership; respect those in authority over you. Be faithful in what you've been given to do. Serve the brethren

Understand the need to wait on God's timing before you launch out into public ministry

Surrendering to the work of the Holy Spirit is vital if you want your character to grow in strength

Exercise your spiritual gifting as much as possible; learn to be more and more sensitive in the spirit realm

Study the lives of anointed men and women of God, both in the Bible and throughout Church history. Glean from them what is important for you.

Deliver what God gives you; avoid adding your introductions, interpretations, mini-sermons, etc.

Do not allow the snare of Fear of Man to entrap you, and do not be afraid of delivering the oracles of God.

Learn to be bold in delivering the Word of the Lord, but avoid falling over into arrogance and pride.

Do not go out into ministry or consider you even have a ministry until the Body of Christ recognizes your calling. You are not to go out on your own volition, you are to wait until the Church calls you out.

The exception to this is when God Himself urges you to go out – this is less common than many people think.

3. PROPHETIC TYPES

There are various levels of the prophetic and this will show in their ability, giftings, accuracy and expertise in ministering the Word correctly. The following chart indicates the types of prophetic ministries that God is raising up today.

Prophets are there to serve the brethren, not lord it over them. Do not enter into "direction" or "church government", these are areas designated by God to the Eldership.

In the following table are some Prophetic types. Although not all of these are recognized in the Body of Christ as yet, they do however give an oversight of what is possible in the years to come. Need it be said, that maturity will be a key ingredient in such callings.

1	Sons of the Prophets	In training, often attached to a mature ministry
2	Local Church prophets	Often confined to this local ministry only
3	City wide prophets	Honoured amongst the city and easily cross denominational barriers
4	Nation wide prophets	Powerful within their nation but often not so anointed outside of their boundaries
5	Fellowship or Network prophets	Accepted and honoured within a certain movement or network of churches
6	International prophets	Called to the nations and accepted as such
7	Political Daniel-type prophets	Have great wisdom and revelation to speak into business, politics and even the military. Often hidden away.

Chapter 11

Being a True Disciple

1. BELIEVERS OR DISCIPLES?

There is a distinct Biblical difference between a person who is a "Believer" and one who is a "Disciple". This could be phrased, there is a difference between being a "Child of God" (Greek *teknon* G5043) and a "Son of God" (Greek *huios* G5207). Immature Believers are like Children of God while mature Disciples are like Sons of God.

A child of biological parents bears the nature of those parents. When that child grows to adulthood hopefully that child has grown up to bear the character of the parents. Spiritually speaking, a child is one **born** of God, a son is one **taught** of God. Or to put it this way, a child has **God's nature**; a son has this, plus **God's character**.

2. THE TWO CALLS OF REPENTANCE AND DISCIPLESHIP

There seems to be two calls in the ministry of Jesus. The people of Galilee were told to "repent and believe in the gospel," (Mark 1: 15), but the fishermen were called to do this and to follow and be trained to "fish for men" (Mark 1: 16-17). Two different groups, two messages, two different expectations.

Jesus called the 12 disciples in particular (*mathetes*, meaning "pupil, disciple") to follow Him as a means of training and equipping them.

"Believing" and "Salvation" are of course closely linked. However when we over-emphasize the benefits of salvation and "conversion" above teaching believers "to obey", we ignore the command of the Great Commission to "make disciples".

The result of this is that relatively few believers ever come to spiritual maturity. So, based on the Biblical evidence, we have reason to say that there's a lot of difference between a Believer and a Disciple, as well as understanding the call to be a True Follower.

The purpose of "making disciples" is to teach believers to have exclusive loyalty to Jesus Christ, and to be personally accountable for reflecting His character. "Accountability" (personal) has a far stronger meaning than mere "responsibility" (official).

For this to happen one must begin by learning who Jesus is, according to His own teachings. So, only the teachings of Jesus Christ must be imparted to believers and not that of any group, denomination, or even the pet subject of the one doing the teaching.

3. THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF A DISCIPLE

The Lord Jesus taught His disciples to make **the Kingdom of God** the first objective of their search in life (Matthew 6: 31-33). This should take priority above all else even though it might cause great difficulty (Luke 12: 51-53).

The criterion for God's Kingdom revolves around doing what He wants done. If we want to function in His Kingdom as a True Disciple, we'll give up our own self-willed ways.

The standard of determination for God's Kingdom is straight forward: we are to do His will (Matthew 7: 21).

Jesus called men to fellowship with Him for the express purpose of **preparing them to carry out His mission** of reaching the world with the Gospel.

Those who are "baptised" should then be taught "to obey"; this is when we can say a person has been truly "discipled".

Baptising and **teaching to obey** are given as the main aspects in "discipling" and this even applies to the discipling of nations (Matthew 28: 19-20).

4. KNOWING AND IMPARTING A PERSON NOT A BELIEF

We cannot ask anyone to truly "follow" before they "know".

The purpose in this is not merely to teach a belief or doctrine, but to impart a way of life from the master to the disciple. The goal being that the disciple becomes like his master (Matthew 10: 25).

The goal of the true disciple is to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rms 8: 29). Jesus said if we hold to His teaching, then we are really His disciples (Jhn 8: 31).

On the plus side, the disciples mentioned in Acts are "disciples **of the Lord**" (Acts 9:1). On the minus side, Paul warned the Ephesian elders about those who would **draw disciples after themselves** (Acts 20: 30), this being the spirit of Absalom (2 Samuel 15: 6).

The life of a true disciple is one of submission to Christ. Jesus said that we cannot be His disciples unless we give up our lives and follow Him (Luke 14: 27).

We'll know a person is a disciple by the ongoing transformation, personal holiness, compassionate service, servanthood, and fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Galatians 5: 22-23).

It's clear in Scripture that the purpose of discipleship is to produce Sons, those who are mature in both **spirit and soul**. True disciples are those who are undergoing the process of transformation into Sons, those who are prepared to inherit the Kingdom.

The concept of discipleship is directly linked to Sonship. Discipleship has as its intended goal, the reproducing of Sons who in turn properly reflect the Father.

On the highest level, God's Sons are to be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8: 29), who is the perfect reflection of His Heavenly Father (John. 14: 9).

On the earthly level, we find spiritual fathers discipling spiritual sons, who carry on the heart of their spiritual father (Philippians 2: 19).

We find that the task of teaching, training and imparting oneself to faithful men and women, who in turn will do the same (2 Timothy 2: 2), is absolutely central to the message of the Kingdom. It could even be said that where a church fails to consistently and diligently do this, it is not truly "the Church".

True Biblical discipleship is a process, the purpose of which is to bring the believer to spiritual maturity (Sonship) through being taught to obey Christ's commands. This takes place within accountable relationships.

For true Biblical discipleship to function there must be **accountability**. Discipleship not only involves an *individual relationship* to Christ, but also a *corporate relationship* to His Body, and hence accountability to the delegated authority, local Elders or the Five Fold ministry.

Note that spiritual maturity is not an end in itself. God's purpose for bringing us into maturity is in order that we might ultimately reign with Him throughout eternity (Romans 8: 17 / 2 Timothy 2: 12 / Revelation 5: 10).

True Biblical discipleship is the moulding and shaping of a life until it resembles that of the Master. When we fail to do this we have failed to make disciples in the New Testament understanding.

