



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

## Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.6.3

This issue of PARABLES BOOKSHELF contains chapters 6 and 7 of the book *Christ in You - The Hope of Glory*.

I receive e-mails from a person who often attaches the following quote to the bottom of his correspondence.

*"You don't have a soul, you are a soul. You have a body."*

C. S. Lewis

It is fascinating to consider the fact that we are a soul inhabiting a body. One day we will lay aside this present body and will put on a far better one. You might say that this is our training body. We have been given the specific body we received to train our souls how to function as sons of God.

All of our bodies are influenced by sin. Our bodies desire continuously to satisfy some lust, or appetite resident in the body. We can progress in conformity to Christ by ruling over these bodies, not allowing the flesh to dictate to us what we will do.

This sounds like it should be a fairly easy task, but our flesh can exert powerful influences upon us. Just try fasting for a day, or two, and see how much of a battle it is to subject the clamoring desires of the flesh to the rule of your soul.

A day will come when we will lay aside these bodies of sin, and will receive new bodies that do not know sin. The struggle against sin will then be over. We should therefore

use the time allotted to us in these present bodies to develop the character of our inner man.

We must wage warfare against the flesh and its passions and desires that we might become men and women of godly character.

You are not a body that has a soul. You are a soul that has a body. This present body is so designed to provide you much opportunity to develop your spiritual muscles.

Have you been allowing your flesh to dictate the life you have lived? The end result of doing so is slavery and death. We must rule over the flesh if we would be mature sons and daughters of God.

## Food for Thought

*"I account this body nothing but a close prison to my soul; and the earth a larger prison to my body. I may not break prison till I be loosed by death; but I will leave it, not unwillingly, when I am loosed."*

Joseph Hall

## Scripture Memory

II Corinthians 5:1

For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

### Parables Newsletter

- Series 1.6.3
- *The Hope of Glory*
- Chapters 6-7

# Christ in You - The Hope of Glory!

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## The Afflicted Way

I have but poorly described what awaits the glorified sons of God who attain to the number of the firstborn, and have dimly portrayed the distinctions between the three resurrections of man. I am hindered from providing a clearer picture of the glories of the ages to come by my own limited sight. I have seen these things as through a glass darkly (I Corinthians 13:12).

Christ must be fully formed in us...

The best I can urge upon any child of God is simply to believe the witness Yahweh has provided for us in His word. He has said that the first resurrection is worthy of our utmost striving.

Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us.

I cannot describe the glory to be revealed in us, for I have not seen it. The apostle John confessed that "it has not yet appeared what we shall be," but he said we would be like the firstborn Son of God in His glory. Such a state is beyond present comprehension.

I Corinthians 2:9

"Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."

What awaits the overcoming sons of God will be awesome beyond anything in this present age. God has prepared amazing things for those who have toiled and wept and suffered in this time of

formation of His sons.

Matthew 25:34-35

Then the King will say to those on His right, "Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

I know I must bring some balance to this teaching, for although the future is glorious beyond description for all who attain to that age to come, there is a cost to be borne at this time. In order to enter into the glory of a resurrected son of God one must be conformed first to the image and likeness of God. This image and likeness is one of character. Christ must be fully formed in us before we can reign as members of Christ over the kingdoms of the earth.

This conforming process is difficult. Yahshua described it in the following way:

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. ***For the gate is small, and the way is afflicted that leads to life, and few are those who find it.***"

The most common English translations of the Scriptures say "the way is narrow." The word rendered "narrow" is the Greek word thlibo, which the KJV has rendered in the following ways: afflict, narrow, throng, suffer tribulation, trouble. The most common rendering of this Greek word is "afflicted," and it is fitting to translate it this way in the verse quoted above. The way to life is an afflicted path.

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II Timothy 3:12

And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Yahshua will be persecuted.

There is no other way to mature a child of God than to subject them to distresses and difficulties. Much sin is bound up in this flesh, and it is with the utmost difficulty that the spiritual creation formed within us by the power of the Holy Spirit comes to a place of ascendancy over the clamoring passions and desires of the flesh. Pride must be humbled. Selfishness must be replaced with a total selflessness. Lust must be crucified. Hatred must give way to love. Irritability must yield to patience. Fear must be conquered by faith and peace.

We can only make the transformation from fleshly beings to spiritual as we are placed in situations where our character is tried. We must be brought into a variety of circumstances where the natural man will always respond with lust, fear, anger, and a host of other unrighteous thoughts and actions. In each instance our Father, by His Holy Spirit, urges us to arise as spiritual beings in His own image and put down the flesh in order to manifest the glory of God's character within us.

