

Calling

by one of many Christinas...

Calling

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This book is dedicated to
anyone who will read it

INTRODUCTION

CALLING. After hearing this word (calling), the hearts of many Christians tremble and begin to beat more fervently, and the images of God's glory, miracles and His power that are so longed for and expected pass before their eyes. When we think about serving God, we see ourselves as God's instruments that He uses for His honour and glory. There is probably not a single Christian on earth who does not dream of being called to become a vessel of God's glory, as Abraham, Moses, David, prophets, apostles and other giants of faith were called. We read about God's works in their lives and dream of an equal calling filled with the same glory, power, and fruit of the spirit.

Oh, what a privilege, joy and wonder it is when the Lord uses us, when someone gets saved through us, when we lay hands on the sick and they are healed, when His words on our lips become a delivering power in the lives of others. When we dream of our service to God, we boldly include in it the greatest and most glorious works of God that we can imagine: the raising of a man from the dead, walking on water, the coming of the power of God on a multitude of thousands, the transfer of a man in the Spirit to another place, an incredible "awakening" in the city and throughout the country. The dream of our ministry is strengthened by hearing and reading testimonies about the servants of God who lived recently, through whom the Lord worked as powerfully as in the Old Testament or the times of the apostles. When we hear about the servants of God who live in our days and around us, through whom the Lord pours His wisdom and strength now, we say impatiently: "And when will it be my turn?" Oh, that only God would call me, that only He would call..."

But have I been called by God? How do I know if I am called and what works the Lord has planned in my life? Am I just one of the sheep in the flock, or does God have some personal calling, plan and ministry for me? Is there room for God's glory, miracles, signs, and wonders in that plan? Has God handed out all the invitations and great callings He gave to Abraham, Moses, David, the apostle Paul, Martin Luther, Charles Finney, Smith Wigglesworth, Kathryn Kuhlman, Billy Grame, Benny Hinn and many others, and no longer have any left? Maybe it is enough to simply be a good Christian, help others, attend church and testify about Christ?

But there is not a single Christian whose heart does not vibrate with the testimony of the Holy Spirit: "God has called you personally to His works of glory and to the knowledge of Christ. He has prepared a wonderful plan and is calling you to something great that even your imagined list of His works of glory cannot contain." You have a special and personal ministry that He holds in His hands and calls you. This calling is so great and glorious that only the Lord can fulfil it.

But how often, the desire to become instruments of His glory as soon as possible overwhelms us so much that, unable to endure, we begin to use ourselves for God's sake, without understanding and outraged by our unproductiveness, we hurry to fulfil "any" ministry, however unheard or not understood. However, this "any" calling does not give us peace, and the dissatisfaction within and the unquenchable thirst testifies that we often miss His perfect plan and personal calling that has our name in His lips, saying "Come".

Maybe God has forgotten me and does not see how I long? Maybe everything is in my hands, I just need to take initiative,

try and He will use me? Maybe you just need to do something for Him, and then everything will take care of itself and become clear? We want to be used so much that we only think about how to "make God" perform miracles and how to draw His attention that He would start using us. We seem to be more interested in His honour and glory than He is.

But the Lord desires to use us more than we dream or imagine. He is looking for anyone who is willing to be used, who will agree and say, "Here I am, send me."

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

And yet, why do so few come to the place where God works supernaturally and continuously, where His glory and power are not just a momentary and rare "coincidence" but a clearly visible and working anointing? Why are there so many called but few chosen? Why are there so many invitations, desires and dreams, but so few who do not quit and go all the way?

His ministry is not just for a few years, it is not a chance or an unsought treasure. His ministry is for your whole life, to walk the path that Jesus opens for you and that the Holy Spirit guides. If you want to be, simply, a "normal" Christian, to live decently and calmly, to find without losing and to win without fighting, to reap fruit without sowing, and to live only at the foot of the mountain, then this book will only irritate you. However, if you desire to go all the way and, having His invitation in your hand, hold it to the end, then do not stop and do not hesitate, no matter what happens in your life, because it is not how you start that

matter, but how you finish. Each of the giants of the faith lived with His calling, which they held firmly in their hands, passing through valleys and deserts, accepted and rejected, praised and despised. They walked the narrow way, surrendering to the One who called them to eternal glory.

