

# Restoring my Soul

A five day devotional guide

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# Two cries of Abba Father

The apostle Paul identified and described two distinct cries of 'Abba! Father!' that are expressed by Christian believers. The first expression of 'Abba! Father!' is motivated by a spirit of adoption. This is the expression of a son of man who has received the faith of God and believes to receive the sonship that God has planned and prepared for them.

The second expression of 'Abba! Father!' is made by a person who has been *born again* of the Spirit. When a person has been born from above by receiving the incorruptible seed of God, the Father sends forth the Spirit of the Son to dwell within their heart. The Spirit of the Son cries out, 'Abba! Father!' within the born-again son of God. The Son of God Himself is confessing within them that God is the Father of their spirit.

We learn from Paul that *both* these expressions of 'Abba! Father!' should be the *ongoing* confession of a Christian believer. The adoption is not simply an interim step in the process of new birth. While adoption is necessary for receiving the Spirit of Christ as a new-born son of God, it is also a fundamental and ongoing element of God's plan for every believer.

In this regard, we know that the fulfilment of the Everlasting Covenant encompasses both our adoption as sons of men, and our birth from above as sons of God. This is communicated in the final statements of the book of Revelation, when John heard a loud voice from heaven proclaiming, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is *with men*, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people ... He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall *be My son.*'

## References:

Rom 8:15, 23  
1Pe 1:23  
Gal 4:6  
Heb 12:9

**Further Study:** Revelation 21

**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 29

# Faith comes by hearing

When Melchizedek gave bread and wine to Abram, He blessed Abram and declared to him that he would become *a possessor of heaven and earth* as a co-heir with the Son. Abram was promised the same inheritance as the Son of God Himself! However, from Abram's natural perspective, becoming a possessor of heaven and earth was beyond his comprehension. From his point of view, it was impossible. Having no children, Abram began to despair of this promised blessing. King Solomon noted that, when hope is deferred or seemingly lost, the heart becomes sick or depressed. This was Abram's experience.

The word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying to him, 'Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield [of faith] to you; your very great reward'. Yahweh, the Word, had come to give Abram His own faith so that Abram could see and believe for the blessing of sonship, both for himself and for his children. Abram's faith was, in fact, the faith of God that he received by hearing the word of Yahweh.

Paul taught that the word of God gives a person the *capacity to hear* so that they can *receive the faith of the Son that comes by hearing*. The word of Yahweh gave Abram the capacity to hear the word by delivering Abram from the fear and anxiety that was causing his heart to become sick. By receiving the command, 'Do not fear', Abram was delivered from his depression, and was *made a disciple*. This meant that he had received the ear of a disciple. He could now hear the word and receive the faith of God that comes by hearing. Through the prophet Isaiah, the Son of God testified, saying, 'The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to *sustain the weary [or depressed] one with a word*. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple. The Lord God has opened My ear.'

## References:

Pro 13:12      Isa 50:4-5  
Gen 15:1      Col 1:4-6  
Eph 6:16

## Further Study:

Romans 10

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 30

# Abraham received the adoption

When Abram received the faith of the Son of God, he was able to believe and confess with the mouth of a disciple, that he and his descendants would be born from above with God's own life. Because Abram believed in Yahweh, and believed His word, God reckoned him as righteous. This means that God considered Abram to be a son in His house, even though Abram had not been born of God. Abram was an adopted son of God who was now an heir of the divine nature.

This demonstrates that *Abraham received the adoption*. Although, at this point, it was the promise of the adoption, the faith which he received from God granted to him the substance of what he was promised, and was now able to hope for. His hope had become sure. Now that Abram was a disciple, the Lord called Abram to meet Him in offering. Through offering, the covenant was confirmed to Abraham and his descendants. For this reason, Paul stated that the blessing of the adoption *belonged* to Abraham and his children.

Having received the promise of the adoption, Abraham grew strong in faith and continued in the way of discipleship. As Paul noted, 'He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore, "it was accounted to him for righteousness".'

As a disciple, Abraham continued to receive and obey the word of the Lord. Moreover, he was able to instruct, or disciple, others. We know this because Yahweh said of Abraham, 'I have known him, in order that *he may command his children and his household after him*'. To receive the tongue and ear of a disciple meant that Abraham had received the culture of God's house. He was, therefore, able to train his children in this culture.

