

FRUITFULNESS

THE GOAL OF OUR FAITH

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TRANSFORMED
WORKING LIFE

PETER MICHELL



ICCC

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE™



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Grusgropvagen 5
702 36 Örebro
Sweden

Tel: +46/19-24 70 00
Email: info@iccc.net

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Work is a first class calling

No one can serve two masters

Hope –the certainty of future blessing

Faith or presumption

Hearing God speak

Renewing the mind

Working from rest

Be strong in the battle

Anointing

Fruitfulness

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of our faith is that the Lord is glorified.

The Lord is glorified when His character is seen to be formed in us. This is a lifelong process of being changed from glory to glory which is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. The process is aided by our co-operation and by our increasing understanding of who we are in Christ.

The Lord is glorified when we ask in faith and He does whatever we have asked for us – John 15:7-8. Abide in Jesus and let His words abide in you – Jesus speaking in John 15: 7 (This needs to be properly understood - see Faith or Presumption in this series.)

Fruitfulness could be described as demonstrating the very character and nature of God through our lives as we abide in Him. *‘As He is so are we in this world.’*
1 John 4:17

Jesus said, ‘You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.’

John 15:16

This booklet seeks to help maximise our fruitfulness as the truth and the Spirit work in us to make us more like Him, and our lives and activities become an outward manifestation of an inward walk of faith.

Jesus quoted Isaiah saying: *‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’*
Isaiah 61:1-2

The New Testament is full of testimony of what Jesus did under that anointing. Yet He said we will do greater works than He (John 14:12) because He will ask the Father and He will give us the Holy Spirit who will

be with us and in us. It is the very same anointing!

So we are going to look together at who we are and what we do – with the expectation that we will become more and more fruitful.

CHAPTER 1

WHO WE ARE**1) Sons by birth**

There is a difference between being a real born son and being adopted – we rejoice in both, so let us examine –

Jesus' own words, '*you must be born again.*' (John chapter 3 speaking to Nicodemus, a Pharisee.) He goes on to say – '*You must be born of water and of the Spirit.*' Jesus explains the meaning by adding, that which is born of the flesh (water) is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

So here is the distinction – we all come into this world born of the flesh through our earthly parents. But, that said, our human spirit remains in the kingdom known as 'death' because flesh can only beget flesh. We inherit spiritual death from Adam. '*In Adam all die*' (1 Corinthians 15:22)

Jesus then says, of those who are born again of the Spirit, '*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgement but has passed from death to life.*' (John 5:24)' He has been born again of the Spirit. His human spirit has come back to life.

So literally - our human flesh (body and soul) is inherited through natural birth – we have literal human parents - a literal human father of our body and soul.

Our human spirit is born again by the Spirit when we believe in Jesus as the only way to the Father – we have a literal Heavenly Father of our spirit.

In order to stand tall and know who you are in Christ it is vital to understand this - God is literally the Father of your human spirit.

For more study please see 'Inherent Power' in this series, it deals with the division of body, soul and spirit and details the various aspects of our

relationship(s) with the Lord. ‘Inherent Power’ (sometimes referred to as Relationship Foundation) is the basic starting point of the Transformed Working Life teaching course.

Conclusion

Forget your feelings and focus on the truth – as a believer you are now a child of God, fully received by Him and entitled, as such, to all the blessings and favour of God that are bought and paid for by the blood of Jesus. Time now to go on to maturity

2) Sons by adoption

To quote from Vines Expository Dictionary of Bible Words – ‘God does not adopt believers as children; they are begotten as such by His Holy Spirit through faith. Adoption is a term involving the dignity of the relationship of believers as sons; it is not a putting into the family by spiritual birth, but a putting into the position of sons.’

So adoption is all about taking position. It has both present and future significance, and was part of the blessing God intended for Israel, now available to us.

Future - Paul says to the Romans (8:23) *‘that we are eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body,’* a future event when we rise to meet Jesus in the air and are changed in the twinkling of an eye.

