

# *Walking With Jesus*



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**“In all your ways acknowledge Him  
and He will direct your paths.”**

## FORWARD

“Enoch walked with God, then he was no more because God took him away”. (Genesis 5:24) Thirty-five years ago at a Bible Study group the teacher shared her revelation on these words.

Enoch was so close to God, and enjoyed fellowship so much that one day, when God asked him if he was coming further, he realised God meant into ETERNITY. He hesitated because he was less than half the age of others of his time – 365 years old when others were an average of 900 years old. The teacher visualised him saying to God, “what about my family”? God’s answer was “you know I will take care of them, so what do you want to do, walk on with me or go back”? So Enoch was “no more” on this earth because God took him away.

For a Christian this must be the best ending to one’s life on this earth – no sickness, no pain, no anxieties about those who are left – just pure fellowship with God for ever in His Presence.

There are more than 100 references to “walking” in the Bible. Some of them refer to the physical act of moving one’s legs, but the bulk of them indicate a life-style, a journey through the years of one’s life, and some combine the physical with the spiritual journey. Some references are commands from God, some are suggestions based on the writer’s experiences, and many are warnings about what not to do.

We would like to address many of these ideas under topics which the Holy Spirit has laid on our heart, based on the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples, which we have become.

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## CHAPTER 1 – Our Inspiration – Our Father in Heaven

One of the most precious things in this world is to be in the family of God and to be able to call God, Father. This comes true, not when we join a church but when we acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God who paid the price that God demanded. Our rebellion from God caused separation from the source of all life and resulted in spiritual death, and ultimately, physical deterioration and death too. Someone had to die but Jesus took our place because God loved the world so much and He wanted us to be His children, in His likeness, to represent Him on this earth.

By God's decree we have our days and years on this earth, from the time we are born to the time we depart, to choose to acknowledge Jesus or not. There is no other name under heaven by which we can be saved. (Acts 4:12) Under the Old Covenant all the 10 commandments had to be kept to be accounted righteous but God knew this was impossible because of the devil, so the New Covenant was made very easy – the law of love. We love because God first loved us. (1 John 4:19) Jesus summed up the Law and the Prophets. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind...and love your neighbour as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-40)

In the world the devil has power (1 John 5:19) and we are all, by default, in his kingdom unless we choose to be born again by the Holy Spirit into God's Kingdom, God's family and be filled with His love. Because God wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the Truth, (1 Timothy 2:4) every one gets an opportunity, somewhere, some time, some place. Where His word has not gone

an angel has been sent, a dream or a vision has been given, because ever since the creation of the world His invisible nature and attributes, His eternal power have been made intelligible and clearly discernible through this very creation. (Romans 1:20) The Bible says that people are without excuse. There are even the most primitive people who are trying to find the Truth through their own religious practices.

But when seekers hear the truth that God loves them, that they can choose to be in God's family, be born again by the Holy Spirit, receive a new heart, a spiritual adoption and a righteousness in God's sight so that they can relate and be related to God through Jesus, and can be filled with His love, this is truly Good News. Many, when they hear this simple message, decide very promptly, under the anointing of the Holy Spirit to receive such a wonderful gift.

These are new babies and they need spiritual nourishment because they cannot walk yet. But they are now in God's family and are heirs of salvation. Love is essential for them. They might have come from very weird backgrounds and experiences and might not present very well to more mature standards, but, just as God is so patient with us so also we must be patient with these babies, no matter what their physical age. Particularly, they must learn that no matter how many times they fall down, it is right and proper for them to come to God for forgiveness.

Our Father is always patient with us if we stay humble before Him, our Father is always loving us because He made us with our unique personalities and strengths and weaknesses. Our Father has

chosen us to be in His family for these very traits, so that He can use us for His purposes. He likes it that we are each very different, with different tastes and interests. Though in our lives we have met people who did not like us and we have tried to please them and most probably failed, God loves us the way we are made and we need to recognise this and only try to please Him.