## References:

2Co 4:13

Heb 11:1

Rom 9:4

Rom 4:20-22

Gen 18:19

## Further Study:

Genesis 15

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 31

# The same spirit of faith

When the gospel of sonship is first proclaimed to an unsaved person by a disciple-messenger, grace and supplication that comes with the word grants to them the capacity to hear and respond to the message. Those who do not resist the grace of God come to the point of accepting that they are bankrupt in spirit and begin to mourn for their sin. Their mourning involves a cry for forgiveness, and also a cry for help so that they can believe to receive the sonship that the gospel is offering to them.

In response to their travail, the Father forgives them and gives to them the faith of God so that they can believe what God Himself believes about them; that is, that they can be a son of God. This is the faith that comes by hearing the word. With this faith, they believe for sonship and cry out to the Father to make them His son or daughter. This is the cry of 'Abba! Father!' that is motivated by a spirit of adoption. Paul also referred to the spirit of adoption as a 'spirit of faith'.

The faith that the hearer receives is the same faith that Abraham received when the Word of Yahweh came to him and said, 'I am your shield'. Because they have received Abraham's faith, they have become Abraham's children. This is important because the promised inheritance of sonship was made only to Abraham and his descendants. Thus, in order to receive the promise of sonship, a person must become a child of Abraham and follow in the culture of Abraham's family.

Having already forgiven their sin, the Father reckons righteousness to the hearer because they have believed His word and received His invitation to become His child. This means that the Father considers them to be a son in His house, even though they are not yet born with the life of God. This is the first stage of the adoption.

**References:**

Mat 5:3-4

Gen 15:1

Rom 8:15

Rom 4:16

2Co 4:13

**Further Study:**

Galatians 3

**Daily Proverb:**

Proverbs 1

# Born as a son of God

An adopted son or daughter in the Father's house is entitled to the wealth that belongs to the Father. This is the inheritance of the divine nature. The adopted son receives the Holy Spirit, whom the Father sends to dwell within them. They begin to experience the washing of regeneration and renewing of their natural identity by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also further energises the spirit of faith that they have received from the word of Christ so that their spirit rejoices in the hope of sonship. This is part of the ongoing cry of 'Abba! Father!' by a spirit of adoption.

Having received the Holy Spirit, the new believer is able to confess Christ as Lord. This is essential, because Christ will not direct us to the Father to be born again of His life until we have accepted Him as the Lord of our lives. It is Christ who gives a person the right to become a son of God. Those who receive the word of Christ are directed to go to the Father to be born a second time. The Father then births them from above by the incorruptible word of God. Their regenerated natural identity (or human spirit) is *reborn* and *made spiritual*. Through this birthing process, God the Father has now become the Father of their spirit.

The Father sends forth the Spirit of the Son to dwell within their heart. The Spirit of the Son confesses within them that God is the Father of their spirit. As the apostle Paul explained, 'Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"' When this happens, they have been born of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit also enables a son of God to confess that God is their Father by continuing to bear witness with their spirit that they are a son of God.

## References:

Joh 14:16  
Tit 3:5  
1Co 12:3

Joh 1:12  
Gal 4:6  
Rom 8:9

## Further Study:

John 3

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 2



# Continuing in the adoption

The apostle Paul explained that if a person belongs to Christ, having been born of God and baptised into Christ, *then* they are Abraham's children and heirs according to the promise that God made to Abraham. We recall that the inheritance is the promise of receiving the Spirit through the process of being born again. Paul was highlighting that, even though a person has received the promise of the Spirit, *they need to continue in the adoption*. He made this same point in his letter to the Christians in Rome, writing, 'Not only that, but we also who *have the firstfruits of the Spirit*, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, *eagerly waiting for the adoption*, the redemption of our body'.

If a spirit of adoption is the expression of a person who has faith to *receive* the promise of the Spirit, why will they *continue* to express, 'Abba! Father!' by a spirit of adoption *after* they have been born of the Spirit and come into Christ through baptism? To answer this question, we must recognise the distinction between Christ the Person *dwelling* within us, and Christ being *formed* within us.

When a believer is first born of the Spirit, Christ the Person has come into their heart. However, the divine nature has not yet *become their nature*. This only happens once Christ is formed in them through a process of travail. This travail is an *ongoing* share in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. In this fellowship, offering transfer is operative. Offering transfer happens when a person is joined to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Their sin and iniquity is transferred to Christ so that it can be removed from them in the fellowship of His sufferings. In this same fellowship, His life is transferred to them so that it can be *formed in them*.