(1 Thessalonians 4:17, 1 Corinthians 15:52)

Present – adoption is about position in the family. It’s about us being heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:17) Adoption contains the concept that as joint heirs with Christ we are like Him in spiritual position. That means the same power He demonstrated through His anointing by the Holy Spirit – that very same power, is also our inheritance. He demonstrated what it meant to be the Son of God and expects us to do the same. *‘Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also. And greater works than these he will do because I go to the Father.’* (John 14:12) This is the position in the family that is ours to manifest.

Adoption is position in the family. We are joint heirs. Jesus demonstrated what it means to be a son of God. Can we step up and take position?

Power

Adoption is about demonstrated power. We find this in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. Chapter 1 verse 5 he tells us that we are predestined to adoption as sons. (This is, of course, predestination to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, not to eternal salvation, in the foreknowledge of God. - Romans 8:29)

Paul goes on to explain that as sons they (we) are the recipients of amazing power – the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him far above every principality, and every name that is named. We are joint heirs, we are in Christ. This is us, but just as Paul realised that the Ephesians needed revelation and the spirit of wisdom to come into this inheritance, so we also need revelation and the spirit of wisdom to fully take our position as sons. (Ephesians 1:17-23)

Conclusion

Becoming a son differs from being a child! The writer to the Hebrews, *'For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.'* (5:12-14)

To take position as a son we need solid food and spiritual exercise. Prayer – *'Holy Spirit lead me into all truth and make me sensitive to your voice.'*
The sons are expected to demonstrate the glory of God - *'for the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.'*
Romans 8:19. We need to be filled.

3) Filled with the Spirit.

Jesus was born as a literal baby with a literal human mother who was impregnated by the Holy Spirit. Although He was God in human form, He ministered under anointing of the Spirit. Just occasionally the divine ‘God’ aspect of His nature broke through. (John 18:6 – when the troops came to the garden of Gethsemane looking for Jesus to arrest Him, and He answered them saying ‘I am,’ they all fell to the ground.)

We see the Spirit descending on Jesus at His baptism and we have already quoted in the introduction the effect of the anointing –

Jesus reading from the prophet Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth: *‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and recovery of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’*

Luke 4:18-19

The same anointing is available for us - indeed God intends that we receive it so that we may take up our position as sons already discussed in the previous chapter.

It is entirely possible to be a believer and not enter into the fullness available – Paul speaking to the believers at Ephesus on his second missionary journey, *‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ So they said to him, ‘We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.’ And he said to them, ‘Into what then were you baptised?’ So they said to him, ‘Into John’s baptism.’ Paul then goes on to explain further, and the Ephesians are then baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit came upon them and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.’* Acts 19:1-6

There is more The passage Jesus quoted from Isaiah goes on to say*, *‘To comfort all who mourn, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, (the antidote to depression) – that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.’* In context, this is part of the New Covenant promised to Israel which we inherit and they will come into in due course.

Being filled with the Spirit is not compulsory, but is undeniably important and worthwhile. To enjoy the fullness, requires a heart attitude of love for Jesus and obedience to the Holy Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit is an ongoing day to day requirement. Paul speaking to the Ephesians, *‘and do not be drunk with wine in which is*

dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.’ The tense is continuous present – be filled, go on be filled. (Chapter 5:18)

Though it is not everyone’s experience, speaking in tongues is very frequently the first gift to be experienced. Hopefully followed by all or some of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12.

- The passage in Isaiah 61 also has the *line ‘to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God.’* Jesus when quoting the passage stopped short after the acceptable year of the Lord and did not go on to the day of vengeance. This is because at His first coming He comes to save. Judgement and its consequences were then, and still are now, yet future - He will come again to fulfil the day of vengeance.

So we can correctly consider that it is still the acceptable year of the Lord at the present time and therefore expect to live in the favour of the Lord.

Conclusion

Be and continue being filled with the Spirit – this is effected by having more and more love for Jesus and by being attentive to and obedient to His word brought to us through the Holy Spirit. Inevitably, if we follow this path, He will lead us to be continually filled with the Spirit.

4) **Eternally safe**

Confidence in our salvation and our position in Christ is very important. Otherwise we are likely to slip into worry and can then become less effective or even ineffective as believers, bearing no or little fruit. So we need to know and understand that we are eternally safe in Jesus' hands.