Our Father is always holy and wants us to be holy too. All His noes are for our protection and benefit, so that the devil cannot get a hold on us again, because he is our deadly enemy and doesn't like losing from his kingdom of darkness. Our Father is good and is the author of all good things. (James 1:17) He delights in answering our desires and giving us lovely surprises, just like any good father does.

There is a very inspiring list of attributes that Love is. Since God IS love, this is what we can assume about our Heavenly Father.

LOVE (our Father) is patient, is kind, does not envy, does not boast, is not proud, is not rude, is not self-seeking, not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Love always protects, always trusts always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

Our Father is generous, faithful, gentle, and wants to impart peace and joy to us. This then is our inspiration – our Father in Heaven.

## CHAPTER 2 – Our Worship – Your Name is Holy

The first mention of “holy” was when Moses saw the burning bush and went over to look. God said to him, “Do not come near; take your shoes off your feet for the place on which you stand is holy.”

(Genesis 3:5) It is recorded that Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look at God.

It is also recorded that “our God is a consuming fire.” (Deuteronomy 4:12) and when God did reveal Himself and His glory to Moses He put Moses in a cleft in the rock and covered him with His hand until He passed by, because Moses could not look on God’s face. (Exodus 33:22&23) Even then Moses worshipped God because he considered he had found favour in God’s eyes.

The dictionary defines “holy” as morally and spiritually excellent or perfect, and to be revered (held in deep and affectionate respect and honour). From this definition it is obvious that this must originate in an atmosphere of love and trust.

In former times the church tried to frighten people into honouring God by talking about hell and so they feared God. Then they were also told that God sends sickness and trouble to teach us, which also instilled fear rather than love and trust. We think this is why this generation needs to be won back to God, because their parents rejected this teaching, feeling instinctively that this could not be right.

When God revealed His glory to Moses He described Himself as “compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.” (Exodus 34:6&7)

It is hard to understand how God's nature could have been so slandered by people who were supposed to proclaim the Good News. Our experience in the establishment church over 50 years is mainly one of duty and service so that one of us actually lost sight of God's unconditional and personal love, so had to cut off and reassess what God says in His word and decide to believe that, and THAT ONLY. It is only when a person rediscovers God's love and allows it to flow into the heart that thankfulness and His love flows back to Him in worship. For some the heart is so damaged, so hardened or frozen, that God's solution of a new heart is such a blessing from such a gracious God. (Ezekiel 36:26)

What then does the Bible mean when it says that our God is a consuming fire? The hurts and damages which can cause unforgiveness are garbage in our lives. Sometimes it even rots our souls and warps our spirits. God hates these things and wants to refine us as gold and silver. (Malachi 3:3) He has said we are to be holy as He is holy. (1 Peter 1:16) He disciplines us for our good that we may share in His holiness. (Hebrews 12:10) When we worship Him, when we seek His face and His glory, we reflect Him and He trusts His glory to us so that the world will see Him and love Him too. (John 17:22-24) This love, this adoration between Him and His child is visible to those who want to know Him and receive His blessing so that they too will want to follow Him and worship Him.

There is a saying that one can attract more with honey than vinegar; sweetness is better than a sour lemon. Caricatures of olden day priests were of sour faces and pinched lips. This is a



terrible picture of a worshipper of Jesus Christ who should be full of the love of God, but it prevails to this present day.

We need to change the picture in people's minds. They need to see the beauty of the Lord in our countenance, as we acknowledge "Holy is Your Name".

### **CHAPTER 3 – Our Submission – Your Kingdom Come, Your Will be Done**

We have written in previous books about submission. The dictionary has 4 synonyms – concession, acquiescence, capitulation and surrender. These words speak to us as a progression. The first word indicates that the person being submitted to could be right. The second indicates a willingness to agree with the person. The third, an acknowledgement that the person is right but we don't necessarily agree fully, but the fourth is an acknowledgement that the person is right and we are wrong. There are many people who believe that some of the Bible is right but they do not wish to agree to all of it because they value their own opinion too much.

