

PASSING THE BATON NUMBER 17
'Knowing God's Ways'

"God is the Architect of your faith, but you have to give Him planning permission".

30th August 2008

Welcome:

Welcome to Passing the Baton number seventeen. I sense that we are making real progress, particularly at the last meeting when we stormed the heavenlies in regard to this nation of ours. I have since heard that a number of organisations are calling people to prayer for 30 days – the Spirit is speaking to the churches. I am constantly amazed at how little Christians seem to recognise the power and importance of prayer.

I want to start by acknowledging Graham Cooke's brilliant teaching entitled 'Crisis to Process' and 'Cycles of Intimacy' which I was privileged to hear some ten or so years ago. Those of you who know me, know that Graham, without his knowledge, is my mentor. I have sat under his ministry now for more than 12 years and put into practice most of his teachings, so what follows is my life's message formed from the teaching which I received and went over, time and time again. It has become flesh on me as I have lived it out, I recommend it.

I also want to give credit to the late Roger D G Price from whom I first heard teaching on the ages and stages of Christian growth. My thanks to you both, guys. I have reason to believe that Graham sat under Roger's ministry too. So, here we go –

God's goal for us is maturity and the journey He takes us on to achieve this, is called 'process'.

It is no use accumulating books full of notes, cupboards full of tapes and CD's; this revelatory truth has to be put into practice for it to bring change and power in your life.

Isaiah 55:8,9

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways", says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

God doesn't think like us.

Pretty obvious statement, but how many of us do believe, deep down, that He thinks the same way as we do and agrees with our point of view?

Psalm 50:21 says,

"You thought I was altogether like you."

Dream on!

God's goal for us is maturity, maturity, maturity.

The journey He takes us on to accomplish this is called – process.

Process is a series of steps to take us from one place to another.

Process - is our journey of development from a child to a mature adult. From 'Abba', daddy, to 'Father', the steps we take from one level to another *in the spirit*.

Notice please, I didn't just say from 'a child to an adult' – there are many immature adults around, children in the body of an adult, teknions, I'll explain that later - what God is looking for is maturity. Mature sons, huioi; mature adult Christians, to whom He can entrust the secrets of the Kingdom, to whom He can safely delegate responsibility, and His power because they have His heart and know His ways.

They have stood the test and have been proven to be trustworthy in their daily lives, through manifold difficulties and trials.

He will not bestow His power upon babes – even if they have been on the road 25 years and think it is time, they gave up their tricycle and started with the Lamborghini because they cannot yet be trusted.

As Graham says, *“God is the Architect of your faith, but you have to give Him planning permission”*.

When the opportunity of a lifetime presents itself, we have to make sure that we act within the lifetime of that opportunity.

God is holding out to you today the opportunity to go on in your relationship with Him, which means you must **act** within the lifetime of the opportunity.

It has a given season for you to respond.

In these days of acceleration, God is looking for those who will receive that acceleration in their relationship with Him – and run.

The requirement for this is that you live present/future, not in present/past.

This is going to mean some quality decisions and determination from you.

You are responsible for your spirituality, God is the architect of what He is planning in you, but you have to give Him that planning permission.

It is one thing for you to trust God and a completely different thing for Him to trust you.

Friendship with God is earned by faithfulness of service. *“You are My friends if...”*

Sonship, by that I mean responsibility, is bestowed upon you by the Father, when He says you are ready, not before.

Once you are born again you **are** a child of God, it is at that point that you start your journey.

The rebirth is but the first step, there remains much ground to be taken.

We go from a child of God; to a servant of God; to a friend of God; and finally, to a love slave of God, where we work in tandem, in partnership, with Him.

That is the cycle He takes us through.

This may all be a new concept to you, if it is, sit back, relax, and enjoy what is about to unfold for you this could be your opportunity of a lifetime. If you haven't heard it before, don't fret about why you haven't heard it, just be thankful to God you are hearing it now and being given the opportunity to respond.

Nepios to huiois - the growth process:

The first thing we need to understand is that God is a family man.

He loves family, He created it, and like any good Father, He wants His children to grow up and become responsible adults as I said before.

Ours is the only religion where we can call God, "Father". He desires an intimate Father/child relationship with us and His goal for us is to conform us into the likeness of Jesus – so we become **sons** of God –

John 1:12 KJV

*"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the **power** to become the **sons** of God, to those who believe in His name".*

Most versions say *"the right to become children (or a child) of God"* but I prefer the Old King James version – says it like it is – God gives us the **power** as His children, to **become** something - **sons** – it's a process.

He is bringing many **sons** to glory.

Romans 8:19

*"the whole creation groans, waiting for the manifestation of the **sons** of God."*

So, we are all children, we are not all sons; but we are on our way.

There are at least four stages we can determine from the scriptures.

The Greek word for a little child, one who is still a babe in arms, an infant, is **nepios**, literally – without the power of speech. It is used of infants, and of those who are carnal, and have not grown, as they should have done in spiritual understanding and power, the spiritually immature

1 Corinthians 3:1

*"Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere **infants** in Christ."*

The word here is **nepios**.

Those who are, so to speak, partakers of milk and without the experience of the word of righteousness; this word is always used to describe believers in an *immature* condition.

Babes - all noise at one end and smell at the other with a smile in between as Graham Cooke would say. They live in their own mess and constantly need someone to clean up after them. If they make enough noise someone will come and help them, feed them, clear up their mess.

This is fine during our first few weeks and months, even sometimes years, as Christians, but if I find that I am still having to clear up after you've poured your porridge on your head and change your nappies when you are 40 year old, I will have to deal with you. Nepios.

When we *are* dealing with a babe in Christ, a **new believer**, it is important that we make sure we develop their dependency *on God* and not on us. They will depend on us at first, but this must quickly be turned into a dependency on God and relationship with Him, teaching them to walk with Him and hear Him are imperatives for those discipling or in leadership of any kind, because if a Christian stays at this stage, you *will* have a 40 year old, who is dependent on you, or other people, for everything, which is very unhealthy for you and for them.

The next stage of growth in the scriptures is the **teknion** stage. Teknion is the plural – little child, little children – this is used *figuratively* in the New Testament and always in the plural.

It is a term of affection by a teacher to his disciples under 'circumstances requiring a tender appeal'. At this stage the children are weaned they are beginning to take solids and 'chew' their food, the process of individuation is beginning, they are no longer part of you, but are seeing themselves as individuals before God. Healthy growth is taking place.

The downside at this age is that their discernment is not developed, just like young children, and all they want is what tastes good, feels good, looks good, and sometimes any old thing will go in.

They are consumed with how they feel and their whole relationship with God is emotional – if they can't feel Him, they don't think He is there. Feelings and emotions are the evidence for everything at this stage; you will find them constantly going to meetings, events and conferences, because they *want something to happen* that is outside them. They are waiting for the Holy Spirit or an 'impartation' to drop on them like a cow pat from above.

