



# Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

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OCTOBER 2020

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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# **RESTORING MY SOUL**

*A Five Day Devotional Guide*

**October 2020**

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## Light and darkness

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul wrote, 'For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.' **Eph 5:8-11**.

In this passage, Paul identified two kinds of fruit that are the basis of two ways of walking in life. *The fruit of light* is the righteousness of God that is revealed in our lives as we walk in the light of the word that is ministered to us by Christ. **Rom 1:16-17**. **1Jn 1:7**. The fruit of light is from the tree of life. **Rev 2:7**. **Eph 5:9**. *The fruit of darkness* is from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. **Eph 5:9,11**. Walking in darkness leads to 'death'. Our salvation depends on recognising the difference between the fruit of light and the fruit of darkness.

Salvation is our deliverance from the kingdom of darkness, into the kingdom of the Son. **Col 1:13**. We are in darkness when we refuse the word of God that is proclaimed to us by those who are part of a presbytery, whom Christ sends to us. When we receive their word, it becomes a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. **Psa 119:105**. We walk in the light of this word and have fellowship with those who are ministering to us, and with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. **1Jn 1:3**.

We remain in darkness when we walk by the sight of our eyes, and live according to our own understanding. God, who is Light, is the Father of lights. **Jas 1:17**. **1Pe 1:23**. By His word, a person is delivered from the darkness that blinds their mind in relation to whom God has called them to be. **Eph 3:14-15**.

## Living in darkness

A person who lives in darkness can only know themselves through the knowledge of good and evil. The Scriptures refer to this as 'living according to the flesh'. **Rom 8:5-6**. With the knowledge of good and evil as their reference point, a person who lives according to the flesh endeavours to know themselves through self-assessment and by comparing themselves with others. The apostle Paul said that when they do this, they are not wise. **2Co 10:12**. In other words, they are not living by the wisdom from above, which is found in the word of the cross. **1Co 2:1-5**. The apostle James explained that they are, in fact, living by a wisdom from beneath. He described this wisdom as 'earthly, sensual, and demonic'. **Jas 3:15**.

Notably, James taught that envy and self-seeking are the fundamental motivations of those who live according to the wisdom from beneath. Envy and self-seeking give rise to confusion and to every evil thing. **Jas 3:16**. Paul described the confusion and evil that result from envy and self-seeking as 'the unfruitful *works* of darkness' which a person does in secret. **Eph 5:11**. Their works are done in secret because they are the expression of a projection that they have 'tailored' for themselves to conceal the shame of their nakedness and fear. We note, in this regard, the words of Jesus, who said, 'And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their *deeds* were evil.' **Joh 3:19**.

Those who minister from the basis of selfish ambition in a church are motivated by envy, comparison and argument. **Php 1:15-16**. This is indeed a great darkness, because those who minister in this manner believe that their sight and initiatives belong to the light. **Mat 6:23**. Paul said that, because of this, their preaching is *insincere*. **Php 1:16**. The word is not true in them. They are deceived and, consequently, deceive others through their ministry.

## The kingdom of the Son

How are we delivered from darkness? In the Son, we have redemption through His blood and receive the forgiveness of sins. **Col 1:13-14**. This is our beginning point. Under the influence of grace and supplication, as the word of the cross is preached to us, we are caused to look on Him whom we have pierced. **Zec 12:10**. As we see Christ crucified, we are able to accept our guilt in this matter. Also, we are delivered from our own self-righteous perspectives and understanding, which is a darkness from which we are unable to deliver ourselves. When we acknowledge this reality, we have become 'poor in spirit'. **Mat 5:3**.

We mourn as we acknowledge the injuries that our unfruitful works of darkness have caused to others, and have therefore caused to Christ. With godly sorrow, we cry out to God for forgiveness, and we make amends, where possible, for the impact of our sin upon others. **2Co 7:10**.

The Holy Spirit enables our mourning to shift from godly sorrow to a fellowship in the travail of Christ. **Rom 8:26**. This is an amazing transaction! In this fellowship, we cease from judging ourselves and others. Our judgements cease because the other law, which is the basis of our judgements, is being removed from our heart through the circumcision of Christ. **Rom 7:23. Col 2:11-12**.