Submission to God requires that we acknowledge that God is right all the time, even if we do not understand. This creates an interesting dynamic in the Spirit world. God says that those who are not for Me are against Me, or are enemies with Me. If we speak contrary to what God says, we are speaking on behalf of the devil,

which causes us to defy God each time for the devil's own advantage.

For example, if God says in His word that He brings the clouds to water His earth and show His love (Job 37:13), but the weather forecast says it will not rain and we believe them, this gives the devil opportunity to bring drought. If the doctor tells us we are going to die from an illness and we believe him, what good is it to us that Jesus died on the Cross for all our sicknesses and sins.

Agreeing with God's word all the time, searching the Bible for the promises of God concerning any matter, and admitting to Him that His word is the ultimate authority brings it to reality in our world. This is the power of God unto salvation. God's word is good news for a sinful and hurting world. God has trusted us to speak His promises into actuality just as He spoke the creation into being. Jesus spoke to storms, to sicknesses and evil spirits and they obeyed Him because they recognised His authority. Jesus said He had delegated to us His authority. At first it was His disciples, but He said in His prayer before He was crucified, "My prayer is not for them alone (the Apostles). I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they (let them) also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (John 17:20-22) Since God wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4) and is not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9) this is the responsibility of His church, and He has given us a sacred trust to do this work in His power and on His behalf. In Heaven everything is done

according to God's plans and desires all the time. This is of course why Satan was cast out of Heaven – because he did not want to conform to God's plan. When we pray that God's will be done on earth as in Heaven, and we submit to Him, His Kingdom increases daily, because He has equipped us and promised us.

## **CHAPTER 4 – Our Provision – Our Daily Bread**

God has revealed Himself as Jehovah Jireh, Provider God. (Genesis 22:14) This supernatural provision was in response to Abraham's obedience and this provision was on the mountain of the Lord – it will be provided.

There are two guidelines here to receive supernatural provision.

- 1**, it is in God's appointed place and
- 2**, it is in response to our obedience.

We have been talking about being in the family of God through what Jesus has done for us. This gives us access to the throne room with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

Jesus said not to worry about what we eat or drink. The pagans run after these things, and our Heavenly Father knows that we need them. His advice was to seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to us as well. (Matthew 6:25&33)

Paul wrote that God supplies seed to the sower and bread for food and will also increase our store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of our righteousness. (2 Corinthians 9:10) God intends that we should have more than enough so that we can be generous on every occasion, to demonstrate that He is generous. Our daily bread therefore is more than for just our own needs.

Jesus told a story about asking, to encourage us to ask boldly for as much as we need. (Luke 11) Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks the door will be opened. Jesus goes on about not being given bad things when we have asked for good. How much more will your Father in Heaven give good things (Matthew 7:11), the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!

Isaiah encourages us to enlarge the place of our tent, to stretch our tent curtains wide, not to hold back...for you will spread out...(Isaiah 54:2&3) The bigger our vision, the greater our need, the more our supply.

James says that every good gift comes down from the Father, who does not change. (James 1:17) He chose to give us birth through the word of truth. This is not only our physical birth but especially our new birth by the Holy Spirit, into the family of God.

From the time God took His chosen people out of Egypt and slavery He miraculously provided for them. There were manna, quails, and water from the rock. All of this was because He knew their need. Gratitude would have brought them more blessing and favour but only a few recognised God's love and goodness. These

are mentioned by name in the honour roll of faith. (Hebrews 11) Most perished in the wilderness and never entered God's Promised Land.

With the appeal of God written by the Prophets, it is easy to find out how much God wanted His people to walk with Him in close fellowship, but Jesus' teaching makes it plainer why the Father desires this. God gets as much joy out of giving as any good earthly father or mother. When our children receive something that they really wanted and they are happy and thankful it warms our hearts. Giving us our "daily bread" gives God pleasure, and He demonstrates and we experience His love.