This is fine if they don't stay there, but an many Charismatics in renewal *have* stayed there: doing the rounds of the conferences, and getting an 'impartation' at every one, never realising that they have lost whatever they thought they had before they get out of the building, because what they are looking for is a quick fix.

They are not prepared to put the work in and are missing God's best for their lives.

They are looking to make it to the next level in God painlessly and with no effort on their part.

They don't understand process neither do they want it.

As a consequence, they stay in that place of childishness, always looking for the sweet stuff and never eating their sprouts; never growing and never proving themselves able to be trusted. Silly children.

Teknions don't understand that everything God does is through *a process* with them. Process is a series of steps that takes you from where you are, to where God wants you to be, and

God *will not* do anything outside of that. He will never allow a conference, a meeting, or an event - no matter how anointed the speakers are - to take the place of your walk with Him.

He will never allow idolatry of persons to take the place of relationship with Him.

If you find you have a tendency to follow the latest Christian celebrity, or fad - check it out – that person doesn't **want** to be in the place of God to you, you are supposed to be following Christ, not them.

You are placing them where they shouldn't be, and God will have to remove them or deal with you; or both.

Sometimes I wonder how much the body of Christ has been the downfall of leaders, because of the idolatry of their person which they couldn't handle and didn't want.

Beloved, we are responsible in this area. If this is speaking to you, you need to examine yourself and repent – change your mind, change your focus.

Teknions won't have this. They are out for the short cut, the quick way; they spend their time *avoiding* the process to which God wants to commit them. They are stuck in that place of childishness wanting to avoid pain; wanting to avoid the work; wanting to avoid the process; wanting to avoid God; and they condemn themselves to their own immaturity.

They pout, they shout, they rant, they turn their back to try to get Him to change His mind; all they are proving is their immaturity. They become, if you like, dedicated to remaining childish, never achieving the childlike trust and rest in Him that is His best for them.

So, impartation is no *substitute* for process.

God enjoys the journey. He desires it, whether we desire it or not, and as He is God, and you aren't, guess who gets to win on this one? Paul says -

*'We **work out** our salvation with fear and trembling'* **Philippians 2:12** – for work out read walk out. This is a daily walk, step by step with Him. This means we have to do the whole thing **His** way, with Him.

The next stage is the **paidion**, the adolescent, spotty teenager, all hormones, moods, and knowledge. It is used metaphorically of believers who are deficient, again, in spiritual understanding

1 Corinthians 14:20

²⁰ *"Brothers, stop thinking like children" (paidion)*

And Jesus used it in affectionate and familiar terms to His disciples, almost like we would say 'lads'. John refers to them as young believers in the family of God in **1 John 2:13, 18**.

These know the stuff, in fact they know it all, but they haven't put the time in. Again, they haven't paid their dues as it were. They have gone up and down the supermarket aisles, putting all the lovely gifts in their trolley, but when it comes to the checkout, they don't want to pay the man!

They are all gift and very little character.

They haven't sorted their flesh out from their spirit, and they live their lives largely subject to their own carnality.

Sometimes, because of their gifting and their inability or unwillingness to be corrected, nobody dares to address the issues in their lives and as a result they never grow beyond the spotty adolescent stage.

This is as true of leadership as it is of the congregation.

Beloved, true love corrects, it doesn't back down from the difficulty of facing bad behaviour and encouraging people to grow.

There are people in leadership right now who would benefit from being faced with their behaviours so they could understand about process and move on in God to become...huios.

Huios – now these are the sons who have stood the test. Jesus uses the word 'huios' in a very significant way, as in **Matthew 5:9** where He says –

*9" Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the **sons** of God".*

The word here is 'huios' fully mature sons.

They have followed the injunction to *"Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that you may be (or become) sons of your Father which is in heaven"*.

The disciples were to do these things, not in order that they might **become** children of God but that being children, they might make the fact manifest in their **character**, that they might become – **sons**.

The difference between believers as *children* of God and as *sons* of God is brought out in

Romans 8: 14-21

"The Spirit bears witness with their spirit that they are 'children' of God and as such, they are His heirs and joint-heirs with Christ."

This stresses the fact of their spiritual birth.

On the other hand, as many as are **led** by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God, i.e. these and no other; their conduct gives *evidence* of the dignity of their relationship with Jesus and their likeness to His character.

These are the people who have endured and embraced both the cross and the process; the privation, hardship, difficulties, humiliations, rejections, and pain of growing up in God.

They have not avoided the cross, they have embraced it.

They have allowed the stripping, that is a necessary part of son-ship; nothing holds them; and they hold on to nothing.

God can pass the riches of His grace and provision *through* them, knowing that they will not keep anything for themselves. "*Channels only Blessed Master*" as the old hymn puts it. These are sons who have understood the ways of God and have co-operated fully with His process in their lives.

If you asked them, they would tell you they wouldn't change anything, because what they have experienced has resulted in such treasure; a relationship with the Lord they could not have imagined before and they would have had it no other way. They understand His ways, they know His Presence, they understand His process with them, they know His comfort in sorrow and distress; and they do not resent or hide from His dealings with them. They have paid the price. Like Enoch and Noah, they walk with God in the high places of His trust and affection.

This is our goal then, to become well beloved **sons** of the living God whom He can trust with the riches of the Kingdom.

The Adoption Ceremony: huiothesia: Greek: 'tithimi' to place and 'huios' – an adult son. Thus to place a son.

In the ancient world when a son reached this stage, there was what was known as the 'adoption' ceremony. This is not the way we think of adoption in the west.

When a Roman child was young his father made sure that he had the best education available and very firm discipline. Often cultured Greek captives would be put in charge of the teenage boys, and the children learned from them much that Greece had to teach.

Those who excelled and who impressed their families and tutors with their responsible, self-controlled, mature behaviour were chosen to go through the adoption ceremony. They were taken to the Forum, introduced to the people and then the father read a proclamation to the effect that he was delighted with his boy and from now on counted him a son (huios).

Then the father gave his son a long robe called the toga virilis which he would wear from that time on to signify his new status. He immediately received part of his inheritance (the rest came later) he was allowed to manage his own affairs and he could speak on behalf of his father.

Sonship.

Adoption.

Jesus' adoption ceremony, which everyone watching would have understood because they were at that time under Roman occupation, was when He came up out of the waters of baptism.

The Holy Spirit alighted on Him – His toga virilis - and the Father testified to the world that He was delighted with Him, and henceforth considered Him a mature son (huios).

You can see this fulfilled the 'ceremony of adoption' – the rite of passage for Jesus to begin His ministry.

The Father's declaration, and clothing from on high with the Holy Spirit, was soon followed by a public demonstration of His new authority.

He gave up His carpentry and spent His remaining three and a half years preaching the good news of the Kingdom and healing those who needed healing.