In Christianity there is much discussion as to whether or not a born again Christian can lose their salvation. Much of the discussion can be avoided when we understand the tripartite nature of a born again Christian. We are body, soul and spirit. The human spirit is brought back to life and the Holy Spirit takes up residence. Thus John is able to say, *'Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.'*
1 John 3:9

Our born again human spirit is incapable of sin - -for the very reason that the Holy Spirit dwells in us and has taken up control at that level. The letter to the Hebrews has it in chapter 12 verse 23 – *'you have come to the spirits of just men made perfect.'* Your human spirit is eternal and cannot sin – therefore ...

So Paul is able to say, *'In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom you also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.'* Ephesians 1:13-14 [See also 2 Corinthians 1:22 and 5:5]

Key word - Guarantee.

Paul to the Romans states that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ – that would include ourselves. We do not have the power to overcome the Holy Spirit within our human spirit!
(Romans 8:35-9)

Furthermore, once we believe in Jesus we become a purchased possession. He now owns us because He purchased us at a price - the price of Jesus blood.
(Ephesians 1:14, 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23.)

Quenching the Spirit

Eternally safe and secure we can be bold, and we are called to be bold in the Spirit. However, the world will try to draw us away - *'beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world and not according to Christ.'* (Colossians 2:8) Going the way of worldly wisdom will quench the Holy Spirit who has a far better way for us. As a purchased possession belonging to Jesus, He has every right to instruct us in the way we should go.

This is effected by the leading and guidance that comes through the Spirit as He shows us what has been prepared for us and as He speaks to us the words of Jesus. Making our own way through life, doing what seems best to our human thinking will quench the Holy Spirit and we will be unfruitful.

Grieving the Spirit.

In our body and soul we can and do sin and we can and do grieve the Holy Spirit. The New Testament has many passages telling us that those who live a life of sin cannot inherit the Kingdom. This is for unbelievers of course, not us once we are born again, because although we once were sinners just the same, by His mercy he saved us through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (see Titus 3: 2-5) . We, however, if we sin, grieve the Holy Spirit. And sin has consequences that we are likely to suffer. There is, however, a very quick way back - *'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'*

1 John 1:9

Having told the Ephesians they are eternally safe Paul urges them not to grieve the Spirit (4:30). It's the same for us. A life sold out to Jesus, loving Him with all our heart, all our soul and with all our mind and strength, will lead to an increase in practical righteousness; because we develop a hunger for righteousness in the outworking of our lives, in addition to the gift of righteousness bestowed on us by Jesus when we first believed.

The sin unto death.

There is reference in 1 John 5:16 to a sin leading to death. This occurs where a believer has become infatuated with the world and / or with works of the enemy kingdom. Such a believer bears no fruit. God is slow to anger and will continue to give opportunities for repentance. Eventually, or in strategically important times, the believer will die and be taken to heaven to be perfected there – such is the grace of God.

(Ananias and Sapphira committed this sin, recorded in Acts 5. Lying to the Holy Spirit - at the very beginning of the emergence of the church it was clearly strategic. In the Old Testament there are examples – Saul for example, went to a medium to call up Samuel, who had died much earlier. Saul is then told he will die and be with Samuel (1 Samuel 28:19). Saul and his sons then die.)

All unbelievers commit the sin unto death. The penalty of sin is death. The only antidote is new life in Jesus – believe and you will be saved and inherit eternal life.

The unforgivable sin.

The devil loves to tell believers that their case is hopeless because they have committed the unforgivable sin.

So lets look at what the scripture says, *‘Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation.’*
Mark 3:28-9

Blaspheme - to revile, to rail against. Clearly our human spirit is not capable of committing the unforgivable sin once we are born again – as stated in 1 John. So a believer cannot commit the unforgivable sin. However, in our soul, in our minds we can go down this wrong path. Persevering in so doing would be grieving the Holy Spirit and possibly eventually committing the sin unto death – whereupon we would be taken to heaven to be fully restored.