## **CHAPTER 5 – The Highway – Holiness unto Him – Forgiven and Cleansed**

We must be cleansed from all iniquity (proneness to sin, our sinful nature) in order to be holy and blameless. Without holiness no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14) This was our inheritance won for us on the Cross. We were chosen before the creation of the world and predestined from the time we were conceived. God knew us and planned for us to be adopted as His sons and daughters, and to be redeemed from Satan's kingdom to be instead in His Kingdom and His family. (Ephesians 1:3-8) There are no sinners in God's family, because a sinner is one who is not in covenant with God. (Galatians 2:15 & Romans 3:22-24) No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him/her. (1 John 3:9) When we are

righteousness-focussed we gradually become what God intended, being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory. (2 Corinthians 3:18) God looks at us through His precious Son who is sinless and who always does the Father's will.

Because we are being transformed into the likeness of Jesus, we are also empowered to choose the Father's will and do it. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. God has promised in His word that He has begun a good work in us and will complete it also. (Philippians 1:6) God has chosen our good works for us in advance and He has prepared the desires and dreams, the gifts and the human support, including our natural families, for our preparation to accomplish these. (Ephesians 2:10)

There is, we believe, an ideal road for us to walk on. It is the highway of God, called the Way of Holiness. (Isaiah 35:8) This road is for those who are clean, those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Jesus describes the small gate and the narrow way. (Matthew 7:14) This road leads to life and He says there are only a few who find it. This is very strange, considering that God wants all people to find the Truth. He goes on to warn about false prophets who are inwardly ferocious wolves. "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father."

When we are walking on the Highway of Holiness, keeping in step with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:25) we receive confirmation in our spirit of God's "Well done". There is no experience like this, a sense of God's overwhelming love and approval. The establishment church

that has taught that we do not rely on feelings, has sold people very short. There is no relationship that is worth while that is purely clinical. This is a cold belief system, and not a personal relationship. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Depart from Me, I never knew you". (Matthew 7:23) This was also God's grief when the Prophets said that these people honour Me with their lips but their hearts are far from me. (Isaiah 29:13) Relationships are really more about warmth than cold facts.

David describes how he was deceived by looking at the wicked (those who are not in Covenant with God). (Psalm 73) His heart was grieved and his spirit embittered. His feet were slipping on the highway, then he got his focus right again and God strengthened him..."it is good to be near God", he testifies. The Bible warns that the devil prowls like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 3:8) He is earth-bound so if we stick to the highway and keep focussing on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) we are protected at all times. God's ways are higher than our ways (Isaiah 55:9) and He has raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:6) The devil is under our feet, because, having been buried with Jesus in baptism, we have been raised with Him through our faith in the power of God, who raised Him from the dead, the first fruits for us all to be raised from death. (1 Corinthians 15:20)

This highway is also the way of love. We are told to walk in love. If we love one another, God lives in us. (1 John 4:12) We like to express it that God is ALIVE in us. When the unsaved look at us they see God's love, no longer I but Christ living in me. (Galatians 2:20)

## **CHAPTER 6 – Our Participation and Cooperation – Trusting Him**

Jesus continually reminded His disciples that He came to do the will of “Him who sent Me”. (eg John 4:34) The story that precedes this statement is very revealing.

Jesus is going through Samaria, an area where they have, from earlier times (2 Kings 17:24-40), although taught to worship the Lord (v28), brought every other god (idol) into their worship because of the very mixed cultures and peoples that populated the place. Since the first commandment is to worship only the Lord, they completely failed to keep covenant with God and so became alienated from God. Jews therefore could not have anything to do with Samaritans and a Jewish man would certainly not speak to a woman (and to this day the serious religious Jews will not).

Jesus is doing the work of the Father. He not only speaks to the Samaritans but a woman at that. Why?