## References:

Rom 8:23, 29  
Gal 3:26-29  
Gal 4:19  
Col 3:10

## Further Study:

## Daily Proverb:

Colossians 1

Proverbs 5

# Our ongoing confession

A person who has been born of God will continue to express, 'Abba! Father!' by a spirit of adoption because they desire to attain to the full measure of their inheritance as a son of God. They will continue to receive the word of God as it is ministered to them by Christ's messengers. Through the word, they *continue* to receive the faith of God to believe and obey His word. As they grow from faith to faith through the hearing of the word, a son of God has increasing access to the grace of God in which they stand.

This is the grace of life that Jesus revealed as the nature of His sonship. To stand in the grace of God and exalt in the hope of the calling of sonship, means that they are obtaining their eternal inheritance as a son of God. A son of God rejoices in suffering because they understand that they receive their inheritance through offering transfer as they are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering. In the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, they are being changed from one degree of glory to another, into the image of Christ's sonship.

The faith of sonship, and the witness of the Holy Spirit with our spirit that we are children of God, enables us to claim our sonship with joyful assurance. Because we are God's children by adoption, we press into the Father's house to become heirs of everything that belongs to us as a result of being born again of His seed. This desire is a spirit of adoption. It is expressed through a believer's ongoing cry of 'Abba! Father!' Because we are fellow heirs with Christ, we join the fellowship of His sufferings so that we may be glorified together with Him as we become possessors of the divine nature. The Spirit of the Son continues to cry out, 'Abba! Father!' within us, confirming that we are progressively obtaining the inheritance of our sonship.

## References:

Joh 1:14, 16  
Rom 5:1  
1Pe 3:7  
2Co 3:18  
Gal 4:6  
2Th 1:3

## Further Study:

Psalm 92

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 6

# The tongue of a disciple

A person who continues to express, 'Abba Father' by a spirit of adoption is a disciple. They have received the ear and the mouth of a disciple. They are no longer slaves of sin who have invested themselves in the expression of their own life. This investment becomes a bondage to fear that describes the condition of a person who has a heart that is bound by unbelief. A Christian who lives this way soon becomes weary in the way of the Lord because they fail to enter the rest that faith brings. This rest is fundamental to a Christian progressively obtaining their inheritance as a son of God. This is why Paul said, 'For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"'

Christ's disciples are able to hear and receive the word that is ministered to them from Christ's messengers. It is through this word that they continue to receive the faith of God, 'from faith to faith'. Having this spirit of faith, they are then able to believe and obey God's word, and follow in the steps of the faith of their father, Abraham, the believer. They, as Abraham's children, obey the commands of God that are the culture of Abraham's house. The obedience of faith is the culture of his house.

Paul explained that a person who has received the spirit of faith, and therefore believes God's word, speaks in a particular way. To make this point, Paul specifically quoted a passage from Psalm 116. This psalm is the testimony of David who was restored to a spirit of faith through repentance, having earlier fallen out of faith at a time in his life when he was greatly distressed because of suffering. The account of his experience provides helpful instruction regarding the nature of faith and how it leads to the fellowship of offering in the midst of the God's people.

## References:

Rom 8:15      Gal 3:9  
Rom 1:17      2Co 4:13  
Rom 4:12      Rom 10:6, 8-9

## Further Study:

Isaiah 50

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 7

# A participation in Christ's sufferings

Psalm 116 opens with David's expression of love for Yahweh, who heard his prayers. David then summarised the fruit of his experience as a commitment to continue to call on the name of the Lord as long as he lived. 'Calling on the name of Lord' is the initiative of a person who recognises that their life is found only in the name of the Lord. A person who calls on the name of the Lord desires to be known in the fellowship of the name and to express the love of God within this fellowship.

David then explained how he felt in the midst of his difficult situation. He wrote, 'The cords of death encompassed me and the terrors of Sheol came upon me; I found distress and sorrow'. Importantly, this statement of the psalmist was prophetic of Christ's sufferings on the cross. It is also mentioned in Psalm 18, which is a Messianic psalm that prophetically described the event of Christ's death. Why is this important? It is because it highlights the truth that a believer's suffering, no matter how traumatic or unjust, or whether it is caused within or outside the church, is an opportunity to receive their suffering as fellowship in the sufferings of Christ.

