

According to the pattern....

1. The Garden of Eden and the fall of mankind

Most people misunderstand the beginning of chapter 3 of the book of Genesis, where the story of how mankind sinned against God for the first time is recounted. Many believe that a serpent actually spoke to Eve and tempted her to disobey God, actually that is not what the bible says in this chapter.

If we look in Luke chapter 13 verses 31 & 32 we read of how Pharisees came to warn Jesus that Herod was out to get Him. Jesus gave a very interesting reply, He said this: "Tell that fox....." Clearly this does not refer to his physical appearance since in all probability Herod did not have red hair, a bushy tale and walked around on four legs.

Jesus description of Herod being a fox spoke of his characteristics not his physical appearance: it should therefore be equally obvious that the reference in Genesis chapter 3 is not "a serpent" but "**the serpent**" a phrase that in scripture **always** refers to the devil. We can see this from Revelation chapter 12 verse 9 where the devil is again referred to as "the serpent".

"The great dragon was cast out, that old **serpent**, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceives the whole world: he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him." Adam and Eve were use to fellowship with God, able to see Him as He is a being of light.

If another "being of light" comes along they have no reason to presume that this second being of light is evil. We learn from 2 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 14 that the devil is able to appear as an Angel of Light making it all the more difficult to recognise him for who he is.

We can see from Isaiah chapter 14 we read that he tried to overthrow God in heaven and be the one who is worshipped, himself. Verses 12 to 20 of these chapter read: "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!

For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

Yet you shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see you shall narrowly look upon you, and consider you, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, who did shook kingdoms; who made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; who opened not the house of his prisoners?

All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, who go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet.

You shall not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, and slain your people: the seed of evildoers shall never be renowned.” Since he failed to overthrow God he then decided to try to spoil the pinnacle of God’s creation which is mankind, and draw them away from God.

Ezekiel chapter 28 verses 4 to 19 read as follows; “With your wisdom and with your understanding you have got riches, and have got gold and silver into your treasures: by your great wisdom and by your trading you have increased your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches:

therefore thus says The Lord God; because you have set your heart as the heart of God; therefore I will bring strangers upon you, the terror of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and they shall defile your brightness.

They shall bring you down to the pit, and you shall die the deaths of those who are slain in the midst of the seas. Will you yet say before him who slain you, I am God? But you shall be a man, and no God, in the hand of him who slain you.

You shall die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, says The Lord God.

Moreover the word of The Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus and say unto him, Thus says The Lord God; you sealed up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

You have been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, Sardis, topaz, diamond, beryl, onyx, jasper, sapphire, emerald, carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of your tabrets and of your pipes was prepared in you on the day that you were created.

You are the anointed cherub that covers; and I have set you so: you were upon the holy mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, till iniquity was found in you.

By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled the midst of you with violence, and you have sinned: therefore I will cast you as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness: I will cast you to the ground; I will lay you before kings, so that they may behold you.

You have defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trade; therefore I will bring forth a fire from the midst of you, it shall devour you, and I will bring you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all those who behold you. All those who know you among the people shall be astonished at you: you shall be a terror, and never shall you be any more.”

These verses are not talking about a human being but a high ranking angel who tried to overthrow God his pride and ego are just as arrogant today and he will try once more to overthrow God but his attempts are doomed to failure.

Most people think that Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden for just one sin; actually that is only part of the reason. The reason they were expelled from the Garden is clearly given in verses 22 & 23 of Genesis chapter 3 which reads as follows;

“The Lord God said; the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from where he was taken.”

God always intended that mankind would live forever but had Adam & Eve eaten from the tree of life they would have lived forever – in the state of sin and would therefore be irredeemable. Therefore God announces and begins to put into effect His plan of salvation in this chapter.

In Genesis chapter 1 verse 23 clearly shows that God has given unto all He created to produce fruit **of their own kind**. This not only means that a monkey **cannot** give birth to a human being because it is not of that kind, man is a separate creation. Therefore sinful man can produce nothing but offspring with sinful nature.

Anyone whose father is a human being will have a sin nature, therefore there must come somebody who was created like Adam who is without a sin nature and who would lead a sinless life right from birth to death without falling into sin, only such a person could be an acceptable sacrifice for the redemption of mankind.

Sometimes in scripture we can see prophetic statements made by the people of God. We can see such a statement in Genesis chapter 22 when Abraham goes up a mountain believing he is required to sacrifice his only legitimate son, but on the way up Isaac asked Abraham; “Here is the wood and the fire, but where is the sacrifice?”

Abraham’s reply was prophetic though he probably did not realise it at the time. Verse 8 of Genesis chapter 22 reads as follows; “Abraham said, my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a sacrifice: so they went on up the mountain, both of them together.”

If you follow the story throughout the books of Moses (roughly the first five books of The Bible) you will find that later God put into effect a plan that would atone for the sins of an entire community, but only for one year. This was a hint and a reflection of what was to come, the greatest sacrifice of all, the Son of God, our saviour Jesus.

The sacrifice of Jesus was so big before God that it is stated that it could atone for the sins of all mankind and the sins of all time if only the people it was intended to be on behalf of would put their faith in it and show through their lives that they believe it by walking in fellowship with God once more, this time for all eternity.

According to the pattern Study 2 relationship

Some people are surprised at the words that Matthew wrote in the seventh chapter of his gospel, verses 21 to 27 which read: “Not every one who says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? In your name cast out devils and in your name done many wonderful works?”

Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you who work iniquity. Therefore whoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man, who built his house upon a rock: the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house but it did not fall, for it was founded on rock.

Every one who hears these sayings of mine, and does not practice them shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand: the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.”

It seems clear from this passage that what Matthew is emphasising here is the importance of a real relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It is this relationship that is more important than any amount of good works that we might do. The reason for this is because we are saved by grace not by works, most of which might be in the flesh.

When someone is born-again of The Spirit (not a catchphrase but a biblical quote from John chapter 3) they cannot help but fall in love with Jesus and thereafter change their life-style to one that eliminates all those things we know will cause offence to God, learn to hear His voice and to obey immediately the commands that He gives us.