Paul explains it when he preaches in Athens. (Acts 17:24-28) “From one man He made every nation of men...He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him...” “He commands all people everywhere to repent.”

Jesus recognises what we call a Divine Appointment. Those who are seekers of God, who have a need only God can satisfy, meet someone who can introduce them to Him. Because Jesus came to seek the lost, and this woman was really lost, her life was a mess and she had been used and probably abused by men, His



compassion rose up within Him. He is so humble, and empowers her by asking for water. His “word of knowledge” about her husbands challenges her to realise this is a very special encounter, and Jesus reveals to her that He is indeed Messiah, the Christ, the anointed one. (v26) Jesus was not fazed by her sins because He came into the world to save sinners. It has been said that when you meet Jesus you will never be the same again. This was certainly true for this woman.

Jesus is demonstrating here how to work with the Holy Spirit and with the Anointing, the glory of God, so that God can touch people’s lives. These Divine Appointments are the greater works that John writes about. (John 14:12)

Bartimaeus (Mark 10:40-52), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), and the Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28) are all similar Divine Appointments where a needy person’s life was changed for ever by the anointing which breaks yokes and removes burdens. (Isaiah 10:27) The Glory and the Presence of the power of God which Jesus carried with Him through the Holy Spirit accomplished the works of the Father.

The extraordinary thing is that God wants us to do the same works. “In this world we are like Him.” (1 John 4:17)

Paul prayed that we might know the incomparably great power for us who believe. (Ephesians 1:19) This is not about religious rituals and customs but an intimate relationship with the Father through the Holy Spirit. Just as for Jesus who said, “It is the Father living in Me who is doing His work” (John 14:10), so also it is the Holy Spirit in us

who does the work. The Father's stipulation according to Jesus is, "Abide in Me (John 15:4), I am in the Father and you are in Me". (John 14:11) Paul writes about being "in Christ", blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3), chosen to be holy and blameless, adopted as His sons and daughters, forgiven of our sins, redeemed from Satan's kingdom into the glorious inheritance of His Kingdom, of which Jesus is King. We have a responsibility to believe and receive all these blessings and to walk in them. "You are My friends if you do what I command." (John 15:14)

The purpose of our calling is to be a royal priesthood, a holy people who reflect their Father, God, that we may declare the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)

God's divine power has given us everything we need for life and Godliness through our knowledge of Him. (2 Peter 1:3) These promises have been given to us so that we can participate in the divine nature. This means we begin to look and behave more and more like our Heavenly Father, just as Jesus commanded. Peter writes that we should make every effort to add goodness to our faith. Many people think this is enough but Peter says to add knowledge. This is not only information about the precious promises, but the kind of knowledge which is intimate relationship with God. Jesus introduces this when He tells some who have been doing works in His name, "Depart from Me, I never knew you". (Matthew 7:23)

Then we are encouraged to add self-control. This might seem to be the most difficult fruit of the Spirit to master, even though it is

mentioned last in a list written by Paul. (Galatians 5:23) Then Peter says to add perseverance. It would seem that Peter knows it is hard-going to deny self, which is largely what self-control is. This progress will produce Godliness and brotherly kindness, and the result will be manifestation of the kind of love that God shows to us, unconditional love. Peter writes that if we possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep us from being ineffective and unproductive. To bear fruit that lasts, as Jesus commanded us, means we must make every effort. (John 15:16) But this does qualify us to ask the Father for whatever we ask in Jesus' name.

Brotherly kindness is an interesting concept to meditate on if it is what leads to unconditional love. God made all the animals after their own kind. (Genesis 1:24&25) We are made after God's own image, not just the same "species" but superior to the animals. We are all equal under God and it makes no difference about skin colour, race, educational abilities or advantages. The root of the word "kind" is the same whether it means species or being nice to people. Brotherly kindness is therefore treating others as we would be treated ourselves with acceptance and respect. There is no room for lording it over another for any reason if we are to honour what God has said about exercising brotherly kindness. Racism and elitism are the opposite of brotherly kindness. If we are not willing to practise brotherly kindness we will never learn God's kind of love.

