

Dear Friend,

Paul said, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" when He humbled himself and became obedient, even obedient unto the cross." In the previous two letters, we have discussed the first two levels of humbling ourselves, as described in the Word of God. Level one is to hear and obey the apostle's doctrine, which are the sayings of Jesus Christ as recorded in the four gospels. His teachings must always be "top shelf" in our hearts and minds.

Level two is to become obedient to the promptings of the new nature within us, and to constantly obey the conscience whenever it warns us concerning acts of unrighteousness. A person who does this is considered a mature son of God, of sufficient age to participate in the family business [the kingdom of God]. Jewish custom is to have a Bar Mitzvah. Remember, at age 12 they found Jesus teaching in the temple. He said, "I must be about my Father's business." This second level is so important for many reasons. Without this maturity, most people will not be strong enough to obey the leadership of the Holy Spirit even if they hear Him.

The third level of humbling ourselves is when we are being led by the third member of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. Jesus is Lord. Jesus is the head of the church. The Holy Spirit brings the mind of Christ to believers on an individual basis. Today our physical ears do not hear words coming from the physical lips of Jesus like the disciples did in the four gospels. That is what most people want. That is what they are looking for. And that is why they "think" they never hear the Lord speaking to them.

Today, as born-again Christians, we receive the mind of Christ [His instructions for our individual calling] as He speaks from heaven by way of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, in His glorified body, is seated in heaven. He speaks from the realm of the Spirit. We hear and see with our spiritual ears and eyes. It is important to understand that the Holy Spirit has not come to be our Lord. He has come to bring us the Lordship of Christ.

Let us look at an example. I want to start with an example that is not an apostle; not a person in the five-fold ministry. All we are told is that this man is a disciple. But as you will see, he is a mature disciple, a mature son of God.

Act 9:10-18 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, *I am here*, Lord. (11) And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, (12) And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. (13) Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: (14) And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. (15) But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: (16) For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. (17) And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. (18) And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

Ananias is a disciple. In this case the Lord appeared to him in a vision. Visions and dreams are major ways that the Holy Spirit communicates the mind of Christ to believers.

This is a great example of how oftentimes it is useless to hear the Holy Spirit's leading if you are not mature enough to obey it. Ananias understood the vision. Saul of Tarsus was famous at the time. Ananias knew that Saul had been terrorizing the church, having Christians arrested, beaten, put in prison, and even having some executed.

In the natural realm, it seemed the Lord was sending Ananias on a suicide mission. Notice how the Lord allowed Ananias to talk with Him about his concerns. Just think about this ... what if Ananias is hearing wrong. What if he goes to Saul of Tarsus and finds out that Saul has NOT had that conversion experience on the road to Damascus. There is a good chance it will cost him his life. **THIS IS WHY LESSON TWO OF THIS TEACHING SERIES IS SO IMPORTANT! IT IS ONE THING TO HEAR GOD. IT IS ANOTHER THING TO BE MATURE ENOUGH TO OBEY GOD.**

Ananias chose to obey the vision. Also please notice the precise detail given by the Lord, by the Holy Spirit, how to find where Saul of Tarsus was; *go to a street called Straight. Enquire at the house of Judas and there you will find Saul of Tarsus.* More details: *I have shown Saul in a vision that a man named Ananias is coming to lay hands on him that he may receive his sight.*

The Lord is able to give you precise details for what He has called you to do. He knows EVERYTHING. "Waiting on God" has become a lost art to this generation. But those that learn to wait upon the Lord and listen for His leadership receive the leadership they seek in precise detail. He does not always reveal the why, but He always reveals sufficient WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW for you to obey His instructions.

Very often, it looks like certain disaster for you to do what He says. But our job is to hear and obey with simple humility so that the work of the kingdom goes forward. On a much less dangerous scale, the Lord's instructions to Sue and me in the beginning of our ministry seemed like certain disaster. We had never heard of any other ministry operating the way He told us to operate financially. I never tell other people, or ministries, that they need to follow the same instructions that He gave us, but it was imperative that we obey what He told us to do. Here are a few of His instructions to us at the time. [These were the days of the cassette tape ... before CD's ... and much before Mp3's and YouTube videos]

The Holy Spirit said, *"Do not charge money for the cassette tapes. Send the cassette tapes freely to all who ask for them. You pay the postage. Do not include a return envelope. Never let another person know of any of your personal needs, or the needs of the ministry. If you will obey these instructions of mine, I will speak to the hearts of the people I choose to support both you and the needs of the ministry."*

Notice there is sufficient WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW in those instructions to know what to do. On the other hand, it seemed absolutely impossible because those were the days when "money was staying away in great abundance." We didn't know how we were going to eat our next meal, buy blank cassette tapes, buy bubble mailers, or anything else ... but we knew what He said and we made up our minds to obey those instructions. He always made a way when there seemed to be no way. He provided in the wilderness much like He did during the manna days for Israel. For years it seemed at bedtime we

felt like, *"Well ... we did not die today, but surely we will die tomorrow."* What we meant was ... that was the way it looked financially. But He was faithful and is still faithful today.

God is looking for mature sons and daughters who will hear and obey His instructions even when it looks like certain disaster to do so. If we are faithful to obey, we can rest assured He is faithful to do what He promised. He said to me, *"You will never prove yourself to be more faithful than Me."*

Ananias had to overcome natural fears concerning Saul in order to humble himself and obey the leadership that came by the Holy Spirit. His assignment was completed in a single day. The assignment Sue and I received has gone on for many years. We also have had to overcome natural fears of lack to obey the leadership that came to us by the Holy Spirit. The temptations to disobey were ongoing. There were many times it "looked like" we were going to go under financially. I cannot tell you how many times I was tempted to disobey the instructions of the Lord and let people know of the needs we had, or the needs the ministry had.

But His words to us were like an anchor to our soul. Here is good counsel we have learned from much experience: ALWAYS WRITE DOWN WHAT THE LORD SAYS TO YOU WHILE IT IS STILL FRESH IN YOUR MIND SO YOU WILL HAVE IT TO FALL BACK ON WHEN TEMPTATION COMES.

Hab 2:2 And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

The third level of humbling ourselves is to always have the same attitude that Saul had when he first met Jesus on the road to Damascus. *"Lord, what would You have me do?"*

Your friend and co-laborer,

GARY