Paul himself drew from these very passages as he testified of his own participation in the sufferings of Christ. He wrote, 'For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our *affliction* which came to us in Asia, that we were *burdened excessively, beyond our strength*, so that we *despaired even of life*; indeed, we had the *sentence of death within ourselves* so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope'. Paul's response in the midst of his sufferings demonstrated that he had received the faith of the Son of God to participate in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

## References:

2Co 1:8-10      Rom 8:17  
Gal 2:20        Col 1:24  
Php 3:10        1Pe 4:13

Further Study:      Psalm 116

Daily Proverb:      Proverbs 8

## Great distress and sorrow

David testified that he would call upon the name of the Lord as long as he lived. However, this was not the initial response of the psalmist. In the midst of his suffering, David was in great distress and sorrow. He was depressed because his hope seemed like a lost cause. In this regard, David was in a similar state to Abraham before the Word of Yahweh came to him, saying, 'Do not fear'. David could not see, nor believe, that his afflictions were an opportunity to join the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Instead, he declared that his afflictions were his, alone. Furthermore, he said, in *fearful haste*, 'All men are liars'. David's fear and torment was the evidence that he had turned from faith that works by love. Consequently, David was unable to trust, believe, or love his brethren. To him, they were all liars. When a person lets go of faith and trust, they are unable to have fellowship with God's people.

If the psalmist was unable to recover from this state of disconnection, his belief that all men are liars would have become like a spirit of antichrist within him. His love would most certainly have grown cold. A person who is motivated by the spirit of antichrist, rather than by a spirit of faith, is in bondage to the fear of death and rejects the reality that Christ, the Word, is coming in the flesh of their brethren. Eventually, because of offence, they depart from the congregation and persecute those who are of the fellowship of faith. Thankfully, the psalmist did come to faith. What was the beginning point for his recovery? He turned again to the Lord and called upon His name. In the first instance, this meant crying out, 'O Lord, I implore You, deliver my soul! [Save my life!]'.

### References:

Psa 116:1-4      Gal 5:6  
Gen 15:1        2Jn 1:7  
Heb 11:24-25    Mat 24:11-13

### Further Study:

1 John 2

### Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 9

# Return to your rest

David came to the point of being bankrupt in spirit, and began to mourn. As one who was bankrupt in spirit, and now earnestly desiring to receive what the Lord was teaching him in this circumstance, he was able to receive the grace of God, the gift of His righteousness (having let go of self-righteousness), and the mercy of God.

David testified that, having been brought low, or to the end of himself, he was able to receive again the salvation of the Lord and declare, ‘*Return to your rest, O my soul*, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. For You have rescued my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.’

Evidently, David had received the faith of God so that he was able to walk by faith, and not by his natural sight or fallen perspective, regarding the circumstances of his life. By faith, he was able to believe the word of God and enter the Lord’s rest. David described it as ‘the land of the living’. Jesus called this promised land ‘the kingdom of heaven’, which belongs to those who have become bankrupt in spirit.

Paul explained that, in the New Covenant, when a person enters the Lord’s rest, they become a *partaker* of Christ. This is the same rest that Jesus spoke of when He said to His disciples, ‘Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.’

**References:**

Mat 5:3-4

Psa 116:5, 7-9

2Co 5:7

Mat 11:28-30

**Further Study:**

Hebrews 3

**Daily Proverb:**

Proverbs 12

# Entering the Lord's rest

We know that not every Christian who experiences distress in the midst of their suffering enters the Lord's rest. In this regard, Paul reminds us of the example of the children of Israel. In the day of their trial and fear, they would not receive the word of Moses, nor the testimony of Caleb and Joshua, the Lord's messengers. Instead of becoming poor in spirit and mixing the word with faith, they wanted to return to Egypt. They even called the context of their former slavery, 'a land flowing with milk and honey'. Therefore, the Lord swore in His wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest'.

What did it mean for David to enter the Lord's rest? David himself asked, 'What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?' A benefit is something that is bestowed upon a person. When David was noting the Lord's benefits, he was specifically referring to the righteousness of faith that he had received as a gift from the Lord. This faith was granting him access to a context of grace in which he could stand and exalt in hope.

A believer comes to the rest that is associated with obtaining their inheritance as a son of God, by being yoked with Christ. We observe this faith in the testimony of David, who declared that he would partake of the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. This means that he would join, by faith, the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. This fellowship is represented by the cup of salvation. As Paul taught, 'Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ?' To call on the name of the Lord, having entered His rest, is to partake of the bread of the communion. It is the acceptance that the body of Christ is the context for our life.

**References:**

Num 16:13  
Heb 3:11  
Rom 5:1-2

1Co 10:16-17  
Psa 116:13

**Further Study:**

Hebrews 4

**Daily Proverb:**

Proverbs 13

# To You I shall offer

Instead of believing that his sufferings were his own, David was able to speak in a spirit of faith, and say, 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones'. He had now accepted that his sufferings were a participation, or an ongoing fellowship, in the sufferings of the Lord. He was choosing these sufferings for himself.