Loved beyond measure

Paul prays for the Ephesians *‘that they, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.’* Ephesians 3:17-18. This is the place of safety in our relationship with the Lord. When we know the extent of His love, the very last thing we would want to do is to quench or grieve the Spirit. By fulfilling the first command to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength we will continually increase in the knowledge of His love for us. (The principle of sowing and reaping) Yet, it is not humanly possible. So my favourite and frequent prayer, ‘Holy Spirit fill me with more and more love for Jesus.’

Conclusion

We are eternally secure, no matter what. Add to our security - ‘to hunger and thirst for righteousness’ – that carries the promise that we will be filled.
(Matthew 5:6)

We will be in a position to be more and more fruitful when we know we are secure in the love of Lord. From a secure base we can go on from glory to glory.

5) Going to be conformed to the image of Jesus.

Once a believer it is inevitable that you will be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

The scripture explicitly has this promise in Romans 8 –

‘And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born of many brethren.’ Romans 8:28-29

And more....

‘Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.’ (30)

Foreknowledge.

The key to understanding this passage is the word ‘foreknowledge.’ The Lord knows us from the beginning. The Lord knows exactly which of us, in our freewill, will come to believe and trust in Him.

Then, in that foreknowledge, He determines that we will be conformed to the image of Jesus. This is predestination – it is not that God has decided who will be eternally saved and who will not. Rather He knows beforehand who will freely choose Him – then those who choose Him will definitely be conformed to the image of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit – His role.

‘Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.’ 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

It’s His job. He brings conviction when we step out of line. He brings guidance for us to walk in. He is our best friend.

Jesus – His role

Paul, writing to the Ephesians in chapter 5, explains the role of the husband in caring for his wife. The husband washes his wife, to sanctify and cleanse her, by washing with the water of the word. Jesus, being the perfect husband, has this responsibility, for us His bride,.

‘Washing with the water of the word.’ Has to be understood. This is the rhema word of God. Vines description - Not the whole bible as such, but the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance. Jesus tells the Holy Spirit what to say to us and the Holy Spirit brings those words to us. (John 16:13-14) See Faith or Presumption, in this series for a full study of rhema.

Our role

Our role can be summed up - co-operate, co-operate, co-operate. Paul urges Timothy, - *‘Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.’*
2 Timothy 2:15

Jesus promised us the Holy Spirit would lead us into all truth – and here Paul is urging our co-operation with that. My frequent prayer, ‘Holy Spirit lead me into all truth, more and more.’

Conclusion

Let’s co-operate with the process. Let the Holy Spirit convict us and lead us in the process of becoming more like Him day by day. Let’s be diligent to show ourselves approved.
(2 Timothy 2:15)

6) Excellent character

Peter's second letter – *'Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.'*
Chapter 1:2-4

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self control, to self control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness and to brotherly kindness love.
Chapter 1: 5-7

For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.
Chapter 1:8-9

Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.'
Chapter 1: 10-11

We are all a work in progress and Peter is giving a sort of check list against which we can see how we are doing. We can then come before the Holy Spirit in repentance where necessary and urge Him to change us in any and every respect where we see ourselves falling short. (Co-operating, of course with the process.)

In defining the fruit of the Spirit Paul gives a target to aim at – *'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such there is no law.'*
Galatians 5:22-23

As we meditate on these things and acknowledge where we could do better, we can call on the Holy Spirit to do this work in us and, of course, co-operate by seeking to move in that direction. As Paul puts it, *'put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind. and that you put on the new man which was created in true righteousness and holiness* Ephesians 4:22-24) (see 'Renewing the mind' in this series)

That's our part to play - put off the old and put on the new. Call on the

Holy Spirit to help. Then we will demonstrate excellent character. This is not a once and for all event but a continuing day by day process effected by walking in the Spirit. Paul's letter to the Ephesians is very instructive. He calls them to:

Put on the new man

Put away lying and other sinful acts thus not grieving the Spirit

To walk in love

To walk in light

To walk in wisdom

To establish good relationships - in marriage, with offspring and parents, with those we work with.

To put on the whole armour of God. (See 'Be strong in the Battle' in this series.)