Some years ago I was brought to a particularly difficult trial. I was perplexed, and grieved and discouraged, causing me to cry out to the Lord for some encouragement. At that very moment He had a family member stick a prophetic word in my hand that they had just received in their e-mail. It was a direct and explicit answer to my cry of anguish. This prophetic word contained the following sentence.

*And no matter what the circumstances look like, I am able to work My glory in them, and to make you come forth into the calling and anointing that I have for you.*

As I looked at my trial I wondered very much how God's glory could be manifest in it. There was nothing that appeared glorious to me, for my trial was leading to my being subjected to false accusations and unrighteous judgments resulting in condemnation. In my shortsightedness, the only glory I could envision was for God to end the trial and vindicate me before my detractors.

Since then I have come to understand that God is glorified whenever we manifest His holy and righteous character in the midst of our trials. Although outwardly we may be subjected to shame, God is glorified if we bear up under the trial patiently, crucifying the flesh with its evil passions. When we are slandered and seek to conciliate, when we are reviled and do not revile in return, when we are insulted and speak forth a blessing, then Yahweh is glorified. The greatest glory we can bring to the Father is found in the moments of our most extreme trials.

John 12:27-28

"Now My soul has become troubled; and ***what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'?*** But for this purpose I came to this hour. ***Father, glorify Thy name.***" There came therefore a voice out of heaven: ***"I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."***

Yahshua was faced with two choices when He saw the cross before Him. He could say, "Father, save me from this hour," or He could say, "Father, glorify Thy name." Yahshua chose to glorify His Father's name by going through the trial and manifesting the meek, humble and loving character of God as He was being subjected to terrible abuse and scorn. The Father was glorified beyond measure as His Son was being crucified and He declared, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."

*There is no other way to mature a child of God...*

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This single act was a triumph over the rebellious and self-centered attitude of Satan. By the righteousness, humility, and love of the Son of God all sin was shown to be exceedingly sinful. The nature and character of God was revealed to be infinitely higher and worthy of praise than the fallen nature of man.

In order for you and I to be made ready to receive the glory, power and authority reserved for the

*When life is comfortable, the sons of God tend to be at ease.*

glorified sons of God, we must first become mature sons in the image and likeness of our Father. This conformity is proven through many trials that seem grievous

at the moment, but they yield the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Hebrews 12:3-12

For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart. You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; for those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Our Father will always subject us to the optimum circumstances to produce in us His righteous character. He rarely chooses to subject His sons in training to ease and comfort, riches or worldly acclaim. When life is comfortable, the sons of God tend to be at ease. When men and women have plenty, their tendency is toward pride and careless living. Yahweh knows our frame, and the waywardness of the flesh. He therefore chooses circumstances that are humble and which keep us focused on Him.

In 1999 I surrendered to the Lord to follow Him wherever He would lead me. This was a departure from the manner of my Christian walk prior to that time. I had previously lived according to the manner of all the other Christians with whom I was familiar. I remained in control of many of the decisions of my life, fearing that a total surrender to His will might lead me to experiences my flesh and soul dreaded.

When I crossed through the narrow gate of surrender to His will in all things, I found myself entering an afflicted path. I had known afflictions in earlier days, but they were much less, for I was still directing my way in many decisions. My growth in Christ was also much slower during those former days. When I entered into the path of affliction of God's choosing, my spiritual growth entered into a greatly accelerated state.

Yahweh directed me to quit my job as a computer professional at a local hospital and begin ministering full-time. I had no savings, and I had a wife and two children. I actually anticipated that the Lord would honor my faith and obedience by supplying me with an on-time abundance of provision and allowing me to maintain my former manner and standard of living. This was not to be the case.

Over the course of the next six years I lived day by day in dependence upon my heavenly Father. He supplied our every need, but our provision was

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very meager in comparison to what we had known when I was working as a computer professional. There were many days when there was no food in the house and we were dependent upon God sending provision that very day or we would not eat. He always sent a provision! We never went hungry, but we did not eat steak either. We were blessed to have a simple meal, a sandwich, or something very basic to fill our bellies. In hindsight, we could have eaten a much better diet if we had educated ourselves in the preparation of inexpensive wholesome foods such as dried beans and whole grains and vegetables.

We never suffered hunger, but I felt a kind of suffering in these experiences. I knew I could go out and get a job and buy whatever my heart desired to feed myself and my family. Yet the Spirit of Christ constrained me from doing so. He showed me that He wanted me to write books, minister to others, and trust Him for all things during these years. I knew that taking a job would be a violation of the Father's will for me, for He was testing me and seeking to teach me many things by keeping me dependent upon Him.