## **CHAPTER 7 – The Wrong Way – Repent, Turn Around, Go Back**

Jesus has only given us two commandments, love God and love our neighbour. By this all people will know we are Jesus' disciples. (John 13:34&35) If anyone obeys His word, God's love is truly made complete in him/her. Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did. (1 John 2:5&6)

The Holy Spirit is a patient teacher. He convicts us of sin, going our own way rather than God's way. This is not just the original awareness of sin that caused us to turn and be saved, but a daily, even hourly or minute by minute awareness of a wrong thought or action which is not love. Repenting is not beating ourselves up, but a simple act of turning to God again and again. We become righteousness-conscious, because it feels cold when the Lord is not intimately close. When we become truly convicted of our righteousness which Jesus has so freely bestowed on us, so that God looks on us as He looks on His Son, we are only too ready to repent and to feel His beautiful presence near. The disciples on the road to Emmaus described it well. "Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us on the road...". (Luke 24:32)

One of the greatest lies that Satan has propagated is that we do not rely on feelings. As we have already written, the establishment church taught us this, and one of us lost any sense of God's love in my life. I believed the words of the Bible in theory and was most happy to assure others that God loved them but I really did not feel that He loved me, so I served Him out of duty, to try to give meaning

to my Christian life. If we do not receive God's love we really have no unconditional love to share with others. If we feel God's warmth and closeness, being filled with His Holy Spirit every day, this overflows into the lives of everyone we meet. Paul describes this well when he says that without love we are a resounding gong or clashing cymbal, (1 Corinthians 13:1) we are nothing and we gain nothing.

The right way is to believe God's word and practise it. When I realised I was not practising God's word I had to repent and believe that God did love me as He said, and receive His warm "hug" every day until His love had melted the ice off my heart. It is not our worthiness or unworthiness that matters, but Jesus' worthiness; what He has done to secure our redemption and our blamelessness in God's sight. We throw off everything that hinders us... and fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. (Hebrews 12:1&2)

There is a teaching in the establishment church of "once saved, always saved." The Bible does not teach this though. There is a warning in Paul's writing that God's kindness leads towards repentance. (Romans 2:4) We are told to continue in His kindness. Otherwise we will be cut off. (Romans 11:22) Jesus says, "Every good tree bears good fruit... every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognise them." (Matthew 7:17-20) God never gives up on us but the warning is there. Jesus says that He is the true vine and His Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch that bears no fruit, and prunes those that do so that they bear more fruit. He challenges us to remain in Him, because, apart from Him we can do nothing (that

bears fruit). If we break off the vine we wither and then are thrown into the fire and burned. (John 15:1-6)

The writer to the Hebrews also warns what would happen if we kept on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth. (Hebrews 10:26-29) He also ends with the exhortation, "We are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who continue, who persevere, who believe and are saved".

David prays to God to keep him from presumptuous sins. (Psalm 19:13) This has been translated in NIV as wilful sins but this could not be right because if we deliberately sin we are cut off. The word "presumptuous" and the word "presumptive" have the same root but have very different meanings. The first means "egotistical and overconfident" but the second means "taking for granted or assumed". We need to remember not to take God's kindness and protection for granted, humbly asking Him for what we need.

We need to remember that the devil is prowling around, waiting for our mistakes so that he can come against us.

It is easy to make a mistake but we are also encouraged to confess that we have messed up, as God has promised that He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9) This is not a one-off act of repentance but a lifestyle of repentance and purifying. Even if we have not actually done anything wrong but someone has wronged us, our response is usually carnal and therefore unloving, which also puts us in the wrong in God's sight. We describe this as having mud thrown on us which makes us as dirty as the person who wronged us. When we repent God cleanses us from other people's sin too.