Jesus spoke of His ministry in a very specific way in terms of His adoption –

'I have come in My Father's Name'. John 5:43 NIV.

Mature sons are those who have given up the right to do what they want and have determined to do God's will. Those who have completely yielded their wills to Him are the sons.

Understanding the ways of God.

No matter how long or how short a time you have been on the road as a Christian, you will have discovered that God doesn't think the same way as we do or do things in the same way as we do. He often doesn't answer prayer the way we think He should, ask Jonah. His standards and value system are completely different, and His ways of doing things are certainly not the way we would do things, history shows us.

So, we have to settle it, He is God, He is in charge, He will do whatever He pleases –

Daniel 4:34,35

"For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, 'What have You done?'"

This great God of ours will thrust us into circumstances and situations that we cannot understand and over which we have no control with simply the words, *'Nevertheless, I will be with you'*.

He will call you to do a work for Him that only He can accomplish, and you will have to adjust your life to Him in order that He can do this.

Our part in this day is to hear *'what the Spirit is saying to the churches'* and respond accordingly.

Every church is made up of individuals, we cannot hide behind the corporate any longer.

We must respond to God and His wooing as individuals, then corporately His will for this earth will be worked out through us in these days.

This will require us to listen, repent - change our minds - and respond to Him.

When we hear His call and respond appropriately there will be **no limit** to what God can and will do through us, His people. He is looking to call us into Bridal partnership with Him. Will you be wooed and won this day? Will you follow Him regardless of how impossible it may seem? If you will, you will experience God's mighty working through you.

God is, as I have already said, a ‘family man’. Family is His idea, and when you have children your goal for them is that they grow into responsible adults. So that is His stated purpose, to conform us to the image of our brother, Jesus.

God works to principles -

- He is agricultural; this means He measures **growth**, not time.
- When you have produced a good crop of fruit, He will **prune** you in order to obtain an even bigger crop. Good husbandry!
- He works in cycles and seasons in your life.
- Your life will ebb and flow like the tides with His dealings with you.
- Walking with Him has a rhythm to it.
- He will take you from the training ground (which is this), to the proving ground, where you prove out what you have learnt, to the battle ground. Ages and stages of growth.

What does the process of our development look like?

The fruit of the Spirit grows in bad soil - you **need** someone to be unkind to you to show forth the fruit of kindness - moving in the opposite attitude or spirit, to that which is coming at you. When someone is rude, you have the opportunity to be sweet to them, not to return evil with evil. You have the opportunity to absorb their failure.

Regarding faith, we **need** a problem for faith to grow – faith won’t grow without a problem, and neither will we. So – we need problems and God will make sure we get them! This is just one way in which His thinking doesn’t line up with ours. So, if you find yourself up to your neck in problems right now, know that you have an excellent opportunity to enlarge your faith.

Psalm 4: 1 KJV

“Thou hast enlarged me while I was in distress”

The only place we get the enlargement...

You actually **need** difficulties so that you can overcome them, you cannot be an overcomer without something to overcome.

But this is not what we want to hear.

We want life to be simple and we want our comfort – at least I do – and we do not like having to be stretched, and tested, it’s painful.

But God is in the business of producing **sons** in the image of Jesus. He states it in His word.

Romans 8:29 NKJV.

*“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to **be conformed to the image** of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*

As we grow in the Christian walk, His expectation is that we will grow in loving and trusting Him; circumstances and situations are there to cause us to turn **to** Him, not run **from** Him.

In our Summer School we looked at three men. Jacob, who wrestled with God. Jonah, who ran from God. And Noah, whose name means 'rest'. I wonder which one you are this morning.

Wrestling, running, or resting, you get to choose. Let me tell you if you are doing either of the first two you are just silly.

Everything in your life is useful. God allows it all. **Everything** is necessary for strength, for relationship, for identity, for destiny.

The first rule:

First rule of maturity is that we learn to respond, not react, to the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

We get to become thermostats, not thermometers. Thermostats keep the temperature even, thermometers, just in case you didn't know, register the heat.

Everything, but everything, in our lives is ultimately for our profit, it may not feel good or seem good, we may be full of the 'why' question, which never gets answered, but it is all there for our growth and profit.

Better get used to it, God's ways are not ours.

We are yelling out for deliverance from a situation and He says, *"I have just spent a lot of time and money getting you into that, I'm not going to deliver you, this is a keeper."*

That's something else about God; in the situation we are in He will either be our keeper, or our deliverer. Graham Cooke has a book on this 'The Keeping Power of God' – brilliant stuff, recommend it. Recommend anything of Graham's.

As finite beings, we normally think in straight lines. We are consecutive in our movements; we follow a logical or chronological sequence. For example, we start and finish a book, begin, and end each day at work; we look forward to an event and then back on it. We measure our progress by time and production.

Do I have enough time to accomplish this, what do I have to do to fit in a break? We work to deadlines; fixed points and we are goal orientated. If we are creative, we move through the various stages to create what is in our hearts, start and finish a picture, or write a book. When we travel, we move from one place to another from a point of departure focusing on the time of arrival. Our journey is linear, we work in straight lines. God is not like this.

God is circular. Everything starts with Him and ends with Him.

Romans 11:36

"For of Him, and through Him and to Him are all things, to Whom be the glory forever. Amen".

It all begins and ends with Him

Everything proceeds from Him, goes through you, and back to Him. When we love Him, we love Him with the love with which He first loved us. It takes God to love God. We cannot love Him from our fallen nature, it is His love descending to us and ascending from us, back to Him.

Love is a circle.

God is always doing lots of things all at once. There is never just one thing going on – He is an economist, He may be dealing with something in you, but He’s also doing something in everyone else around you at the same time. Brilliant. He is simultaneous and He is spontaneous.

You always know where you are with God, but you just never know what He is going to do next.

There is no beginning with God, and no end with God, because He is the Alpha and the Omega. **He is** the beginning and the end and everything in between.

“Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” says the Lord?’ **Jeremiah 23:24.**

Everything begins and ends in Him. When God begins something in your life it has a beginning in God and will only be accomplished when it ends up in God, not when it ends up in your ministry.

He exists outside of time and His purpose is accomplished as soon as it is conceived. He sees the end from the beginning, and He sees you now, as you will be on that Day. When He speaks a word of prophesy over you, He is standing in the place of its fulfilment.

Everything is real the moment God speaks it – a word from Him and it’s real. The moment He speaks into your life, it’s a done deal – you may not see it for 50 years in a time/space context, but to Him, it is already done, and He stands in that place of the accomplishment of His purpose and calls you to live *there*, to become what He has said you are, and to stand in the Spirit, where He is standing.

This means, if you have the promise, you have the reality.

If you have the prophetic word, you have the potential for fulfilment.

There is only one thing God requires from you - **co-operation.**

With that, He will accomplish everything.

Without your active, willing, co-operation, you may never see the fulfilment of your prophetic word.