It was not the Father's will that I have an abundance of money at that time. He could easily have provided it had He chosen to do so. He can open up the windows of heaven and pour forth a blessing at any time. The best environment for my spiritual growth was not one of material prosperity. It was an environment of daily dependence for that days need.

I learned something through this experience. I discovered that when I had been making decisions for myself that I was consistently choosing a path that was much more comfortable to the flesh. I didn't realize how much this was true until I gave the direction of my entire life into the hands of my Father. His choices for my family and I were not nearly as comfortable as what my own soul would have led us unto. This truth is certainly a major portion of what Yahshua was indicating in His words in Matthew chapter 7.

Wide is the gate and broad is the way to destruction, and many are on that path. What path does the natural man choose for himself? With little exception, man chooses the easiest way. Few would choose to walk through a thorny hedge if there was a clear way around it. Yet God will lead His sons and daughters through the thorny hedge that rips and tears at their flesh.

This tendency to choose for ourselves a comfortable path, determining what sacrifices we will make, and which ones we will avoid, is a path-way to destruction. The Lord has given us clear examples of people whose lives were ones of ease and comfort, and rather than producing righteous men and women after His image and likeness, the abundance of their situation led them to careless living and sin.

*With little exception,  
man chooses the easiest  
way.*

Ezekiel 16:49-50

Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: **she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food, and careless ease**, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me. Therefore I removed them when I saw it.

God knows that it requires a path of affliction to provide an environment for spiritual growth and righteousness. The majority of Christians, failing to allow God to choose their path and to lead them in all decisions, are also failing to gain in conformity to Christ. At best they have greatly slowed their growth to spiritual maturity.

The disciples of Christ were amazed when Yahshua spoke the following words:

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Matthew 19:23-24

"Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Many have misunderstood the message of Christ in these words, for they have mistakenly equated "the eye of a needle" with a sewing needle. Camels do not go through the eye of a sewing needle, so this makes little sense. In the days of Christ cities

*A life of material ease and comfort will hinder all men from coming to maturity in Christ.*

were surrounded by walls for protection against invading enemies. Gates were set in the walls to allow people and materials to come and go. These gates were closed at night and in

times of danger, but it was still necessary to allow a limited flow of people in and out. Therefore, built into the large gates was a small door which could be opened to let a man in or out. This small door was called "the eye of the needle."

Camels at the time were used for transport of goods. They would be piled high with merchandise and goods to be traded. If a man came to the gates after they had been closed and needed to enter, it was possible to go through and take his camel along, but it was very difficult. The master of the camel would have to take all the merchandise off of the camel, and the camel would have to go through the gate on his knees.

This is a picture of how a rich man must enter the kingdom of heaven. Getting on one's knees speaks of humility, and removing all the goods from the camel's back speaks of the necessity of a rich man giving up all his possessions.

Matthew 19:21-22

Yahshua said to him, "***If you wish to be per-***

***fect***, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieved; for he was one who owned much property.

The word rendered as "perfect" in this Scripture is the Greek word *teleios*. This Greek word means "perfect, mature, of full age." What Yahshua was telling this rich young ruler of the Jews is that if he wanted to come to maturity as a son of God, then he needed to free himself from all his wealth which was making his life very comfortable and easy, and then come follow Christ. Christ would lead this young man down an afflicted path, but it would lead to spiritual maturity. Holding onto his possessions, and clinging to his comfortable lifestyle, would hinder this man from coming to a perfect conformity to the image of Christ.

Most Christians think that the Lord's words to this young ruler were exceptional. They have been convinced by preachers of prosperity that this young man had an inordinate affection for the world's goods and therefore he was required to give them up, but not all Christians need do so. What the saints have not understood is that the Lord is revealing a very general principle through these words, a principle with application to all of the lives of Yahweh's sons and daughters. A life of material ease and comfort will hinder all men from coming to maturity in Christ. "The way is afflicted" which leads to life. Comfort and affliction are opposites. We cannot choose to live comfortable lives and expect to find the life of Christ revealed in us at the end of our journey. It will not happen.

I am convinced that a life of very humble circumstances provides the optimal environment for the maturing of almost all of the children of God. God wants us to be dependent upon Him. He will not lead all men to quit their jobs, as He instructed me to do. I was a minister of the gospel and the Scriptures declare:

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I Corinthians 9:14

So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

Yet, God does have a specific plan for every son and daughter. He would have them submit their every decision to Him. Yahweh wants to be the One to choose where you work, where you live, and what you spend your money and time doing. If all saints submitted all these decisions to God I believe that most would find themselves living in daily dependence upon God. When the Lord taught His disciples to pray, He began this way:

Matthew 6:9-11

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ***Give us this day our daily bread.***

When people came up to Yahshua saying they wanted to be His disciple, it was not unheard of for Him to counsel them to sell all they had, give it to the poor, and then come follow Him. To do so placed a person in a position of complete daily dependence upon the Father. Manifesting a willingness to dispose of one's possessions and live the life the Lord chose for them was not the requirement of a select few. A willingness to surrender all was required of all who would be Christ's disciple.

