

The disturbing ways
God trains His children
for holiness requires
the trust of a child

“Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Matt 18:3-4

Feeling like a little Child

The narrow way is hard and personal with many trials in purification for all God's children who follow Jesus Christ.

“Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Matt 18:3-4

Why do we tremble, but see so many people in the church who give the appearance they have the self-confidence of knowing all they need and they already arrived where God wants them in their Christian life?

Since God took hold of me again back in 2010 and awakened me from sleep and opened my eyes to see I had not really trusted in Him, He gave me a new awareness of His grace and the presence of His Spirit I need for life in His kingdom. And He restored my ministry through a friend in a way that is incomprehensible for me to understand. And now I am so often aware I can do nothing without living in His presence which I often fall to do.

By His grace I have been taken by the Spirit to Pakistan three times with my friend with a burning desire to make disciples, and have been inspired by the Spirit as He taught me, and encouraged me to write over two hundred articles on the life of a disciple of Christ. But this has made me feel even more to see myself as like a child who has just begun to know God, let alone denied myself completely and taken up my cross to daily follow Christ' example.

In His service whatever He has led me to do and understand belongs to Him as the fruit of His training in righteousness. Whatever good fruit of righteousness appears in any of us belongs to the true Vine of Christ.

It seems that the more we learn under the leading of the Spirit, the more we are aware of our failings to represent our Father adequately as a devoted and responsible child.

The further I go in my disciples walk, the more I am dependant on a moment-by-moment awareness of Christ's presence; but I am ashamed to say, I seem to be even more aware of the desires of flesh that draws me repeatedly away from the awareness of all that God has done for me in Christ by giving me His treasure of the renewed divine nature.

Consequently, as I grow in the knowledge of God, I am constantly appalled by the knowledge of what is not of God in me.

The attraction of the world and the tendency to see the painful and disagreeable circumstances of life as the only reality seems to be the way we are drawn away from trusting in God and His great and excellent providence working for the good of those He has called who love Him.

When I react unfavourably to disagreeable events and circumstances, I am displaying the fruit of the flesh that I am responsible as His child for putting to death. Every day I find I have somehow desired self interest in the world and denied I now belong to God in Christ as His servant.

I understand these experiences are God's lesson for me to learn to deny the fallen world any claim to know the truth, and to give up being a slave of sin who is giving in the flesh to gratify fallen desires that separate us from Him. And, instead of ignoring Him, to trust in Him in every situation because His word alone is the truth that we need in order to stay the course He has set before us to be transformed into the image of Christ. And His promised presence alone is all we need as we live in a fallen world.

The world wants to see human failings as something that can be addressed and controlled by human wisdom and science without God. But human failings exist simply because we have declared independence from humble obedience and honouring God as the giver of life, and to whom we must answer for all that falls short of His character of holiness.

Instead of ignoring God we need to humble ourselves and take responsibility for our rebellion in order to live in the presence of God by surrendering up our precious fleshy rights in order to serve Him by being progressively regenerated and invigorated by the Holy Spirit so we can enjoy the presence of God without condemnation.

Oh, how I long for the new heaven and earth that our Lord has prepared for us, where the full beauty and majesty of God will be our inheritance.

How gracious is the Spirit who keeps reminding me to get my mind off the world and people, and instead look to Christ seated on His throne as He presently rules over all things in heaven and earth.

How gracious is our Father who has repeatedly reminded me of all that Jesus Christ has done for us as the Lamb of God's sacrifice for our sins so that we can be washed and recreated holy in His image.

Didn't Jesus say *unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.?*

Oh, how I long to be able to represent His righteousness without compromise, but I will have to wait for His return to realise the full reality of His glory.

Maybe our weakness isn't so bad after all, for when the Spirit makes us constantly aware of our inability, He calls on us to trust in His ability to produce the fruit of His life in our daily sacrifice to God as we take up our cross to follow Christ.