Conclusion

John puts it, *'as He is so are we in this world.'* (1 John 4:17) One part of being like Jesus in this world is to be a demonstration of excellent character. Let's co-operate in the process of becoming more and more like Him through the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in bearing His fruit in our lives and in what we do. So doing we will become more and more partakers of the divine nature.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT WE DOa) **Calling**

'If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask whatever you desire and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.' John 15:7-8

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

Ephesians 2:10

Now let's link these two passages together. The Lord wants much fruit. The Lord has prepared good works for us to walk in. Thus, as we walk in that which God has prepared for us, we can expect to produce much fruit to the Father's glory.

We each have God's calling for our lives – it is up to us to understand what is our calling, because the calling is irrevocable. (Romans 11:29) The scripture helps - *'let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.'* (1 Corinthians 7:20) This is why I spent my working life as an accountant. I became a believer whilst an articled clerk. After qualification I worked as an accountant first in industry and then in practice.

Then the question is, was it fruitful?

Fruitful for me and my family - certainly, the Lord used accountancy to provide for us. We saw the hand of God making that provision in a number of ways. We did not advertise our services, but relied on the Lord to send along those clients we were supposed to serve. Through prayer and the answers to prayer, we were able to do some things beyond our training and understanding, as the Spirit spoke instructions and we followed His advice. We were able to see some staff and some clients come to know Jesus as their personal saviour through being in contact with us. I have no doubt that over

the period we did not fulfil all that could have been done, yet we can look back and see -God is faithful, we are His children, He goes before us to prepare the way.

During my working life I joined first FGBMFI and then ICCC, meeting with other business people. The Spirit led me to write 'Faith at work,' which was published in association with ICCC. A love of the truth continually developed within me and I became involved with the teaching ministry of ICCC. (There had been prophetic markers along the way – so I was certain of the Lord's guidance.) In this process I felt the Lord was telling me to write a series of teaching booklets but did nothing about it at that time – it was 'on the back burner' and nobody knew about it. Then at an ICCC meeting in Moscow a brother from Singapore, who I had not met, stood up in the meeting and said he had a word from the Lord for me. 'Peter, you are to write a series of booklets and they will go round the world.' Hence this booklet and the booklets in the Transformed Working Life series.

Look for and take notice of the confirmations that the Lord gives regarding your calling. These signposts give a good foundation – especially when things don't seem to go to plan.

Mistakes

It is a gross error to think that one calling is better than another. Glory to God comes from our obedience – that is the first requirement. It is quite wrong to think that a 'seemingly' spiritual job is better than a 'seemingly' secular job. It is with regret that we see many anointed and skilled business people think it would be better to become a pastor, leaving their calling and losing their way and fruitfulness.

For detailed discussion of calling see 'Work is a first class calling' in this series. (Coming in 2016)

Conclusion

Understand the specific calling of God for you. Walk in that, knowing He is faithful, He has gone before and prepared the way. Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit - It will be fruitful.
God will be in it with you and will provide the power in the form of His anointing which we will now consider

b) Anointing

One key to fruitfulness is the anointing of God which is more fully discussed in the booklet ‘Anointing’ in this series.

For our purposes, in examining fruitfulness, we need to understand that it is the things done under anointing, rather than things done out of our own effort, that please the Lord.

What is anointing? It could, perhaps, be described as ‘wind in our sails,’ or ‘fuel in the tank.’ Anointing is an added element beyond our human capacity enabling us to be far more fruitful.

Daniel and his friends, in the Old Testament, are seen to be *‘ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in his (King Nebuchadnezzar’s) realm.’* Why? Because God gave them *‘knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom’* (above that which they would have learned in their studies) – a statement of anointing. (Daniel chapter 1)

Again in the Old Testament we find the anointing of God on craftsmen – there is a clear statement of God’s anointing – *‘See I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge and in all workmanship to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze, in cutting jewels for setting, in carving wood, and to work in all manner of workmanship.’* Exodus 31:1-4

And it goes on to say that God has appointed others with him and anointed them also.