Significantly, we are able to forgive those who have sinned against us. The capacity for forgiveness is not natural to us. It is a measure of grace that can only be received as we meet Christ and are joined to the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. Unless we forgive those who have hurt us, and relinquish our presumed right for vengeance, we will not receive forgiveness from God for our own sins. **Mat 6:14-15**. Furthermore, we will find no relief from our pain; nor healing of our injuries.

## The fruit of righteousness

In the kingdom of the Son, which is the light, we are growing as sons of the Father; the life of Christ is becoming our life; and we are enabled by the Spirit to minister this life to others. This is what it means to *bear the fruit of light*. Paul identified this fruit as 'all goodness, righteousness, and truth'. **Eph 5:9**.

The fruit of righteousness is the fruit that we are to bring forth through our fellowship in the offering of Christ. Paul's prayer was that his readers would be 'filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God'. **Php 1:9-11**. This is the fruit that is brought forth by those who hunger and thirst for righteousness as they partake of the communion elements. **Mat 5:6**. They are blessed because 'they are filled' with this fruit through their participation in the offering and sufferings of Christ, as members of His body. **Mat 5:6. 1Co 10:16**.

Christ was referring to the fruit of righteousness when He identified Himself as 'the Vine'. He said, 'I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can *do* nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned'. **Joh 15:5-6**. We see that the fruit of the Vine, which is the fruit of righteousness, is what *we do* as we abide in Christ. They are the works of our sonship in Him.

Bearing the fruit of righteousness depends upon our fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. In his discussion on the fruits of righteousness, Paul, who was writing to the Philippians from prison, testified, 'My chains are in Christ'. **Php 1:12-13**. His chains and imprisonment were his point of participation in the sufferings of Christ.



## Bearing the fruit of righteousness

The fruit of Paul's fellowship in the sufferings of Christ was that the gospel was being proclaimed to, and even beyond, 'the whole palace guard'. **Php 1:12-13**. Paul called this 'the furtherance of the gospel'. **Php 1:12**. Notably, he said that through his chains, his brethren in the Lord were emboldened to speak the word without fear. **Php 1:14**. Even when others were cleaving to him with deceit, supposing to add affliction to his chains, he was able to rejoice that Christ was being preached. The works, for which Paul had been set apart by God, were being fulfilled through his chains in Christ, and all things were working together for good. **Php 1:18. Rom 8:28**.

In order to bear the fruit of righteousness, we must receive illumination. 'Illumination' means 'turning from darkness to the light'. The gifts of the Spirit are the manifestation and ministry of *exanastasis* life operating in the body of Christ. They bring illumination to us so that we can be delivered from the delusion, or darkness, of our fallen way. As we turn from our own way, the sufferings that we are experiencing under the judgement of God are commuted to *chastening* in Christ.

This is most important. Paul explained and demonstrated, 'No chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it *yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness* to those who have been *trained* by it.' **Heb 12:11**. Those who receive illumination, and are trained by the chastening of the Lord, put off the carnal desire for self-definition, which is a lameness. They make straight paths for their feet by walking in the pathway of offering that the word is illuminating to them. **Heb 12:12-13**. Importantly, they have fellowship with one another, with the presbytery, and with the Father and the Son.

## Sowing the fruit of righteousness

The apostle James contrasted the works motivated by envy and self-seeking with the fruit of righteousness, writing, 'Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.' **Jas 3:16,18**. He was explaining that the works of sonship are fulfilled through *offering*, which is the expression of love. We recall the words of Jesus, who said, 'Greater love has no-one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.' **Joh 15:13**. Evidently, the fruit of sonship is sown in peace when we lay down our lives to reveal others. This was Paul's mode. He testified that through his chains his brethren became much more bold to speak the word according to their name as a son of God. **Php 1:14**.

To 'sow the fruits of righteousness in peace' means to 'proclaim, through testimony, the gospel of sonship that we have received in the light of fellowship'. To this end, we note the words of Paul, who wrote, 'How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "*How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!*"' **Rom 10:14-15**.