We cannot be said to have been truly born-again if we feel we can go on living in the same way as we did before we came to know Jesus our saviour. If we truly are born-again and walking in fellowship with our maker then there will be fruit come out of it, a change of life-style and a different attitude towards others.

Much of this fruit will be produced by the work of God in our lives (if we allow Him to do what He wants to do in and through us) but there are things that we have to do in order to co-operate with the changes that God wants to bring about in our lives. One of these things is to become familiar with and fall in love with the written word of God which is The Bible.

This will sustain, build us up and encourage us. King David knew the benefit of studying and meditating on the scriptures for he wrote in psalm No.1 the following line: “But his delight *is* in the law of The Lord; and in His law he meditates day and night.”

We only have to look at the opening words of the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples to see the paramount importance of our relationship with our creator. The first two words read “Our Father” The Greek word for father is “Abba” and in its context in the Greek language it is the most intimate term possible between a child and its father.

Once we get our relationship right with God then all the over fruit that we will produce will come out of that. It is an intimate and deeply personal relationship with His people that is central to the heart and will of God; we can see this from the beginning in Genesis chapter 3 v 8 through to Revelation chapter 21 v 3.

Other reasons we need to meditate on and become familiar with scripture include thereby being able to recognise false teaching when we are confronted with it. Through our relationship with God and through regular studying of the scriptures we will become so familiar with the genuine article we will know immediately if something counterfeit is presented to us.

The second reason is because we are told in 1 Peter chapter 3 v 15 to “Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear. So many new believers and more mature ones cannot do this.

The reason is that they have never been taught how to explain their faith to someone who is not yet a believer, or to someone who wants to be discipled in the faith, and it is for this reason that we began our series of studies on this subject with the explanation of the plan of salvation and the need for mankind’s redemption.

Jesus took upon Himself the consequences of our sin so that we would never have to. Isaiah chapter 53 v 5 reads: “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.”

If in this lifetime we do not allow Jesus to take the consequences of our transgressions then we will have to bear the consequences of them for all eternity, forever banished from the presence of God. If we do allow Jesus to bear the consequences for our sin then our transgressions past, present and future are eternally taken care of when we truly walk in fellowship with Him.

Many people are never taught how to build a relationship with God through Jesus Christ so we will now look at a few scriptures that will help us to do this. The first is found in Ephesians chapter 5 verses 19 and 20 which read: “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”

This is what is known as silent prayer, not praying aloud but praying “in your spirit” which is where God will speak to you. This is nothing new we find it as far back as the book of Genesis chapter 24 verse 45 when Abraham’s servant is searching out a wife for his master’s son, Isaac.

The verse reads as follows: “And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, let me drink, I pray you.” Pray in the heart being what Paul was writing about, another way of saying it is “silent prayer”.

If we look at the preceding verses we will find that Abraham’s servant is here recounting the story of how he met Rebekah to her parents, and asking them for permission to take her with them as a wife for his master’s son, Isaac. She agrees and is greatly rewarded for her obedience.

Psalm 100 verse 4 also gives us helpful information. “Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless His name. We enter into His presence primarily through praise and thanksgiving, acknowledging His greatness and worthiness to receive our sacrifice of praise.

If you became the parent of a child you would after some years be able to recognise the voice of your child in a crowd because you had spent time getting to know the sound of the child’s voice and knowing the child personally. Our relationship with God takes time to build but is built in the same way, through spending quality time in His presence every day with praise, thanksgiving and the study of His word.

Once we have learnt to identify that still small voice speaking into our spirit we will open ourselves up by being taught many things by Him and through Him, asking always for cleansing and forgiveness of sin so that we can stand in His presence with that robe of righteousness that only Jesus can give us.

Doing these things will fill you with a sense of joy greater than you could ever find through anything else in the world, it will also give you a sense of purpose and a sense of direction for your life, and a vision of the great plans that God has for your life which He will guide you to over time.

Praise Him for being your saviour, your Lord and your God, for always being there when you need Him, for the great and wonderful love and gifts that He showers upon you day by day and for wanting to have intimate fellowship with you, not just in this life but forever in eternity.

Let us finish we another look at one of the most wonderful verses in scripture, taken from Revelation chapter 21 verses 3 and 4: “I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

He shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. Blessed be God forever.

According to the pattern...

Study No.3 Supporting each other

If you have done those things suggested in these studies so far then you will now have become a child of God. Your Father, God Himself has made provision for you to be looked after and disciplined for the rest of the days that you will live in your physical body, the provision is called “the body of Christ” – the church and its members.

In the story of Moses fight with the Amalakites, Exodus chapter 17 verses 8 to 13 we see that because Moses had the support of Aaron and Hur the Israelites were able to prevail against the enemy because these people lifted up the arms of Moses continuously until the battle was one.

The battle we are involved in is not one that will take a few hours, days, weeks or months to win, it will continue until we are taken up to be with Jesus our saviour, forevermore. We are not fighting flesh and blood so conventional weapons are ineffective, this battle can only be won through prayer and obedience to God.

Just as Moses saw more and more victory because his companions were continuously lifting up his arms, so equally if we support and lift up in prayer every day then the church will see more and more victory as a result. If you pray for your Pastor and leaders for just five minutes every day you will be doing a great job, hopefully all will do the same.

“Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. Moses said unto Joshua, choose men and go out to fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said and fought with Amalek: Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

It came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put *it* under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.”

Similarly, however long you have been in Christ you will also need the prayers of your brothers and sisters in Christ every day. Make a list of all the people who have joined the church writing the names of the females and the males on a separate piece of paper.

If the person at the top prays for the person mentioned below for just five minutes per day and the same thing happens all the way down the list (which should include the Pastor) then everybody will be covered in prayer if only for a short time every day.

This is the principle used by the Roman army when they went into battle. Not the prayer part but their shields were so large when held in front of them they not only covered themselves but the shield also partially covered the person next to them. Through this method of self defence the Roman army became greatly victorious.

Many other churches have tried these prayer principles for themselves and can testify of the difference that has been made in the church and the lives of its members. It still works in a wonderfully effective way today yet there are so few churches that use these principles, that is just one reason why the church sees so little real victory every day.