Fulfilment of prophecy is not automatic, it depends upon our responses to Him at every stage.

He has no production schedule to meet, though, He can outwait you. He is not trapped in time like us but comes the time when the time to respond expires and we cannot retrieve the situation.

You will remember when I started, I spoke about acting within the lifetime of what God was holding out to us. Beloved, it is so important that we live in the now of God, not in yesterday, not in tomorrow, but in the I Am, being present with God, and looking to the future in God.

As finite, limited, beings we cannot interact with an infinite, unlimited, Being without significant help, so He has graciously given us the Holy Spirit. You must live your life in constant connection and communion with Him.

We have to be instructed by the Holy Spirit on how to work with what God is doing, and part of that instruction is to teach us how God thinks and how God works. He loves to teach us about Jesus and about the Father, that's His job, that's why He indwells us, as our teacher, our personal trainer, with us 24/7, the Spirit of Jesus.

Coming into the Presence:

If we try to get into God's presence without Holy Spirit's leading, we come into striving and performance. He initiates, we respond, we must learn to flow with Him. We are built to respond to Him, not initiate. The bride responds to the overtures of the Bridegroom. We were created to respond to Him.

God delights in initiating things in us. He loves making the first move on you every day. He loves those first few moments when you meet with Him. Don't come to Him with a shopping list, come to receive of His goodness and greatness, let Him fill you with Himself in order that you can respond to Him.

Intimacy draws us into the very presence of God and brings us into contact with His holiness and His majesty, that makes us...vulnerable.

When you come into the Presence whatever is not given over suddenly surfaces and you feel incredibly weak, exposed, vulnerable. The fig leaves are off and all is revealed. Some of us won't get into the Presence because we are nervous to lose our fig leaves – like Adam, we are afraid and have hidden ourselves, or worse, we have sown fig leaves together to hide ourselves, little realising that He knows exactly what is underneath. He is neither upset nor shocked; He simply wants you with Him, warts, and all. He loves us "complete with smelly feet", as I once heard someone say.

The rhythms of God:

We need to be instructed by the Holy Spirit how to move with the rhythms of God. He teaches us how God thinks and works. *"My ways are not your ways"*. God says: *"you and I are incompatible and I don't change"*. If the Holy Spirit treads on your toes, move your feet.

God does not always move at the same pace, sometimes He does quick steps, sometimes slow steps, life in the Spirit is very like having the most perfect dancing partner – moving gracefully together with Him leading. Any of you who have ever enjoyed ballroom dancing you will know that even if you are not a dancer, if you partner with a man who can dance, you become a dancer too – it's brilliant – life in the Spirit is like that, a bridal partnership – moving as one.

What links crisis with process?

The pattern of process that we see as we look at the Bible, and the circumstances in our own lives, is that God allows a **crisis** to lead us into the **process** of development and maturity – therefore we go from crisis to process. And He allows in His wisdom, what He could easily prevent by His power.

If you are in a crisis situation at the moment, God is *allowing* it. Do your best to use it because it will serve to develop you. Take that thing and use it as a steppingstone. Press into God; get all you can out of it. He is in control; there is nothing to lose and everything to gain.

When you came into the world you came in crisis, you were thrust into bright lights, noise, and people, naked. Someone turned you upside down and slapped you on the rear, welcome. Life's pain began. Crisis. Then growing up, first school, have to leave mum, another crisis. If you look at your own process of growth you will see that every time you made a growth spurt, it started with being thrust out of your comfort zone. You went from the crisis into the process of development.

Joseph, familiar Old Testament character, has a great prophecy hanging over his life. Goes about telling his brothers about it, Mister Big, *"You are going to bow down to me, and mum and dad are too"* – silly boy – they become jealous of him and his place in his father's affections; so when father says *"go and see how they are doing"*, he struts off to see his brothers, wearing his fancy coat, and finds them in the desert - where else - looking after the sheep.

Little place called Dothan, back side of the desert, nobody about; you know the rest; they hatch a plot to get rid of him and he finds himself looking up at the sky from down an empty water hole. But this isn't the end of the story, Reuben, being the kind-hearted soul he is, says, *"Here comes a caravan, let's sell him to these people"*. He doesn't want the boy killed. From being dad's favourite and heir to the family fortune, Joseph finds himself - sold into slavery.

He has a crisis of some proportion.

Another example. Normal Tuesday afternoon, Mo's looking after the sheep, it's hot, he's dozing; had his lunch; sheep are doing what sheep do, suddenly, he sees a bush burning; not an uncommon sight in the desert, but this one is different and causes him to go over and have a closer look.

The bush is burning but it isn't being consumed. He probably reflects on this later in life, if he hadn't walked over there at that moment, he wouldn't have ended up face to face with the most occultic and despotic ruler the earth had ever seen. But this simple action of moving over to look at the bush changes his life forever, because he comes face to face with the living God, and he is commissioned to bring the children of Israel out of the captivity of Egypt.

Old man, "with a stick and stutter", as Graham Cooke would say, now enlisted to lead a million people out of slavery in Egypt.

The period prophesied to Abram in **Genesis 15:13** is up and it is time for the people to come out of their 400 years of bondage.

God sovereignly chooses Moses.

Sheep have been his training ground; little does he realise the likeness people have to sheep. His training will stand him in good stead in the gruelling years that lie before him. Normal Tuesday turns into the adventure which takes up the rest of his life.

He's just had a crisis.

David, young man, another one with a great prophecy over his head, keeping sheep – again. Normal Thursday. Has a good idea. I'll go and see how the troops are doing and as an excuse for the trip, I'll take some bread and cheese down to the boys – his brothers.

He's not their favourite it seems; in fact, they are quite scathing about him. Still, he has this curiosity to have a look to see how Israel is doing against the Philistines, as a result he ends up taking on Goliath, and he has enough stones for his brothers as well, if he gets the chance. Not the way he thought his day would go. Subsequently he spends the next 40 odd years being chased around the desert by a madman by the name of Saul, who is determined to kill him.

Crisis.

These men were thrust by a **crisis** into God's **process of development** for their lives.

That process is the development of maturity.

God will not spare us this preparation.

He is looking for sons, fully mature sons, in the likeness of Jesus.

So, whatever you are currently going through, it is all for the good, because God is treating you as a son, and if a son, then an heir. He is looking to bring you from nepios, to huios – from a babe into a fully mature son.

God says *"I **know** the plans I have for you"* He also knows how He is going to bring us into those plans. Into that destiny, into that purpose, so we need to learn to sit still under the hand of God whilst He prepares us for our destiny.

I think sometimes too often, Christians are blaming on the devil what is simply God's training of them. You cannot crucify the devil or cast out the flesh. We have to stand still and allow God to do what He wants with us. He is the potter; we are the clay. His purpose is not to feather bed us until we get to heaven! He has a higher purpose for us. God is a long-term planner – He plans for eternity, not just for the now.