The feet of those who bring good news are beautiful because they are shod with the gospel of peace. **Eph 6:15**. These are sons of God who are *walking in the light* of the word that they have received. Their testimony is sincere because it is the expression of who they are as a son of God in Christ.

## The love of God

The life of God is *love*. Christ said that His obedience to the Father's commandment was the evidence that the love of God was in Him. **Joh 10:17-18.** **Joh 14:31.** God the Father loved the world and wanted to save it. **Joh 3:16-17.** He communicated His desire to the Son, and then imparted His love to Him. The Father then commanded the Son to love the world as He did. **Joh 10:18.**

The Son, having received the love of the Father, obeyed the Father's command. He laid His life down in offering so that He could multiply the life which He had received from the Father. He could then give this life to us to become our life. This manifested the love of God. In this regard, Christ testified, 'Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No-one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.' **Joh 10:17-18.**

Offering is the culture of faith that works by love. **Gal 5:6.** Christ's offering revealed two fundamental aspects of Yahweh's culture. The first aspect was His *obedience* to the command of God. The second aspect was His *offering* that revealed the expression of His name. The freedom of Yahweh was demonstrated by Their capacity to lay Their lives down to reveal One Another. This same freedom has been offered to us in Christ. **Gal 5:1.** A son of God exercises this freedom as an expression of their obedience to God's word.

## Abiding in His love

By His obedience, Christ demonstrated that He was abiding in the Father's love. **Joh 15:10**. Christ now wants us to abide in His love. **Joh 15:9**. Significantly, this is the same love that He received from the Father! He wants us to love one another in the same way that He loved us. **Joh 13:34. Joh 15:12**.

Christ demonstrated His love toward us by being a friend to us. Christ defined 'friendship' as 'the culture of offering'. Jesus said that we are His friends if we do whatever He commands us. **Joh 15:14**. He also said that if we obey His commandments, we abide in His love, just as He obeyed the Father's commandments and remained in His love. **Joh 15:10**. The love of a friend is seen when they lay their life down in offering for their companion. **Joh 15:13**. This is the love of God that we are to have for one another.

As sons of God, we have received the divine nature, which is the love of God. We have a participation in the fellowship of Yahweh as members of the body of Christ. We must give heed to the Son's exhortation to *abide in His love*. We do this by continuing to receive and obey Christ's word, which is ministered to us from a presbytery in His hand. **Rev 1:20**. By faith, we obey His word when we, in freedom, lay our lives down for one another according to our name as a son of God.

A person who has received the love of Christ is compelled to participate in the offering and sufferings of Christ. **2Co 5:14-15**. This compulsion is more than just our personal motivation, or initiative, to live as a Christian because of our appreciation of, and agreement with, the word of God. Rather, it is the evidence that we are in Christ, and that the love of God, which is the divine nature, is becoming our life through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

## Anointed to love

Yahweh the Son was begotten as the Son of God by the word of the Father. This was when the love that belongs to the Father was poured into His heart by the Holy Spirit. **Rom 5:5**. The Son was then anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Christ. By this anointing, the Son was enabled to embrace and express the love of God that He had received from the Father. The Scriptures teach us that Jesus was anointed with the oil of joy and gladness. **Heb 1:9**. This oil of joy was poured on His head, and made His face shine. **Psa 133:1-2. Psa 104:14-15**.

Because of the joy that was set before Him, He then despised the shame associated with our fallen condition, and endured the cross. **Heb 12:1-2**. 'The joy set before Him' was the joy of bringing many sons of God to birth, and then to full maturity and glory, through His offering. This happens as we are made members of His corporate body and join Him in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings. In this fellowship, we become workers together with Christ. That is, we become part of a kingdom of priests whose work is to minister to God the Father. **Rev 1:6**.

Most significantly, the joy of Christ was the fruit of embracing the love that the Father had poured into His heart by the Holy Spirit. The joy of Christ was an expression of His faith, which was working by love. It was a demonstration of the nature of His fellowship with the Father. **Joh 15:9-10**.