If you pray for your Pastor and leaders for just five minutes per day and pray for the next person down the list from you for a similar period of time then you will be doing a great and very effective thing. After a while you will find that what you thought had been only five minutes will have grown greatly into a length of intercessory prayer you never thought you could achieve.

The ministry of intercession (praying for others but not neglecting your prayer time with The Lord and the study of His word every day) is something that all of us are called to do in one way or another, though of course there will be some in the church who will be called to intercede for the members, the Pastor and leaders and or the church in a much deeper and lengthy way.

Do not think that because you are young in Christ that you will not be effective in your prayers, the very opposite is true because what you pray will be from the heart that has not been affected by the negativity that comes over the minds of many of those who have been in Christ Jesus for many more years than you have.

When you attend a church prayer meeting it will encourage many people greatly to hear your prayers after only a short time in Christ, remember to keep them in accordance with scripture, brief (not lengthy) and in faith and you will be laying the foundations of becoming a very effective prayer indeed.

Whatever you do and wherever you go always ask that the presence of God will go with you and give you wisdom to know what you should do and what you should say in every situation. This is what Jesus did when He walked the earth, and He would hear the instructions of Father before doing or saying anything, this is what we should do always.

Just as Jesus was able to hear instruction from Father at any time of the day or night so we too can hear Father's voice just as clearly as long as we do not switch off when we come out of the prayer closet every morning. Do you want to be like Jesus? God wants you to be like Him more and more. He was often up before dawn praying, you will find also that the best time to have personal fellowship with God is before breakfast.

Jesus sought Father every morning to know what plans He had for Him over the course of the whole day, He knew where to go, what to do and what to say, we too should have this prayerful attitude of mind every day and then we will see that this is another thing that will see the church gaining more and more victory day by day.

In John chapter 5 we read the story of Jesus healing a man who had been at the Pool of Bethesda for more than 30 years. Nobody else around that pool got healed that day. Only one person was healed because that was the only person Father told Jesus to heal on that day.

Later His disciples asked Jesus how they too could work such great miracles. The reply that Jesus gave them is of great significance. In John chapter 5 verse 19 we see the reply that Jesus gave: “Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but only what he sees the Father do: for whatever the Father does the Son does likewise.”

In Exodus chapter 40 verses 36 to 37 inclusive we read: “When the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: but if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. It is a simple lesson that God wanted to teach His people in those days and wants to teach His people today – you do not move until I do.

So many times we have taken a verse of scripture or laid hands on a sick person claiming that we have done it in faith where as actually we have acted out of presumption because we were not instructed to do so at the time. If only we would be like Jesus and wait until we hear the instruction of Father first, then we shall surely be victorious.

According to the pattern Study 4 the Holy Spirit

In Matthew chapter 3 verses 16 and 17 we read of Jesus baptism by John in the river Jordan and the audible voice of God confirming the divinity of Jesus. “16 And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straight away out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and resting upon Him: then a voice came from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

In Mark chapter 1 v 8 writing about the things that John the Baptist had said he records his words about Jesus: “I baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” In Acts chapter 1 verse 5 Jesus tells His disciples: “John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

On the day of Pentecost the disciples received this experience. Logically since it was necessary for Jesus and later the Apostles to be baptized with The Holy Spirit then it is at least as necessary for us today. In Ephesians chapter 5 verse 18 Paul urges them: “Do not get drunk with wine but be filled with the Spirit” This is written in the “continual” sense expressing that this is not intended to be a one-off experience.

Many times in scripture we see that the disciples and some of the people they prayed for were filled (baptized – same thing) with The Holy Spirit which shows that it was not intended to be a one-off experience but a continual process that takes place in a less sensational way every day of the life of a Christian since we as sinful vessels leak and need to be continually filled again and again.

This experience is intended for all who want to go on in the faith and produce fruit that will last forever, which is what God is looking for us to do. Therefore only those who have truly committed their lives to Christ and are truly born again can have this experience. To receive such an experience is very easy; in most cases receiving will not produce signs as dynamic as those of the Apostles when they were in the upper room.

Just believe the word of God and you will later see evidence in your walk and relationship with God through Jesus Christ that what you have asked for has happened to you in a profoundly deep way. In Luke chapter 11 verses 9 to 13 we are given a promise by Jesus Himself which still holds good to this very day.

He said “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you for every one who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knock it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he be given a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

We all need the baptism and continual in-filling of The Holy Spirit to empower us to fulfill the Great Commission that Jesus gave to all His followers and can be found in Mark chapter 16, and to demonstrate the true signs and wonders just as the Apostles did during their days of ministry on earth.

Though Jesus was sinless for the whole of His life He still identified with mankind to such a degree that He even went through the waters of baptism just as every man and woman should do, making a public declaration of faith in Christ Jesus and all that He has won and done for us.

Since Jesus identified with us in this way then we must identify with Him in this way also. It is known as believer's baptism because it is received by a person who is of adult age and understands something of what Jesus has accomplished for mankind through His death on the cross and His rising again to life on the third day.

There was once a man who was a popular religious knowledge tutor who's pupils came up to him and started giving him small details of the events that had happened in his life. Though curious about this he dismissed it from his mind as just something that the pupils were just guessing at and could apply also to literally hundreds of other people.

Then they came up and asked him if he had been taken ill and actually died (albeit before being medically brought back to life) on a certain date. Naturally the tutor replied that he had not but then asked where they were getting all the information about his life from – to which they replied that they had been using an Ouija board and had been in contact with his familiar spirits.

Then it was he realized the significance of the date that they had given him asking if he had died on that date. It was the very day that he had been publicly baptized by total emersion. Clearly having done that the powers of darkness then realized that there was no possibility any longer of having his soul for eternity because of what he had done.

This is a true story and shows the importance of not just being baptized with The Holy Spirit but being baptized in water also. In some countries baptisms are not allowed to take place in public and are sometimes considered a breach of their laws even when they take place in private with a small gathering there.

It is possible to have someone with you in your bathroom and baptize you in the bath tub. Other countries do not have baptismal tanks in their churches so when they have people to be baptized they take them down to the river or beside the sea and baptize them there. Others want to be baptized in the River Jordan just as Jesus was.