A disciple is a learner-follower. In fact we can say that the essence of the Gospel is summed up in the two words spoken by the Lord Jesus: "*Follow me.*"

Altogether there seems to be four main aspects to true discipleship: being a **Servant**, a **Son**, a **Steward**, and a **Witness**. True discipleship is when all four are in harmony within us and functions for the overall benefit of the brethren.

5. SOME TEXTS TO REFLECT ON

Matthew 4: 19 5: 11-12 8: 22 10: 7-8 16: 25-26

Mark 3: 35 8: 34-35 9: 35 10: 28-31 16: 15-16

John 6: 27 8: 31-32 12: 26

Chapter 12

Principles of a Model Pastor

1. A FOUNDATION FOUND IN 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS

The first principle of being a good pastor is to **be joined to others in ministry**.

Paul gives us this principle (1 Thessalonians 1: 11). He was joined to Silvanus, who was a prophet (Acts 15: 32 / Silas is another version of Silvanus), and Timothy, a teacher (1 Timothy 4: 13).

Joint ministries are the key to effective kingdom preaching and ministry (see Ephesians 4: 11-16).

The second principle is that we are to remember those in our care before God, regularly **praying for them** (1 Thessalonians 1: 2-3).

Paul is our example; he ministered in four ways: (1) In **word** (*logos*); (2) in **power** (*dúnamis*); (3) in **Holy Spirit** anointing; and (4) in **much assurance** (*full confidence*). See 1 Thessalonians 1: 5.

The result of this ministry was the brethren (1) became **followers** of the Lord, (2) they **received joy** even in persecution, and (3) they **became examples** to other churches (1 Thessalonians 1: 6-7).

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF A GODLY PASTOR

We need to **be confident in the message we have**; a gospel from God which is approved by Him, and that pleases God (1 Thessalonians 2: 4). We do not preach to please men, but to please God.

Godly pastors behave **gently, devoutly, justly** and **blamelessly** before the brethren like good witnesses (see 1 Thessalonians 2: 7 and 10). This is the character of a true spiritual "father".

What are these characteristics?

1. *Gentle* = not harsh nor relying on the dignity of the apostolic calling.
2. *Devout* = living a holy life-style in the eyes of God (see Luke 1: 75).
3. *Just* = living a righteous life in the eyes of men, agreeable to them.
4. *Blameless* = the latter two prove us to be without blame in man's eyes; faultless in the eyes of men; without any censure.

Godly pastors **exhort**, they also **comfort**, and **implore** the brethren to walk worthy of the Gospel of Christ (1 Thessalonians 2: 11-12). Such pastors **act like a father** (see verse 11). They will:

1. "*Exhort*" meaning to encourage and instruct.
2. "*Comfort*" meaning to calm and console.
3. "*Implore*" meaning to call one to witness.

Paul concludes all this by putting it into **an eternal perspective**. He shows that all this is worthwhile because the brethren will be a pastor's crown of glory when Jesus Christ

returns (1 Thessalonians 2: 19-20). He now introduces the theme of **Christ's Return** and shows how a Godly pastor should keep this in mind as he cares for the flock.

3. HOLDING ON AND GROWING DURING TRIBULATION

Tribulation and persecution was the background for Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. To encourage the brethren Paul regularly mentioned the **Return of the Lord Jesus**. He used a special Greek word "*parousia*" in both his letters to describe the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This formed a focal point for his teaching of being a Godly pastor to the flock, as well as a source of comfort to the saints in general.

Not only do these two letters bring insight to any pastor undergoing persecution, but they're also helpful for the End Time church in general in the Last Days. Paul's experiences as a pastor undergoing his own tribulation are extremely valuable for us today.

Six times Paul used the word *Parousia* and each time he attached a particularly important insight to it regarding the Last Days.

1. **A Pastor's reward and crown.** When Christ returns the joy and reward of a Godly pastor shall be the brethren he has nurtured well. So pastors should be diligent and faithful (1 Thessalonians 2: 19).

2. **A Pastor's aim and purpose.** The aim of a Godly pastor is to present saints who can stand blameless and holy before God on that great Day (1 Thessalonians 3: 13).

3. **A pastor's duty.** To instruct the brethren undergoing persecution, to hold fast during tribulation.

4. **A pastor's ministry and calling.** A Godly pastor will ask the Lord to influence the brethren in spirit, soul and body. The pastor will do this through prayer, teaching and exhortation, to prepare the brethren for the Second Coming of Christ (1 Thess 5: 23).

5. **A pastor's teaching.** This will primarily take the form of encouraging the brethren to remain firm, stable and not to be troubled during the distressing days of tribulation. The pastor will help the brethren see the deceptions that try to shake their foundation in Jesus Christ (2 Thess 2: 1-2).

6. **A pastor's responsibility to the brethren.** To tell and warn the saints of the coming of the Anti-Christ. To enable them to recognise this lawless one and his activities, and to exhort the brethren to stand firm and be established in every good word and work (2 Thess 2: 3-17).

Keeping these six issues in mind will encourage the pastor as he ministers to the flock. It will also keep the pastor "on track" so that he will not be diverted with other non-essential issues.

Normally a pastor following the New Testament pattern should only minister according to what the New Testament writings encourage him to do "as a pastor". For instance, he should usually confine his *teaching* to such things as found in points 5 and 6. His *exhortation* however will cover all the above six points.

4. PRINCIPLES OF MINISTERING IN UNITY

A joined ministry in proper Biblical unity with each other is the most effective ministry for the Kingdom of God. When the whole Body ministers according to each person's gifts and calling, then true **spiritual union flows** for the benefit of all (Ephesians 4: 1-16).

Be in correct submission to one another, **recognise each other's calling** and allow it to be used in right order. This will require great humility which the Enemy, and our soul, will try to use against true Unity.

Therefore ministries need to be joined and linked together; this is the clear New Testament practice. **Jesus taught this principle** and Paul imitated it; so why not we? (Mark 6: 7 / Luke 10: 1 / 2 Corinthians 1: 1 / Philippians 1: 1 / Colossians 1: 1-2).

5. SOME BENEFITS OF BEING PROPERLY JOINED

Prayer is answered and corporate spiritual strength is increased (Matthew 18: 18-20).
A joined ministry acts as a witness (John 8: 17-18).
Each is strengthened by the other during times of weakness.

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYING FOR THE BRETHREN

A Godly pastor will always pray for the brethren. When a pastor prays according to Biblical principles great things will happen amongst his flock (Ephesians 1: 15-19 / Philippians 1: 9-11 and Colossians 1: 3-12).

Pray for one another (1 Thessalonians 1: 2-3 / Philemon 1: 4 / Luke 22: 31-32) **by name preferably**.

Paul gives us the important principle to always **be thankful** for the brethren to whom you minister; tell them this to encourage them. (Romans 1: 8 / Ephesians 1: 16). In 2 Thessalonians 2:13 Paul uses the word "bound" meaning " *to be obliged; to owe as a duty*".

So there seems to be a spiritual responsibility for pastors to give regularly thanks for the brethren in their charge. May we do this faithfully and with diligence!

Chapter 13

How the Book of Revelation parallels the Book of Genesis

1. THE SEED-BED OF ALL DOCTRINE

The Book of Genesis is the "seed-bed" of all Biblical doctrine. Whatever is found as a doctrine (= *teaching*) in the Bible can be found in embryonic form somewhere in Genesis.

This is one reason why Evolutionists attack the Creationists' acceptance of Genesis as truth, because if you destroy the foundation you therefore destroy the validity of all other Biblical truth based upon it.

