



# Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

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NOVEMBER 2019

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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# **RESTORING MY SOUL**

*A Five Day Devotional Guide*

**November 2019**

## **Contributing Authors**

Victor Hall

Peter Hay

David Baker

## **Compiled by**

David Baker

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## The messenger is anointed

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote, 'Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has *anointed us* is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.' **2Co 1:21-22**. Having identified that it was God the Father who established him and the *aggelos* in fellowship with the Corinthians, Paul then explained that they had been anointed by God the Father for this priestly ministry toward them. This was the same anointing that Christ had received for His ministry as High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. **Luk 4:18**.

The Holy Spirit, in symbol, is the fragrant oil of the anointing of the Spirit of God. The anointing of the Spirit sanctifies, or consecrates, a messenger to their priestly mandate. **Lev 8:12**. This anointing is a mandate of authority that a person receives from God the Father to do the works that He prepared for them to do as His son, in Christ. It is symbolised in the Scriptures as a person's 'priestly garment', which is also called 'a robe of righteousness.' **Isa 61:10**. We receive this robe by being clothed with Christ. **Gal 3:27**.

The anointing of the Spirit is essential to the priestly ministry of every believer. The evidence of this anointing is a person's commitment to, and participation in, the fellowship that they have been joined to by the Father. **1Co 12:18**. King David highlighted this point, writing, 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing – *life forevermore*.' **Psa 133**. The blessing of God is eternal life that is received, lived and expressed through fellowship.

## Sealed by God

Paul explained that the anointing of the Spirit was a seal upon the messengers and upon those who received the gospel of God from them. **2Co 1:22**. The seal of God is the sign of ownership. For example, Paul wrote, 'Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, *having this seal*: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity"'. **2Ti 2:19**.

The first dimension of being sealed by God happens when the Son asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit to a hearer to be with them and in their heart. Concerning this gift, Paul explained that it is God the Father who 'sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge [or, down payment, of our sonship]'. **2Co 1:22**.

Baptism into Christ is the second dimension of being sealed. Through baptism, we join the fellowship of Christ's offering and *circumcision*. **Col 2:11-12**. Journeying with Christ in the fellowship of His offering and circumcision is what it means to live and walk by faith. **Gal 2:20**. Fellowship in the circumcision of Christ is an authentication of, or testimony to, the reality that we have received the righteousness of faith that comes from God as a seal, or a sign. Paul explained that circumcision for Abraham was a sign that he had received the seal of the righteousness of faith, imputed to him as a gift, before he had been circumcised. **Gen 15:3-6. Gen 17:11. Rom 4:11-12**.

When we have the righteousness that comes from faith, we have the seal of God upon us. Having been joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and circumcision through baptism, we are then baptised with the Holy Spirit, from the Father, as the guarantee of receiving and expressing our sonship. **Act 2:38-39**. Regarding this third dimension of being sealed by God, Paul wrote, 'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption'. **Eph 4:30**.

## The authority of the messenger

In his first letter, Paul admonished the Corinthians for accommodating serious sexual immorality within the church. **1Co 5:1-6**. He gave them specific instructions regarding the approach that they needed to take to deal with the matter, writing, 'Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.' **1Co 5:5**. Paul addressed this same matter in his second letter to the church. He acknowledged that the Corinthians had obeyed his directions and had mourned for their sin. **2Co 2:6. 2Co 7:9-11**. He then charged them to forgive and comfort the man, and to reaffirm their love for him, lest he be permanently lost to the Lord on account of his unbearable sorrow. **2Co 2:7-8**.

Significantly, Paul explained that he had written to the Corinthians about this matter to *put them to the test* regarding their obedience to his word. **2Co 2:9**. This initiative was an expression of the authority that the Father had given to Paul as a messenger of Christ. With this authority, Paul was able to speak the command of the Father to the Corinthians. Through this command, the faith of the Son of God could be received by his hearers. **Rom 10:16-17**. Paul wanted to ensure that the Corinthian Christians were demonstrating the *obedience of faith* as sons of God who were holy and acceptable to the Lord. **Rom 1:5. Rom 16:26. Rom 12:1**. This is because, through their obedience to the word of the Father, they would obtain the reward of eternal life.