Luke 14:33

So therefore, ***no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.***

Luke 5:11

And when they had brought their boats to land, ***they left everything and followed Him.***

Luke 18:29-30

And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, ***there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life.*** "

In this last passage we see a parallel to the afflicted path that leads to life. Yahshua tells His disciples that all who have left the comforts of house and possessions and relatives behind will receive "eternal life." Because they accepted the afflicted path, these will receive life.

There are few Christians today who have given up all their possessions to God. I am convinced that God would have everyone who would be a disciple of Christ to surrender all things to Him that He might direct them in all their worldly possessions, the choice of where they live, and how they spend their time and money. He may not tell you to dispose of all things, yet if Scriptures provide any pattern at all in God's dealings with those who would be sons of God, He will require this of many. He laid this requirement on me. He reduced my worldly possessions down to nothing. For a time He led my family and I to live and travel in a 20 year old motorhome and I am convinced that had the rest of my family stayed the course, this would be our manner of living in this hour.

A willingness to surrender all was required of all who would be Christ's disciple.

If we make our life choices for ourselves, we will inevitably choose circumstances and conditions that are comfortable to our flesh. This comfort stands as a hindrance to spiritual growth. Having a home can afford so much comfort and insulation from the trials we need to mature that Yahshua will call us to surrender even this which

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many find to be an absolute requirement, and non-negotiable with the Lord. Yahshua spoke to a Scribe who wanted to follow Him as a disciple. Scribes in Israel had comfortable lives, and nice homes. He told the Scribe:

Matthew 8:20

"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Yahshua, although being the Son of God, was content to live far below the standard of living of the people He dwelt among. Most Jews had a home of some kind, but Yahshua lived as a homeless man. God could have provided a house and a nice ministry center for His Son.

*All the body needs to survive is food and covering.*

Yet He chose that which was optimal to teach Him obedience, and to perfect Him.

Hebrews 5:8-9

Although He was a Son, ***He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.*** And ***having been made perfect,*** He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation...

In order to enter by the narrow gate, and to travel the afflicted way which leads to life, it is mandatory that we allow our Father in heaven to direct our steps. The vast majority of mankind seek to direct their own steps. They have certain desires and requirements that they feel this life should provide for them. Yahshua said that this path of self-direction is wide and it leads to destruction.

I know that to Western Christians, this message is very radical. It was radical in the day of Christ. The rich young ruler went away grieved, probably

reasoning that what Christ demanded of him could not possibly be the will of God. Most Scribes in Christ's day would also have balked at giving up the requirement of having their own home, thinking such a sacrifice was totally unnecessary. The apostle Paul very plainly affirmed the words of Christ, revealing that he was not only willing to accept this afflicted path, but he instructed others that it was right and necessary.

I Timothy 6:6-11

But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by ***contentment***. For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. And ***if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content***. But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. But flee from these things, you man of God...

All the body needs to survive is food and covering. These are the necessities. All beyond this are comforts. A man doesn't need a house filled with furniture. He doesn't need televisions, stereos, game consoles, a swimming pool or jacuzzi, a pool table or other forms of entertainment, two cars in the garage, or walls adorned with decorations, and closets filled with the merchandise of this world. I once had many of these things, back when I lived as most Christians do today, making my own choices concerning the path I would walk. I did not understand that choosing for myself a comfortable life was hindering the maturation of the spiritual man.

Yahweh may provide all of these things to you at some point in your path. At other times He may reduce you to nothing. The key to growth in Christ is being content with whatever Yahweh chooses for us. The apostle Paul did not always



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know lean times. There were seasons of plenty.

Philippians 4:11-13

I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

I have found that the Lord will lead us to experience seasons of material blessing and comfort. These often serve as intermissions in much longer seasons of leanness and difficulty. There are seasons where He places us in the fire of refining, and times when He takes us out of the fire for a season of refreshing. What is certain is that He will not choose for us the uninterrupted comfort and ease that the majority of Christians have chosen for themselves.