Everything we experience is to prepare us for our eternal destiny with Him.

Everything in our lives is allowed by His wisdom.

He allows in His wisdom what He could easily prevent by His power.

Everything in your life is useful, everything. God allows it all. It is necessary for strength, for relationship, for identity, for destiny. Every circumstance is designed to cause you to turn to Him, not away from Him. Every circumstance, used to the full, can bring you into more of your destiny – which is to become – like Christ.

Romans 8:29

*“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be **conformed** to the image of His son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*

Jesus is your brother. God is your Father, and the first thing He will establish in you is relational, you are **His** child, His son - or daughter if you prefer it ladies. Before He will put you into service of any kind, He establishes you in the **relationship** and every circuit or cycle you go round with God will take you deeper and deeper into that issue of relationship, of Whose you are, the familial relationship. He is your Father, Jesus is your Brother.

When He has established that, He will train you in servanthood, when you have proved yourself in that area, you will go into friendship and ultimately, you will become His love slave. Every time you have completed the cycle; you will go round again at a deeper, higher, wider, broader level.

Whole thing starts all over again, training is continuous – and circular.

On each level you will meet various things, a bigger devil which you have to beat before you go on to the next level – “you have to beat the devil on the level that you’re on”. God will make you as big as what is coming at you before you are finished on that level, He says, *“I’m going to make you as big as that, that’s what it is there for, to enlarge you”* - brilliant – a permanent state of change and growth.

Grace growers, they will be there too, to train you to respond in the opposite spirit and release the fruit of the Spirit in your life.

A bigger problem to cause your faith to be stretched. Tighter finances maybe to prove to you that He **is** your provider, your source. Whatever you are needing God will be graciously providing in the way of tests and trials.

So, God works in cycles, He doesn’t work in straight lines. He measures growth not time, so it doesn’t matter if you have been born again 50 years, if you haven’t grown, if you are still a babe as far as He is concerned, and on the milk, He’s still waiting for your co-operation to move you on. You just might find that circumstances become a little more difficult to get your attention, that’s all.

And He uses everything.

It’s all designed to press you into Him, into an ever deepening, intimate, relationship with Him.

He establishes you in sonship, moving to servant-hood and stewardship, friendship and finally slavery.

He works in cycles.

His ways are not our ways.

He is agricultural.

He measures growth not time, when you are bearing good fruit, along He comes with the pruning shears a lops off a few branches, that you might bear more fruit, much fruit.

No good fighting it. Our best chance is to get into step, embrace it and make it as painless as possible, if you think the same way as I do.

It's called agreement with God. Alignment with God – we looked at what non-alignment looked like when we looked at the first part of the spiritual warfare teaching, but it is worth looking at it again:

Signs of non-alignment:

Physically you will feel tense, there will be stress in and around your life versus the rest and peace of God.

Emotionally you will feel upset – fear, worry and doubt are your companions.

Mentally you will feel resistance, as if you are fighting something.

Spiritually, non-alignment makes you feel you are under attack and you will mistake this for spiritual warfare.

Other signs: loss of appetite, or reverse, over eating to comfort, loss of sleep, tension, stress, headaches, even 'flu like symptoms, tired, listless, nervous, maybe just wanting to hide, wanting to get away from everything, doing something physical rather than spiritual, can't be bothered to meet with God or pray, so you clean the house, or the car, or you go to the gym, meet your friends, chat endlessly about nothing with them, or watch TV at 10 o'clock in the morning.

Emotionally, when you are non-aligned, you can be reactive against people and situations, you see the worst, you speak without thinking, you are anxious, full of worry, fear, anger, rejection, you are irritable, take everything as an offence, feel rejected at the slightest thing. You are sad, moody, you have a roller coaster of emotions, sometimes you are just cynical, mistrustful, mentally you question everything, become super analytical. You speculate, you pick holes in things, or you replay events negatively and guess what, every time you replay it, it gets more negative and the enemy adds more. You are suspicious about people and their motives, and so on. You take snapshots which aren't true and come to conclusions that only reinforce your opinion. You are unable to be objective, everything is subjective and based on your feelings.

When you are non-aligned, barriers are raised, against God, against people, resistance forms and we man the barricades to repel truth from other people. We just won't receive it, we are defensive and selectively deaf. We resist the Holy Spirit and the truth He wants to bring and when people try to bring it we think they have some kind of wrong motive!

When you are non-aligned your natural mind has to have the upper hand. Poor alignment brings us into negativity, unbelief, woundedness, poor, relationships and condemnation.

There is no recognisable pattern to your thoughts, because the enemy is not daft, he just takes you into areas of the flesh and right away from the Spirit.

If you do not practice **agreement** between yourself and the Holy Spirit, you will be soulish, led mostly by your feelings and your emotions and heavily influenced by rational thinking.

Those are some symptoms of non-alignment.

If what I have said so far has got you thinking about where you are, if you have realised that you are in a stuck place, or you are out of alignment, or maybe you are behind time in relation to your years as a Christian, just take a few moments now to do business with Him, talk to Him about it, confess and change your mind, ask Him to get you into alignment or to get you moving and He will – that's what this day is all about.

So, what does alignment look like?

Physically you are ready for the fight, resting, internally you are at peace, you may feel apprehensive, but you are willing to be involved with God, you are alert, in fellowship with Him, and full of mercy, kindness and good fruit. You are walking in the Spirit.

The starting point for spiritual breakthrough lies in the will. The truth doesn't set you free until you experience it. A head full of knowledge is useless. A sustained breakthrough is when faith and focus come together, and stay together, we don't want a breakthrough that is lost before you get down the path. The road to hell, it is said, is paved with good intentions. What we don't want is a few good intentions; we want intentional will choices, combined with faith and focus.

A sustained breakthrough depends on the will and the spirit combining. A determination to go God's way, your choices will flow from your pre-set determination.

If you have a flabby will, it isn't making choices – it hasn't been exercised and like faith, it is a muscle that needs exercise to keep it fit. It is much more important to exercise your will and faith muscles than to spend time at the gym.

Satan attacks your mind and emotions to subvert your will. When he has done that successfully, he has you.

We need to understand the ways of God in these days. The current refreshing Toronto and Lakeland, is for a purpose. We know that God is moving purposefully and powerfully across the earth, we know that the church is rising up to a new place of anointing and power, that means as God moves us up in anointing, we encounter a completely different kind of warfare.

When God moves us up a level in the Spirit, we encounter a higher level of warfare.

This warfare is what Jesus is provoking by His presence in us and through us.

When Jesus is in the church in power, we are provoking warfare in the earth.

The first rule of spiritual warfare is this: you cannot take ground from the enemy if he has got ground in you. As we saw in our first Spiritual Warfare teaching; our first warfare is *not* against the devil, our first warfare is always against our flesh.