It is for this purpose that Christ's messengers, who are His bondslaves, receive authority from the Father. Bondslaves who have received authority from God, and ascension-gift grace from the Son as apostles, prophets, evangelists or pastor-teachers, are set as rulers over His household. By the Spirit, they are to feed those who are in the household with the word of present truth. **Luk 12:42**.

## By faith you stand

Christ's messengers do not receive authority from God to exercise power and control over others. Their mindset and demeanour should be the same as that of the apostle Paul, who wrote, 'Not that we have dominion over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; *for by faith you stand*'. **2Co 1:24**. Jesus likened messengers who abuse their authority in the church to slaves who beat the male servants and female servants, and who eat and drink and become drunk. He said that He would *personally* deal with them. He would come on a day when they are unprepared, and would cut them in two and appoint them their portion with the unbelievers. **Luk 12:45-46**.

Those with authority must not use the word of God as a law to compel their hearers to comply with their directives. To do this would be to 'beat their fellow slaves'. Instead, they are to exercise their authority in the same manner as Paul, who said, 'I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others.' **2Co 8:8**. The authority of the presbytery to proclaim the word of faith establishes the ground of fellowship. Christ's *aggelos* do not impose this fellowship on others. Rather, they entreat their hearers to join them in their fellowship. **1Jn 1:1-3**. In this fellowship of offering, the sincerity of a person's faith is tested. **2Co 8:8**. That is, the sanctification of a person's name and works as a son of God is proven through offering. **Rom 12:1-3**.

Living by faith is the implication of Christ dwelling in a person's heart. **Gal 2:20**. As a messenger with authority to minister the word of faith to the Corinthians, it was also Paul's prerogative to call the Corinthians to *test themselves* as to whether they lived by faith; that is, whether Christ dwelt within them. **2Co 13:5**.



## The fragrance of Christ

Describing the nature of his ministry as a messenger of Christ, Paul wrote, 'Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.' **2Co 2:14**. Paul's triumph in Christ was because of *exanastasis* life that he received through fellowship in Christ's offering and sufferings. **Php 3:10-16**. Paul, through fellowship in Christ's sufferings, had ceased from trusting in himself and his own capacities for his ministry. He had been made sufficient as a minister of Christ through the grace that he received because of the Father's call on his life. **2Co 3:5-6**.

The Father diffuses the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ through the ministry of His messengers. This happens when the Father makes them a spectacle to the world. In this regard, we note Paul's testimony, 'For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men.' **1Co 4:9**. The messengers of God have in themselves the sentence of the death that Christ died. It is for this reason that they have become a spectacle to men and angels. As a result of being conformed to Christ's death and the fellowship of His sufferings, they are able to diffuse the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ wherever they minister. They are able to proclaim, through testimony, the name of Christ that was poured forth as ointment upon them through the offering of Christ.

King Solomon wrote, 'Because of the *fragrance* of your good ointments, *Your name* is ointment poured forth.' **Son 1:3**. Notably, this song was sung as part of the Feast of Passover. It speaks prophetically of Christ, who is our Passover Lamb, and of His offering and sufferings. **1Co 5:7**. The fragrance of Christ was His name that was being poured forth as He offered Himself as a living sacrifice for His bride, the church.

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FURTHER STUDY 2 CORINTHIANS 2

## A more excellent name

In a song of love, which spoke of Christ and His offering, the sons of Korah wrote, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions. All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad.' **Psa 45:6-8.** Paul quoted this psalm in the introduction to his letter to the Hebrews, and applied it to Christ. He did so to explain how the Son of Man had obtained, *by inheritance from God*, a more excellent name than the angels. **Heb 1:4. Psa 2:7-8.**

Jesus obtained the inheritance of a name more excellent than the angels by priesting Himself as a living sacrifice in obedience to the Father. **Php 2:8-9.** Paul explained that Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest. Rather, it was the Father, who had said to Him, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You,' who also said, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.' **Heb 5:5-6.**

As our great High Priest, Jesus had been *anointed* with the Spirit to offer Himself as the Lamb of God. By this anointing, He was *progressively glorified*, and *revealed by name*, as King-Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. This was accomplished as He offered Himself in each wounding event as He journeyed from Gethsemane to Calvary. **Heb 5:8-10.**

As He ministered, Christ's name was the fragrance of His anointing as our Melchizedek King-Priest. The fragrance of His name, which was *evident* as He journeyed, revealed that He was receiving the inheritance of the name that the Father was giving to Him. He was ministering this also to those who received this salvation.