This of course is a spiritual battle, exemplified particularly in the *Evolution versus Creation* debate. It can also be seen in the battle between what we might call Liberal theologians and Fundamentalist believers; those who accept the Bible as "symbolic" in meaning, and those who hold it to be the inerrant Word of God.

Genesis is the book of Beginnings, and Revelation is the book of Final Things.

Therefore to fully understand the concept, principles and doctrines of the rest of Scripture we need to interpret "Genesis" correctly. It is the foundation of all and every truth.

2. THE BIBLE IS A "WHOLE" BOOK

All things in Scripture are in harmony; the Bible is whole and true throughout. It interprets itself; it explains itself, and it supports itself.

It is not contradictory when taken as a whole, neither does it invalidate itself at any point. It is totally harmonious, which is precisely what we would expect if all the books had a common source or author.

For this reason we would expect to find a common "golden" (= *divine*) thread intertwined through all the books.

This is found in a particular way in relation to the first and last books of the Bible.

Some of the more important themes found in Genesis are also found in Revelation, as if the first and final books encapsulate and embrace the same truths, as to say that all other books in between them also hold such truths.

This connection strengthens the belief that the Bible is a "single volume" authored by One Mind.

3. LINKING THE BEGINNING WITH THE END: The Parallels

THEME 1: A new heaven and a new earth

The first created heaven and earth, perfect and "good" in the eyes of God is restored / re-created to be "goodly" once more.

Gen. 1: 1 parallels Rev. 21: 1 / Gen. 2: 1

THEME 2: A garden, a river and the Tree of Life

In the beginning there is a garden, then a tree, then a river / this is reversed at the End with a river mentioned first, then the tree then what seems to be a description of a garden-like scene.

Gen. 2: 8-10 parallels Rev. 22: 1-2

THEME 3: The first "marriage" and the final marriage

The first Adam and his bride, Eve

The last Adam, Christ and His bride, a repentant Israel

Gen. 2: 18-25 parallels Rev. 19: 7

Rev. 21: 9

Rev. 22: 17

THEME 4: A Deceiver and a Serpent

A deceiving, speaking serpent at the beginning / a deceiving beast speaking like a dragon at the end. Both are speaking beasts; both are Satan.

Gen. 3: 1-13 parallels Rev. 13: 14

Rev. 20: 2

THEME 5: God provides a covering/garment

An act of sin causes a sacrificial covering to be provided by God / acts of righteousness causes a new type of covering to be provided by God.

Gen. 3: 21 parallels Rev. 19: 8

THEME 6: Relationship with God lost, then restored

At the beginning of all things sinful man is driven away by God / at the End of all things God dwells with righteous man.

Gen. chapter 3 parallels Rev. chapters 21-22

THEME 7: "Sons" are foundational in building a city

The first mentioned and the last mentioned cities in the Bible are connected to a "city". The first city was established by an unrighteous son, Cain; the last mentioned city has as its foundation righteous "sons", the twelve apostles.

Gen. 4: 17 parallels Rev. 21: 14

THEME 8: Man is marked and sealed by God

Unrighteous Cain is marked by God so that no harm comes to him / the righteous ones are marked and sealed by God lest they be harmed.

Gen. 4: 15 parallels Rev. 7: 3-4

THEME 9: Tree of Life barred then made accessible

Sin causes the way to the Tree of Life to be barred / righteousness causes the way to the Tree to be opened.

Gen. 3: 24 parallels Rev. 2: 7 and Rev. 22: 14

THEME 10: A new name given

A name given by the first Adam / a new name given by the Last Adam.

Gen. 3: 20 parallels Rev. 2: 17

Rev. 3: 12

THEME 11: Father and Son rest

In the beginning the Lord rested / at the End He sits upon His throne.

Gen. 2: 2 parallels Rev. 3: 21

THEME 12: God will come and visit His people

At the beginning it is prophesied that God will visit His people / at the End He says He will come to His people.

Gen. 50: 25 parallels Rev. 22: 20

THEME 13: From Darkness to Light

In the Beginning there was darkness that gave way to light, day / at the End darkness will give way to everlasting Day. God's sequence is from Night to Day, meaning that "activity" (day) comes out of "rest" (night).

Gen. 1: 2-3 parallels Rev. 21: 23-25

Rev. 22: 5

THEME 14: Babel rises; Babylon falls

In the beginning Babel (Babylon) is raised up; at the End Babylon falls.

Gen. 11: 3-9 parallels Rev. 18: 2

THEME 15: God's provision of a lamb on a mountain

A lamb is found standing on mount Moriah / a Lamb is found standing on mount Zion.

Gen. 22: 8-13 parallels Rev. 14: 1

THEME 16: The first and last Book

A book of the genealogy of the first Adam / the Book of the genealogy of the last Adam, the Lamb of God.

Gen. 5: 1 parallels Rev. 21: 27

THEME 17: The robe of an innocent man dipped in blood

Innocent Joseph's robe dipped in blood / the innocent Lord Jesus' robe dipped in blood. One spoke the words of God, one was the Word of God. Both persecuted for speaking the word of the Lord.

Gen. 37: 31 parallels Rev. 19: 13

Gen. 37: 8

THEME 18: First and last mention of a Reward

The first and last mention of God's reward.

Gen. 15: 1 parallels Rev. 22: 12

THEME 19: In his image

In the beginning God makes man in His image / at the End the Anti-Christ makes man to worship his image.

Gen. 1: 27 parallels Rev. 13: 14-15

THEME 20: Man is marked and sealed by God

Unrighteous Cain is marked by God so that no harm comes to him / the righteous ones are marked and sealed by God lest they be harmed.

Gen. 4: 15 parallels Rev. 7: 3-4

THEME 21: Signs in the heavens

In the beginning God made heavenly lights as a sign / at the End the Beast will also use heaven light (fire) as a sign.

Gen. 1: 14 parallels Rev. 13: 13

THEME 22: Sin enters and ends

In Genesis there is the entry of sin, and in Revelation there is the end of sin.

Gen. chpt. 3 parallel Rev. chpts. 21 and 22

THEME 23: Curse given and removed

In the beginning God pronounces a curse due to sin / at the end He declares an end to the curse.

Gen. 3: 14 and 17 parallels Rev. 22: 3

THEME 24: The station of the Cherubim

Cherubim are at the place of God's presence at the beginning and at the end.

Gen. 3: 24 parallels Rev. 4: 6

THEME 25: Abraham's seed victorious

In the beginning a conspiracy is mounted against Abraham's seed, the children of "faith", but it is defeated / at the end another conspiracy against the faithful seed is defeated.

Gen. 14: 1-16 parallels Rev. chpt. 12

THEME 26: The promised seed

The seed is promised to possess the gates of the enemy / the seed, the servants, come into their possession.

Gen. 22: 17 parallels Rev. 11: 18

THEME 27: The sign of the sun, moon and stars

The dream / vision of these three appear both at the beginning and the end.

Gen. 37: 9 parallels Rev. 12: 1

THEME 28: Man and Satan's dominions

In the beginning Man's dominion ceases through sin / at the end Satan's dominion ceases due to righteousness.

Gen. 3: 6 and 24 parallels Rev. 22: 3 and 14

THEME 29: A flood sent forth

In the beginning God sends a flood to destroy an evil generation / at the end Satan will send forth a flood in an attempt to destroy an elect generation.