## CHAPTER 8 – The Kingdom

Jesus said to seek first God's Kingdom and His righteousness. (Matthew 6:32) He majored on preaching the Kingdom of God, exhorting and encouraging His hearers to enter. He taught extensively what the Kingdom of God is like. The Kingdom of God could be defined as "our relationship with God", and the Kingdom of Heaven as "our behaviour in that relationship".

If we are "poor in spirit" or "persecuted because of righteousness" we are demonstrating the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 5:3&10)

The Kingdom of God is "...righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Romans 14:17)

The knowledge of the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven has been given to you (the disciples) but not to them (the people). (Matthew 13:11) It is a bit unreasonable to expect those who are not born again to behave as if they are, when God's precious Holy Spirit is not motivating them. This is why Paul taught that Jesus died for us while we were still sinners. (Romans 5:8)

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. Weeds appear among the good wheat. (Matthew 13:24-30) These have been scattered by the enemy but they are identifiable at the time of harvest and are gathered together and burned while the wheat is brought into the barn. The behaviour of the weeds, and the lack of the desired fruit, has shown up what they really are.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed which, in due time grows, to give shelter, a resting and nesting place for the birds. It is also like yeast which a woman has put into her flour to make it

produce light and delicious bread which could feed many. (Matthew 13:31-33)

“I must preach the good news of the Kingdom of God to other towns because that is why I was sent,” Jesus said. ((Luke 4:43) Jesus also said, “The Kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21) He also said, “I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it”. (Luke 18:17) We can see how important the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven are to Jesus. Entering into the relationship with God and behaving like His child is important to Him.

Jesus taught other illustrations of the Kingdom of Heaven. He tells of the wedding banquet, and who will go. He warns that we must have a wedding garment, our garment of righteousness which Jesus has won for us and gives us freely. (Matthew 22:1-14) He also taught about having our lamps filled with oil in readiness for His coming. Some of the waiting bridesmaids had let their oil levels go dangerously low, indicative of allowing their relationship with the Father through the Holy Spirit to go nearly dry. (Matthew 25:1-13) Many Christians take their relationship with God very matter-of-factly, relying on God’s grace and love to hold them to Him. But Jesus said, “When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8) Jesus wants us to be overcomers to the end. Paul warns, “If any man builds on this foundation (Jesus Christ) using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work.” (1 Corinthians 3:12&13)



Jesus also warned that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from those who are not producing fruit. (Matthew 21:43 and Matthew 25:14-30)

God is always merciful and while we are on this earth there is time to repent, and to begin again to do the works He has prepared for us. His purpose is sure. He laid down His life for the sheep. He said, "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to My voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd." (John 10:15&16) When He said this He was speaking to the Jews but He was to be a light to the Gentiles too. (Isaiah 42:6) Paul put it very clearly when he was in Athens. "From one man He made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him..." (Acts 17:26&27)

Jesus' prayer before He died is very revealing of His true desires. We love reading this prayer. "I am not praying for the world, but for those You have given Me." (John 17:9) He meant, of course, His disciples, the eleven who stayed with Him, mentioning with regret the one who did not. (John 17:12) But then He prays, "...not only for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one". (John 17:20) Jesus said that from the days of John the Baptist the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful (passionate) men lay hold of it. (Matthew 11:12) It is interesting that Jesus' death on the Cross is called "the Passion of our Lord". This expression gives us a clue to how Jesus felt about God's Kingdom. No one can enter the Kingdom of Heaven without the righteousness that only Jesus can give us.

## CHAPTER 9 – The Power and The Glory

When we are in the Kingdom, then we need a supernatural power to be what we are called to be. Jesus' last instruction to His disciples was, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you". (Acts 1:8) God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power...He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil..." (Acts 10:38) Peter and John said to the crowd, "Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we have made this man walk?" (Acts 3:12)

The works of God are done in His power, but He chooses to use a human agent. It is important to acknowledge that it is God who works in and through us.