## Revealing His name

Prior to His ascension back to the right hand of the Father, Christ commanded His disciples to go into all the world and, *in His name*, preach the gospel. **Mar 16:15-17**. By this, He meant that they were to receive the same anointing that He had received for His priestly work, and were to proclaim His name by priesting themselves as living sacrifices in the fellowship of Christ's offering. **2Th 1:11-12**.

The knowledge of Christ that they learn from Him, in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, is the gospel of Christ and Him crucified. Paul referred to this as 'my gospel'. **Rom 2:16**. **Rom 16:25**. It must become our gospel as well. Paul ministered this gospel with the fragrance of the oil that anointed Christ as the Father's High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. Every person who receives the gospel of God, and makes it their gospel, receives the same anointing.

All who receive the gospel are born again as sons of God and are made members of the body of Christ. They are then joined, as ministers, to the fellowship of Christ's offering. The suffering that they experience as they proclaim the gospel of sonship is the aroma of Christ's offering that is being diffused to their hearers. Their ministry is the aroma of life, or death, to those who hear them. **2Co 2:16**. Whether it is an aroma of life, or an aroma of death, depends on how their message is received by their hearers.

Christ's messengers proclaim the privilege of participating in Christ's offering as the means by which the sons of men are able to be born and mature as sons of God. Importantly, the fragrance of this glorious message is not diffused simply because a messenger has the anointing upon them. It is diffused because the name of Christ is being poured forth by those who have the sentence of death in themselves in fellowship with Christ.

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FURTHER STUDY 2 CORINTHIANS 1

## An epistle written on the heart

God the Father does not send messengers indiscriminately to proclaim the gospel of sonship. Those to whom they have been sent are written on their hearts as epistles of Christ. **2Co 3:2**. Unless this message has been written on their heart, they are unable to minister the word of sonship to others. This was Paul's point when he said to the Corinthians, 'For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.' **1Co 4:15**.

The Father writes the gospel of sonship on the hearts of His *aggelos* messengers using His finger as a 'pen'. **Jer 31:33**. The use of God's finger as a pen was first demonstrated when the Law Covenant was delivered to Moses. The Scripture recorded, 'And when He [Yahweh] had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God'. **Exo 31:18**. We note that what Yahweh had *spoken* to Moses was *written* on the tablets of stone with the finger of God.

In the New Covenant, the Father writes the gospel of sonship in the hearts of His *aggelos* messengers by the Spirit of God. **Exo 31:18**. This letter is not written with ink, but with the Spirit of God. **2Co 3:3**. The covenant that they are ministering is not external to them in the same way that the tablets of stone were external to Moses as a standard that he and the children of Israel needed to attain in order to receive their sonship. Christ's *aggelos* messengers *embody* the New Covenant! It is written into their hearts. **Heb 10:15-16**. For this reason, Paul said to the Corinthians, 'I urge you, *imitate me*'. **1Co 4:16**.

## Living epistles read by all men

How does the Father write the epistle of another person's sonship on the hearts of His *aggelos* messengers? He does it through Christ, the Messenger of the Covenant, who has ascended to the right hand of the Father, and has given ascension-gift grace to men. **Mal 3:1. Eph 1:20-21. Eph 4:10.** The knowledge of the glory of God is written in the hearts of *aggelos* presbyters through the exercise of the ascension-gift graces of the apostle, prophet, evangelist and pastor-teacher, who are sent from Christ. **Eph 4:11.**

The gospel of sonship continues to be written on the hearts of presbyters and, indeed, on the heart of every believer, as they receive and respond with repentance and faith to the word of the Father that is proclaimed in the presbytery through Christ's apostolic administration. When it is written on a person's heart, they are born of that word. The Lord continues to write 'the already accomplished word' of a believer's salvation, by which they were born from above, upon their heart, giving them illumination and relationship with Himself as His son and priest. This is true illumination. It is the morning star arising in their heart. **2Pe 1:19.**

When this message has become light in a believer's heart, they are able to shine the knowledge of Christ to others. With the Spirit of the Lord as their 'ink', they are able to 'write' the New Covenant upon the heart of their hearers, so that they become a 'letter' that proclaims that they are living epistles because they have come into the New Covenant of Christ. This letter, now written upon their heart, can be read by all men. **2Co 3:2.** Every believer in the body of Christ is to become a letter of Christ that is read and known by others. This is what it means to be the light of the world, expressing the glory of Christ in the various contexts of life in which the Father has placed them.