Jesus exhorted us to abide in His love so that His joy may remain in us, and become our joy. Christ's joy is the fruit of His life. He was saying that He wants *His* life to fully become *our* life. **Joh 15:11**. This was the very same desire of the apostle John, and of his fellow presbyters, who ministered to us the word of God so that our joy may be full. **1Jn 1:4**.

## A covenant of love

In the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim's* own covenant, before the creation of the heavens and the earth, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit agreed together to create and to bring to glory a great multitude of sons who would be in Their image and likeness. **Gen 1:26**. This is Their Everlasting Covenant.

The name of every son was discussed by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, within the covenant dialogue of Yahweh, before the foundation of the world. **Eph 2:10. Eph 1:4**. In the offering of Yahweh, the Son and Holy Spirit gave the Father to be the *source* of the name and life of every son of God. The love of God is the love of the Father. His love compelled Him to *give* His life to a multitude of sons.

Yahweh the Son, who is the sum and expression of all sonship, received the *word* of the Father, which was the expression of the Father's love. By the word of the Father, Yahweh Son was begotten as the Son of God. **Heb 1:5**. This happened by the *sanctifying capacity* of the Holy Spirit as He poured the love of the Father into the heart of the Son. **1Pe 1:1-2. Rom 5:5**. The life and name of every son of God were in the Son.

Having received the love of the Father, the Son was compelled by love to lay down His life. **Joh 10:17-18**. Through this offering, which was by the capacity of Eternal Spirit, the life of God was multiplied to each son, named in the Father, enabling them to be born of the divine nature in the image and likeness of the Son. **Heb 9:13-14. Rom 8:29. 1Co 15:49**.

The Holy Spirit was compelled by love to reveal the Father and the Son by making the divine nature substantial in the sons of God. The Holy Spirit takes what belongs to the Son, which the Son received from the Father, and makes it known, or substantial, in the sons of God. **Joh 16:13-15. Heb 10:15-16**.

## The grief of the Father

Adam and Eve fell from the fellowship of Yahweh when they were enticed by Satan to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Through the use of a lie, Satan created the illusion that they could have life outside of the image and likeness of God. Believing Satan's lie, Adam and Eve rejected the fatherhood of God. They chose, instead, the fatherhood of the devil. **Joh 8:44.**

When this happened, the whole of mankind was lost to God the Father. They were all stolen from Him through the fatherhood of Satan. **Joh 10:10.** The Father voiced His *deep grief* and yearning for mankind, when He called to Adam, saying, *'Where are you?'* **Gen 3:9.** This was the grief of a Father whose children had rejected His fatherhood. His sons and daughters were all now dead to Him in their trespasses and sins. **Eph 2:1.**

The parents of children who reject the blessing of God by choosing friendship with the world are acquainted with the grief that was expressed by the Father. **Jas 4:4.** Just as it was for the Father, it is hard for a parent to let go of a child whom they feel has been taken from them. However, at some point, parents must come to accept the choice that the child has made; otherwise, they will never find closure in the matter.

How do Christian parents find closure or resolution in these situations? A person can only truly accept their child's choice, and its implications for them, in the same way that the Father accepted the loss of His children. He was able to find resolution in the fellowship of Christ's offering. The Father did not take action, outside of the fellowship of offering, to recover His children to Himself. He, with the Son, and the Holy Spirit, believed in the offering of Yahweh as the only provision for the fulfilment of Their covenant plan. They believed in its sufficiency for every contingency, including the fall of mankind.

## Reproach laid on Christ

Mankind rejected the fatherhood of God when Adam disobeyed Him and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Through disobedience, the other law was established in the hearts of Adam and Eve, and in every son and daughter of man who would be born after them, bringing them into captivity to the fatherhood of Satan. **Rom 7:23**. Every thought, motivation and behaviour that is an expression of the other law in our heart is a *reproach* upon the Father. It is our rejection of God as our Father and as the source of our life and works.