God is still looking for anyone today who will accept to be led and placed himself in His hands. God is the same forever, His word has not changed, His hand has not shortened to save, to help, to reveal great signs and wonders. The eyes of the Lord look upon the earth, and seek any vessel, any man, that would trust in Him. Often, we look for short cuts, more productive methods and easier principles, but the way to His glory and calling has not changed - it is complete devotion and trust in Him, His guidance, His methods, His time, place and conditions. There is no shortcut or detour. He still cries, "Who will agree to go as I lead, who will agree to go all the way?" I have prepared everything, signed and distributed the invitations, I am waiting for those who will come."

There is nothing more important in life than hearing God's call, responding to it, and coming. There are many examples in the Bible of ordinary people responding to God's extraordinary and supernatural callings and becoming His powerful instruments. Even as they stumbled, they came to receive a personal invitation directly from His hands. God does not send anything by email, He waits for you to come and receive it directly from Him, personally and without intermediaries, without copying or hesitating about His works of immeasurable glory and power written in your calling.

How do I respond to His call? God's word says you just have to come.

Revelation 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

A great calling begins with the small step you take when you hear His voice "come".

God is calling you, will you come?

1 CHAPTER

Before hearing the call

Before we can hear and respond to His call, it is important to understand some fundamental truths about calling that are described in God's word and that are still valid today. Despite the fact that each call is unique, they are all signed by the same author. In the lives of all God's servants, we find the same pattern of the Holy Spirit and the same truths, therefore, be sure that the Lord will call you according to the same example that He used in the lives of Abraham, David, the apostles and other men of faith.

There are no preconditions. One of the most wonderful truths about calling is that the Lord does not impose any preconditions on a person. He does not require of us any special qualities, works of righteousness, preparation, attitude, good emotional state, wisdom or experience. He doesn't care how beautiful or dirty your life has been, what denomination you belong to, and what good or bad you think of yourself. The only thing He desires is our consent to accept this invitation and to come.

Luke 14:16-17 Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'

It is enough for you to have only an invitation, which guarantees the right to receive what is written on it.

It is strange, but most of the time a person creates conditions for himself, for others and for God. In the Gospels, Jesus used parables to show the main reasons why we try to justify ourselves and refuse to come where the Lord calls us: reluctance, family, work, favourite occupation, wealth, the pleasures of life, creating additional conditions for ourselves, the desire to prepare and become worthy beforehand, demanding self-righteous works, good mood or special feelings, seeking confirmations, signs and wonders.

Matthew 22:2-3 “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

God's word doesn't emphasize what man was like before he was called. When we read about Abraham, we don't know anything about how he lived before hearing God's call to leave the land of his fathers. We only know that he was one of the many inhabitants of Ur, where idolatry prevailed, but we cannot see what his character and works were before that. Likewise, in the Gospels, when we read about the apostles, we nowhere find a description of their previous life, as if the Lord did not care what a person was like before he was called, what matters is that he accepted the invitation.

God's word is full of evidence and facts that, namely, those who, according to human standards, had no chance of being called to special works or to draw God's attention in any way, received extraordinary callings. And in this day and age, every Christian is called to the glory of God without any preconditions or merits, without likes or dislikes of character. Kathryn Kuhlman, whom

the Lord used powerfully in the healing ministry, has said that she was not God's first and even second choice for the healing ministry. However, since no one wanted to accept this call because of fear and unbelief, she said, "Here I am," despite not having any qualities that corresponded to this calling. The Lord simply did not find another vessel to accept this invitation. She said „yes“ to God's call and came, and the Lord faithfully guided her along the path she agreed to follow.

Often, we react in the opposite way and limit our personal calling to our own weaknesses and strengths. There is no limit except His call to follow. Jesus has said that everything is ready, all that remains is to come.

Personal calling. One of the reasons why some Christians are distracted, insecure, and have internal dissatisfaction, fear, and doubt about what they are doing and how they are living is usually because they copy the lives, works, and callings of others without hearing their own name called out on the lips of Jesus - "Come, follow me." No one else can call you but Jesus, so if you do not hear His voice in your heart saying, "follow me", then any works, activities and efforts in your life will be only short-term initiatives dependent on emotions, circumstances and the opinions of others. We watch with envy the anointed men of God who, with supernatural assurance and inner peace, go where we would not go and do what we would not do. Where does that strength and assurance come from, as if they knew where they were going and could see the One, they were following? How often, after reading a book about the works of faith, the power of God and miracles in the lives of "famous" men of God, we rush to do the same and copy their calling with great zeal and enthusiasm, hoping to see the same results. However, after running for a while, we only get halfway

before our emotions run out and difficult circumstances shatter our efforts. It just doesn't work. Why?