## Our sufficiency is from God

Paul stressed that the sufficiency of *aggelos* messengers to minister the New Covenant is not in themselves, but is from God. **2Co 3:5-6**. In the first instance, the sufficiency of Paul and his fellow messengers was that they had been born as sons of God and had joined the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. This was their personal sufficiency. The Father had called and separated them, by the Holy Spirit, to be ministers of the New Covenant in Christ. **Act 13:1-3**.

God the Father made them sufficient for this call by joining them to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. In this fellowship, the hearts of Paul and those who ministered with him were being circumcised and sprinkled by the blood of Christ. By this means, their conscience was being cleansed from their own projections and dead works so that they could acceptably serve God the Father. **Heb 9:14**. Moreover, they were recipients of the comfort of *exanastasis*, which overflowed as comfort and consolation to their hearers. **2Co 1:4-5**. The sonship of these people had been written on their hearts, by the Father, as epistles of Christ. **2Co 3:2-3**. This was their qualification for the ministry of the gospel of God to their hearers.

If the sufficiency of the *aggelos*, which included Paul and the apostolic administration who served with him, had been other than from God the Father, they would have been *peddlers* of the word of God. **2Co 2:17**. A 'peddler' is a person who derives personal gain through the trading of goods. Peddling the word of God happens when a person misappropriates the word of God to verify their own identity through ministry expression in the church. Factors such as theological expertise, ministry success, natural capacity, or one's connection with graced messengers, serve as the sufficiency, or adequacy, for the service of those who peddle the word of God.

## Light from the face of Christ

Summarising the ministry through which a person is born again and is then brought to maturity as a son of God, Paul wrote, 'For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.' **2Co 4:6**. To explain this point, Paul drew our attention to the ministry of Moses.

When the Lord spoke to Moses concerning the Law Covenant, He wrote on tablets of stone. This covenant had a glory, meaning that it revealed the conditions of God's Covenant through which an Israelite could receive their sonship as an eternal inheritance. After Yahweh had spoken His word to Moses from the fire of Their fellowship, the glory of this Covenant shone from Moses' face. **Exo 34:29-30. 2Co 3:7**.

The people of Israel were unable to relate to the glory of the Law that shone from Moses' face. He wore a veil on his face because the children of Israel were afraid to come near him. **Exo 34:30,33-35. 2Co 3:13**. Only then could he fraternise among them. The veil on his face was the veil upon their heart. Because of this veil, signifying their bondage to fear, the children of Israel were unable to access their sonship. **Rom 8:15**. Paul explained that this veil remains on the face of the Jews, even today, when the Law is read to them. **2Co 3:14-15**.

Paul described the New Covenant as 'the ministry of the Spirit'. **2Co 3:8**. He said that the glory of the New Covenant far exceeds the glory of the former covenant that shone from the face of Moses. The Father shines the New Covenant into the heart of His *aggelos* messengers through the four ascension-gift graces of Christ. **2Co 4:6**. When these presbyters have been born of this light, which is the life of God in Christ, the glory of Christ shines from their face.

## Speaking in Christ

Paul understood that he and his fellow *aggelos* messengers were not sufficient in themselves to be ministers of the Spirit. They were made sufficient ministers of the New Covenant by receiving *exanastasis* from the Father, through the sufferings of Christ that abounded in them. Paul established this key point further, by explaining that he and his fellow messengers had the *treasure* of *exanastasis* in their mortal bodies, which he likened to earthen vessels. **2Co 4:7**. He testified, 'For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the *life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh*. So then death is working in us, but life in you.' **2Co 4:11-12**.