Paul says, there is a war going on **in** you and if you don't win that battle you will not win any other. You can't take a city for God if the stronghold of your own spirit is untouched by the Holy Spirit.

It seems that the majority of my teaching this year has been on joyfully submitting to the Lordship of Jesus. So now the Holy Spirit is coming into our hearts - but He's coming in to stay and He's coming in, to rule.

We must come to a place where the Holy Spirit is **ruling** in our life.

A place of absolute surrender and submission to His reign and rule over us. The benevolent dictatorship, if you like, of the Holy Spirit.

If you do not understand the ways of God, you will not understand the schemes of the devil either. You will end up blaming the devil for something that God is doing in your life. Jesus has not come just to make us feel wonderful, that's a by-product of His coming and He is not here to serve us or to bless us, He is here to provoke our hearts and tell us, *"I am not here for you, you are here for Me"*.

When Joshua had a visitation from the Angel of the Lord, he said *"Are you for us or against us?"* The Angel said *"No!" "I'm not for you and I'm not against you because I'm not here for you, you are here for Me"*.

Beloved when He comes, He doesn't come to take sides, He comes to take over.

Beloved, you were bought with a price, you are not your own, you don't belong to yourself, you belong to Jesus.

With this impartation, visitation, renewal, call it what you will, there is a price to pay – we are meant to come into a *new* place in God, where He is raising us up to a whole new level of anointing, a whole new level relationship and intimacy with Jesus.

Alongside this, He is going to provoke inside us a whole new capacity for warfare. And we are going to enter into real spiritual warfare. Most of us have not even seen a devil, let alone been attacked by one. We think we're in warfare, this is nothing. There is a place God is taking us, where He will raise us up into the heavenlies where the church gets to police the heavens.

But first of all, we have to learn to police our own lives.

Crisis and development:

When you came in at salvation, you came in at crisis point, at least some of us did; some will have come in intellectually, receiving the gift of salvation, but not making Jesus Lord. Either way, subsequently we have the process of working out our salvation.

In water baptism, you signify death with Christ and rising to new life, then you have the process of putting off the old life with all its habits and desires and putting on the new.

Then there is the process of getting to know the Holy Spirit; getting to know how to keep Him happy and not grieve Him and not quench Him.

Learning how to apologise to God, and other people, and keeping short accounts.

Doing a review every day, every day you must do a review.

When you get to lunchtime, if you have done anything wrong, apologise, dinner time, if you have done anything wrong, apologise, review the afternoon.

Before you go to bed, review the evening.

Ask God how you could have handled situations differently if you have got on the wrong side of someone in a moment of carnality.

Bless God for everything He's done but apologise for anything you've done wrong. Keep short accounts. I cannot stress enough how important this is. Keeping your windows clean in order that you can see Him and hear Him.

For some people deliverance is a crisis situation. Things in your life you cannot get rid of on your own, so you come into a crisis. The Holy Spirit is putting His finger on things and the demonic is dancing around trying to get out of here.

At this point, you realise two things have got to happen if you are wise. One is, I need to get free the other is, I need to stay free.

Some people are only interested in getting free and make no effort at all to stay free, and guess what, they end up worse than when they started.

Always two battles in deliverance, one battle to get free, another to stay free.

Be aware of this.

Make sure that you are living in the word, understanding the word, in fellowship with God and those around you.

Incidentally, you can't be in fellowship with God and out with anyone else, it doesn't work like that. If you are out with any person, you are out with God.

Then there is the faith aspect. Too much month and not enough money – you have a crisis. You learn God turns up at the 59th minute 59th second. You're getting more and more panic stricken, but you are learning to live by faith, trusting in the faithful One.

We need to know how to live by faith, not by sight or emotions but by the word of God and Who He wants to be for us in any given situation. Crisis to process. Crisis to development of the character and nature of Jesus.

Hard.

"I am with you". Feed off it every day. This is the process of living by faith, God's will is always in His word. Crisis in prayer – I can't pray "Yes, I know, isn't it wonderful? But I'm giving you Someone who knows how to pray" and you realise how brilliant the Holy Spirit is. He knows exactly what to pray and this pushes you deeper into your relationship with Him. You are going from crisis to the process of development.

The enemy comes in in a crisis, and you learn how to stand still in the presence of God when the enemy is against you. You are being developed in this arena – you are in process. He can't fight you unless God allows it – so when the enemy attacks, God is doing something. Stand still. When the enemy comes in like a flood, God is always raising something up in your spirit. Your response should be *'Thank you for this war, thank you for this battle. What does this mean? What are you teaching me?'*

Spiritual warfare, as I said before, has got nothing to do with taking authority over the devil. It's about seeing the Majesty, the supremacy, the pre-eminence, the brilliance, of Jesus, discovering the awesomeness of Who God is - authority over the devil is an incidental thing.

You get taken up with God and Jesus and never taken up with the enemy.

What's God doing?

He wants to loom so large in your vision you can't see anything else. If you get God between you and your problem, I guarantee you won't see the problem. He's **BIG**. And you *need* that problem if you are going to grow.

In warfare we worship more than anything else, because in warfare He reveals Himself to be Who He really is, King of kings, Mighty One. God is so big there's nothing out there to be afraid of. You have to hold your nerve; understand who God is; how He works; how He thinks; and the ways of God and - you have to **know** who you are in Christ.

Spiritual warfare is the discovery of who God is.

There is always the danger in the charismatic church of majoring on minors, and sometimes we major on the enemy when we should be majoring on Who God is.

Worship. Revelation is given by God when we worship, when we give ourselves up to being lost in Him and His magnificence.

Anything you get in the realm of the Spirit you will get through confrontation; times of difficulty; if you want to grow in faith, you need a problem. You *cannot* grow in faith without a problem. Stop moaning, start praising, you **NEED** problems and difficulties you cannot grow in faith without them.

You cannot become a soldier unless you are thrust into the middle of a battle.

You cannot become an overcomer unless you have something to overcome.

You need conflict, trials, difficulties, problems, these are the growing compost that God uses to stretch us from one dimension to another.

Through this process we learn God's ways with us. We learn who He is; Who He wants to be for us; we learn how it works; we learn how to move in this new realm. We learn that He really does not leave us – ever.

We learn that He really is **the All Sufficient One**.

Some people never get beyond crisis. They never get from the crisis to the process of development; they stick at crisis. Why? Because they're running away from the circumstances. They blame the enemy for what God is doing, they stay nepios, teknion, or paidion.

If you do not understand the ways of God you cannot understand the schemes of the devil; in the end you will stop trying and drop out of the race.

Joseph was someone who got beyond crisis. He receives this prophecy from God about reigning and ruling and the exact opposite of the prophecy happened. But he sticks with the process.