In the Bible, we read how God called Abraham to leave the land of his fathers and go where He would show him. Abraham's calling was copied by his nephew Lot, who went with Abraham and also left the land of his fathers. But after a while, not understanding where Abraham is going, why is he waiting and delaying acting, why is he not starting a new church or organizing, a conference on the topic of "successful evangelism", why is he just wandering aimlessly around the promised land and doing nothing, as if following something invisible? Halfway through, Lot decided to turn somewhere else and do "something". The time has come, simply, to "get life in order", because the age has already reached the limit when you can't wait anymore, but you have to create and manage, when everyone around you is doing something, building cities, having their own ministry, becoming pastors and leaders. As a confirming sign, a favourable circumstance appeared, because Abraham himself offered to bless Lot, giving him the opportunity to choose the very best and richest land, where there are developed cities with good work and a guaranteed "blessing".

Lot, leaving the land of his fathers with Abraham, had not personally heard the voice "Come out and follow me", but he copied Abraham, followed him and hoped that what the Lord said to Abraham would do the same in his life. But without a personal call, you are only halfway there.

If you don't hear a personal invitation, then you go where you want and do what you like, you choose and move first, hoping that the Lord also follows you, trying to draw Him with

confessions of faith. However, Jesus called all the apostles by name, each one personally - "follow me".

In the Bible, we also read about a completely opposite example, when the prophet Elijah told his servant Elisha three times before his ascension to heaven to stay and not follow him. Oh, how enthusiastically we would attack to copy and follow the instructions of the anointed man of God. After all, the prophet Elijah himself told me to stay and not follow him, he knows what he is doing, because the Lord revealed it to him. However, why was Elisha, who had served and learned from the prophet Elijah all those years, this time he was so determined and unconvincing?

2 Kings 2:2 Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; the LORD has sent me to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

Elisha did not follow the prophet Elijah, but he had already heard another voice in his heart calling him by the name "follow me". Nothing can divert you from your goal when you have a personal calling from the Lord. Elisha followed to the end, so the Lord led him to where the double anointing awaited him, which he so longed for and to which Elisha had been called many years before. Ever since the Lord gave the call to follow through the prophet Elijah, Elisha, leaving everything behind, followed until he saw and received what he was called to. You cannot go all the way without a personal calling.

Why did many of those who believed and followed Jesus leave Him after a while? As they walked with the other disciples, seeing signs and wonders and hearing Jesus' words and listening

to His teaching, they still left halfway because of it. However, those disciples who had personally heard the call to "follow me" remained with, regardless of the circumstances.

John 6:66-69 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."

No one can call you to follow Jesus but Him. Neither a pastor, nor a prophet, nor a specially anointed servant of God can give you a calling. The Lord uses them and speaks through their lips, but only He can speak to your heart. He doesn't give this privilege to anyone else, and he craves your attention to the point of jealousy. He does not give this right to any man, and He desires that you depend only on Him, that no doubt, no circumstances, no manipulation of the opinions of men, lead you, but only He. This in no way means that you are independent of others, as in that case pride would prevent you from being called, but more on that later.

God only hands out invitations by name. He does not call family, group or friends because His calling is personal. Why is it that when you hear His call so clearly, others around you do not hear or respond? Because He addresses you by name. When Saul was illuminated by a blinding light on the road to Damascus, from which he heard the voice of Jesus, no one else heard this voice except Saul. This often happens to us too, when we hear His call, we try to understand why others did not hear anything. Then we run to discuss, consult, collect "affirmations"

and approvals from others. If you hear His voice, just follow Him.

In the Gospel according to John, we read that Peter, following Jesus, saw another disciple walking with him and began to compare himself with him, his calling with his. But Jesus' answer was short and simple.

John 21:21-22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? **You must follow me.**"

Sometimes we try to copy others and follow them, we look around and see if my neighbour, another member of the church received the same calling, or if the Lord spoke to him as well. It is impossible to copy, replicate, invent, plan or choose a call. It is He who calls and who chooses. He has prepared the best invitation for you and only for you.