Paul ministered by *speaking in Christ*. **2Co 12:19**. That is, he was born of God and was joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. The Son of God was in him and was his life. As he journeyed each day with Christ in the fellowship of His offering, Paul's name and life as a son, which were in the Son of God who dwelt in Paul, were being revealed to Paul from Christ's face. By looking into the face of Christ, Paul was able to see, as in a mirror, the image, expression and testimony of his own sonship. **2Co 3:18**.

Through Paul's preaching, the Son of God was revealed to his hearers, by the Holy Spirit, as the express image of who the Father named them to be, and was calling them to become, in Christ. **2Co 4:3-4**. As Paul preached, they were able to see and receive a revelation of their sonship by illumination, as the word of the Father proceeded by command from the face of Christ. Once joined to this same fellowship, Paul's hearers, as members of Christ's body, could also reveal Christ to others as He personally revealed Himself to them in the fellowship of their journey with Him.



## The Spirit of grace and supplication

As God's messengers proclaim the light of the gospel, which shines from the face of Christ, grace and supplication from the Lord is poured out upon their hearers by the Holy Spirit. **Zec 12:10**. Grace enables a hearer to turn to the Lord. When they do this, the veil of their fleshly self-righteous view of life, and of themselves, is drawn back and they are able to look on Jesus whom they have pierced. **2Co 3:16**. **Zec 12:10**. In this moment, they see the Lord and acknowledge the judgement that He has received and suffered because of their self-centredness and sin. **Luk 23:41**.

They become poor in spirit when they see and accept the ruin of their own way. **Mat 5:3**. Under the influence of a spirit of supplication, they begin to mourn in repentance for their sin and for the loss of their sonship. They receive forgiveness from the Father on account of Christ's blood that was shed for them. **Col 1:14**. As they continue to supplicate, their mourning shifts from a sorrow for what has been lost through sin, to a travail to believe and receive the word of their sonship that is being proclaimed to them by Christ's messengers. **2Co 7:10**.

This desire to become the son of God whom the Father named them to be reveals that they have received a *spirit of adoption* by the Holy Spirit. This is the faith of the Son of God that they receive by hearing the word of the Father as it is preached by His messengers. **Rom 10:16-17**. Through His word, the Lord Himself says to them, 'Do not fear; I am your shield of faith, your exceedingly great reward.' **Gen 15:1**. Therefore, Paul said, 'For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father".' **Rom 8:15**.

## Strengthened in the inner man

When a person receives the command of the Father, which is proclaimed by Christ's messengers, they receive a spirit of adoption and begin to cry out, 'Abba! Father!' **Rom 8:15. 2Co 4:13.** This is the cry of obedience that begins to circumvent and overcome their other law. **Eph 3:16-19.** They desire to reveal the Father, rather than themselves, by being born again by His word that is shining as the light of their sonship from the face of Christ through the ministry of the Father's messengers.

In response to the expression of this spirit of faith, the Father begins to strengthen them in the inner man so that the Son of God can dwell in their heart by faith. **Eph 3:17.** The Father does this by the washing of regeneration by His word and the renewing of their spirit by the Holy Spirit. **Tit 3:5.** John explained that Jesus, the Messenger of the Covenant, prays to the Father, who sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in the heart of a believer. **Joh 14:16-17.** Through the process of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, the identity – soul and spirit – of the hearer is being restored. The 'eye (spiritual sight) of their body' is being healed so that their whole being – body, soul and spirit – is able to be full of light. Their body is full of light when Christ, the Light of life, is received into their heart through the ministry of a lamp messenger. **Luk 11:34,36.**

The Father then sends forth the Spirit of the Son into their heart, crying out their obedience, which is, 'Abba! Father!' **Gal 4:6.** This is the cry of Christ, the Capstone, who has been brought forth, and declares, 'Grace, grace to it!' **Zec 4:7.** That is, the Son declares that the life and name of this son of God is found in the fellowship of His offering. The Son of God is the Seed of the Father. In Him is the name and life of every son whom the Father predestined.