He was so upright in the way he conducted himself under extreme provocation, that he rose to become second in command to Pharaoh in Egypt, true this process took something over 20 years, but God wasn't in a hurry with His man. The purpose of God's process with Joseph is shown in

Psalm 105:16:21

*"¹⁶Moreover He (God) called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread. ¹⁷He sent a man before them – Joseph – who was sold as a slave. ¹⁸They hurt his feet with fetters, he was laid in irons. ¹⁹Until the time that his word came to pass, **the word of the Lord tested him.** ²⁰The king sent and released him, the ruler of the people let him go free. ²¹He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions, to bind his princes at his pleasure and teach his elders wisdom."*

Joseph gets this prophetic word that he is going to reign over his entire family, and instantly he is thrust into God's process which is designed to bring his character into line with his prophecy and his destiny.

Beloved, there is no short cut to this.

We have to stand still under the hand of the Master Potter and allow Him to shape and form us for what He has in store for us. His agenda is **never** the same as ours. His word will test you as it did Joseph.

Every time I have had a prophetic word over my life everything has gone in the opposite direction! God talks about expansion, and everything starts to contract. What's that all about? God's ways are not ours. I need to be trained at a deeper level to come into the next thing that God has for me.

Mary and Martha, crying out to Jesus because Lazarus is sick: '*Master our brother is sick*'. But Jesus carries, and says: '*This sickness is not unto death*' – but he DIED!

What is this all about? They heard healing; Jesus' agenda was resurrection. He had something **bigger** in mind, raising Lazarus from the dead.

Beloved, He has always got something bigger in mind.

The disciples on the road to Emmaus, down in the mouth because things hadn't happened the way they thought they should – Jesus joins them, and the conversation gets interesting.

He says *"What's up boys?"* they look at Him cockled, are You the only one who hasn't heard what's happened? And they proceed to tell Him what *they thought* was going to happen and how they are disappointed.

It isn't until He breaks bread, and their eyes are opened that they come out of the crisis.

Part of their process.

They thought He was going to be King, and release them from Roman domination, but God had a higher purpose. Resurrection life. God had something much bigger in mind.

Kingdom, church, eternity.

The **declaration** of God's intent over your life and mine will be followed by a degree of **distress**, as we are plunged into the circumstances God has planned for our next elevation.

When God pitches you into distress it is to bring about an internal change in your heart.

All we want is out.

God allows in His wisdom what He could easily prevent by His power.

God is working in Joseph's life, He is bringing the lad's character up to match his destiny. Little does Joseph realise it, but God is closely watching all of his **internal** reactions.

He's been in prison for a long time now, the baker and the cupbearer have dreams. One of them is set free – he allows himself a plea *"When you get before Pharaoh, remind him about me"*. Just missed the test Jo, you need another two years. Another principle with God, He can't do through you what He hasn't been able to do in you.

We need to stand still under the hand of God.

How many of us are running away from situations and circumstances right now that God has allowed in our lives because He is trying to build our internal resources and get us to face up to Who He is.

So, in distress God is **developing** Joseph to be the man God wants him to be. Joseph is saying, *"Forget my destiny, just get me out of here!"* God says *"No, son, your destiny is too important, just shut up and stand still."* In this time of distress God is developing Joseph. He is learning to reign and rule.

In Egypt he learned land management, people skills, government – in that time of distress, God was developing him to be No.2 in the nation. When the time was right God delivered him. When he was developed enough, the demonstration of all that God had promised him came about.

Beloved, do not despise the training period, it is absolutely essential.

God's sequence is

- 1) The prophetic word or call comes - declaration
- 2) Distress
- 3) Character development and finally
- 4) Demonstration of the prophetic word.

Some of us will miss the reality of what God wants to do in our lives because we won't stand still in the time of distress and let God develop us.

Some of us will even blame the whole thing on the enemy – as I am always saying, we do need to establish who is doing what to whom.

In other words, is this God? Is this the devil? Is this the cross? Am I reaping what I have sown? Are You nailing something in my life? Is this training for reigning? Am I missing something?

Questions.

We need to ask them *"What does this mean?"*. *"What should I do?"*

The "why" question will never get answered this side of eternity.

When the angel visited Mary, she didn't ask why, she said *"How can this be?"* She didn't argue with the prophecy.

What we are seeing here is the cycle that God takes us through, His ways. He declares our future over us; He then takes us as a horseshoe and plunges us into the fire of circumstances.

These circumstances are there to shape us. It is at this point that many of us give up, the heat and the pressure are too much, and we settle for mediocrity in our Christian walk. If, however, we *knew* the gift of God...**John 4:9** and the Samaritan woman at the well. God wants to give us so much more than we could ask or think, but we settle for so much less because we will not stay the course.

Through the hammer the file and the furnace, we are forged into the people God requires us to be to fulfil our destiny.

Psalm 105:19 *"until the word of the Lord came; the word of the Lord tested him."*

Prophecy will test your life.

Israel didn't get beyond crisis.

They had this incredible prophetic word in **Exodus 6** – seven "I will" statements absolute promise, declaration of God's intent, but they didn't stand still under the process.

They murmured and grumbled in the wilderness and they never attained the realm that God had wanted for them.

It is possible to miss it if you don't stand still and understand what God is doing in your life right now.

Two things the Holy Spirit is doing with us: first, He is teaching us how to trust the Lord; and second, we are learning what it is like to have Him trust us.

Every day of your life He is teaching you how to walk by faith, how to trust God. You have got situations in your life right now where you need to learn to trust God. That's what they're there for. You've problems and difficulties now because God is teaching you something.

We are all going to understand who God is in these days.

We think we know.

But, there is so much more depth, so much more to who God is.

We misunderstand the ways of God.

Crisis is **allowed**, and sometimes even **engineered**, by God to deliver us to a place where only He can help us.

Ask Jacob, he wrestled until he was weak enough to cry out *"I will not let You go until you bless me."* Ask Joseph – years in prison changed his perspective all right – he says to his brothers – *"you meant it for harm, but God meant it for good."* How many of us could have that perspective on our current circumstances – **God means it for good.**

And what about the New Testament?

2 Corinthians 12:7 – and Paul's thorn. Crisis. Paul asks three times for this thing to be removed, God says *"No. I have given you these circumstances to do something in you. My grace is enough for you Paul, stop moaning!"*

The 'thorn' was designed to bring Paul to an understanding of personal weakness.

One of the most wonderful things in my life is knowing that I can't do this thing.

Knowing that I am unable to do anything without Him, *"Without Me"*, Jesus said *"you can do nothing"*; nothing of eternal value in the Kingdom.

Weak, inadequate, vulnerable,

I love it.

Love it all.

Only **He** can do it.

God's grace, mercy and kindness are always going to be enough for me.

One with God is always a majority.

He is enough.