Our reproaches against the Father were laid on Christ when the Father made Him to be sin for us. This happened when Christ drank the cup of wrath that the Father gave to Him in the garden of Gethsemane. **Luk 22:42**. When Christ drank the cup of cursing, every person who ever lived, and would ever live, was made a member of His corporate body. By this means, His body became the body of sin. **Rom 6:5-6**. The sword of the Lord that had been set in judgement against every individual son and daughter of man fell upon Christ and His body. **Jer 25:15-16**. The Scriptures describe our reproaches of the Father, which were laid on Christ, as '*a sword*'. **Psa 69:9**. **Psa 22:20-21**. **Zec 13:7**.

Through His offering, Christ made our death to be His death. *By the grace of God*, He experienced the sufferings of death that belong to every person. **Heb 2:9**. That is, He died by *exanastasis*. As the sword struck Him in judgement because of our sin, it was turned, by *exanastasis*, to a circumcision and chastening upon Him. By this action, the sin and other law that belonged to the old creation were being cut from Him, and He was made alive from the death of sin as the Firstborn of a corporate new creation.



## The travail of Christ

The travail of Christ was His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. Through Christ's travail, the old creation was passing away and a new creation was being brought forth by the resurrection life of God that was in His blood. **Isa 53:7. Isa 53:11**

Each wounding event of Christ's travail addressed a specific aspect of the old creation. For example, through the abuse that He suffered in the court of Caiaphas, Christ brought an end to the fallen, religious expression of humanity exemplified by the Jewish nation. **Mat 26:67**. Through the humiliation and abuse that He suffered at the hands of Herod and Pilate, He condemned the fallen nature of the descendants of Ishmael and Esau and, indeed, of all the nations. **Luk 23:11. Mar 15:16-20**.

When a person refuses the word of the cross that addresses them in relation to these specific points of Christ's travail, they forfeit the *exanastasis* life that belongs to the new creation. They are left to pursue life according to their own law, in a body of death. They remain a part of the old creation that is passing away; and their end is eternal death. **Pro 14:12. Rom 6:21-23**.

It is important to recognise that the travail of Christ was not for the purpose of restoring mankind to the sinless condition of Adam and Eve prior to the Fall. Rather, the whole world was being reconciled to God so that they could be born *anew* as the sons whom the Father had predestined them to be before the foundation of the world. We are all to become new creation sons of God in Christ. **2Co 5:17**.

## The final reproach

As well as being described as a sword, the Scriptures liken the reproaches that Christ endured on His offering journey to a great flood of water. By His sixth wound, when Christ was nailed to the cross outside the city of Jerusalem, the waters of reproach had 'come up to His neck'. **Psa 69:1**.

When the flood of mankind's sinful reproaches against the Father overflowed Jesus on the cross, marking the final aspect of God's judgement upon the sin of the whole world, He was completely submerged, *with us*, in the sea of God's forgetfulness. He cried out, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' **Mat 27:46**. Christ's exclamation was for Himself, and on behalf of those who would be conformed to His death.

This was the acute travail of the Son, who had been fully joined to mankind's separation from the Father. This separation had caused the Father such grief, and had prompted the question, 'Where are you?' **Gen 3:8-9**. The Holy Spirit was also grieved because He had laid down His life to become the expression of the name of every son of God.

Christ's heart was broken by this final reproach. **Psa 69:20**. The broken heart of Christ was the fruit of His obedience to the Father, and also the full manifestation of mankind's separation from God on account of sin and the other law. Even though Jesus had no sin, He did not endeavour to save Himself, but entrusted Himself to God who was able to save Him from death. **Heb 5:6-7**. **1Pe 2:21-23**. In this regard, He was poor in spirit. **Mat 5:3**. The Father looked on Him, and saved Him, *because* He was poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembled at God's word. **Isa 66:2**.

## Christ's broken heart

When the heart of Christ was broken, the power of the other law in the hearts of men was broken and finished. In Him, we could be delivered from the other law, and from captivity to the spirit of Satan. When the word of the cross is proclaimed to us, grace and supplication enables us to look on Him whom we have pierced. **Zec 12:10**. We see that we are dead with Christ. **2Co 5:14**. Our hearts are broken as we are joined to the broken heart of Christ. The power of the other law is broken within us and we cease from our fruitless endeavours to save ourselves. This is the blessing of becoming poor in spirit. **Mat 5:3**. Through repentance and faith, we are able to stand up in Christ, and walk in a new way. **Heb 10:19-20**.