II Corinthians 11:27

***I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.***

II Timothy 2:9

***I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal...***

II Timothy 2:3

***Suffer hardship with me***, as a good soldier of Christ Yahshua.

II Timothy 4:5

But you, be sober in all things, ***endure hardship***, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Lest some should argue that the apostle Paul was giving these instructions to a fellow minister, and they don't apply to all Christians, I will provide a couple examples of similar instructions to the churches.

Philippians 1:29-30

***For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake***, not only to believe in Him, but also ***to suffer*** for His sake, ***experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.***

Romans 8:16-17

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, ***if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.***

The apostle makes it quite plain to the saints that being an heir with Christ is inextricably tied together with their willingness to suffer with Christ. There is an afflicted path that leads to life for all the sons of God. It is a sobering truth that the Lord declared when He uttered the words, "and few there are that find it."

*There is an afflicted path that leads to life...*

If we fail in conformity to Christ, a conformity that only comes by walking an afflicted path, then we will not attain to the number of the firstborn sons of God. Consider again, the story of Joseph. When all of Joseph's brothers were living as free men, living as they pleased, Joseph was a slave and a prisoner. Joseph could not choose anything for himself, and he serves as a type of those who are overcomers in Christ.

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For the past four years I have lived alone. My children are grown and my wife has chosen to not allow the Lord to order her steps, for there are certain things she desires, even requires in this life. I do not condemn her for this. I know, however, that I must not choose my lifestyle and activities for myself. I must surrender to the Father in all things. After my wife left me, Yahweh chose for me to live at a homeless shelter for a year, then to work as an employee of the homeless shelter for a further two years. I was not paid much, and though I have no debt and live a simple life, I found myself living constantly in dependence upon the Father to meet all of my needs.

Several months ago He directed me to leave the employment of the rescue mission, and to enter

*Many who have had an abundance will be reduced to great poverty.*

into full-time ministry again, trusting Him for every provision. He has been faithful to meet my every need. I am lacking for nothing, but by most American's standards

my life would be appalling. I have no home. I live out of a small camper/van. I have very few possessions. And I am dependent upon the Father for all of my needs.

Though many would not choose to live as the Father has directed me, I am content with what He has chosen. I know it is the optimal environment for me. In times past I have wondered why the Father didn't pour out a great financial blessing upon me. I now know the answer. Financial wealth leads to independence. If I had much money in times past I would have made decisions that would have led me away from what was best for me. I would have sought to ease my way and make my flesh more comfortable. Comfort was not what I needed to grow, therefore God withheld His abundance.

Having an abundance tends to make men and women less sensitive to God's leading and direction. They begin to make decisions influenced by

the desires of their soul, rather than seeking to know the mind of Yahweh in everything. Perhaps the day will come when I have matured enough spiritually so that the Father can trust me with an abundance, knowing that I have learned the discipline of waiting on Him before I move in any direction. This maturity has to be gained by much discipline at the hands of our Father.

Let me end this chapter by inviting you to look at the Scripture which serves as its basis once more. Consider what the Spirit of Christ is speaking to you, through these words. Ask Him to reveal the application to your own walk.

A day is close at hand when judgment is coming to the church. Many who have had an abundance will be reduced to great poverty. Is it not much better to freely surrender to the Lord's direction in your life, than to have Him take what you have by force? There is great reward for those who release their possessions of a free will, for as the Lord told the rich young ruler, "and you will have treasure in heaven." There is no reward if you cling to that which your flesh cries out for until it is suddenly snatched out of your hands.

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. ***For the gate is small, and the way is afflicted that leads to life, and few are those who find it.***"

### Death of Initiative

The first chapter of this book declared the value of taking a wider view of the work of God, for as we observe the end Yahweh has in mind for His sons we can better comprehend those things which are to be our present experience. Yahweh is looking for sons to whom He can impart His own omnipo-

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tent power and authority. In order to entrust the powers of the age to come to sons, these sons must be fully formed in Yahweh's own image. To fall short in any measure in attaining to the character of God would result in incalculable harm to the creation.

Consider the message of the following passage from the gospels:

Luke 9:52-56

And they went, and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make arrangements for Him. And they did not receive Him, because He was journeying with His face toward Jerusalem. And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" But He turned and rebuked them, and said, **"You do not know what kind of spirit you are of;** for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

Suppose Yahweh had granted James and John the power and authority to do whatever came into their heart BEFORE they learned the nature of the Spirit of Christ. These "sons of thunder" would have left smoking ruins all around in their misguided zeal for their Lord. Yahweh will bequeath an even greater power to His sons in the age to come, and therefore it is an absolute necessity that they come into a strict conformity to the Spirit of Christ.