Further to this, David was committed to making offering in the fellowship of God's people, saying, 'To You I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call upon the name of the Lord. I shall pay my vows to the Lord, oh may it be in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!' David's return to faith was marked by his earnest desire to make offering. This was the fulfilment of his vow as one who was a slave of the Lord. Furthermore, David was motivated to be found in the midst of the congregation of God's people; that is, he had received faith by hearing the word, and was joining, again, the fellowship of the Lord.

As David professed to be a bondsman of Yahweh, he noted that he was a son of the Lord's handmaid. In other words, David was acknowledging that he was a child of God's Covenant from the womb. Because of the faith of his parents, David was a son of Abraham. Nevertheless, his faith was tested through suffering. Whether we have been saved out of the world or born of God in the womb of our mother, every son of God will experience a trial of faith. Regarding the trial of faith, the apostle James said, 'Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith *produces* endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.'

## References:

Psa 116:15-19

Heb 11:25

Num 15:2-3

Jas 1:2-4

Heb 10:36

## Further Study:

Daily Proverb:

Psalm 42

Proverbs 14



# Speaking as a disciple

A person who calls on the name of the Lord and commits to make offering in the fellowship of His people, is able to speak this way because they have received the tongue of a disciple. In the book of Romans, Paul noted that a person who has received the righteousness of faith confesses Christ as their Lord. They are able to do this because they have received the Holy Spirit from the Father. There are two related implications of this confession.

First, a disciple of Christ will obey, from the heart, the word to which their Lord and Master has committed them. Paul called this 'the obedience of faith'. What is the word to which they are being committed? It is the word of the Father. As they obey God's word as slaves of righteousness, it results in their sanctification to their name as a son of God. Regarding this sanctification, Paul explained that 'having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you [have] your [fruit], resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life'. This eternal life is described by the apostle John as 'grace and truth'. It is the fullness of the life of the Son of God that a person receives from Christ, their Head, as they are joined to the order of headship in the body of Christ. As they continue to receive this life in Christ, they grow as a son of God.

The second implication of confessing the lordship of Christ as His disciple, is that a person will take up their cross and follow Christ. They will personally join themselves to the fellowship of His offering and suffering. In his Gospel, Matthew wrote, 'Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life [soul] will lose it; but whoever loses his life [soul] for My sake will find it".'

## References:

Rom 10:9      Eph 4:14-16  
1Co 12:3      Mat 16:24-25  
Rom 1:5

## Further Study:

Romans 6

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 15

# Faith working by love

Jesus declared that every believer must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him as a disciple. This is an action of faith that works by the love of God. Presenting themselves in this way is the initiative of a son of man who, in a spirit of adoption, desires to partake of the divine nature that is their inheritance as a son of God. With this understanding, we note Paul's exhortation to Christian believers to present themselves as a living sacrifice. 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that *you* present *your bodies* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service [of worship]. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind [by the Holy Spirit], that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.'

All believers who walk and live by the faith of the Son of God have the adoption and are heirs of the divine nature, provided that they, by baptism, maintain a fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. They proceed from faith to faith, crying out, 'Abba! Father!' by a spirit of adoption. And, the Son cries out, 'Abba! Father!' within them as He is formed within them, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord. As members of the body of Christ, they mature in sonship as they grow up into Christ's capacity for headship.

Having joined the fellowship of Christ's offering by baptism, and then continuing to participate in His offering by eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood, a son of God is able to *speak and minister in Christ according to their sanctified name*. In this regard, they speak and minister by the Holy Spirit, with the life and divine nature of Christ.

## References:

Mat 16:24-25    2Co 3:18  
Gal 5:6        Rom 6:3-5  
Rom 12:1-2

## Further Study:

James 2

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 16

# The secret place

Sons of God are to meet the Father in the secret place with an unveiled face. If a person knows that God is their Father, then they have a special and unique relationship with Him. The Father reveals the secret of their name to them. Jesus said to His disciples, 'But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly'.

When a son of God prays in the secret place, they are joining the fellowship and offering of Yahweh. We have often used the phrase 'the prayer meeting of four' to describe this fellowship of prayer. It is an ongoing discussion that includes the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the believer. In this fellowship, the believer's sonship is revealed to them. They are learning from the Father what their name is. When Jesus said that the Father would *reward* a son of God openly, He was referring to the *gift* of the Holy Spirit that the Father gives to them. When the Father first sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in a believer's heart, the Holy Spirit begins to regenerate and renew their natural identity. The Holy Spirit also bears witness with their spirit that they are a son of God.