Wherever it takes place probably makes no difference at all, but wherever it happens it is important to speak out your faith and trust in God and confess any known sins before going down into the water. This is symbolic of cutting yourself off from the old life of sin and disobedience to God and rising up to a new life and a new and close walk and fellowship with the saviour.

In Paul's letter to the church in Rome (the New Testament book of Romans) he writes on the subject of baptism in this manner: "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection:

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, henceforth we should not serve sin. For He who is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead can die no more; death has no more dominion over Him.

For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He lives, He lives unto God. Likewise reckon yourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the times of the Apostles it was the normal practice for people to receive baptism in water and then receive the baptism of The Holy Spirit, sadly very few churches do it that way round and being taught about the baptism of The Holy Spirit takes place many days after the candidates have been baptized in water.

This is because the church of the 21st century has moved a long way from what should have happened and what actually did happen in the days of the Apostles. However, in these last days God is restoring things and this is one of the things that will be dealt with in the course of time. Meanwhile let us proclaim and act upon the truth of scripture in all matters.

According to the pattern

Study No.5 The Full Armour of God

The belt of Truth

Truth is of great importance to the Christian who is to be victorious and overcome the evil one. There is a saying that it is all right to tell a white lie, but there is no such thing. Every time we tell a lie, we side with the devil, who is the father of lies. Always being truthful means also that we must never compromise, but always proclaim the uniqueness of Jesus, if possible without giving offence. Unless a person believes in the uniqueness of the Jesus of the gospels then all we are believing in is one who is just like any other religious leader and founder, all of whom have no power to pay the penalty of their own sin, much less the sin of all mankind for eternity.

Many people are taught a perversion of the true gospel, some receive a gospel of salvation through good works, others are told that it is through a combination of faith and good works that they can obtain salvation. In Ephesians chapter one, Paul is very clear about the gospel he is preaching. ""You are saved through grace, by faith in the Son of God, Jesus the Christ, not through works least any man would boast." We see the truth of this with Abraham in the book of Genesis (Old Testament) and the book of Hebrews (New Testament) that Abraham believed the word of God and this is what God counted as justifying him. Although it is true that in most cases faith without works is no faith at all, the works referred to are the fruit of our relationship with Jesus Christ and evidence of the work of God in our lives, they do not count towards our salvation, that is through faith in Christ Jesus alone.

The word faith originally meant much more than just an acknowledgement of, it referred to something you shaped your life around. Faith is believing God and doing what He tells you to do. This can only come about through a personal relationship with God, through Jesus Christ so we can hear His voice speaking to us and obey what He is telling us to do. Faith is effective in this way only if we are faithful to the truth of the gospel and continue to believe in our hearts until the end of our lives on earth.

What about someone who is not able to do any work at all because of a severe disability? The answer is very easy and very wonderful. What counts for our salvation is our relationship with God, anyone who has such a genuine relationship, though they are unable to do any work, their relationship with God through Jesus Christ is all they need for salvation.

The shoes of the gospel of peace

Many times man has tried to bring peace to troubled situations, yet has found time and time again that peace does not last very long. The only time there will ever be lasting and true peace anywhere on earth is when people accept the truth of the gospel and commit themselves to a life of worship and obedience to the true Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. No human being can bring this peace, only the rule and reign of Jesus on earth, eternally.

A priest of God in the days of Moses was anointed with oil on the right ear, the right hand and the right foot. The ear, so that the person does not listen to malicious gossip, things that are completely untrue or that could cause a great deal of harm such as talking about being unfaithful to God, the hand, so that all the works he put his hands to would be for the honour and glory of God, and the foot so that he would go nowhere God had forbidden him to go.

The helmet of salvation

Obviously this was intended to protect the head, but in spiritual terms it refers to what we set our minds to, what we watch, what we read and what we think. The enemy will try to fill our minds with things that are harmful to us, even dangerous, but we must learn to distinguish what is of God and what is not. Pornography, astrology, palmistry, reading tea leaves etc. are all the very things we are advised by God to stay away from, as well as many other things such as holistic medicine, acupuncture and some forms of so-called natural remedies and supplements.

St Paul said that "If anyone comes to you with a gospel different from that which we have preached to you, have nothing to do with that person." Notice it says "have nothing to do with that person" and not "study what he tells you so that you can explain to him where he is wrong". If you understand the true gospel of Jesus Christ properly, you will know at once when someone comes to you with a false one. We must be careful that we do not fill our minds with negative things which are the opposite of faith. True faith is thinking positively about God's purpose for your life, and the things He has called you to do. If we do not allow negative thinking to enter our minds then we are less likely to be defeated by negativity. "He who is faithful has called you, He will also bring it about."

The breastplate of righteousness

One of the things that enabled Jesus to perform so many miracles on earth was that He was a man of total integrity. He never lied, never did anything in a wrong motive and did not sin in secret believing He would not be found out. People who do that are always exposed sooner or later, whoever they are. Because He was careful to walk in the ways set before Him, since there was no sin found in Him, when He spoke, what He said carried great spiritual weight and authority, since there was nothing false in Him. Similarly with us, if we are walking in fellowship with God and honestly trying to avoid doing anything that God would not approve of, then the power and authority available to us would be much greater than it would otherwise have been.

The shield of faith

Do you really believe what the bible says about Jesus and the promises He has made through His word to yourself and all who follow Him? Do you believe that in His name you have power over all the power of the enemy and that you can heal the sick and cast out demons in Jesus name? Many people misunderstand what that phrase means, it does not give you the authority to go around doing just as you like, Jesus only did what He saw The Father doing. The key is to act on command and not out of presumption. This involves constantly listening for God's voice and obeying it, and not acting until you have heard from God what you should do in every situation. Also,

if you know in advance you will be ministering to the sick and the demon possessed over the period of at least the previous week get your church (and yourself) to pray for a spirit of healing and deliverance to be present in power at the meeting.

The sword of The Spirit

This is the word of God, which is always intended to be used in a strategic way. When you speak out the word of God, whether through a bible reading or a prophecy or a sermon, say it with conviction, because there is much authority and power in the speaking of the word of God. The entire universe was created by the word of God being spoken forth, it still has the power to change things in people's lives if we use it in the way it is intended to be used. Not acting on presumption but on command from God.