It's not too late to respond today. Have I failed God, or is it too late to respond to His call? Maybe I missed and didn't hear His call, living according to my desires and imaginations? Did the Lord change His mind and withdraw the invitation? Do I have another option? Such questions torment us when we realize that we once rejected His invitation and wasted a lot of time living for ourselves. Yes, the opportunity has remained the same because God's word says that while it is today, you can accept the invitation and come. He can bring you back from the farthest point to which you have wandered and bring you back. In the Bible, we see many examples where neither age, nor mistakes, nor time spent in vain prevented the Lord from bringing a person

to where He called. But if you hear His call today, don't delay, grab it and follow.

Moses spent forty years in Egypt, living in a prestigious environment, another forty years he wandered in the desert, running away from his calling, but when he reached the age of eighty, he responded to the voice of the Lord and came. In the Gospels we also read that labourers were hired for the vineyard in the morning, at noon, in the evening and just before the end of the day. They all got the same salary. Therefore, it doesn't matter how old you are, how much time is left for you on earth or how much time you have wasted for nothing.

Hebrews 3:15 As has just been said: “**Today**, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.”

As long as it is today, He is calling, and it is not too late to respond to His call. Just answer. If you hear His voice and wonder what to do next, should you live a calm and orderly Christian life, or should you seek and find, hear and respond, come and stay? God longs to speak to you, to call you and pour out a personal invitation to the wedding, a personal invitation to the vineyard. If only you desire to hear, you will surely hear.

The principle of growth. In these times of productivity, high consumption, rapid development, and the "last days", many proclaim that God has also changed. He does things faster and more efficiently because there is no time left, so He immediately equips us with the weapons and gifts of the Spirit and puts us on the front lines. But God has not changed, He is the same forever and believe me, He really has plenty of time. Therefore, do not

be surprised if He will patiently mold, teach and raise you to become what the Lord wants you to be.

When we don't see a quick change in our lives and the lives of others, we stop, thinking that we missed something, that some principle of "faith" is not working, or that the Lord has not called us. When we read a book about God's mighty works in the lives of others and try to apply it to our own lives, after the first failures we put it aside as a dysfunctional and complicated tool. But the key to fulfil a calling is to keep going. It is going from faith to faith, from grace to grace, from glory to glory, from one spiritual season to another, from one revelation of Christ to another. Each Christian personally goes through and experiences different seasons of spiritual maturity and growth. When we try to apply the personal revelations and experiences of other Christians apart from the Lord, then they become nothing more than a complication, a mystery, and a dead weapon. The Lord may use and teach you from other person's experience, books, and lives, but you personally will be guided and walk the path they walked.

In the Old Testament, we read that when David was preparing to go into battle against the giant Goliath, King Saul offered him his armour. David, after trying on his armour, put it aside and went into battle with only a slingshot and a few stones. It was David's personal weapon, experience and practice. Although Saul's armour was good, fair, and fit for battle, it was Saul's weapons. David also used armour and sword later in battles, but he learned it himself and switched from throwing stones to sword and armour. The Lord can give you victory over your greatest enemy using the level of knowledge, maturity, and faith that you have. But don't stop, He will grow you and lead you from one class to another, from one victory to another. Your

weapons, knowledge and personal revelation of the Lord will change in each season.

If a school-boy thinks that it is possible to go on quickly and will start reading the material of 12 class, he will mess up and harm not only himself, but also those around him. He needs to trust the teacher, **allow himself to be taught** and go from one class to another. The Lord is calling you to become an instrument of His glory, but this does not mean that in His favour He will transfer you from 1 grade directly to 12 grade and will give you a diploma of grace (because there is no more time for slow learning) and assign you to work at a machine with sharp knives. He will prepare and lead you into a calling when you become strong, with His weapons on the left and right, strengthened in love and faith, having crucified the old self and clothed in Christ, fully surrendered and trusting in your Teacher.

2 CHAPTER

Two callings

Do not be surprised, but indeed God has prepared two callings for you. Each has its own purpose, time and function, but both are important and inseparable. The order in which you will recognize and respond to them, whether you will keep them both to the end, will depend not only on your personal relationship with the Lord, but also on the amount of His power and anointing. Therefore, it is very important to understand their meaning, how and when they work and what their purpose is, so that you can fulfil the perfect will of God and, having done everything, stand. Some of God's anointed servants, who mixed up the meaning of these callings, confused their sequence or lost one of them, not only experienced great defeats, lost their anointing, but also left the Lord. You are given two hands to hold both callings.