Gen. 6: 11-22 parallels Rev. 12: 15-16

Chapter 14

The Power of Words

LETTING THE WORD JUDGE US

1. God created the world by the use of His **words**.

This shows us right from the beginning that words have power, are creative, can have long-term effects, and are to be used wisely and with fore-thought. The very first recorded words of man (Adam) were also to do with creativity:

Gen. 2: 23 And Adam said: "***This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man***".

2. The creative power of words has been acknowledged throughout history. Even in the occult realm "spells" hold this same basic fundamental.

Therefore as Christians we need to re-assess the use of our words, not just from the correct use of the tongue in not slandering, but realising that words can release either a blessing or a curse.

The Church today faces a major crisis. Generally it is to do with the mis-use of the tongue.

Of course it's not a new problem but one that was recognised even by Solomon the wisest man on earth at the time. And we see this echoed in the Epistle of James also.

Prov. 6: 16 ***These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him....***

Prov. 6: 19 ***A false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren.***

James 3: 5 ***Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!***

James 3: 6 ***And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among the members that it defiles the whole body, and sets of fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.***

3. Why should things be any different now in regard to our use of the tongue than any other period in the Church Age? Because of the increased revelation of the *Faith Word Movement* together with the revealing of many prophetic ministries.

Of course not everything about the *Faith Word Movement* was wholesome, but over the past 10 years there has been a maturing by many who have come through this move. Likewise with the increasing release of prophetic Ministries in the past decade,

it's obvious that the Enemy would attack the Church through slander, criticism and gossip.

We should also be aware that we are in line for many great deceptions of doctrine against fundamental Bible teaching. The Enemy will attempt to strike wherever Biblical Words and Word Ministries are breaking through. He will try to stop the truth and power of these coming into full maturity by using the opposite weapon of words - namely, slander, wrong teaching, and fault-finding.

4. Our teaching and preaching, our prophesying and sharing must fall into line with the written Word of God, and what it strongly says about gossip and slander.

If we do not heed the Word of God we will fall under God's judgment in the matter.

Note what Paul says about judging ourselves according to the revealed Word.

1 Cor. 11: 31-32 *For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.*

Here Paul clearly says that we should judge ourselves according to the Scriptures. If we do this we shall not come under God's judgment because the Bible is His ultimate standard and we have honoured it by accepting it as His direction for our life.

However if we fail to judge ourselves according to this standard we'll come under God's judgment and suffer the same judgment as the world!

If we allow the Word of God to be our standard and find we are guilty of some trespass, then God will chastise us (as well as forgive), but the chastening will be for a better purpose - to bring us to maturity.

Heb. 12: 6 *For whom the LORD loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*

5. The Word of God is given so that it might establish peace in our hearts. This of course will only happen when we obey the Word.

Disobey, and we feel uneasy, convicted and unworthy.

The only remedy for this is total repentance ("change of mind and heart") together with a disciplined life that does not give way to falling back into sin.

6. God is concerned about the use of our tongue.

Much of the Bible deals with this issue, both in regard to the negative and positive side of the issue.

Prov. 15: 4 *A wholesome tongue is a tree of life.*

We are foolish indeed if we think we can avoid not reaping what we have sown in the way of slander and gossip.

Prov. 18: 21 ***Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.***

7. I believe that many of the ills in the Body of Christ, and in an individual's own life, are due to the spiritual release of negativity that occurs when brethren speak against one another - even in private.

Many believers struggle in their daily walk without knowing why. I believe one of the major reasons is because of the gossip and backbiting that has gone on in secret, unknown to many.

When we speak out against a brother or sister without due cause, and when our aim is to pull down rather than to correct or discipline, we actually release a curse upon them in the spiritual realm.

This negativity affects them even though they don't know it. If questioned closely I believe we would find that they "sense" something is wrong, that there is an "attack" of some sort against them, that they have been "isolated" somehow.

I have experienced this myself, but only later realised what had been happening to me and how it occurred.

This is one reason why Paul admonished the Corinthians.

1 Cor. 14: 26 ***Let all things be done for edification.***

Strong's Dictionary regarding "edification" says:

G3619. **oikodome** (pronounced *oy-kod-om-ay*). architecture, a structure, figuratively meaning to confirm, build, edify,
to build up.

8. In the Epistle of Jude there are five areas of warning relating to the tongue.

Jude 1: 15 ***To execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.***

Jude 1: 16 ***These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.***

Notice the five areas we are warned to guard against.

1. **Murmuring**
2. **Complaining**
3. Following our **own lusts**
4. Speaking **words that will influence** people
5. **Flattering others** for our own benefit

9. Jude was writing against the ungodly who do such things, but we know that many "godly" people murmur, complain and speak great swelling words.

Murmuring and complaining are the same thing in Scripture. it was in fact the downfall of many in the Old testament period. Compare Miriam for example.

Murmuring is mentioned by Jude first because this is where all problems start that infect the Body of believers. A person who murmurs against the brethren is also murmuring against the God of the brethren! This is often not realised. When we murmur against a brother or sister we are also murmuring against God, especially if they are in leadership.

Jude 1:15 *To execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.*

Jude 1:16 *These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.*

Murmuring will let the Enemy come in, and the end result of this will be rebellion and division.

The Word of God is given to us to act as a hedge. If we ignore the boundaries that the Lord has given us we give place to Satan and he will work a great work of evil.

Eccles. 10:8 *He who digs a pit will fall into it, and whoever breaks through a wall will be bitten by a serpent.*

It is vital that the End Time Church resist the temptations of the Enemy to sow division in the Body of Christ through slander, criticism and backbiting. If the people of the Word do not guard themselves in how they use their words, the Word of God will be our judge on that great day of Judgment.

Be warned. Read and reflect on what Jesus Himself says to us about this attitude:

John 12: 48 *He who rejects me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him. The word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.*

TRUTHS FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

10. The Book of Proverbs (in Hebrew it's called *The Proverbs of Solomon*) is a book of truths of a King.

It is representative of the truths found by one who was a king by divine decree.

Because we too are called to reign with Christ, we should take notice of the many principles and truths that are contained in *Proverbs*.

11. Solomon instructs us in his Book to understand the three-fold sequence of having knowledge, understanding, and wisdom.

Knowledge is the *acquisition* of facts.

Understanding is the *interpreting* of the facts.

Wisdom is the *application* of these facts.

We can have much knowledge, but unless we apply it, we will never be wise!

Proverbs 1:5 ***A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel.***

I believe that the Book of Proverbs is an End Time book for the final age of the Church. Why? Because it instructs us to seek for wisdom!

"*Wisdom*" is an End Time characteristic of the Last Days Church. In these End Times we will need to speak great truths, preach solid doctrine, prophesy extraordinary words, and teach deep revelations.

All these require the use of words. How can we be pure in this calling unless we are controlling our tongues?

12. "*Knowledge*" in the Greek language of the New Testament has three meanings that are important for us to consider.

This is first found in the Book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 1:2 ***To know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding.***

This three-fold sequence of (1) knowing, (2) perceiving and (3) receiving must be understood and applied by the Church if it's going to come into "full Sonship", into maturity.

The three Greek words found in the New Testament, for "*know*" and "*knowledge*" are as follows:

First word

GNOSIS

2 Pet. 3: 18 ***But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen***

According to Strongs Dictionary (G1108) the word **gnosis** means, **knowing the act**. By implication it means "knowledge" or science. Its more accurate meaning is **to know by experience**. See John 8: 22 and 17: 3.