Some bibles suggest that "all prayer" or "praying on every possible occasion in The Spirit" is part of the armour of God, but this subject is dealt with in another section.

According to the pattern

Study No. 6 Christian character

If you are a Christian and people know about it (as they should) then they will look to see if they can find Godly attributes in your attitudes, character and actions. If they do not find them then they will be antagonistic towards people who say they are Christians because they have met so many who are highly worldly.

What should your attitude be? It should be like the attitude Christ Jesus had as described in Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 to 11 an attitude of humility, submission and obedience, which is the attitude that Christ Jesus not only had but demonstrated throughout His life on earth.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

When Jesus was confronted with arrogance amongst His own disciples He corrected them and rebuked them for having an attitude similar to the people of the world rather than the people of God. We can see this from Mark chapter 10 where two of the disciples had asked a special favour of Jesus but had been refused. The others were angry with them for having asked such a thing from Him.

In Mark chapter 10 verses 35 to 45 we read the following: “James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would like you to do for us whatsoever we shall desire. Jesus said unto them, what would you have me do for you?

They said unto him, grant unto us to sit, one on your right hand, and the other on your left hand, in your glory. But Jesus said unto them, You do not know what you are asking: can you drink of the cup that I drink of and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

They said unto him, we can. Jesus replied, you shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized with you shall be baptized: but to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to those for whom it is prepared.

When the ten heard this, they began to be much displeased with James and John. Jesus called them to him, and said unto them, you know that those who are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

It must not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chief shall be servant of all. Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

Maybe you will be put in charge of some people at work, if that is so then your attitude should be to work with them as colleagues and encourage them in all that they do for you. That way you will get more out of them. The worldly would bully the people and try to force them to raise their productivity level.

In the world today this is happening in many places. Employees are being put under so much pressure to perform that there has been a huge increase in the numbers of people going long-term sick with stress related illnesses and having nervous breakdowns as a result of the pressures that they are being put under.

The attitude of the bosses is entirely unsympathetic and all they are concerned with is getting somebody else in to do the job so that it will not affect the amount of profit they make every year. That way they can continue to have huge bonus payments at the end of the financial year and give nothing to their employees.

In John chapter 13 verses 4 to 11 we see that Jesus washed the feet of His disciples in the upper room after the Feast of the Passover. This is a job that should have been done by the meanest slave of the house when the guests arrive, one by one the slave will wash their feet, not wait until they have all arrived and then do it.

Jesus rose from supper, and laid aside his garments; took a towel and girded himself. After that He poured water into a bason and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel He had round Him..

When He came to Simon Peter: Peter said unto him, Lord, do you wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, what I do you do not realise now; but you will realise later. Peter said unto Him, you shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I do not, you can have no part with me.

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus said to him, he who has bathed needs no further washing except for his feet, but is clean every where: and you are clean, but not every one of you. Jesus knew who was to betray him; that is why He said you are not all clean.”

We must be careful that we do not get involved in worldly affairs or if we are found out in this area we will be called hypocrites and bring disgrace on Christianity as well as embarrassing yourself and Christ Jesus. A true Christian should avoid all things that do not contribute to the glorifying of God.

In Galatians chapter 5 verses 17 to 23 Paul lists the things to be avoided and the things to be worked towards by every Christian. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that you cannot do the things that you use to. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelling and such like: of which I tell you now, as I have also told you in time past, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (Temperance means not getting drunk, it does not mean being tee-total. If you do these things it will be easy for unbelievers to see the difference between your life-style and the world's.

This way you will have made an impact on the unbeliever who may very well ask you for the reason that your life-style is so different to the life-style of the people in the world, then you will have an open invitation to briefly outline the gospel to them, an opportunity you may never have had amongst your work colleagues otherwise.

This way also you will be pleasing to Christ Jesus our Lord who sacrificed Himself in order to show the world that there is a different and much better way of living. Always where possible be cheerful and give thanks for your salvation, there are so many in the world who are miserable and bad tempered, the contrast you show will also make an impression on others whether those people admit it According to the pattern

According to the pattern

Study No.7 Keys to effective prayer

In John chapter 14 Jesus makes a wonderful promise to His disciples, though this is much misunderstood by many of the people of God today. Verses 13 and 14 of that chapter read as follows: “Whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.”

Many think that this is an authorisation to ask for whatever we want, including great riches and glory for ourselves, but that is not what is meant by these verses, and this is not what they are saying. What Jesus is clearly saying through these verses is “Whatever you ask in my name” Not what ever you ask, we shall look at the latter verses later.

Translated in to language that is very easy to understand these verses promises that every time we pray something that is in the Father’s will and is therefore what Jesus would have prayed then we are assured that it will be done. No time limit on it, it may take a long time it may be only a short time, and we must persistent in our prayer, not just a one-off.

In Luke chapter 18 verses 1 to 8 Jesus told a parable intending to encourage His followers to be persistent in their prayers and to continue in them until they see what they are asking for manifest. So many get discouraged and give up after only a short time and this is one of the reasons why so few prayers are successful these days.

“He spoke a parable unto them to this end; that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, there was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: and there was a widow in that city; she came unto him, saying, avenge me of my adversary.

He would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself: though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubles me so much I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Then The Lord said, hear what the unjust judge said. Shall not God avenge his own elect, who cry day and night unto him, though He bare long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?”

Daniel knew the importance of persistence in prayer when you know that what you are praying is in deed in keeping with the will of God and for His praise and glory. In chapter 10 of the book of Daniel, verses 11 to 13 inclusive an angel comes to visit him and encourage him in his prayers, assuring Daniel that they are being heard but there is a spiritual battle going on.

“He said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto you, and stand upright: for unto you am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

Then said he unto me, fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that you set your heart to understand; and to chasten yourself before God, your words were heard, and I have come because of them. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty one days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.”

Few people realize that the Prince of the Kingdom of Persia is not in fact a human being but a ruling demonic force that was battling against the angel and trying to prevent Daniel’s prayer from being manifest. Because Daniel persisted in prayer the angel was given authority to continue the fight until he had brought about the victory.