Two callings can be identified in the life of each of the men of faith described in the Bible. The measure of God's glory, anointing and power depended on how they responded to these callings and how long they kept them. We see this most clearly in the life of Abraham.

Abraham's life in God's eyes began when he heard and responded to God's call to leave his country, his relatives, his parents' house and **go to the land** that he would show him. (*Genesis 12:1*). Although Abraham was already seventy years old, in God's eyes this was only the beginning. His whole life up to this point is, as it were, erased and unimportant to God, that He has not even left any trace of it in His word. When you accept the Lord's call to follow Him, all your past, doubts, mistakes and

backslidings are erased. Everything becomes irrelevant and insignificant, except that you accept His call and the most important calling in your life - to go to another land and follow Him.

This image of Abraham's life described in the Old Testament speaks of the most important calling - to follow Jesus and go to another place, leave your former way of life, your place of sin, your past and go to a new land, the promised land, which is Christ. In the life of each of us, this call is heard - to enter into a new life in Jesus Christ and to remain in Him. Jesus, speaking of the first calling, always used parables related to the invitation to come to a new place - to the wedding, to the light, to the vineyard, to the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, nothing is more important in your life than the first calling - to come, be and remain in a new place, which is Jesus Christ.

Matthew 22:4 “Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. **Come to the wedding banquet.**’

When calling Abraham to leave the land of his fathers and go to the one God will show him, the Lord did not initially mention anything to him about the promise to have offspring, be fruitful and become a blessing to all the peoples of the earth. Only after coming to the new land did Abraham heard the second calling - to be fruitful and become a blessing to all the peoples of the earth.

Genesis 17:6 **I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.**

Firsts, the Lord calls you to come to a new land, where another call awaits you - a call to be fruitful, to have offspring and to become a blessing to others. This calling cannot be fulfilled in any other place than the promised land. Without the new land there is no offspring and no fertility. Therefore, the most important thing is to come and **stay in the place** where fruitfulness and blessing await you. Only after answering the first call and coming to a new land, Abraham heard the second call - to become the father of many nations. The first calling is always about the place, the second about the seed and fruitfulness. If you do not answer and keep the first call, you cannot hear and respond to the second. But what does all this mean in my life, after all, it happened in Old Testament times?

We see exactly the same sequence and the same callings in the New Testament. The Lord, seeing Peter and Andrew, gave them the first calling - to follow. This call is the most important, on which the second depends, to become fishers of men

Matthew 4:19 “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.”

Becoming fishers of men depends only on how you respond and keep the first call to follow Jesus. One can start a church, a charity, pray in tongues, serve as a pastor and prophet, cast out demons and heal the sick, attend church and sing in a worship group, but at the same time, still, not follow Jesus. Not the ministry, family, dreams, evangelism and a whole series of other wonderful and blessed things and works, but these two basic

words "follow me" are the most important in your life, on which everything listed before depends.

When talking about fruitfulness and service, Jesus always emphasized that the most important thing is to remain in Him, to remain in that land, in that life to which Jesus called you. Personal relationship with Him is irreplaceable, neither by good works, nor by service, nor by any other activity. Only here you hear the second calling and become what the Lord wants you to be. Only here will you hear His promise to be fruitful, bear offspring and become a blessing to the people around you.

John 15:4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

Barrenness, errors and falls in the life of a Christian are always associated with departure and distance from the promised land. Fear and adversity are often the door through which we withdraw from the place where we are to beget offspring and become fruitful. We see this in the life of Abraham. After coming to the promised land and hearing the second call to have offspring and become fruitful, Abraham lived in this land for a while, but when famine came, he left and went to Egypt. The fear of loss and the possibility of finding help in Egypt pushed Abraham to leave the land where he was called to be fruitful. Although God did not abandon Abraham and preserved him in Egypt, Abraham spent several years in vain, and not only did he not have a descendant, but he almost lost his wife Sarah, through whom this descendant was to come. Only after the intervention of the Lord, and after the pharaoh was warned in a dream, who wanted to take Sarah into his harem, Abraham was forced out of

Egypt back to the promised land. After a few years, He returned again to the same place from which He started.