So we see that there is a type of knowledge that can only be "known" through "knowing the act" or by experiencing what we know. This is a profound concept and should really challenge our superficial concepts about "knowing" something!

Second word

EPIGINOSKO

Luke 24: 31 ***Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him, and He vanished from their sight.***

According to Strongs Dictionary (G1921) the word **epiginosko** means to know upon some mark, to recognise, **to become fully acquainted with**, to acknowledge; to have

knowledge, to take knowledge, perceive. Its more accurate meaning is **to know fully through revealed knowledge**.

So in this type of knowledge we discover there is an understanding that passes beyond knowing something just from experience.

Here we are told that we can know a truth fully by becoming intimately acquainted with it, just as the disciples at Emmaus did with the risen Jesus - even though it was only momentarily.

Third word

EIDO

Heb. 8: 11 ***None of them shall teach his neighbour, and none his brother saying, "Know the LORD" for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.***

According to Strongs (G1492) the verb **eido** means (either literally or figuratively) "to see". By implication the word means to know; be aware, **known knowledge**, look on, **be sure**, behold, consider, perceive, see, tell, understand. Its more accurate meaning is **to know absolutely**.

What a truth! We can actually "know" knowledge to such a degree that we know it absolutely!!

13. So we see that there are three important stages in the development of "knowledge".

We should be diligent in applying these truths and insights so that we don't simply remain at a very superficial level of understanding.

So, first we come to **know by experience**. Most people stop at this point in their Christian growth.

Then as we mature we come **to know more fully** by revealed knowledge.

Finally we come **to know absolutely**. To "know knowledge" as it were!

Why have I laboured this point about the degrees of knowledge? Because it relates to the use of our tongue.

As preachers and teachers we should never speak out what we have not yet experienced for ourselves. See Proverbs 5: 15.

How many times have you sat under some preaching or teaching, that might have been sound, helpful and even relevant, yet somehow lacked power?

his kind of preaching and teaching comes when the preacher has come across some knowledge of truth in a book or at a conference, but who has not personally experienced it.

In his zeal to share the new found revelation it's presented as important and even current - but in fact the preacher himself has never experience it for himself. So it becomes "stale water" and does not accomplish very much except perhaps to impart information to us.

Our soul and mind benefits, but not our spirit man.

14. Despite our reading of Scripture about the mis-use of our tongue, and by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in how we use our words, most Christians are still at the stage of only having *acquired the knowledge* that backbiting is wrong.

We haven't yet applied it to our innermost lives!

Hence we are under judgment, because we have had the knowledge shown us by the Word yet haven't yielded to it.

That is why this issue is so important in the End Times. It's not enough just to know; we must also apply the truth that is revealed to us.

Remember that we shall be judged, not on what we did *not* know, but on what we *did* know, but failed to apply!

15. So let's go back to the Book of the Wise King (Solomon's proverbs) and see what the Word of God tells us to do.

We will concentrate on what Solomon wrote about controlling the tongue and its wise use.

Wisdom from the Book of Proverbs on how to use the tongue

Chapter 1: 10-11

Here the righteous man is warned not to listen to the enticing words of sinners. They will always trap you. Notice that Solomon says the defence against this is to "*not consent*". That is, "*not to speak words of approval*". We are to resist such temptations and use our words wisely and powerfully to counter-attack any of the enemy's suggestions. This is what Jesus did to Satan in the wilderness temptations. He used the Word to resist His enemy.

Chapter 2: 10-11

Having wisdom, knowledge and understanding acts as a safeguard against those who speak out against you. When lies are spoken about you, or people attempt to harm you with words, it will be the applied wisdom you have stored in your heart that acts as a defence.

Chapter 2: 16

Sexual and spiritual seduction operates through words that are intended to flatter you. Be alert for this in both the natural and spiritual realms.

Chapter 4: 20-24

Honour the teachings of the Lord. Do not simply "accept" them as Truth but receive them into your heart. Believe them, apply them. Guard against tainting these precious truths by not having perverse lips or a deceitful mouth (verse 24).

Chapter 6: 12-15

A man who uses his speech wrongly will walk wrongly as well. His life will follow what his mouth speaks.

Chapter 6: 19

God hates those who speak lies and act as a bad witness. He also hates and abhors those who sow division amongst the believers by what they say or even imply.

Chapter 7: 4

Actually speak to Wisdom (the Lord) and treat this wonderful gift as honourable. Regard knowledge, understanding and wisdom as a near relative, for in this way words of natural and spiritual seduction will not influence you as sin.

Chapter 8: 8

The test of whether a person is wise or not is found in how they use their words. A wise person in God will never say or imply anything that is crooked or perverse.

Chapter 10: 11

Wise people use their mouth and words to impart life. On the other hand people who are angry, violent and aggressive use their words to justify their actions.

Chapter 10: 19

People who talk a lot are restless in their soul and spirit. They are likely to talk a lot to cover up some inner turmoil of their soul. For some the need to talk a lot is to quieten their conscience due to sin deep within. On the other hand a wise person knows how to use his words and when to keep quiet. It's not an effort for him, he has control over both his inner and outer life.

Chapter 10: 31-32

A righteous person will be known by the wisdom they speak. On the other hand the perverse person will always mouth wicked things.

Chapter 11: 13

A person who can't control their mouth will blurt out secrets that shouldn't be made public. However a faithful person whom you can trust will always guard their words.

Chapter 12: 18-19

When you speak harsh words they are like a sword that pierces; this is a curse. But the tongue of wisdom will bring spiritual and even natural health; it is a blessing.

Chapter 13: 3

Watch your words as they will protect and preserve life. To speak hastily will bring about some form of destruction.

Chapter 15: 1-4

The use of our words can be for good or evil. The sign of wisdom is always found in how people use their words.

Chapter 18: 6-7

The foolish person will always leave a trail of contention and division behind them. Look for this as a sign and discern it well.

Chapter 18: 8

The gossip of a talebearer is like a curse that goes deep into a person's soul poisoning them.

Chapter 18: 21

The power of the tongue is so great that it can actually bring about life or even death. Blessings and curses! How you speak will determine whether you reap blessings or curses in your life.

Chapter 23: 9

Be cautious where you speak. Wisdom can only be received by those whose hearts are receptive. A foolish person will scoff at what is wise.

Chapter 25: 11

Chosen words given at a chosen moment are precious.

Chapter 25: 23

The face and physical demure of a backbiter will be evident, as certain as the north wind brings rain when it blows.

Chapter 26: 23

Do not be deceived by the fervency of a person's speech. It can be hiding something evil and base.

Chapter 27: 2

Do not boast about yourself, even if it is deserved. Let others see this in you and honour you in their own time.

Chapter 29: 20

Learn to be reserved with your speech. Talking too hastily will bring you into disrepute.

Based on all the above let this verse from Proverbs 8: 6 be our aim in all our speech:

**Listen, for I will speak of excellent things,
and from the opening of my lips
will come right things.**

Chapter 15

The Tabernacle Pattern

1. THE PATTERN

God has determined a pattern for us. Using this pattern He will build His Temple (= House/Abode/Dwelling).

Exo. 25: 9 "According to all that I show you, that is, **the pattern** of the tabernacle and **the pattern** of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it."

Exo. 25: 40 "And see to it that you make them according to the **pattern which was shown you on the mountain.**"

Likewise in Ezekiel's vision he is told to understand the pattern and entire design.