The sons of God must learn a deep humility. They must not consider that any thought or ambition arising from the soul of man is of value. Walking humbly before God requires that a man move only at the command of God, doing nothing that arises out from self. It is an acknowledgment that only Yahweh is the source of righteous judgment and all goodness. Man can only act in righteousness and goodness when he has perfectly comprehended the mind and will of the Father.

Isaiah 11:3-4

***He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; but with righteousness He will judge...***

Righteous judgment is not arrived at by a rational examination of the facts. Even if we have a moral code to guide us and we apply all diligence to understand all the facts of a matter, our rational mind will not lead us to righteous judgment. The prophet Isaiah testified that the coming Messiah would not judge after the manner of men. The Son of God would not evaluate situations as He received input through His natural senses and then weighed the matter in His soul. The Messiah would judge with righteousness.

*The sons of God must learn a deep humility.*

The majority in Christendom today overwhelmingly form their judgments according to the report of their senses as they weigh the facts in their soul. Many know of no other way to judge a matter. Little do they realize that they are operating out of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and they have not begun to judge things in righteousness. How often have unrighteous actions been upheld by Christian men, and righteous actions condemned? All the while those making the judgments think their thoughts are right and in keeping with the mind of Christ.

John 16:2-3

***"They will make you outcasts from the synagogue, but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God. And these things they will do, because they have not known the Father, or Me."***

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If we do not know Christ or the Father, even as James and John did not know the Spirit they were of, we will make judgments that are antagonistic to the judgments of God. You may believe you would never misjudge things so badly, yet if you judge any matter by the seeing of the eye or the hearing of the ear, you are already on the wrong track and operating contrary to the example of the firstborn Son of God.

Suppose you saw a man confessing the name of Christ and he was casting out a demon, speaking

*It is pride to think that we can judge matters ourselves...*

forth the word of God, or even performing a miracle. Would you not conclude that such an one must be walking in righteousness? Would you not judge that this

person must certainly be one of God's favorite sons, and walking in the pleasure of Yahweh? Yahshua did not judge in this way.

Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

I scarcely believe there is a Christian today who would judge things as Yahshua did in this Scripture. Most would stand up alongside these and say, "But Lord, they were confessing Your name and doing many good works. They were casting out Satan. How can you condemn these as lawless?" If we judge events by what our eyes see and ears hear we will stumble badly. We will end up approving that which Christ condemns and condemning that which He approves.

It is pride to think that we can judge matters ourselves and come to a righteous understanding of a matter. The soul of man, no matter how educated in the things of God, is inadequate for the task of making righteous judgments. There is one unfailing source of righteous judgment in all of creation, and that is Yahweh. We only know righteousness, and we only judge a matter fairly, as we receive His mind and thoughts. This is how Yahshua judged all things. He looked to the Father and received His judgment.

John 5:30

"I can do nothing on My own initiative. **As I hear, I judge;** and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."

It was not the hearing of the ear that Yahshua referred to in these words. It was hearing by the Spirit. Yahshua never did anything of His own initiative. He did not even speak a word of His own initiative, but only spoke the words the Father commanded Him to speak. Yahshua was at perfect rest in His soul. Yahshua did not allow His soul to direct His activities, or even to influence His actions. He stilled His soul and at every decision He looked to the mind of the Father and did only what He observed the Father doing.

John 4:34

Yahshua said to them, "**My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.**"

With these words Yahshua was declaring that the very thing that sustained Him and gave Him life was knowing the Father's will and doing it. Anything less than this was a work of death. We ONLY know the will of the Father in any instance, we only comprehend His mind and thoughts, as they are imparted to us by the Holy Spirit.

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I Corinthians 2:10-16

The Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? ***Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.*** Now ***we have received***, not the spirit of the world, but ***the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God***, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But ***we have the mind of Christ.***

The apostle Paul declares, “***we have received... the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God.***” Many Christians will say, “Yes, this is true. Therefore my judgments are right.” DO NOT BE DECEIVED! Do you not understand that the soul of man has received the ability to judge right and wrong, good and evil, by eating of the forbidden fruit in the garden? This soulish sense of judgment is ALWAYS with us, and it is distorted and twisted, arising from our fallen humanity. The vast majority of Christians examine the facts as they are apprehended by the seeing of the eye and the hearing of the ear, and they look inside to discern what is the good path and what is the evil path. They think they have arrived at the mind of God when they have only consulted with their own soul.

Are you able to discern between the voice of your soul and the voice of the Spirit of God? Most Christians are failing to divide between them.