Genesis 13:3-4 From the Negev he went from place to place **until he came to Bethel**, to the place between Bethel and Ai **where his tent had been earlier** and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the LORD.

Returning to the promised land, he cried out to God again and heard the same promise of fruitfulness. Only here the Lord renewed and reminded him of his second calling. Abraham needed to stay in this land again and grow in faith until the seed ripened and the harvest time came. We read the same about his son Isaac, when, after a great famine, the Lord told him to stay in this land, despite the unfavourable circumstances and fear.

Genesis 26:2 The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live.

It often happens in our lives when the fear of losing ourselves, worries and work keep us away from the promised land. Overwhelmed by activity, haste and self-realization, we quickly forget Sarah, the promise of God we once heard, and run to seek help where there are favourable circumstances and rational decisions. But the faithfulness of the Lord brings us back to the promised land, we go back to the very place where we once built an altar and called on the name of the Lord, where our hearts heard His words "follow me" so clearly. Any retreat from the promised land distances us from fruitfulness. The most noble activities, great employment, various initiatives, projects and

works can pull you from your first calling to stay in Him. Maybe you think that His promise to make you fruitful depends on your works, but don't be fooled, because it is not what you do that bears fruit, but where you are. Whatever your ministry or activity, if it prevents you from remaining in Him and following Him personally, then probably you have set aside the main calling.

The first calling works through love for the Lord, and the second through love for others. Although both are intertwined, inseparable and dependent on each other, the first call to love the Lord is the beginning and source of everything, from which the second one flows.

Matthew 22:37-39 Jesus replied: “ ‘**Love the Lord** your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the **first** and greatest commandment. And **the second** is like it: ‘**Love your neighbor** as yourself.’”

If you forget your first love and leave your first call, then your love for others will quickly run out, you will get tired, disappointed and, eventually, from a loving and calm Mary who sits at the feet of Jesus and listens to His words, you will turn into a nervous and tired Martha who is dissatisfied with others and suffers from heavy workload. In the Revelation to John, the Lord reminds the Ephesian church that they have lost their first love (*Revelation John 2:4*), even though their activities and works were impressive. The first love is the first call to be in Him and remain in His love.

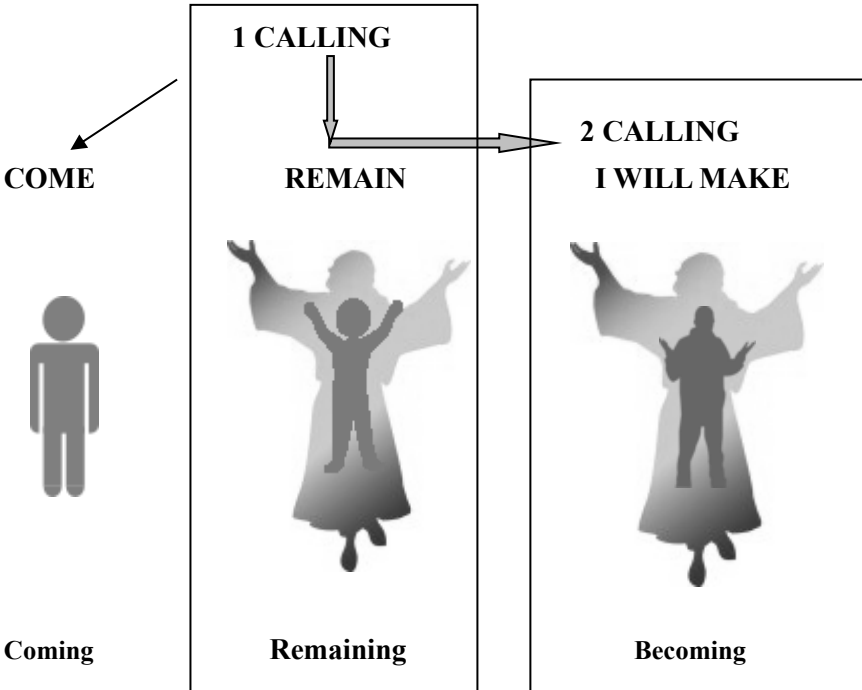
Most of the time, we think that we have already fulfilled our first calling when we prayed a prayer of repentance and accepted Jesus Christ into our heart. But this is just the beginning. The Lord has moved you to a wonderful light, to a wonderful land, now you need to stay in Him and follow Him, walk in Him crosswise and lengthwise, cross the whole earth, grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is not just a momentary experience; it is the most important and main calling of your life. Do not depart from Him and you will know the second calling.