Ezek 43: 10-12 "Son of man, **describe the temple** to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them **measure the pattern**. Vs. 11 "And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, **make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement**, its exits and its entrances, **its entire design** and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so that they may **keep its whole design** and all its ordinances, and perform them. Vs. 12 "This is the law of the temple: the whole area surrounding the mountaintop is most holy. Behold, **this is the law of the temple.**"

2. UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS

It's evident from these passages that God has a particular design in mind for the building of His House. The **Tabernacle of Moses, the Temple of Solomon, and Ezekiel's vision** all have the same pattern. The present House of the Lord, His Church, is also being built on this design.

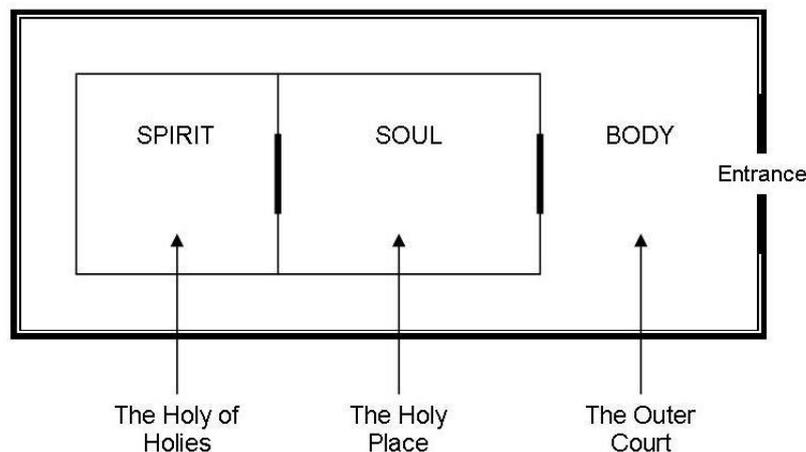
Therefore we must be careful that we build with the Lord in His chosen design. All patterns that are man's must be put aside so that The Lord can build His house (Psa. 127: 1) The pattern for building the End Time House of the Lord is obvious; it is a **3 Fold pattern**. Note these examples of the recurring sequence:

Outer Court	Holy Place	Holy of Holies
Body	Soul	Spirit
Way	Truth	Life
Land	City	Temple
Law	Grace	Kingdom
Passover	Pentecost	Tabernacles

This is important to grasp. God is using this 3 Fold truth to build His present-day Temple, the people of God. We must allow Him to build us in Spirit, Soul and Body. We will not come to maturity until the Lord builds the House within us. It will require cooperation from us to allow Him to have His pattern established in us. Only this House will stand! None other. The pattern has been declared since the time of Moses, but how few Christians today see the relevance and truth in this divine pattern. Pay attention to what God is trying to tell us!

3. THE WHOLE DESIGN

There are many wonderful, even hidden, truths to this divine design. Because we may know some of the outline of this pattern we can still miss the deeper truths to God's revealed design. The basic overall design is this:



This is a vital truth to understand, not just with the mind but also *in* the heart itself. This 3 Fold design relates to almost everything in Scripture in some way or another. Search out the Word to see how these truths apply to your own life. God had said that He wants to meet these three areas of our lives and to have them presented to Him. Deut. 16: 16 " **Three times** a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses" We ignore this command to our present day peril. God wants us to present our Spirit, Soul and Body to Him habitually so He can deal with them, bringing purification and transformation to His chosen design.

4. THIS TRUTH

Those who have **Doctrine** are no match for those who have **Truth**; those with **Logic** are no match for those who have **Spiritual Experience**. Live from your spirit-man!

God's End Time House cannot be built using the doctrines of man or the logic of the carnal mind. We must be led by the Spirit in all things.

Most Christians live from their soul-life allowing it to dictate to the body and dragging the spirit along with it. This is "religion" because religion is the fruit of the soul. But the soul must submit to the spirit of man that in turn is submitted to the Holy Spirit. Failure to do this will result in mixture and confusion.

We must progress through the Outer Court (*Body*) into the Holy Place (*Soul*) and then on into the secret place of the Holy of Holies (*Spirit*). It's here that Life is found – anything outside of this realm will cause us to fall short of perfection.

Remember that Moses' Tabernacle had **three sections**, but David's Tent only had **one part**, the Holy of Holies. God is restoring *David's Tabernacle* not Moses'. He's going to restore just one place, the Holy of Holies. We must learn to live in the realm of the spirit for this will be our eternal abode.

Where is David's Tent, where is the Secret Place? Within us, in our spirit-man. **We together**, collectively, are the House of God, the Body of The Messiah!

Chapter 16

Protocols for the Sons of God

“Sonship” is a shorthand term to describe those who are no longer children in the spiritual, but adult-like. A Jewish boy became a man when he turned 30 years of age; note that this was the age when Jesus was declared to be “God’s Son”:

“You are beloved My Son in whom I am well pleased.” Luke 3: 32-33

This was also the age that David was anointed as King over Israel. It was from this point that David truly began to reign:

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, he reigned forty years. 2 Sam 5: 4

“Sons” are therefore believers (of either gender) who have come to a place of spiritual and soul maturity and are set on a particular course of action. In the case of Jesus it was His messiahship; in the case of David it was as king.

Sons are no longer babes but full-grown in both character and nature.

Because of this, those who aim for a “higher call” should be aware that Sons need to pursue spiritual protocols that will enable them to incarnate the truths of He who alone is Truth. (A protocol is simply an agreement or course of action).

So those who hunger for the “meat” of spiritual life will need to have a protocol or agreement to what is Biblically required. Some of the following principles from Scripture will assist us to see this.

Sons must be Father-pleasers. They must not be self seeking, neither act out of rejection, nor pursue their own ministry; they must not separate themselves from the brethren, or harbour hurts and grudges, no matter how justified they are or feel. Sons must learn to “bear one another’s burdens”.

Like the Sons of the Resurrection they need to know their eternal destiny, and the spiritual nature with which they have been impregnated :

...for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. Luke 20: 36

The Hebraist phrase, “sons of the resurrection” defines “sons of God” not in respect of *character* but *nature*; “being the children of the resurrection” to an un-decaying existence; and thus the children of their Father’s immortality.

1. Sons are led by the Holy Spirit

Romans 8:14 ***For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

2. Sons must be willing to be sacrificed

Romans 8:32 ***He who did not withhold even His own Son, but gave Him up for all of us, will He not also with Him freely give us all things?***

3. Sons are related to heir-ship

Galatians 4: 7 ***So that you no more are a slave, but a son, and if a son, also an heir of God through Christ.***

4. Sons have to learn what obedience is

Hebrews 5: 8 ***Although He was God's Son, yet He learned obedience from the sufferings which He endured.***

5. Sons are sent forth, and willing to go

1 Corinthians 4: 17 ***For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.***

Galatians 4: 4 ***But, when the time was fully come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born subject to Law.***

Philemon 10-12 ***God's love for us has been manifested in that He has sent His only Son into the world so that we may have Life through Him.***

1 John 4: 9 ***I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains... I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart.***

6. Sons are linked to glory

Hebrews 2: 10 ***For it was fitting that He for whom, and through whom, all things exist, after He had brought many sons to glory, should perfect by suffering the Prince Leader who had saved them.***

7. Sons must be willing to be chastened

Hebrews 12: 5-7 ***And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?***

8. Sons must be proven in their character

Philippians 2: 22 ***But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.***

9. Sons pass on the Father's purpose to others

2 Timothy 2: 1-2 ***You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.***

10. Sons are foundational in building

Genesis 4: 17 ***Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son.***

Revelation 21: 14 ***And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.***

11. Sons are to be strong in grace

2 Timothy 2: 1 *You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

12. Sons are linked to resurrection power

Romans 1: 4...*who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

13. Sons are inseparably connected to revelation

Galatians 1: 16...*to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood.*

14. Sons receive the Holy Spirit in intimacy

Galatians 4: 6 *Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"*

15. Sons are faithful to their call

Hebrews 3: 6...*but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence...*

16. Life is associated with those in Sonship

1 John 5: 11-12...*God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.*

Some distinctive features associated with "Sonship :

Sons of God are early targets for "hits" by the enemy to kill them before their destiny is complete. (eg: Moses, Jesus).