As Jesus committed His Spirit into the hands of the Father, the Father drew Him out of many waters, which was the sea of God's forgetfulness. **Psa 18:16**. Jesus left behind the body of sin; it was 'done away with'. **Rom 6:6**. 'The body of sin' is every expression of sin and of the other law, belonging to humanity, including those who have remained loyal to this way of life. It was all cut from Him by the Father.

When the word of the cross is proclaimed to us, we are drawn by Christ to see that we are already dying with Him under the curse of sin. We can choose to come into Christ and be joined to His death and, through fellowship in His offering and sufferings, obtain the salvation that He has already finished for us. Or, we can continue to live according to the desires of our flesh and be condemned to the fiery sea of God's forgetfulness as part of the body of sin. The jealous love of God gives every person the dignity of this choice, making them worthy recipients of either the salvation or damnation that Christ finished for them. **Deu 4:24**.

## Resolution in Christ's offering

God the Father had to let go of the sons and daughters of men, who were lost to Him in the Fall. This was a sword that was piercing His own heart. However, He accepted that unless a person came back from the dead through fellowship in the travail of Christ, they would remain dead to Him. Although He yearned for the reconciliation of every son and daughter, whom He named, He let them go in the forsaken body of sin, according to *their* chosen pathway. **Col 1:19-20. Deu 30:19.** At this point, He was no longer grieved by their rebellion. *He found comfort through the Holy Spirit* as this sanctifying work was finished in Christ. **1Co 1:30.**

This implication of the cross was revealed through the responses of the two thieves who were crucified with Christ on the day that He died. The Father hoped for the recovery of both thieves. **2Pe 3:9.** He grieved for the thief who rejected His fatherhood. This man continued to abuse Christ through the exercise of his knowledge of good and evil, and rejected the salvation that Christ had pioneered for him. **Luk 23:39.** The Father was able to let the thief go, and to forget him, as the thief was appointed to the place of cursing that he had chosen. **Mat 24:50-51.**

The forgetfulness of God is not some form of 'spiritual amnesia' where rebellion, and the abuse of others, are wiped from His memory. Rather, it is the reality that all things are finished and resolved in the cross of Christ. **Joh 17:4. Joh 19:30.** When a matter is assigned to the sea of God's forgetfulness, it no longer evokes a response from God or from those who are obtaining salvation in Christ. This is because the old creation, with its grievous fruit, has passed away. **2Co 5:17. Gal 6:15.** There is no longer any obligation to what is old, because it has no place, or remembrance, in the fellowship of Yahweh.

## The prodigal son

Jesus used the parable of the prodigal son to describe the Father's response to mankind's rejection of His fatherhood. When the prodigal son left his father's house, the father did not go after him to accommodate his rebellion. No doubt this caused great pain to the father. However, when the son *came to his senses*, and returned *broken-hearted* to the father's house, the father rejoiced, saying, 'Let us eat and be merry; *for this my son was dead and is alive again*; he was lost and is found.' **Luk 15:22-24.**

The prodigal son represents *us all*. Our deliverance from sin and death is found only through fellowship in the travail of Christ. When this is our reality, we recognise that the cross is the only provision for the life of every person, including our children and friends. **Rom 13:13-14.** All of our relationships should be made new in the cross. This should be a daily reality in our marriages and families, and from house to house, because we are being delivered from meeting one another according to the principles of the old creation. **Rom 12:9-10.** We are compelled by the love of God to think, and to respond in life, as part of the new creation.