These Old Testament craftsmen were charged with making the tabernacle in which the Spirit of God would reside. It included making the priestly garments and the anointing oil.

We can see that anything produced out of the effort of the flesh would not suffice. Only that which was made under the anointing would be acceptable as the dwelling place of the Spirit of God.

Is it not the same today? The dwelling place of the Spirit of God is now within our human spirit – God dwells in us. Therefore, in simple logic, the Spirit is going to be most comfortable when His ‘house’ is fashioned by, and acts under, the anointing.

The anointing works with us. Consider the building of the temple as reported in Zechariah 4. *‘This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel (Governor of*

Judah) – “Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts,” It goes on to say, *‘The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall finish it.’* The context – the work on building the temple had been half completed and God sends His prophet Zechariah to bring the message to complete, *‘My house shall be built .’*

There were going to be problems, referred to as mountains, but they would be removed and the capstone would be brought forth with shouts of *‘Grace, grace to it.’*

Powered by grace

Under the anointing our works are powered by grace. This is something the world does not know and sets us in a position to be fruitful. See ‘Powered by grace’ in this series.

Conclusion

Our own effort is inadequate. The Lord can and will do much more, to His glory, as we walk in the works He has prepared for us. Let’s go on to manifest His Spirit at work and make a difference

c) **Manifestation of the Spirit at work - making a difference**

This is the calling of ICCC – to be a plantation of tall trees and smaller bushes which the Lord will use for many remarkable miracles. The trees and bushes are full of fruit and berries containing great power which will remain until Jesus comes. (Quoting from the prophecy given to Gunnar Olson.)

We are called to manifest God's power at work for this is fruitfulness.

'If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.' John 15:7-8

Careful, careful! We cannot just take out of the verse the words *'ask what you desire and it will be done for you.'* We have to consider the whole - If i) you abide in Me and ii) My words abide in you, then ... you will ask what you desire and it will be done for you. It is conditional.

'Abide in Jesus.' Abide is to dwell, stay in, rest in, take up position in - Jesus.

'My words abide in you' In the text this is *'rhema'* words which are the words God speaks to you now. It is not the scripture, though God may use scripture to convey a word for right now. Please see 'Faith or Presumption' in this series and 'Hearing God Speak' for a full study.

'You will ask what you desire' Desire is *'thelo'* in the Greek, which indeed means what you want, what you wish, what you determine. In this context determine is probably a better translation. Again we need to consider the statement Jesus has made. When we abide in Him we become like Him. Jesus took on the form of a bond servant, one wholly at the service of another. (Philippians 2:7)

As we abide in Jesus ,more and more we will take on the role of being wholly at His service. In this context He will speak His instructions to us as *'rhema'* words. So long as we allow that word to take up position in us, to abide in us, then when we move in obedience to the word it will come to pass for us – and nothing will be impossible.

At work

This is just as true at work as it is in the home or in the church. When we lift our expectation that the Lord is with us, then we are in position to receive His specific words and guidance. When we are able to move in His instructions at work those around will see the glory of God manifest. And that is the point, Jesus said, 'by this My Father is glorified,' as He concluded His discourse

about the vine.

How does this work?

God's '*rhema*' word has unlimited power. That should be obvious – if the Lord gives a '*rhema*' word then the whole power of heaven is available to fulfil it. In my own experience it has manifested in salvation for unbelievers, in healing for the sick, in receiving professional understanding for 'impossible' problems and in providing miracle finance, even saving from bankruptcy. '*Yet you do not have because you do not ask.*' (James 4:2.) For many, we have become conditioned to think that the Lord is not interested in anything thought to be 'secular.' It is very unusual to hear any sermon or teaching on the subject of the Lord working with us in secular occupations. So we do not seek the Lord in our day to day work and so the majority of our time is not fruitful – that leads some to look for a more spiritual job. It is time to change! It's time to realise the Lord wants us to make a difference where He has put us - in the good works He has prepared beforehand, in the calling He has for us.

Nothing is impossible

Whatever realm you work in* the Lord is able to make a difference through you – as you hear and obey His instruction.

