

On Being Led by the Spirit

Part II - What is the Nature of Our Relationship to Christ?

Continued from August 1984

4. CONGENIAL—full of patience and grace. *“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger; and plenteous in mercy”* (Psalm 103:8).

Like a father, presiding over his children, so the Lord presides over the “*cosmic sandbox*.” Errors abound in the community of the redeemed. Nor will we be beyond such fallacies, this side of heaven. In spite of all we know of spiritual values and methods, we will make our mistakes, and yet, though God does not always prevent the distressing consequences of our follies, He remains ever open to us, and welcomes our constant “*clinging*” to Him.

Right up to the end of His life, David, the ultimate example of rebel human nature, clung to God, and urged Solomon, his successor, and, ironically, the fruit of his folly, to honor God, and follow His precepts. There was no question of whether or not David had a right to talk about “*keeping the commandments*.” He made his mistakes, wept his tears of remorse, accepted the forgiving grace of God, and clung persistently to Him. His resilience, was admirable. He refused to let his failures defeat him, and chase him from God.

Peter provides a similar example in the New Testament. There is, perhaps, no more heinous offense, than deliberately and publicly to deny Christ. Even Christ said that to deny him publicly would bring denial before the Father in heaven. But Peter, doubtless inspired by the Holy Spirit, was eager to go to Christ, on the shores of Galilee, and accept from Him, full recovery.

Perhaps the most comforting expression of this truth is in Psalms 107. Speaking of the failures of Israel, the Psalmist says, *“Because they rebelled against the word of God, and condemned the Counsel of the most high: Therefore he brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses”* (Psalm 107:11-13).

The Lord certainly, wants you to make sound decisions, for your own well being and safety, but if you don't, do not let Satan cause you to back away from God. You are His child. Stay home, where you belong, in spite of your troubles. He is infinitely gracious and longsuffering.

5. PRACTICAL—based on workable realism, and not theoretical idealism. God knows who we are, and where we are at. He understands, thoroughly, the human struggle. *“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, having been tempted in all ways, in the likeness of ourselves, without sin. Let us therefore come with boldness to the throne of grace, in order that we may receive mercy and find grace for a timely help”* (Hebrews 4:15,16).

Christians sometimes work themselves into a frenzy, striving to ensconce their fleshly minds in spiritual “*dream castles*.” Sometimes they become so “*heavenly*,” that they are no “*earthly*” good. That is, everything becomes “*spiritualized*,” and life on the earth becomes distorted. So eagerly do they press

for special visions and revelations from God, that they are often deceived into attaching reality to their fantasies. If heaven could be purchased for the price of frenzy, the cultists would have a monopoly on the streets of gold. God did not deliver us from bondage to Satan, only to imprison us on a religious treadmill. Life with Christ is not slavery to exercises, but a blessed experience of fellowship with Him, in quiet reliance on His grace. We have a heart for God, else we would not be so concerned about His will. And, if we have a heart for God, His Spirit is surely working in us. And, if His Spirit is working in us, we will ultimately fulfill His purpose for us.

“Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus; the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect (restore & repair you) in every good work, to do His will, working in you, that which is well pleasing before Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Hebrews 13:20,21).

With all of these assurances, however, guidance can be a troublesome thing. Christians become quite anxious. They tend to want some special revelation from God, in the form of a kind of *“handwriting on the wall.”* The truth of the matter is, however, that such symbols were more likely to be required in the Old Testament era. When we are open to Christ, He can move us without such material symbols. To the person who possesses Christ, what seems reasonable, is often what is right.

When all else fails, the following is a good rule to follow:

If you know absolutely, what God wants, do it, even if it does not seem reasonable. If you are not sure what God wants, do what is reasonable, even if it does not seem revelational.

Above all, learn to relax, and trust in the power of the Spirit to bring you through the maze, and fulfill His purpose in you. As Paul says, *“Be confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

David Morsey
September 1984
Next month *“Part III - The Practical Application*
www.harvestermission.org