When a son of God is baptised into Christ and made a member of His body, their own name and sonship is hidden with Christ in the bosom of the Father. They are given a share in the life of the Son, which Jesus likened in His parables to talents and minas, which were given to slaves in His house. Talents and minas are given by the Son to slaves of righteousness in His house, to trade with on behalf of their Lord and Master.

## References:

Mat 6:6

Joh 14:16-17

Act 2:38

Tit 3:5

Mat 25:15

Luk 19:13

**Further Study:** 2 Corinthians 3

**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 19

# The firstfruits of sonship

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is given to sons of the Father, who are also slaves of Jesus Christ, as a gift. The Holy Spirit is the firstfruits of their inheritance as a son of God. Paul declared that He is the 'down-payment' of their eternal inheritance. In this regard, the Holy Spirit is the expression of their sonship. As they remain hidden with Christ in God, their name is being revealed through the expression of the gift; that is, the gift is their sonship by the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit, they are able to multiply the talents of Christ's life that have been entrusted to them. Their eternal inheritance, or glory, as a son of God depends on the extent to which they multiply Christ's life through offering.

Jesus taught that 'when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, *but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.*' When a son of God is being who the Father named them to be, they are revealing the Father. Their works are not their own, but are the Father's. In this regard, it is the Father who is in them, who does the works and who is speaking. A person who is full of the Holy Spirit will be known by name when, by the capacity of the Holy Spirit, they do the Father's works.

The Holy Spirit is also the Comforter. He comforts us by helping us in the expression of our sonship and life. He helps us to keep His unity and integration in fellowship, in the bond of peace. He does this by helping us to put off all offence and the need for control, and to relinquish our pursuit of pre-eminence, or our sense of inferiority, in the fellowship of the body of Christ.

## References:

2Co 1:21-22

Joh 14:26

2Co 5:5

2Ti 1:7

Mat 10:19-20

## Further Study:

John 16

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 20

# Preaching Christ crucified

The promise of the spirit of grace and supplication is given to all men when they look on Christ, who was high and lifted up on a cross, pierced with nails, thorns, scourgings, and a spear. Once Christ is portrayed as crucified, every person is able to look on Him, see His offering, and mourn in repentance for the loss of sonship. As they do this, they are able to receive the promise of the Spirit through faith; that is, they are able to regain their predestined sonship that was lost because of sin.

When Paul first came to the region of Galatia, he introduced his hearers to the gospel of sonship by publically preaching about Christ's atoning death. Through Paul's ministry, Christ was publically 'placarded', or portrayed, as crucified before them; that is, Paul's preaching raised Christ up as a standard, or flag, to whom his hearers were to gather. As Paul ministered to his hearers, the spirit of grace and supplication came upon them with power. They received illumination and were able to look upon Christ whom they had pierced. As they mourned in repentance, they found reconciliation with God.

However, in his letter to the Galatians, Paul rebuked them because they had turned aside from living by the Spirit of God. Instead, they were seeking to achieve Christian perfection through fleshly, religious endeavours. In particular, they were succumbing to pressure from the Judaisers, who forcefully maintained the view that a Christian needed to receive circumcision to be acceptable to God and gain entry to heaven. In response to this false gospel, Paul reminded the Galatians of the history of Abraham. This is because a person receives the elementary teachings about faith from Abraham. Moreover, it is through the faith of Abraham that the promise of becoming God's children is obtained.

## References:

Gal 3:1-3  
1Co 1:23  
Zec 12:10

Gal 5:4-5  
Gal 6:12-14

**Further Study:** 1 Corinthians 2

**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 21

# A light for the nations

When Zechariah prophesied concerning the spirit of grace and supplication that would be poured out upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, he was specifically referring to the Jews in Jerusalem, who witnessed the event of Christ's crucifixion. How, then, does grace and supplication come to a person who was not there on that day?

Paul reminded the Galatian Christians of the process through which they were born of God. The beginning point was Paul's ministry. Through his preaching, Jesus Christ was publically portrayed before their eyes, as crucified. Paul explained that Christ redeemed all men from the curse of the law by becoming a curse when He was lifted up on the cross. This was for the purpose that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, and that they might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Paul's ministry in the region of Galatia was recorded by Luke in the book of Acts. Luke particularly noted Paul's declaration, 'The Lord has commanded us, "I have placed you as a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth".' He was specifically quoting Isaiah's prophecy concerning Christ. On behalf of the Lord, Isaiah proclaimed, 'And now says the Lord, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (for I am honoured in the sight of the Lord, and My God is My strength), He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; *I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth*".'