Paul writes about this power, "like the working of His mighty strength, which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the Heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the age to come". (Ephesians 1:19-21) God's power raises from death, not just to life but to glory. There is no earthly power that can be greater than the power that Jesus has been given because of His obedience to the Father's will, and there never will be.

But go back one sentence – "His incomparably great power for us who believe." (Ephesians 1:19) God intends us to use this power through faith. "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the Head over every power and authority." (Colossians 2:9) The outworking of this

power is that we should be doing everything that Jesus did, at the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Much of the “establishment” church has become so lacking in faith that it has become powerless. Instead of fighting the powers and authorities that oppose the Kingdom they argue among themselves. Instead of expecting people to be attracted to Jesus in us they try to attract with brochures and programs. When we are walking with Jesus He is beautiful in us and so attractive to those outside the Kingdom. The love of Jesus in our countenance and our being is actually transferable. Jesus said to the Father, “I have given them the glory that You gave Me”. (John 17:22) Then He says, “Father, I want those You have given Me to...see My glory,” (John 17:24) and, “glory has come to Me through them”. (John 17:10)

Paul writes, “My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with demonstrations of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power”. (1 Corinthians 2:4&5) He also writes, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes”. (Romans 1:16)

We choose whether the words of the Bible have power or not. Faith in God says they do, all the time. God stands by His word. (Psalm 138:2) “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16) Every good work is the work God has appointed us to do. A powerless Christian is useless to God and detrimental to His cause.

the Kingdom, because he brings no glory to Jesus, but rather mockery. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away". (Mark 13:31) Those who pick and choose what they want to believe in the Bible are listening to the devil, just as Eve did in the Garden of Eden. Jesus used God's Word to powerful effect all the time. He was found trustworthy by the Father. When we walk in His steps, hand in hand, yoked to Him, we achieve the same results. What pleased the Father then also pleases the Father now, because He does not change. We should want His glorious presence and anointing all the time and do our best for Him because He did His best for us.

He has shared His glory with us as we walk with Him. No wonder the disciples on the Emmaus road felt their hearts burning within them. (Luke 24:32) The energy flowing from Jesus would be electric. He still shares His power in this way, and through His ministry in and through His followers people feel the warmth of His glory.

## CHAPTER 10 – For Ever and Ever, Amen

“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (1Timothy 1:17) “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”. (1Timothy 1:15) Paul writes to Timothy and he is overwhelmed by the concept of the power of the Gospel. Once we were God’s enemies, outside of Covenant, and enslaved to Satan’s whims. Yet from the beginning God had a solution – the woman’s offspring will crush the enemy’s power for ever and ever. Amen, let it be. Then if it is done, why is the enemy bluffing his way to retain his power?

We do not know why God decided to use humans for such an important role as to enforce Jesus’ victory on the Cross, but this is what He decided. He had given Man His authority on the earth (Psalm 115:16) and He would not take it back. When He is extolled (raised to the highest position), which is what the first commandment asked – no other gods before Me, we are in agreement with God Himself and are His faithful representatives, whom He can trust.

Jesus taught His disciples this principle, which was to continue throughout all generations. If we enshrine saints who have gone to their reward instead of emulating them we have stopped the continuous flow of the concept of “for ever and ever”. People, no matter how devout, who value the past above the future, are not able to appropriate the power and the glory to continue this work that Jesus only began when He was here on the earth. He lives for ever (Hebrews 7:24), is the same, yesterday and today and for ever. (Hebrews 13:8) He is still anointed with the Holy Spirit and power to go around

doing good and healing all who are under the power of the devil (Acts 10:38), but He is in us who walk with Him. Our commendation is already written. “They overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death”. (Revelation 12:11)

In a little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” (Hebrews 10:38)

“But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.” (v39)

“Yes, I am coming soon. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen.” (Revelation 22:20&21)