## Members of His mortal body

Jesus Christ is our great High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek. By the power of Eternal Spirit, He connects a believer to the fellowship of His mortal body; that is, to the offering that He made when He lived on the earth. In His *mortal body*, Christ accomplished their eternal salvation through His offering and death. The believer's faith response is to be baptised into Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Through baptism, they become a member of His mortal body on earth. They can show forth His death until He comes on the day of resurrection and clothes them with His immortality. **1Co 12:13. 1Co 11:26. 1Co 15:53-54.**

As a member of Christ's mortal body on earth, they now fellowship with Him in the sufferings that He endured for us. The resurrection life that is resident in His Spirit, and was in His blood, is sprinkled upon their heart, giving life to their spirit, and strength and healing to their mortal body. **Rom 8:11.**

It is helpful to note that when the Father sends the Spirit of the Son into the heart of a believer, it is Christ the Person who comes to dwell within them. This is not the same as Christ being *formed* within them. Christ is formed within a person through a travailing process. **Gal 4:19.** A believer is joined to this travail when they are baptised. Through baptism, they are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. In this fellowship, His life becomes their life. **Gal 2:20.**

Through the ongoing ministry of light to us, we are able to mature and bear fruit as a son of God. This is what it means to abide in the Son and for Him to abide in us. We must continue to receive the Light of life as it is shone into our heart by the Holy Spirit through the ministry of Christ's *aggelos*.

## Eating and drinking

What does it mean to eat Christ's flesh and drink His blood? Jesus was not saying that a person literally needs to eat a piece of His body or to take a sip of His blood. He said that the flesh profits a person nothing; that is, His natural flesh and blood do not give a person life. **Joh 6:63**. Furthermore, at the first communion service, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said, 'Take, eat; *this [bread] is My body*'. **Mar 14:22**. Likewise, He gave them the cup of wine to drink, saying, '*This [wine] is My blood* of the New Covenant, which is shed for many.' **Mar 14:24**.

Importantly, Jesus was also not saying that the bread and the wine turned into His flesh and blood when they consumed it. To understand what Christ meant, let us consider His description of the bread. He said, 'My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.' **Joh 6:32**. He then identified Himself as being the bread from heaven. Specifically, He said, 'I am the living bread which came down from heaven.' **Joh 6:51**. Jesus was saying that *He was bread that was alive!*

Jesus lived, or was alive, in the flesh, because of the Father. The Father had life in Himself and had granted the Son to have life in Himself. **Joh 5:26**. Jesus said this to emphasise that He lived *as the Son of God* by receiving His life from the Father. As the Son of God, Jesus was the actual manifestation of the Father's life. **Joh 14:9**. He received this life by the word of the Father. **Luk 4:4**. In this regard, He explained, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.' **Joh 4:34**. *This is how He fed on God*. Jesus said that He was able to reveal the Father and to minister His life by abiding in Him.

## Abiding in Him

Jesus said that if we abide in Him, and He abides in us, we will live by Him. **Joh 6:56.** This is what He meant when He said, 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *abides in Me, and I in him.*' **Joh 6:56.** Eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood means receiving His word and living the way that He lived. As the apostle John said, '*Whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.* He who says he *abides in Him* ought himself also to *walk just as He walked.*' **1Jn 2:5-6.** Jesus gives to us true bread from the Father by giving to us the word of life that the Father had given to Him. **Joh 17:8.** We reject Christ by rejecting His word to us. **Joh 12:48.** Christ does not abide in those who reject His word; neither do they abide in Him.

We are able to live as sons of God by abiding in Christ and by doing the works that were prepared for us to do by the Father. The word of the Father, given to us by Christ, is the food that gives us the strength to be God's sons. Confirming this point, Jesus said, 'He who *comes to Me* shall never hunger, and he who *believes in Me* shall never thirst.' **Joh 6:35.** A person who has come to Jesus has taken His yoke upon them as a son of God. **Mat 11:29.** They are walking with Him on the pathway of salvation that He pioneered through His offering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. In this fellowship, they are learning from Him what He learnt through the things that He suffered. **Mat 11:29.** They are learning the obedience of sonship. **Heb 5:8.**

## Eat your bread with joy

In the book of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon wrote, 'Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; for God has already accepted your works. Let your garments always be white, and let your head lack no oil.' **Ecc 9:7-8**. This passage of Scripture provides a particularly helpful synopsis of life in the New Covenant.