1 CALLING call related to land and place	2 CALLING call related to seed and fruitfulness
<i>Genesis 12:1</i> The LORD had said to Abram, “ Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.	<i>Genesis 17:6</i> I will make you very fruitful ; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.
<i>Matthew 4:19</i> “Come, follow me ,”	<i>Matthew 4:19</i> “and I will send you out to fish for people.”
<i>John 15:5</i> “If you remain in me and I in you,	<i>John 15:5</i> you will bear much fruit ; apart from me you can do nothing.
<i>Colossians 3:15</i> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body ◇	<i>Ephesians 4:11</i> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ◇
<i>Mark 3:14</i> He appointed twelve that they might be with him ◇	<i>Mark 3:14</i> and that he might send them out to preach ◇

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness **into his wonderful light.**

Romans 9:29 For those God foreknew he also **predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

The question of the first calling is not who you are, but where you are. The most important thing is the place - to be in Christ, to be in Him, to have a personal relationship with Him, to drink His grace, to drink His life. The second calling is always about what you become when you follow Him. The longer you stay in Him, the more firmly He molds you, the more your second calling becomes clear.



The first calling is greater because we hear the second only when we are in the first. Both callings are important, inseparable and necessary, but one of them, however, is first and more important, and the second is directly dependent on the first. If we confuse their sequence and importance or lose the balance between them, we stumble and our works wither like unripe fruits. But the Lord wants us to bear a hundredfold harvest, which needs time and the patient hands of the vinedresser.

When the second calling overshadows and replaces the first, then it is inevitable to stumble and make mistakes. Eve and Adam were tempted when there was a "pause" in their relationship with the Creator. When Samson left his first calling "to be a Nazarene," i.e. consecrated and set apart for the Lord, and fulfilled only the second calling to lead Israel out of oppression, then gradually his life faded, and as a result the anointing disappeared. From the very beginning, King Saul focused on the Lord's call to fight against Israel's enemies, but when he put aside his main call to follow the Lord and obey Him, he gradually lost not only his kingdom, but also his life. It doesn't happen immediately or at the same time, but it's like a small crack that widens day by day and turns into a ditch that, in the end, is impossible to jump over.

Starting with a second calling is one of the biggest mistakes that produces many Ishmaelites who never inherit God's promise. We so want to hear from God, who am I: am I a pastor, evangelist, deacon, prophet or worshiper? How often the Lord does not answer this question for us but direct our look at the first calling - the calling to be in Him, thus protecting from our initiatives and great zeal that can produce Ishmaelites. Without understanding this silence, we bombard the gates of heaven with

faith, asking what we are to do, what is our ministry, what is our calling? The Lord does not immediately reveal the second calling, because in that case we would run fulfilling it immediately, while He desires to fulfil it Himself and waits for our "death to self".

If you don't know what your second calling is and, relying on all the principles and confessions of faith, you try to do something and establish yourself in any ministry, this is only a sign that you have strayed from the most important and first calling - the calling to be in Him. Because, only by being in Him, you will know your second calling and you will not do it yourself, but He will make you so.

The essence of the second calling is not what you do, but what you become and what Christ makes of you. Being in Him allows His hands to mold you. The Lord will make sure that you are truly dead to yourself before He begins to mold you. He will wait and do nothing, if you do "something" yourself. He only works with a tool that has given up and is still in His hands. More on that later.

Being in Him so clearly, easily and confidently opens the door to the second calling that you do not need to do anything of yourself and prove it. You just become. The proof of who you are will be reflected in the lives of others around you. The apostle Paul also writes about this in his letter to the Corinthians, emphasizing that he does not need proof from people that he is an apostle, because what he is can be seen by his fruits. These fruits can only grow in Christ, in the new land to which God has called you.