## References:

Zec 12:10-11      Mal 1:11  
Gal 3:13-14      Zec 2:11  
Act 13:47        Mic 4:2

## Further Study:

Isaiah 49

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 22

# Lifted up as a standard

Just as a spirit of supplication was poured upon the Jews on the day Christ was crucified, this same spirit of grace and supplication was available to the Gentiles through the public portrayal of Christ, as Paul preached to the Galatians. They were also able to look on Christ whom they had pierced, mourn in repentance, and find reconciliation with Him.

The prophet Isaiah declared, 'Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up [on the cross] and greatly exalted. Just as many were astonished at you, My people, so His appearance was marred more than any man and His form more than the sons of men. Thus He will sprinkle many nations, kings will shut their mouths on account of Him; for what had not been told them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand.'

Jesus said of Himself, 'And I, if and when I am lifted up from the earth [on the cross], will draw and attract all men [Gentiles as well as Jews] to Myself'. Being lifted up on the cross was a notable theme in Christ's teaching. For example, He said that if He was lifted up on the cross, everyone would know that He was Yahweh. In this way, Christ gathered up all the prophetic statements regarding the ministry of the light of life to the world, and applied them to His offering on the cross.

Importantly, in the very next verse of Isaiah's prophecy, the prophet asked, 'Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?' Isaiah was revealing that the ministry of Christ, through His offering on the cross, would be achieved through the preaching of a message. This message is the gospel that Paul preached, and through which Christ was portrayed to the Galatians as crucified. It is through the preaching of Christ crucified outside the camp that the Spirit of God, through Christ, comes to the Gentiles.

## References:

Isa 52:13-15  
Isa 49:22  
Joh 12:32

Joh 3:14-15  
Isa 53:1  
Act 13:47

## Further Study:

Isaiah 11

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 23

# True religion

The apostle Paul had one important question for the Galatian believers. He wrote, 'This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith?' *True religion* begins when a person receives the Spirit. They are born to see when the faith of God is given to them. This faith comes to them through an illumination. As Christ is portrayed before a hearer through the preaching of the cross, the light of illumination comes to them from Christ's crucified, marred face. A spirit of grace and supplication causes a person to look upon Christ and mourn. As they mourn, they begin to receive the spirit of their sonship from the Father. They enter the kingdom when the Holy Spirit, the Son and the Father, come and dwell within them.

Receiving the Spirit of God in Christ is the only thing that is necessary for *true religion*. A person, whether they are a Jew or a Gentile, can only receive the Spirit of God by the hearing of faith. They receive the capacity to hear the word of God, and receive the faith that comes by hearing, through the word that is preached by Christ's messengers. A messenger is a member of the body of Christ in whom Christ is speaking, by the Holy Spirit, according to who they are being sanctified to become as a son of God.

The Spirit is ministered to a person by members of the body of Christ who are a gift of the Holy Spirit. How does a member of the body of Christ become a gift of the Spirit to others? It is by receiving the Holy Spirit. When a member of the body of Christ is filled with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit becomes the expression of their name; that is, their sanctification as a son of God is revealed as they are ministering the life of Christ by the Holy Spirit.

## References:

Gal 3:2

Psa 18:28

Zec 12:10

Rom 10:14-16

1Ti 1:5

## Further Study:

James 1

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 26



# Crucified to the world

When a person receives a messenger of Christ, they hear the word of present truth that proclaims to them their name as a son of God. The preaching of a messenger is not just words or information about God. Christ Himself, through His messengers, pours out upon them the spirit of grace and supplication so that they can see Christ as crucified for them. Then they are able to mourn. Then they are able to receive the Spirit of God by which they are born. Once a person has been born of God, they will desire to be baptised into Christ and joined to the fellowship of His offering. This includes a participation in the sufferings of Christ.

Paul acknowledged that the Galatian Christians had indeed received the Spirit of Christ and joined the fellowship of Christ's offering. However, instead of continuing in the way of the Spirit, they were seeking to have life apart from a fellowship in Christ's offering. He said to them, 'Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain – if indeed it was in vain?' Judaising teachers from Jerusalem had come to the Christians in Asia, instructing the Gentile Christians to be circumcised in order to be saved. These teachers wanted to avoid persecution and suffering at the hands of the Jewish religious leaders, and were seeking their favour by attempting to proselytise the Gentiles to the Jewish religion. As a consequence of their influence, the Galatian believers were beginning to accept the false proposition that eternal life could be obtained by means other than by the Spirit, through participation in the offering of Christ.

Paul called the Judaisers, 'the world', and claimed that if the Galatians pursued relevance to the world as an alternative to an ongoing participation in the sufferings of Christ, then they would be severed from Christ's body and forfeit their eternal reward. This is a most sobering consideration.