They are content in all circumstances (eg: Moses, Joseph, Jesus, Paul).

Sons are falsely accused, and then often persecuted.

Sons "know" the wilderness and how to persevere in it, waiting their time to come forth.

True Sons of God are patient and persevering.

They don't have to try to vindicate themselves in the eyes of men.

Sons are often found in isolated places, unknown and unrecognised.

They know only too well the place of imprisonment and confinement, yet do not despise it.

Sons of God therefore have peculiar Biblical qualities about their character. They are mature in both spirit AND soul. They have learnt to be dependent entirely upon their Head, Jesus Christ. Whilst they love the brethren, they SERVE only Christ. They are not man-pleasers, but Father pleasers.

The Biblical principles we have looked at earlier are the Protocols, the agreement based entirely upon Biblical truths. Any who desire to move on into the greater realms of Life will need to AGREE in their mind with these facts.

They will also need to LIVE these truths as realities from out of the inner man, and as such evidence that “Sonship” has truly taken hold of their spirit.

Living, or pretending to live as Sons when we are in fact still debating it within, will only bring frustration and death of expectancy. Neither will lead us to fruitful spiritual.

Let us therefore press on to the Higher Calling (Philp. 3: 14) and by living out of our spirit-man evidence the wonderful maturity of Soul and Spirit that has been granted us by our Heavenly Father — that He might receive the glory and that we may be well pleasing to Him in all things!

Chapter 17

Identifying the Absalom spirit

(NOTE: In this teaching the “Absalom” is referred to as “he” for convenience sake. The spirit of Absalom may of course also work through a female, and in that case it’s often allied to the spirit of Jezebel.)

One of the most insidious attacks against the Body of Christ comes from those who are “disaffected”. This refers to those who feel they are not appreciated, recognised in their calling, or simply have a rebellious attitude towards God-appointed eldership.

This attitude has plagued the Body of Christ from its earthly inception, and was even at work in Old Testament times in one of King David’s sons, hence the term. We shall look briefly at the Biblical account as it highlights some important principles for us.

Absalom was David’s third son. We read how his sister Tamar was raped by her brother Amnon (2 Sam. 13: 8-14), and when Absalom perceived this all he said was;

Hold your peace my sister...do not take this thing to heart (2 Sam. 13: 20).

Such was the heart of Absalom. He was grossly insensitive and acted unjustly.

To Amnon his brother he spoke neither good nor bad (2 Sam. 13: 22).

The consequence of this incest brought forth “foolishness” and “hatred” in Amnon (verses 13-15), which then resulted in “anger” and “hatred” within the family (verses 21-22). Festering guilt mixed with anger led Absalom to plan his brother’s death, after which he fled the scene and hid for three years (chapter 13). Eventually, upon returning to Jerusalem he was banned from approaching his father David (2 Sam. 14: 24).

When, by another act of treachery, Absalom does get to see his father again (14: 28-33) he immediately sets about to draw attention to himself by “***providing for himself chariots and fifty men to run before him***” (15:1).

The working out of this mind-set causes Absalom to not only draw attention to himself, but also to draw people to himself (15: 2-6). This of course is the basic pattern and strategy of “the Absalom spirit”.

There’s a definite plan to all this. Note the sequence of how it is enacted:

1. Absalom chooses to rise early (2 Sam. 15: 2)
2. He deliberately stands at the gate to the City, where many people pass by.
3. He focuses in on issues the people have (in Heb. lit. =*controversies*).
4. He also seemingly “approves” of their dissatisfaction (15: 3), thus cunningly aligning himself to their concern, and vice versa.
5. Then he sows seeds of discontent by declaring that only he has the ability to make wise decisions (15: 4).
6. The result is that people are duped and pay him homage when they should be going to their God-appointed leader, in this case, King David (15: 5-6).
7. Absalom then uses a “religious ploy” to prepare the next stage of the deceit (15: 7-8).
8. This brings about an uprising against the legitimate God-appointed leadership (15: 10) by drawing others into the web to act deceitfully (the “spies” of verse 10a).

9. The final working out of all this is the setting up of a competitive seat of ruling power (15: 10b).

So, we see the treachery that is acted out by one close to leadership. Sadly, this pattern still runs its course today and we find churches and fellowships undermined by this very same “spirit”. Based on this Biblical account, what then are some of the factors to watch for?

THOSE WITH AN INDEPENDENT SPIRIT

Clearly we are to look for those who have an attitude that betrays an independent spirit. Such a person no longer wants to serve the Body but seeks recognition and reputation for himself. It may well have been that the person initially did serve others, but often this is only short-lived.

THOSE WHO SUBTLY SEEK SELF-PROMOTION

The next step is when such a person begins to manoeuvre to receive the praise of others. We have already seen in 2 Samuel chapter 15 how Absalom stood by the gate of the city and “*stole the hearts of the people*”. In modern jargon we might say “he conned their minds”.

SPIRITUAL PRIDE RISES UP

It’s usually those who lack clear discernment who give accolades and praise to the Absalom-type among them. As this takes root in the heart of the perpetrator he begins to believe that he’s more spiritual than others, and certainly wiser than the current leadership. He becomes unteachable.

AN OFFENDED SPIRIT COMES TO THE FORE

The spiritual pride that resides deep in the heart of the Absalom-type turns into Offence. Almost anything begins to cause offence because his “spiritual insight” isn’t appreciated by the leadership. All the time he works to have his ideas, doctrines and plans promoted. When it’s clear his suggestions are not being accepted, he is greatly offended and seeks out others to back him - and to get them to agree with him about the great offence caused. Disaffected people can so easily seek after others of like spirits, who in turn are drawn to him.

A CRITICAL SPIRIT BEGINS TO OPERATE OPENLY

Once the pattern gets this far it’s not too long before a critical attitude toward leadership begins to operate more openly. This will soon result in nearly every decision, major and minor, being questioned by the disaffected ones.

About the same time that this begins to operate, the Absalom-type feels he can no longer receive any spiritual input or guidance from leadership. Gradually he begins to distance himself from leadership, and complains that they’re the ones who are causing all this.

He is reinforced in his thinking that only he has the wisdom to carry the group further spiritually. Because there’s no balance in his thinking he “hears” only those voices that approve of him, and he can even begin to find Biblical texts in support of this. He has entered very dangerous territory at this stage.

A SPIRIT OF COMPETITION ENTERS THE FRAY

What now emerges is a direct confrontation, which will ultimately lead to more and more confusion. The Absalom-type will set himself up in competition to the leadership by deliberately throwing innuendo and doubt into even casual conversation with the disaffected ones.