Hebrews 4:10-12

For ***the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.*** Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall through following the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and ***piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit***, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

The apostle is declaring that there is a Sabbath rest for all of God’s sons to enter. Yet like the Israelites in the wilderness, the vast majority fail to enter in. The Sabbath rest before the sons of God today is defined as coming to an end of our own works; “***the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His.***” Walking in Sabbath rest is manifested by doing nothing unless we have received it from the Father. This is what Christ was saying when He declared, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; ***but he who does the will of My Father*** who is in heaven.” You can call Christ “Lord” all day long, but if the works you are doing originated in your own soul then you have not begun to do the will of the Father.

*Most Christians have no concept of the peril of being directed by their own soul.*

Most Christians have almost no concept of the peril of being directed by their own soul. They consider that it is enough that they try to live a moral life, and that they devote some of their time to good works. Such a life is detestable to the Father. Yahweh does not want man to offer Him the fruit of his own soul. He wants man to die to self (soul) and begin to be directed and empowered in all things by the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

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Luke 14:26

“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate... **even his own life (psuche, soul)**, he cannot be My disciple.”

If you still live the life of your soul, being led of your own natural mind, willing things from your Adamic soul, pursuing the pleasures and desires of the natural man, then you cannot be Christ's disciple. The reason one must hate their own soul is that they dare not be directed by it if they would follow Christ, for He never was directed by His soul. He did only those things the Father showed Him to do. The disciple of Christ must do the same.

*As disciples of Christ we must walk as Christ walked.*

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, **created** in Christ Yahshua **for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

This was Christ's meaning when He said many would come to Him on the day of judgment saying they did many good works in His name, but He would declare them lawless. These Christians were lawless because they did not submit to the leading of the Spirit in their works. They chose works according to the direction of their own soul. To do so is to be lawless, for a lawless man or woman has removed themselves out from under the rightful authority and have usurped this position. As disciples of Christ we must walk as Christ walked. He only did those things He saw the Father doing, and He was so perfect in this that He did not even speak a word of His own initiative. He only spoke that which the Father gave Him a command to speak.

John 12:49

“For **I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak.**”

John 14:10

“**The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.**”

How was the Father abiding in Yahshua? It was by the indwelling Spirit. Yahshua yielded to the indwelling Spirit in all things, and so must all who would be a disciple of Christ. Many who confess Christ as Lord are in great peril of being cast away as lawless.

The Scriptures provide numerous types and shadows to teach us this vital truth, and to instruct us in the path that all the sons of God must take. As we have seen, the Israelites in the wilderness serve as one profound type that has been cited by the author of the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 4:1

**Therefore, let us fear lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it.**

How does one fall short of entering into His rest? By failing to cease from their own works, those works that their soul would declare to them as being worthy and honorable. We must die to the voice of the soul of man and be led by the by the indwelling Spirit after the pattern of the firstborn Son of God. We have also seen that Joseph serves as a type of those who attain to the number of the firstborn. Joseph's slavery in the house of one of Pharaoh's ministers, and his later imprisonment in Pharaoh's jail, is a type and shadow of those whose natural choices and activities are ended,

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and they now live to do the will of another. Only those who have been so trained to cease from their own works in order to do the works God has prepared for them will be qualified to rule and reign after the similitude of Joseph.

Another type and shadow of this same truth is observed in the words of Christ to Peter.

John 21:18-19

"Truly, truly, I say to you, **when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished**; but **when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go...**" And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"

Although Yahshua was prophesying of the type of death Peter would die, His words were also a spiritual parable. When a Christian is young and immature spiritually, they go wherever they wish and do as they please. They are led of their own soul. In order to become spiritually mature a believer must no longer do so. They must surrender to the will of God in all things. They must yield to the Spirit and go where their own soul would not choose to go.

Yahshua established the pattern. His soul did not choose the cross. God chose it for Him. In Gethsemane Christ's soul was brought to a place of death, and He fully surrendered to the will of the Father.

Matthew 26:38-39

Then He said to them, "**My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death**; remain here and keep watch with Me."

Christ accepted the cross before Him, and there is

a cross appointed to every disciple. It may not be a literal cross such as Yahshua and Peter faced, but there is a Gethsemane appointed to every disciple where the desire of their soul must die in order that we might live only for the will of the Father.

Matthew 26:39-40

"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet **not as I will, but as You will.**"

Gethsemane is where the initiative of man dies. It is where we trade our will, for the will of God. It is the place where every longing, desire, thought, ambition, and will arising from the soul of man is crucified until only the will of the Father remains.