So what is Paul's reaction to this revelation of his own impotence? He is coming out of this crisis of impotence but what is his reaction going to be? He stands there before God and he says - "You mean you have **allowed** this to bring me into something deeper in You? I think I am beginning to understand. If this is You at work, then most gladly I would rather boast about my infirmities. Let me get this right Father – I can boast about my infirmities then, **knowing** that the power of Christ may rest upon me. I think I get it, so I can take pleasure in all this, in my infirmities, reproaches, my needs, persecution, it is for Christ's sake, for when I am weak – **then**, I am strong. I get it; all these things that I want to rush away from and get away from are all sent by You, to bring me to weakness that I might know your grace, power and strength. I get it!

*So, instead of running away from them, I need to jump into the middle and take pleasure in what is happening don't I? I need desperately to **embrace** all this stuff then power will rest upon me, won't it? **Now** I understand what's happening."*

Philippians 4:11 and he makes this statement, "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have **learnt**, in whatever state I am.... to be content."

He's suddenly realised that what is happening out there is irrelevant to what is happening in here, God is doing something. He has learnt that everything is to his profit, God is in control, God is developing him, God is allowing this thing, and he's learnt.

In the crisis and the development process which follows God is bringing us to the place where we discover that God is all we have; and all that we will ever need.

There are things in our lives right now where we need to move from crisis to change, and development.

We need to understand that God has allowed in His wisdom what He could prevent by His power. Some of you are facing tremendous difficulties in your families, jobs, communities.

We need to understand now, this is how God is helping us to grow up.

Face the thing that is in front of you, understand why God wants you to grow up, understand too that He is going to teach you things about His Majesty and His Sovereignty, His brilliance, His effulgent glory, His magnificence, His splendour.

You know what the Holy Spirit is doing in you right now. You have dreams, you have aspirations, some of you are frustrated, disillusioned with yourselves – well good!

Disillusionment is the forerunner of real growth and development. If you have come to a place of profound disillusionment, it's because God has his hand upon your life.

You think you feel this way because God has left you, you feel this way because God is **with** you, and He is teaching you and the fact that you are disillusioned and frustrated are **evidence** of the fact that God is with you and touching you.

Right now you are in crisis, but God is drawing you.

The problem is you can see your mistakes, you can see your own inability, you can see the obstacles in front of you.

The other problem too is that you have this dream in your heart, you have this aspiration to be something, there is a yearning in you to know God, a yearning in you to be significant, a yearning in you to give your life to God on a much deeper level, to be the man or woman that God wants you to be – why is that? Because when you were born again God put a divine **YES** into your heart, everything in God to you is yes and amen.

You will never be happy until you are saying ‘Yes’ to God that is why you have been miserable because you know your problem is you are not saying ‘yes’. You want to say yes, but you are caught up with the problem and how do we get through this, when God wants you to be caught up with Him and the Holy Spirit.

You are in crisis right now and you need to come out of crisis into process, understanding the ways of God. In a moment we are going to pray but I am not going to ask that your circumstances will disappear, I am going to ask that God will raise up something on the inside of you that will make you *face* your circumstances, *face* the test in front of you, come through the crisis into the development process, into a place of maturity and growth because it will only come through *facing* the situations that you are in.

God is drawing you into a place of maturity, but He is saying *“there is a price to pay; you have to face the situation that you are in. I am not delivering you from the circumstances; I am changing you in the circumstances.”*

God is the loveliest, kindest person I have ever met in my entire life.

As gently as I can I need to say to you, beloved, creation is tired of childish Christianity; childish believers who have to have everything done for them; who never learn their lessons; who don’t want process; who constantly want impartation; a quick fix; who won’t learn their lessons of walking by faith and living by faith because it is too hard; and they want somebody else to do it for them.

Sometimes it seems to me that people would rather have a relationship with an anointed ministry than have a relationship with the Holy Spirit for themselves; the way Christians run hither and yon after the latest ‘anointed’ speaker to get hands laid on and an impartation.

If I lay hands on you it will be so that you can surrender to the Holy Spirit’s work in your life.

Beloved it is time for us to stop being a consumer church, and an audience, time to stop living on other people’s stories; and start writing our own.

Personally, I don’t want to hear someone else’s miracles, I want to see my own – and I don’t want to write about them either - because I’m too caught up with what God is going to do next.

It’s time for a radical change church – you can stay where you are if you want, but as for me, I intend to live a life less ordinary, I want life in the fast lane, I intend to co-operate with God and achieve sonship, become a fully mature huio.

If you can say 'yes' to that, and you want that, then we are going to repent this day.

Everything in God's heart to you is yes and amen and He has put a Yes! In your heart. Yes to coming out of crisis into process, yes to growing up, yes to a new realm of the spirit, yes to standing up on the inside, we're going to pass this test – we're going to pass it this time.

Please stand if you are willing to go forward with God from this point, to embrace the process to become **sons**, not just children of the living God.

It's the goodness and kindness of God that leads you to repent. It is impossible for you to repent unless the goodness and kindness of God touches your heart.

I will pray that you will feel the power of God to help you **stand** in your circumstances, and work from your place of crisis to the process of development, where you will begin to cooperate with God for the rest of your life, because you are beginning to understand His ways with you.

I pray that you will come to faith about your problems and come to faith about your situation. That you come into a place of healing and wholeness and being set free, being delivered. You come to a place where you begin to walk in the footsteps of God, knowing that He is going to carry you and teach you, and that you are going to enjoy this, yes, that even in the changing times and seasons, your joy will be full.

Let's pray.

"Father, I thank You, Father I thank You that you never, never, give up on us. That You are always willing to pick us up and set us on the road again with the words "**Never** will I leave you, **never** will I forsake you".

Father I ask that You give us the grace to repent this day, to get back in the race and run with all we have, because it is Your goodness that leads us to repentance. Cause us to change our minds Lord, move on our hearts, show us a different dimension, cause us to reach for it.

Father I thank you that this is becoming true in our experience, we are learning that you are exactly Who you say You are, the faithful God. You are brilliant at this Holy Spirit; you creep up on us with that cheesy grin and say "*You can do this thing because I am with you*".

Father I pray too, that you will cause us to stand in the circumstances of our lives and to embrace the process you have chosen for us, and the situations you have chosen for us, and that you will teach us to *smile* in those circumstances, knowing that You mean them for our ultimate good, because You are a good God.

And I ask Father that you will raise up something on the inside of us that will make us determined to run the race to win, not just to finish.

That we will be consumed with the greatness and the majesty and the supremacy, of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He will be the One who fills our entire existence, that He will see the travail of His soul and be satisfied, and that Father, the Bride you so desire for your Son, one who

will love Him as He deserves to be loved, will be forged out of our difficulties and trials. That you will indeed present us faultless before your glory with exceeding joy.

In Jesus name and for His sake. Amen.”

With most grateful thanks to Graham Cooke for his teaching on Crisis to Process, Bob Mumford and others who have walked this road before me. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am deeply indebted to you all.

Thanks for listening – appreciate it. Be blessed and *run* with all you have.

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