Ask – Lord what do you want for this person, this company, this industry? Nothing is impossible when we are bond-servants to Jesus and hear His voice.

Luke 1:37 - '*For with God nothing will be impossible.*' (Actually, in the text, though not translated, it says no '*rhema*' of God is impossible.)

* It would be foolish to think that the Lord will bless certain types of work – for example, there is a large industry in pornography. It would be foolish to think the Lord would prosper such a thing. Much more likely would be the '*rhema*' word to leave!

* And not restricted to work – the Lord will work with you in retirement, on holiday and in any form of living experience including housework.

The calling of ICCC.

It is for the purpose of making a difference and making a place of safety that ICCC has been called into place. It is up to us, the members, individually to take our position as tall trees and smaller bushes with great power. It is up to us to recognise our position as bond-servants in this respect. It is up to us

to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and what He wants to accomplish in our business, in our employment, in our industry. Anything is possible when we remember the statement to Zerubbabel, *'not by might nor by power but by My Spirit says the Lord.'* Zechariah 4:6

Conclusion

It's our calling and our destiny to be those who make a difference and to complete the work the Lord has for us to do.
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CHAPTER 3

GENEROSITY

Generosity is at the very heart of the Lord. He is generous to us beyond measure. Everything in the Kingdom is free to us, though bought for us at a heavy price by Jesus.

Generosity comes with a spiritual consequence, *‘Give and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down shaken together, and running over will be poured into your bosom. For with the same measure that use it will be measured back to you.’*
 Luke 6:38

It could be described as ‘fuel’ in the Kingdom. The more we take on generosity in our character and actions the more the Lord measures back to us, so the more generous still we can be and so on. A virtuous circle.

So we should seek to be generous in all things but particularly in the *‘rhema’* words of the Lord. The same principle will apply, the more we receive them and obey them, the more we will receive. The more we move in the things of the Spirit the better we get at discerning good and evil. (Hebrews 5:14)

The more we move in the *‘rhema’* words of God the more fruitful we become and more the Lord is glorified.

An essential part of becoming a tall tree is developing generosity of character. This is an area where we can ask the Holy Spirit to do His changing work in us, ‘Holy Spirit make me more and more generous.’

Conclusion

Let’s agree with the Holy Spirit in every area of His work in us, making us more like Jesus, so that we can fully take up position in every aspect – child of God; son of God; bond-servant and so on.

Final conclusions

The goal of our faith is fruitfulness – bringing glory to the Lord. Matthews’s gospel tells the full account of the parable of the sower. (it is also in Mark and Luke in shortened form)

The parable is about the word of the Kingdom. This is the ‘logos’ word of the Kingdom. It is also a name given to Jesus in John’s gospel (1:1). Jesus is the full revelation of the Godhead in bodily form (Colossians 2:9). So putting this together we can see that the meaning is that the sower sows the word which is the full revelation of the truth.

The parable is salutary, for it shows that a lot of what is sown fails to bring forth any lasting fruit. The Lord forbid that should happen to any of us. Then that which does bring forth fruit brings 30 or 60 or 100 fold.

The dangers for us in relation to bearing fruit are shown in the parable:

- 1) Lack of understanding – the seed fell by the wayside and the evil one snatched it away. This is opposition from the devil. This demonstrates the need to study to have a good understanding of Kingdom truth. My prayer ‘Holy Spirit please lead me into more and more truth’ is helpful.
- 2) Stony places – the word is received with joy but when tribulation or persecution arise because of the word, and the man has no deep root (he cannot stand) in himself, he stumbles – no fruit. This is opposition from the world.
- 3) Amongst thorns - the seed is choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches - again no fruit. This is the opposition of the flesh.

Transformed Working Life is designed to help those of us who work in secular occupations to get a deep understanding of the full gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and it is worthy of our study. By adding frequent requests to the Holy Spirit to lead us into more and more truth and to fill us with more and more love for Jesus we will become the tall trees and the smaller bushes with great power expressed in the prophetic foundation of ICCC.

For me a target would be fruitfulness of 100 fold. Only the Holy Spirit can achieve that in me but I do and will co-operate with Him all the way. What is your target?