Joy and a merry heart are the demeanour of faith with which God's covenant people are to come together for communion. Having gathered in faith to have fellowship with the Lord and His people at the communion table, we then receive the faith of the Son of God for our participation in His offering and sufferings during the coming week. We receive this faith by hearing and receiving the word of God that is ministered to us as we partake of the bread and wine of communion. **Rom 10:16-17**.

The evidence that we have received this faith is that, through prayer, we set our minds on the Spirit. This means that, for the joy of becoming the son whom the Father has named us to be, we set our mind on participating in the offering and sufferings of Christ. **Heb 12:2**. This doesn't mean that all our experiences will be joyful or pleasant. **Heb 12:11**. It is for the joy of sonship, which is the peaceable fruit of righteousness, that we walk by faith in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

Paul described this as having faith in the blood of Christ. **Rom 3:25**. Having faith in Christ's blood simply means that we believe that we can receive the life of the Son, and that this life is in His blood. **Lev 17:11**. The life in Christ's blood was given to us to become our life when it was shed and sprinkled on His body as He was wounded seven times on His journey from Gethsemane to the cross. We receive this life as we join and continue in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings.

## Access into grace

Paul explained that faith in Christ's blood gives us access into grace, in which we stand. Grace is the fellowship of *exanastasis* life. As we stand in this grace, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. **Rom 5:2**. That is, we rejoice that we are becoming sons of God. What does this rejoicing look like? The answer is to consider how Jesus, by faith, exulted in His sonship. The expression of Christ's sonship to the Father was, 'Not My will, but Yours, be done.' **Luk 22:42**. This was His prayer as a New Covenant Son of God in Gethsemane, when His blood was first shed as an offering for sin.

The Holy Spirit joins us to the fellowship of Christ's prayer. **Rom 8:26**. As we are joined to this fellowship, the blood that was shed on Christ's body as He prayed by Eternal Spirit is sprinkled upon us. It is given to be our life by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When this happens, we rejoice as a son of God; and we, also, pray, 'Not my will, but Yours, be done.' This is faith 'speaking'. **2Co 4:13**. Importantly, Jesus said that this was how we are meant to pray to the Father in the secret place. **Mat 6:6,10**. Praying in this manner is the evidence of the Spirit of the Son crying within us, 'Abba! Father!' **Gal 4:6**. We are rejoicing that the hope of obtaining our sonship is being realised.

Paul then taught that as we continue to stand in grace throughout the course of each day, we glory, or express sonship, in the midst of tribulations. **Rom 5:3**. These tribulations are a participation in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. **Php 3:10**. We are able to accept, without rancour, the difficulties that beset us, because the Holy Spirit pours the love of God into our hearts, and bears witness within us that we are sons of God. **Rom 5:5. Rom 8:16**.

## Justification by faith

In the fellowship of Christ's offering, when we react poorly to other people, or to difficult situations, we have not lost our justification as sons of God. This is because we are neither righteous nor unrighteous on the basis of our works. We are justified by Christ through faith in His blood. **Rom 3:24-26**. Our righteousness is revealed in the fellowship of Christ's offering, which was a messy and traumatic event.

In these times of difficulty, frustration and poor responses, the Holy Spirit reminds us that it is essential that we have a participation in Christ's sufferings, and that the difficulties that we face are an opportunity for our participation in these sufferings. As we accept this, our participation in Christ's sufferings becomes the means by which the Father removes our fallen and self-centred motivations, and is also the means by which we receive and live by Christ's life. Enduring suffering is a work of faith. Through this work of faith, we join the fellowship of Christ's offering, and are justified. So, works are important, but they must be *the work of faith* that we do according to the will of God in Christ Jesus, as we are led by the Holy Spirit. **Joh 16:13**.

As we walk by faith in the light of the Father's word that shines from the face of Christ, we are fulfilling the works of sonship that were prepared by the Father for us to do, in Christ. By this means, we are revealing the faith-righteousness of the Father, 'from faith to faith'. **Rom 1:17**. In the fellowship of Christ's offering, which we join by faith, we are fulfilling the works of sonship that the Father prepared for us to do before the heavens and earth were created. **2Co 4:13**. **Eph 2:10**. These are the works that God has already accepted! **Ecc 9:7**.





Restoring  
my Soul