Because they too feel unloved they will readily nod their agreement. All the while their conscience tries to alert them to the fact that something's not quite true -yet they ignore this alarm bell and continue in aligning themselves to one of like-spirit.

Later the Absalom will begin to distort some of the teaching given by leadership, and misrepresent certain facts and decisions they make. Thus it moves from a sense of emotional hurt and lack of appreciation, to challenging doctrine. By this stage there's now occurred a major crisis in the pattern of this problem.

THE DELIBERATE SOWING OF STRIFE INCREASES

Now Absalom begins to take the strife to another level, often contacting other individuals in the church to spread the dissatisfaction; always of course making sure the hearer understands that this isn't gossip, but "truth" that needs airing!

When it's something that occurs through a chance meeting with another disaffected person, it's one thing; but when it becomes more "organised" it's quite another. By the use of phone calls, invitations to a cuppa or a meal, and even through clandestine gatherings such as home fellowships, the strife spreads like a cancer.

Absalom is keen to seemingly promote God, the teachings of the Bible, etc, to validate the reason for speaking against leadership. He is very careful at this point not to blow his cover; he doesn't want to be seen as divisive, so acts with seeming humility.

However, invitations to attend a cuppa, a meal or gathering are given out to selected ones who Absalom knows will readily accept. At the outset of such gatherings Absalom makes sure that the attention isn't drawn to him - "it is God who is our focus" he readily announces! This soon changes however, and gradually the gathering turns into a meeting of bruised souls all expressing their sense of hurt and rejection.

ACCUSATIONS FLY

The greatest accusation any believer will have to face is "You don't love me enough!". We all know in our hearts we fail at this point, so the poisoned arrow of accusation can go deep. This becomes the one great area of faultfinding, especially directed at leadership. Usually it's not Biblical love that's the issue for the accusation here, but rather "emotional" love.

While the disaffected ones are giving voice to their hurt, Absalom waits (somewhat impatiently) for an opportunity to turn it in a certain direction. He isn't really interested at all in their grievances; he wants to air his own feelings.

A Bible text is usually flung about, as if to legitimise the gossip. It doesn't take too long before Absalom speaks forthrightly against faults that he's noticed in the leadership. Topping the list will be "lack of love", followed by an accusation that the current leaders are "grieving the Holy Spirit".

Close behind these accusations will often come a “comforter” or “pacifier”. In the Bible Absalom was keen to evidence loyalty to both God and David (2 Sam. 15: 7-9), yet his actions showed otherwise. The use of Biblical quotes or principles, especially that we should still love the leaders whom we’ve “left” brings a kind of “comfort” to the disaffected. They feel they’re not really attacking God’s leaders at all, because they, at least, still “love” them!

Sadly this is nothing more than a trick of the mind; it’s a spiritual and emotional somersault. If they would only listen they’d hear their conscience screaming out at them to wake up and see what’s really going on.

Attacks against eldership are often related to the spiritual qualifications required of leadership as set down in Scripture, and how the current leaders fail to measure up. The breakaway group has now become so entrenched in their “mission of purification” that even minor failures of the previous leaders are made to be seen as major flaws.

OPEN DISLOYALTY FOLLOWED BY DIVISION

Once this has reached a certain point, it’s not too long before open division rears its serpentine head. Absalom doesn’t necessarily need a large group to implement his next move; even a small band of followers will suffice. He knows he has them, for he has “*stolen their hearts*” (2 Sam. 15:6) and they have unwittingly given themselves over to him. They have come under bondage (see 2 Pet. 2: 19) and they are being savagely manipulated. By now Absalom is becoming quite smug and proud.

Soon the disloyalty is shown by the making of some sort of declaration (2 Sam. 15: 10), either in public or in private. It’s remarkable how often those who seek to break away, declare their intention by any means rather than a face-to-face meeting! A hurried phone call or a short letter announces their intent; it is curt, to the point and there is no entering into further dialogue.

A final parting dart is flung at leadership in a last attempt to inflict hurt when it’s announced, “by the way, you need to know that others feel the same way I do!” (compare 2 Sam. 15: 10-13). If the leadership haven’t guarded their spirit and soul, they’ll wilt under this very common accusation.

Perhaps it’s only at this point that the leadership actually becomes aware of the depth of the division. How necessary it is then that elders should pay attention to God’s warnings via prophetic words, and even dreams!

Now the awful truth has come into the open: and the people must make a choice between their current leaders and the Absalom who has deceived them all by his treachery. Usually the larger group are not swayed by the Absalom-type, but he has caused enough division to foster doubt in the remainder of the congregation. A unease now hovers over the people and a spiritual sickness begins to pervade nearly everything they do as believers.

The elders feel sick at heart, the congregation are desperately looking for answers, and those with a rather strong-will in the church will begin to demand quick surgical action. The stress grows and a whole new dynamic begins to take hold. Sunday meetings are soon tainted with doubt, unease, and a sense of loss of anointing.

A CONGREGATION TORN APART

Amongst those whom Absalom has beguiled are the naïve ones (2 Sam. 15: 11). These are those who “only wanted the best of church life”, those who wanted to “move into something spiritually greater”, those who truly did desire the “deeper things”, and who wanted the “freedom of the Spirit”. Sadly these ones don’t see the truth until much later, and they become confused, while some ultimately leave fellowshiping altogether.

Both sides are now in a flurry to re-establish and establish their respective groups. At this point the leadership may try to encourage the remnant through all sorts of ways, in an attempt to stabilise them. Sadly there’s often an over-reaction in this and the people sense the leaders are “trying too hard” to keep them. This can actually cause further unease, and it may very well be that some of the remnant congregation begin to think that there might be something in what Absalom has been saying all along!

Absalom however will begin to gloat, all the time making certain this isn’t seen publicly. But the signs will be there, and sooner or later, what’s in his heart will overflow in his words and actions.

One thing the Absalom-type cannot fail to do is to speak out against what he’s left behind. He will actively seek out “teachings” that will seemingly “approve” of, and legitimise, his actions.

Those who align themselves with him will find some “comfort” in these teachings, as it seems to validate their choice. However the instruction they receive from him will be un-balanced and its source is often other “Absaloms”. He has now cunningly set himself up as a “wise one” subtly imposing upon his group the view that he can lead them into something more “spiritual”, unlike the previous leadership.

When the Absalom sees something go wrong in the church he’s just left, he’s quick to say that “God’s judgement” has now fallen upon the leadership because they didn’t listen. Sadly, even insignificant events will be seen as “signs” that God has approved of the split. Spiritual discernment cannot possibly function in the breakaway group because of the bitterness and pride that’s taken root there.

THE JUDGMENT THAT WILL SURELY FOLLOW

There’s a Biblical principle that states: If the root is evil then the fruit shall also be evil. This simply means that a group birthed from the workings of an “Absalom” will suffer the same fate in due time. Disloyalty, gossip, and eventual rebellion will follow as sure as night follows day.

Note that in Scripture, Absalom died in a most revealing way; his head got caught in trees and he was left dangling until he was executed. Caught by the head! In Biblical typology “the head” stands for authority and leadership.

Absalom set himself up as head and by his head he was judged! (2 Sam. 18: 9-18).

May the Lord and His teaching Spirit guide us into ALL of His wondrous ways and increasingly deliver us from the spirit of Absalom : please pray that MATURITY will be the hall-mark of today’s church!

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