We may keep getting knocked down again and again, but we are compelled by the love of Christ to keep getting up again.

It seems that feeling like the least in the kingdom of God is better than self confidence because pride needs recognition. Our Father has decided that feeling like a dependent and inadequate child isn't so bad after all.

In the economy of God, to be blessed with the knowledge of God has a tendency to make us know the poorness of our spirit and causes us to mourn over our unrighteousness, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Blessed are they who have no confidence in themselves but walk in the confidence of the Spirit of God's enabling to please God.

Examine yourself

Lord, what am I to learn from these situations where I get upset and angry?

You can too easily be caught up in discontent. You often allow disagreeable situations to rob you of your contentment.

When you are disturbed and hurt by situations or unkindness, you are walking in the flesh and not by the Spirit. This disturbance is because you have no compassion and mercy for those who are blind to their misdeeds, or to the fact that God's judgement is currently working in the world.

When you are harping on about your problems and the mistakes and failures of others, you have lost your spiritual sight and joined the earth brigade. You then allow the world to rob you of your peace, because giving into the ways of the world only results in darkness.

The real problem is you because you are still self centred in these matters and unable to respond with the fruit of the Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Gal 5:22-23

The life of the Spirit is also the law of love.

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 1 Cor 13:4-7

But that's not all, all the ways of compassion and mercy of Christ are also evidence of the life of the Spirit of God.

When you trust in God and His wisdom for your life, you will be contented in all situations. You will begin to see as God sees, and you will start to understand the spiritual blindness in yourself and others.

If it wasn't for the disagreeable events you must endure, you wouldn't be aware of the flesh that still has a place in you, so give thanks in all things.

When you are offended you wait in vain for an apology because those who transgress are not aware of what they have done, any more than you are aware you have put your hope in the wrong place.

The more you work out your mortification, that is the putting to death of the sinful flesh, the more sensitive you will be to what displeases God. And if you are not careful to walk by the Spirit, you will feel dislodged and find fault with others and not see your error because you are not looking to Christ.

Your contentment is dependent on your relationship with God and His kingdom and not your circumstances in a world that is contrary to God. The ability to walk with God is dependent on not walking according to the flesh.

'It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.' Heb 12:7-11

These training trials are part of the process of your sanctification, and involve you working out your sanctification by putting the flesh in you to death which belongs to your natural person that you haven't dealt with sufficiently enough in order to live by the heavenly life of the Spirit.

Every negative reaction and anxiety is from the flesh and sinful, failing to trust in God, and needs to be put off and replaced with the love of Christ for the Father and all mankind because He created all.

In Christ you have received all His precious and magnificent promises, along with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, but you can

only possess them when you walk by the Spirit as you live in the presence of Christ your Lord and King as an obedient child servant.

All that is inconsistent with God's promises and the divine nature bestowed by the Spirit concerning the heavenly life is of the earth and fleshly, which must be denied a place in you.

If you have truly counted the cost of your salvation, you will persevere and endure many trials and tribulations which are designed by the Father for your purification so you walk with God even more, and one happy day you will see Him face to face.

Every painful discipline from the hand of your Father is designed perfectly for your training in righteousness, as it is for all His children. So rejoice in all things, giving thanks to God.

“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

Matt 7:13-14

When anxious and given to complaining about how we are mistreated, we are our own fleshly idol, since we are displacing God as the centre of our hearts as He rules over all that His sovereign providence is working out in every detail of our lives for our good. We may have given up many worldly sinful desires, but we haven't denied ourselves, knowing that in our salvation we have died to ourselves with Christ, and Christ now lives in us. When we are dissatisfied with what God is working out in us, we are not able to walk by the Spirit, because we are not living according to the image of Christ, so we cannot know His peace because we are not living in His presence.

The narrow way is hard and personal with many trials in purification for all God's children. *‘Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.’*

Heb 3:12-14

Living Water Resources

Come to the River

*'And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ...Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, **while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.**'*

2 Cor 4:3-7, 16-18

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