## References:

Gal 3:3-4      Php 3:10  
Act 15:1      Gal 5:6  
Gal 5:4      Col 2:11

## Further Study:

Galatians 6

## Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 27

# The ministry of the Spirit

The sufferings that a son of God experiences are a participation in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this fellowship, a believer is established as a firstfruits Christian in the body of Christ. This means that they are able to make offering and are, therefore, joined to the messenger work of the body of Christ. Christ continues His ministry on earth through His body. Each member of Christ's body has a ministry. Through their ministry, by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God is being ministered to others. Paul was making this point when he asked the Galatians, 'So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the law, or by hearing with faith?'

The supply of the Spirit of God is the means by which the body of Christ is mobilised. Gifts and ministries, which come from the Spirit of God, are given so that works of power (i.e. miracles) are ministered by the members of the body of Christ. It was for this reason that Paul said that the only thing that means anything in Christ Jesus, is faith working by love. Moreover, he explained that if a person lives and operates by the Spirit, which they received by the hearing of faith, they will not fulfil the desires of the flesh.

The preaching of the cross, so that those who hear the message are able to see and receive Christ as crucified for their sake, is a miraculous activity. It is a work of power. Those who proclaim Christ crucified can only do so if they have committed themselves to join the fellowship of Christ's offering as members of His body. By this means, they are able to show forth His death in each generation of the church, until Christ comes again.

**References:**

Gal 3:5

Rom 6:3-4

Eph 4:15-16

Gal 6:12

1Co 11:26

**Further Study:**

Galatians 5

**Daily Proverb:**

Proverbs 28

# The testimony of our Lord

Writing from prison, the apostle Paul asked Timothy not to be ashamed of 'the testimony of our Lord'. 'The testimony of our Lord' was the atoning death of Christ as He was lifted up and crucified on the cross. This included the humiliation and sufferings that He endured from Gethsemane to Calvary. As a prisoner of Christ, Paul was also suffering and, therefore, asked Timothy not to be ashamed of his sufferings. Paul had joined Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings as a messenger of the gospel. As Paul suffered for the gospel, by the power of God, people were illuminated to see Christ crucified. Paul was testifying to this when he said to the Galatians that 'it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time'.

Paul's ill health was the outcome of all the persecution he had experienced during his ministry in the other cities and regions that he visited. As Paul was joined to the sufferings of Christ, he received power to minister the Spirit of Christ to his hearers. By this means, he was a gift of the Spirit to them.

Paul had this principle in mind when he reminded Timothy to 'stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.' Paul was exhorting Timothy to proclaim Christ crucified. This is because, through the public portrayal of Christ crucified, the Spirit is ministered to those who hear the word. The word and Spirit work the miracle of illumination within them. A hearer who receives this message is then equipped to join the offering of Christ so that they are also able to be a gift, by the Spirit, to the body and to those who are yet unsaved.

**References:**

Gal 4:13-15

Psa 19:7

1Ti 2:6

1Jn 5:11-12

Rev 1:2

Rev 19:10

**Further Study:**

2 Timothy 1

**Daily Proverb:**

Proverbs 29

# Do not be ashamed

In this season, Christ is calling us again to join the fellowship of His sufferings. Just as Paul exhorted Timothy not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, or of himself as the prisoner of the Lord, we are also being called not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord or of those who are suffering for His name's sake. It is for this reason that we tarry for one another at the communion table.

The Lord is not asking us to like our sufferings or to enjoy them. As both Paul and Peter observed, no suffering is pleasant. Rather, the Lord is asking us to commit ourselves to suffer with Him and with our brethren in Christ. It is by this means that the divine nature is being formed within us and we are able to minister this life to others. Christ Himself did not consider suffering to be a pleasant or desirable experience. In fact, He asked the Father, 'If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me'. However, Christ committed Himself to receive and fulfil the Father's will. Then, it was for the joy that would result from His offering that He endured the cross and despised the shame.

As we embrace our participation in Christ's sufferings, we are delivered from our fear of death and suffering. He secures us and grants peace to us so that we are able to proceed in the way that He has set before us. Most importantly, we are able to endure by the power of God. In the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, we have access to the same power through which Christ endured the cross. This is what Paul meant when he wrote, 'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you'. This is indeed a miracle!

**References:**

1Pe 1:6-8      2Co 4:11  
Mat 26:39      2Co 5:4  
Rom 8:11      1Co 15:31

**Further Study:**

Hebrews 12

**Daily Proverb:**

Proverbs 30