It is the same with us, there are demonic forces working to discourage the people of God and to see that their prayers are not answered, but one of the greatest forces that can ever be used in prayer is faith in God’s word. If we take a promise of God like John chapter 14 verse 13 for instance and pray with great confidence what we believe to be God’s will persistently, we too shall eventually see the victory just as Daniel did.

Jesus encouraged His disciples to fast and pray; something that Jesus was very experienced at doing, Himself. In 1 Corinthians chapter 7 verse 5 Paul writes “Do not refuse one another, except by mutual consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, so that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.”

By refusing one another Paul is referring to the conjugal rights of each other. It seems clear through this and many other passages in the New Testament that frequent prayer and fasting was practiced in the early church much more often than it is in the church today.

In Mark chapter 11 verses 20 to 26 Jesus teaches His disciples some very important principles for successfully answered prayer. “In the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. Peter calling to remembrance said unto Jesus, master, the fig tree which you cursed has withered away. Jesus answering said unto them, have faith in God.

Truly I say unto you, whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be removed, and be cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he said shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he asks for.

Therefore I say unto you, whatever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone: that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive you.

There is another condition for answered prayer; that is that you forgive everyone who has in any way offended you, otherwise your prayer will not be successful. This is not the only condition that is involved for seeing a positive outcome to your prayers, Psalm 66 verse 18 reads: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

This means that if you have any evil thought or intentions in your mind when you come before God in prayer then He will not listen to you. First repent of and renounce those evil thoughts in your mind and ask God to cleanse you and forgive your sin once more and then you can come before God with confidence that He will hear your prayer.

Another principle of prayer that is very rarely spoken of today is found in Matthew chapter 12 verse 29 and reads: “How can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house.” There is no doubt that the “strong man” referred to here is the devil and his forces of evil.

Matthew chapter 18 verses 18 and 19 tell us other things that are important in spiritual warfare. “Truly I say unto you, whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven.”

Don’t forget what Paul writes in Ephesians chapter 6 verses 12 to 18 that as Daniel discovered, we are not fighting flesh and blood so every day be sure to put upon yourself the full armour of God which Paul lists for us in these verses.

Who would send anyone out to battle unless they were fully equipped? The things written in these verses are designed to equip the body of Christ (all born-again believers) to do the job that they have been designed and intended by God to do.

It has been said that the best form of defence is attack, new Christians whether they realize it or not are not exempt from spiritual battle so the sooner they learn how to put on the full armour that God has given them and defend themselves each day the better will be their ability at spiritual warfare.

According to the Pattern

Study No. 8 Spiritual Gifts and Ministries

If the church is to operate the way God designed it to then everybody is going to have to do their own part and with the basic spiritual gifts they will be able to do just that. One of the worst things that can happen is that the body (church members) will not be allowed to operate the way God wants them to, they will be quenching The Holy Spirit.

It may be that some people have the anointing for putting chairs out, cleaning the church or welcoming people at the door, they should be encouraged to do so. Similarly there might be some in the church who have a prophetic gift, they too should be encouraged and be given every opportunity to develop it.

Therefore let us take a look at the basic spiritual gifts and understand why they are given to the body of Christ. Any born-again believer can operate in one or more of these gifts, if you happen to operate in one of them and somebody else comes along who operates in that same gift, encourage them, you are not in competition with anyone.

Tongues This is a gift to be used in general privately, you do not score points by proving to everyone else in the church that you can speak in tongues. Paul calls this “praying in The Spirit” because we should be directed by Him when using this gift. When we do not know how to pray The Holy Spirit will guide us through a different tongue to pray what He knows ought to be prayed in that situation.

Interpretation of tongues Sometimes a person may be given a tongue to speak out in a meeting, the only time this gift should be used in public. In order that the body shall be edified an interpretation (not translation) should be given by the person who spoke the tongue or some other gifted member of the church.

Prophecy This is not necessarily a prediction of a future event but the speaking forth of a message from the throne of God in a language that almost everybody in the meeting will be able to understand. The body must be given the opportunity to receive a prophetic word in every meeting.

Discernment A person with this gift is able at once to determine whether what has come forth (even in a sermon) has been of God, in the flesh or influenced by the demonic. A person gifted in this way will also be able to tell if there is someone in the meeting who needs deliverance and will be able to pick them out. Sometimes having this gift can be very painful especially when nobody else senses what that person does.

Knowledge A person with such a gifting will on occasions instinctively know that there is someone in the church who needs to be healed from a particular kind of complaint or illness, and this is often accompanied by a prophetic word for the person who may come forward for ministry in the meeting or receive it afterwards.

Wisodom It is a well-known thing with men and women experienced in ministry that the enemy will try to trap you into going somewhere or doing something that God has not called you to do, more about this in the study on deliverance.

You will need to have the wisdom supernaturally to know what to say and when to say it, where to go and where not to. Never rush in to accepting an invitation to minister, consider prayerfully every offer that you get, it may not be what it at first appears to be.

Healing We shall discuss this gift in our next study as it involves the operation of other gifts also. A person with such a gift cannot just go up to anyone and command a healing to take place that would be operating under presumption rather than acting in obedience to God.

Faith This kind of faith is not the ordinary kind, you might find yourself praying for somebody who tells you she needs an operation yet almost without being able to stop yourself you say something like “No, you will not need an operation, God will heal you.” In the natural you may not have the faith for it but when God gives you such faith these things always happen – if it truly is of Him.

Miracles This gift is rare in the church today but like every other gift operated, it must be used entirely for the glory of God not in any way for your own. You might pray for somebody who is according to doctors incurably sick and they instantly get well, you may pray for somebody in a wheelchair and they get up and walk. You may pray for somebody who has a withered arm or limb and God heals them instantly, these are miracles demonstrating the sovereignty of Almighty God.

Summary of the five-fold Ministry gifts

Apostle Usually someone who plants churches and maintains oversight of those churches at their request, especially churches in another country.