In relation to a prodigal child, families are only able to find resolution in the cross. They are illuminated to see that the relational mess associated with their child's rebellion has been gathered up into the offering and sufferings of Christ. As parents accept their participation in these sufferings, which Christ made His, and are being delivered from their own fleshly propensities, they are able to release their child to the implications of the cross. They are able to believe, with the Father, in the efficacy of Christ's offering. Having received the jealous love of God, they are able to accept that the old creation is passing away and receive comfort from the Holy Spirit, in the New Covenant. **Luk 14:26. 2Co 3:5-6.**

## Illuminated to see our wretchedness

In this present season, Christ's eyes are searching and illuminating the darkness of our heart. We have been called to depart from living at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and to come and abide with Him at the tree of life. Jesus said, 'If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.' **Joh 15:10**. Christ is urging us to keep His commandments, and to travail with Him for healing in many areas of lameness and fracture in our lives. However, as our darkened modes of living have been exposed, we have quickly realised that we cannot keep His commandments by any determination or capacity of our own. **Exo 19:8. Act 15:10**.

Thankfully, God does not want us to remain forever in our wretched state. When Christ's eyes expose the darkness of our heart, it is critical that we do not draw back in unbelief and shame. **Heb 10:38**. 'Drawing back in unbelief' means that we are choosing to believe in the counsel of our own darkness, rather than believing in Christ, the 'true Light'. **Joh 1:9**. Although the shame of our nakedness is being brought to the light, Christ does not meet us in this way in order to condemn us. Jesus said, 'For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.' **Joh 3:17**. His eyes as a flame of fire reveal the fellowship of God's love toward us. Christ is coming to us in this season, inviting us to turn from our darkened perspective and to be healed, so that we can walk on the straight paths that He has set before us.

## Faith works by love

When we turn in repentance from our darkened perspectives, the Holy Spirit meets us in our mourning and shifts it to a travail. In this travail, He joins us to the fellowship of Christ's offering, and pours the love of God into our hearts. **Rom 5:5.** This is the very same love that was poured into the Son's heart, which enabled Him to obey the Father's command.

As we join the travail of Christ, our lameness will be healed. In this travail, we will also be brought to birth by new creation life. **2Co 5:17.** These things happen as we live together in open hearted fellowship. In this fellowship, we abide in the light of God's word. **1Jn 2:10.** We are joining with the Lord and our brethren at the tree of life. As we are led by the Spirit, we are able to minister the life of God to one another. **1Pe 4:10.** We share what the Lord is saying to us by the ministry of His word. We confess our faults, seeking forgiveness and restoration with those we have wronged. We pray together, seeking to be healed and birthed in the love of God. **Jas 5:16.**

The faith of the Son was given to us through the ministry of the word. This faith is activated in us by the love of God being poured into our hearts. We can know and believe that we have been healed. **1Jn 4:16.** Faith is now working by love! **Gal 5:6.** We acknowledge that there is no adequacy in ourselves to obey the commands of Christ. However, the love of God residing in our hearts is the very capacity which enables us to obey! By faith, we are assured that we can obey the commands of Christ. His love in our hearts enables us to stand in full identity and to walk forward in the obedience of faith. **Rom 5:1-2.**

## Perfect love casts out all fear

The apostle John wrote, 'There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.' **1Jn 4:18**. The love of God is perfect love. As we walk with Christ in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, this perfect love is being poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. **Rom 5:5**. It is activating faith in us.

This faith causes us to know and believe that our lameness is being healed. **1Jn 4:16**. It assures us that we can obey God's commandments. Our capacity to obey God is not something that we should aspire towards, and hope that one day we can achieve. We are a new creation. **2Co 5:17**. The apostle Peter said that God has given us His divine nature, which we know is love. Love, as a motivation, gives us everything we need to walk in obedience to God's word. **2Pe 1:3-4**.

God's perfect love is removing our fear. Christ says to us, 'Do not be afraid; I am your shield of faith.' **Gen 15:1**. **Eph 6:16**. The shield of faith enables us to present ourselves for participation in the offering and sufferings of Christ. As we do this, we do not need to doubt the healing that we have received. We can be confident that God 'does all things well'. **Mar 7:37**.

Consider a person who has recently undergone a knee reconstruction. They need to trust the work of their surgeon, and literally step forward in faith. Their knee needs to carry weight and to be exercised so that it can be properly healed. We also need to step forward in faith where the Lord has brought healing to our lameness. We do this by simply obeying His word. The love of God is being poured into our hearts. We can be confident that the Lord is healing us, and that we can obey His commandments.





Restoring  
my Soul