*There is a cross  
appointed to every  
disciple.*

This is an exceedingly difficult matter to bring the saints to understand. We will never be fitted to receive the power and authority of the ages to come until we humble ourselves and become as little children before our Father in heaven. Little children expect their father to instruct them in all things. Little children are taught to obey without argument, and we must become as little children before our Father. We must hear from Him and do as He instructs us in all things. As we grow older we must never abandon the attitude of seeking to do exactly those things that are pleasing to our Father. He has given to us His Spirit to indwell us that we might know His will in every instance.

How did Yahshua know what to do, and what not to do, in each circumstance? He was led of the Spirit in all things. He observed what His Father was doing, and He did precisely what He saw.

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John 5:19-20

Yahshua therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, ***the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and greater works than these will He show Him***, that you may marvel."

My heart is grieved as I observe among Christians an independence from the Spirit of God. I deplore

*We must not seek our will, but live for our Father's will...*

the church's doctrines which suggest the saints need not be led of the Spirit in the particular circumstances of their lives. Our training as

sons after the image of Christ mandates that it is the Spirit that lead us in all things.

Romans 8:14

***For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

Yahweh has not called His sons in training to be led of their own intellect. He has not told them to develop a code of Scriptural precepts and principles which they can use to evaluate all of life's decisions. He wants His sons to be children of the Spirit.

II Corinthians 3:6

It is He Who has qualified us, making us to be fit and worthy and sufficient as ministers and dispensers of a new covenant of salvation through Christ, ***not ministers of the letter (of legally written code) but of the Spirit; for the code of the Law kills, but the Holy Spirit makes alive.***

This present life serves as a training ground for the sons of God. Yahweh must bring His sons to an end of independent living. He must break them of making decisions that arise from the soul. He seeks sons who are intent upon His will and desire only. He does not want any man to presume that he knows what God would do in a particular situation. Yahweh wants all His sons to look to Him in all things. We are to see what works He is doing, and we are to do them in like manner. We are to hear His judgment in every matter, and then judge the same. We must not seek our will, but live for our Father's will and pleasure.

A large part of our problem in arriving at God's mind is that our priorities and goals are not the same as His. When we encounter great trials our immediate thought is to be delivered from the distress, sorrow, or injury. When we are brought to a Gethsemane, our soul will say, "Father, let this cup of suffering pass from me." It is at this point that we must yield to the Spirit and declare, "Yet not my will, but Your will be done." Yahweh is looking to what we will one day be, and He chooses our circumstances, trials and cross to best promote our growth as sons.

Isaiah 55:8-9

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares Yahweh. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

Some have adopted a mindset where they believe they are to study the Scriptures that they might become adequate in themselves to make life decisions. Some have become so arrogant in this that they begin to demand of God that He do their bidding. They think this attitude is pleasing to the Father, yet such an attitude is foreign to the life of Christ. Yahshua was meek and humble, and He only did those things the Father commanded Him to do. He made no demands Himself.



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We are not to do any works arising out from self. We are to allow the indwelling Spirit of Christ to reveal to us God's will, and provide the power to do that will.

John 14:10

The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but ***the Father abiding in Me does His works.***

As sons of God in training to share the glory, power and authority of our Father in heaven, we must die to our own soul's leadership and direction. We must become sons in whom the Father abides and performs His works. This He seeks to do through the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; and ***it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...***"

This verse has been quoted often in Christendom, but it is rarely experienced. At the end of this age there must come forth a firstfruits group of sons who make it a living reality. Their declaration and experience must become "it is no longer I who live." The Spirit of Christ within must guide in all their works and activities, and it must be the strength which God supplies that accomplishes all things. The sons of God must no longer be directed by their soul. They must live for the pleasure of the Father.

*The Spirit of Christ  
within must guide...*

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### PARABLES PRECEPT—The Hebrew Alphabet



called the ghah, but originally may have had the name ghah, meaning ‘twisted.’”

The modern Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters. An oddity of the Modern Hebrew alphabet is that it has only consonants, with no vowels. Means had to be devised to indicate vowel sounds in Hebrew words. This was done by inserting dots, or points, at various locations in a word, inside, above, or below the consonants.

The image below shows some modern Hebrew consonants with the vowel points.

(Image source: Ancient Hebrew Resource Center’s Website)

Depicted above is the Hebrew letter Ghah. This letter completes the alphabet of characters which have been depicted in these newsletters.

Regarding this letter, Jeff Benner writes:

“While this letter existed in ancient Semitic languages, and in some modern Semitic languages, it no longer exists in modern Hebrew. Instead, it has been absorbed into the letter (ayin). While the evidence

exists showing that this is in fact a separate letter, there is very little evidence for reconstructing its original pictograph... The closest candidate for this letter is... a twisted rope...

In the Arabic language this letter is