Prophets Those who spiritually are continually before the throne of God and who hear and proclaim God’s word of direction for a church, an individual or a situation. This is distinct from someone who has the gift of prophecy as discussed earlier, anyone can prophesy in turn but not all are prophets.

Evangelists This gift can be operated locally, nationally or internationally. No Evangelist is greater than another because they can reach more people, all are of equal importance and no one evangelist is in competition with any other or anyone else. Whether it be local, national or international depends on his calling by God.

Pastors Call them Ministers or anything else their function is usually to head up the local branch of the church and see that things are done in decency and in order. It is their responsibility to care for the flock (their congregation) and see that each one will develop his or her full potential.

Teachers This is an entirely different spiritual calling to any of the others listed here. There are those who are brilliant bible teachers but not called to be Pastors, others can be outstanding Pastors or Ministers without having a particular gifting for bible

teaching, or they may have more than one ministerial gift through the anointing and calling of God.

All these Ministerial gifts have the same basic purpose, to build up, encourage and **equip** the church. Prophets should teach how to use the prophetic gift, Apostles should teach how to set up and oversee churches.

Evangelist should teach how to win souls and what the people in the pews can do to help him/her to do this. Pastors should be looking to raise up others in the church who could replace them if God calls them to move on and teachers should teach others how their depth of understanding and revelation can be obtained by others also.

Of these ministries it is the responsibility of the Pastor/Minister to maintain discipline in the church and makes sure that everybody has an opportunity equally to develop their spiritual gift and/or ministerial gift calling. Jesus never shows anyone favouritism neither therefore should we.

According to the pattern

Study No.9 Healing

True praise and worship in a meeting is not a matter of the worship leader choosing his or her favourite choruses, it is as important as the preaching of the word that you are directed by God throughout. This means spending time in His presence long before the meeting to get the theme that the praise and worship should take.

Once you have done that you will then need to do what everyone else should be doing and that is fasting and praying for the presence of God to be in the meeting in a powerful and tangible way. There is such a thing as a sacrifice of praise because in reality there may be some who are going through a rough time, especially the sick.

What has all this got to do with healing? The fact is that when praise and worship is from the heart and led by God with the worship leader listening out for any instruction from God (as indeed should always happen) many people get touched, healed and delivered through the power of God even though nobody has prayed for them.

If you are to see these things happening amongst you then not only will you need to pray and fast days in advance but you will need to have prayer going on against the forces of darkness continuously before hand, while the meeting is going on and for a time afterwards also.

At an outreach meeting some time ago a group of prayers stopped praying when the leader of the meeting announced that the meeting had concluded, after many had come forward to receive prayer. At that point the hall started to empty as people made their way home.

However on this occasion, especially as it was an altar call for people to receive Jesus as their Lord and saviour the group decided to find out what would happen if they continued to pray after the meeting had been declared over. What happened on other occasions was that the people simply went home at that point.

What happened on this occasion was that the longer they continued to pray the longer the people kept coming forward to receive The Lord Jesus as their personal saviour or to receive healing from something that they had been suffering from for a long time. Many wonderful testimonies of both healing and salvation came out of that meeting.

There are several types of illness that can come about; we will need the gifts of discernment and knowledge to know what the person asking for prayer needs at that time. Many times in churches around the world people will receive a touch from God and then after a few weeks will have to come up for more prayer because they are suffering as much as before, why is this?

If you pull up a weed from your garden but do not pull it up by its roots, you will find that after a while that weed grows back again, whereas if you pull it up by its roots it does not grow again. It is the same with praying for people to receive healing, we need to deal with the root cause of their sickness not the symptoms of it.

A person can get sick through abuse of alcohol or tobacco, also a person can get sick when they catch one of the many viruses that are continually going around in the air. They can get sick through taking on too much work or doing things that they are either not strong enough or should not have to be doing.

Many people today are suffering mental and physical health breakdowns because of the pressures that are put upon them in family life, working life and other ways also. Anyone these days can suffer in this way, Christian or not. However, the root cause of such illnesses might not be so obvious unless someone goes into their family background.

Exodus chapter 20 verse 5 and several other places in the Old Testament read as follows: "'You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me"

Why would God punish future generations for the sins their fathers have committed? The true answer is that He will not, what is meant here is to draw the attention of the people to the fact, not understood in the same way in those days, that some of the things that their fathers get up to can affect their children and grandchildren many years after.

For instance, if someone in the family suffered from mental illness there is an increased risk of the present or future generation suffering in the same way, this applies also to alcoholics, womanisers and those who do even worse things by indulging in occult activities.

The spiritual consequences of these and other sins can go on through three or four generations. When we pray for a person to receive healing we need to know if the illness has come upon the person as a result of their own sin, the sin of their ancestors or in a perfectly normal way in a fallen world.

This is where we need a word of knowledge, so that we know what we ought to be praying. We should never pray for someone to be healed if we have not been directed to do so by God. Anything else would not be acting out of faith but out of presumption and would actually be a sin.

In John chapter 5 Jesus is at the pool of Bethesda where many sick people await the stirring of the pool so that they can get into it and be healed. It tells the story of a man who had been ill for more than 30 years being healed by Jesus but nobody else was, He just simply disappeared into the crowd after that.

Verses 1 to 9 of this chapter read as follows: "After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. There is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, lame, and withered waiting for the moving of the water.

An angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water, whoever entered the pool first after the troubling of the water was made whole of whatever disease he had. A certain man was there, who had an infirmity for thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had been a long time in that condition, he said unto him, do you want to be made whole?

The impotent man answered him, sir I have nobody, to put me into the pool when the water is troubled: but while I am on my way another person gets there before me. Jesus said unto him, rise, take up your bed, and walk. Immediately the man was made whole, took up his bed and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.”

Every time somebody came up to Jesus and asked to be healed Jesus would immediately ask Father what He should do. As Jesus did this, so do we need to. Once He had heard Father’s instruction He obeyed it, not out of presumption but out of obedience.

Unless we get to the root of the sickness no matter how many times we pray or whoever prays for that person the illness will after a little while come right back again, but if we listen for a word of knowledge from God as to what the root cause is and how we should pray then the number of people who get healed would multiply exceedingly.

Jesus healed three blind men in three different ways. One He told to wash in the pool of Siloam, the other touched the man’s eyes and asked how much he could see and the third man was told “receive your sight, your faith has made you whole.” Since Jesus needed to hear Father’s instruction as to how and what He should do, so do we.

The above things are general principles, sometimes in a meeting if healing has been and continues to be prayed for God will sovereignty break out and start healing people from various illnesses (some of which have been described as incurable by doctors) and many miracles will happen without anyone having prayed for these people.

What an honour and privilege it is to be in a meeting like that, if you follow the suggestions mentioned in these studies you will find that you can have these things happening in your meetings also, but if you do not want it enough you will not put in enough effort or prayer time. Are you willing to pay the cost to see people healed and souls won for Jesus?

According to the pattern

Study 10 Deliverance

In Mark's gospel chapter 16 we read Jesus' words to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead. It is known as the Great Commission. However, many people focus on the first part of what Jesus said, this time we shall focus on the second part, the reason will become very clear in a moment.

Verses 15 to 18 read as follows: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be damned. These signs shall follow them that believe; **in my name shall they cast out devils**; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Some people would say that you should not attempt to do the part highlighted unless you know what you are doing, basically saying that only a small number of people should be doing these things, yet here is Jesus telling us that if we are they who believe in Him, each one of us has the power to cast them out.

Of course, if somebody were to ask you to do a job they would show you how to do it and if necessary leave instructions. If we look through the New Testament, both the gospels and the other books you will find that this is exactly what Jesus has done, left us explicit instruction as to how we should do these things.

One of the first things that should be done is to continually bind the evil one in prayer in accordance with Jesus instruction to His disciples in Matthew chapter 12 verse 29 which reads; "How can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man, then he can spoil his house."

The strong man referred to here is the devil and all his forces of evil. To learn how we have authority over them you will need to see the study "Temptations in the wilderness" which tells what really happened when Jesus went into the wilderness to battle the devil after Jesus baptism.

Even if you cannot get hold of that study here Jesus is giving us the authority to go and do the job so there is no question about us not having the authority, it is explicitly clear. There were things that Jesus taught His disciples to do that would ensure that when they had to do this they could do it with great effect and certainty.

Mark chapter 9 tells the story of the demonic epileptic boy whom the disciples failed to heal. Jesus had just been up a high mountain and been transfigured before the disciples He had with Him, Father had again spoken audibly about His son Jesus; this was a high point in Jesus ministry.

Then when He came down the mountain with His disciples He was approached by a man who had evidently asked Jesus disciples that remained at the foot of the mountain to heal the boy but they were unable to. Jesus is not pleased with this because of their lack of faith but casts the devil out of the boy Himself without delay.

Later His disciples ask Jesus “Why could we not cast it out?” To which Jesus gives the reply that is verse 29 of this passage; “He said unto them, this kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.” Jesus did not say to the boy’s father wait here whilst I go over there to fast and pray. Neither did He ask the boy’s father to bring the child back the next day.

He simply spoke to (not shouted at) the spirit inside the boy commanding it to come out without hurting the child (the latter a very important thing to add) and almost immediately the spirit left the boy. Jesus therefore was clearly accustomed to fasting along with prayer, if He needed to be, how much more to we need to be.

Now for a true story by way of illustration, there once was a man who had a council house on an estate in England. He kept hearing strange noises when he lay in his bed at night and thought that he had an infestation of rats in his loft. The next day he went along to the council and demanded that they come down and rid the house of them.

The next day they arrived with all the necessary equipment and opened the trap door to get into the man’s loft. Upon entering the loft he saw several people sprawled out across the floor sleeping and a large hole in the side of the loft where they had crawled in from next door.

This was a situation that the rat man had no authority to deal with so they sent for the police. The Police told the man that unless he instructed them to remove the intruders from the loft in law there was nothing that they could do unless he told them that he wanted these people out of his property.

The man consented to have the people removed and there was little fuss, the people were removed and the hole in the loft wall blocked off once more. If somebody comes to you and you discern through your own spirit or by a word of knowledge that this person has a demon in him and this is the cause of the problem you do not at that point have the authority to do anything.

If the person realises that he has a demon and wants it removed then there should normally be no rush, but counselling sessions should begin in order to find out what gave the demon entry in the first place. It may have been through the man viewing pornography, bearing unforgiveness against someone or has been passed down through the person’s ancestors.

Once you find that out then the ministry can begin, which leads to another story by way of illustration. One evening at a Sunday service a man began to manifest and was a bit of a disturbance to the meeting so several people went up to him and started trying to minister to him.

The team said that they felt that the demonic force in the man was too strong for them to deal with and they phoned someone to ask what they should do because they were afraid that the demon would start screaming terribly and not come out at all, or that they were in danger of being attacked.

The adviser told them to get three or four people who are members of the church to pray each day right through to the next Sunday meeting binding the demon in the

person and demanding it come out quietly. This then is what the people did and arranged for the man to come back the following Sunday evening for ministry.

The man leading the ministry spoke in a quiet voice these words: “We command you now in Jesus name to come out of that person without screaming and without hurting the man and never enter him again.” Having said this the complexion on the man’s face altered, and his countenance was radiant. The devil had left without a sound.

The reason for this is because (as a famous American General said when asked when Operation Desert Storm would begin) the battle of the air **must** be won **before** the ground offensive can take place. This is both a military and spiritual principle that must be remembered at all times.

If the man had not wanted the demon cast out there would have been nothing that the ministering team could have done to cast it out, it is within the man’s spirit and he has the right to say whether it should leave or can remain where it is. However, it is advisable to take into account the parable that Jesus told when a demon is cast out.

Luke chapter 11 verses 24 to 26 inclusive reads: “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, it walks through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none says, I will return unto the house I came out of. When it returns it finds it swept and garnished. Then goes and takes to itself seven other spirits even more wicked; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

If the man goes back to the wicked ways that gave entry to the evil spirit in the first place he will end up worse than he was before so he must be warned about these things. Some spirits will refuse to leave but if the person wants them to go and you stand your ground, sure of your authority in Christ, there is no way it can resist you.