1 Corinthians 9:2 Even though I may not be an apostle to others, surely I am to you! For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

In the life of every Christian, there are seasons of spiritual growth and maturity, during which the Lord calls and draws the person to Himself, circumcises the heart, clothes him, strengthens him in his first calling, prepares him for anointing, introduces him to his second calling, teaches to serve and maintain a balance between both callings. This does not mean that you cannot now lay hands on the sick for healing, pray for others, preach the good news, cast out demons. All these things were experienced by the disciples of Jesus already at the beginning of Jesus' ministry on earth, when He sent them to the surrounding villages. At that time, Jesus' disciples did not understand much, they were carnal, they argued, they were jealous of each other, but the power of God was working in their lives. This was just the beginning, just a small drop of the glory and anointing for which Jesus was preparing them. However, those disciples who made it to the end went through different seasons of discipleship, preparation and ministry as they moved from faith to faith. This shows that there were different seasons of faith and grace in their lives, during which they grew and differed in spiritual maturity. If you desire to go all the way, be sure that there will be time in your life for each season of spiritual maturity. In every season, you will have the opportunity to say to the Lord "stop, it's enough" and stay with the fruits you have, but if you want to go to the hundredfold harvest, don't doubt it, because He will keep you and take you to the end. So, a little bit about that...

3 CHAPTER

A few differences

Before talking more about the first call to follow Jesus and abide in Him, it is important to understand how it differs from the second - to become fruitful. Each of them grows and functions differently. So, some differences...

Hidden vs visible. The call to follow Jesus and abide in Him is special in terms that it is visible only to you and the Lord. None of the people, not even your family members, closest believing brothers and sisters, anointed servants of God can see this calling and how it works in your life. All they see is the result of what Jesus made of you and how you serve others. You, too, can only see a second calling in the lives of others. Your personal relationship, communication, love, devotion to Jesus is hidden in a clay vessel and invisible. No one else can participate in this calling, everything happens only between you and the Lord. In the Gospel, Jesus, speaking about a personal relationship with a person, always emphasized that it takes place in secret.

Matthew 6:6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, **who sees what is done in secret**, will reward you.

However, the opposite is the case with the second calling. The result of becoming and serving others is seen by all, because this calling includes not only Jesus and you, but also other people around you. This call is visible, which is why Jesus in the Gospel encouraged us not to hide the light under a vessel, but to openly

and clearly show good works so that those who enter can see the light.

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine **before others**, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

The second calling emerges from secret place into light because it reflects what is hidden. It will be a reflection of that glory of God and direct relationship with Him hidden in our earthen vessel. Jesus said that nothing can remain hidden, but everything will be revealed. Our service and love for others is a reflection of our first calling. No one sees the spring but drinks the water that springs up from the deep. No one sees the roots, only the tree from which they gather the fruit. Therefore, you do not need to run, worry and jump around the tree, trying to somehow accelerate its growth. All this tree needs are roots that are firmly planted in the ground and will not stop feeding and passing the juices of life through it. Your dedication to the Lord, following Him, uninterrupted personal relationship and communion with Him will be reflected in your second calling.

Blessed, loved vs blessing, loving. If the second call to be fruitful is related to the people around you and works through love for others, then the first one involves only you and the Lord and works through love for Jesus. Being in Him and having a personal relationship with Jesus is built on the love you receive from Him. He loved you first, so He wants you to accept this unconditional and personal love. This love grows, strengthens and spills over the edges of your life to others as you begin to serve others and respond to your second calling. Why was the apostle Paul's ministry so fruitful, where did he have so much love, patience and endurance to care and carry the burden of

other churches? The reason for this was his roots - personal relationship with Jesus and such a **firm conviction** in His love that Paul boldly testified in his letter to Romans that God in Jesus Christ loves him so much that no one can separate him from this love. This unshakable conviction of His love was stronger than circumstances, persecutions, hunger, poverty and difficulties. You are also loved with the same love. There can only be one difference: how firmly are you convinced of this?

Romans 8:38-39 For **I am convinced** that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This was the foundation of his ministry. When you personally accept His love, when this love fills you so much that you become strong and know that no circumstances, difficulties, experiences can deny, separate you from the love of Jesus, then you become capable of serving others with this love. Often, when unfavourable circumstances, difficulties, negative emotions, obstacles come into our lives, we begin to doubt His love - does He still love us, or has He already forgotten and is punishing us for our mistakes? At such moments, we do not have the desire and strength to love others because we do not accept His love - how strongly and personally He loves you, regardless of any circumstances or setbacks. This personal conviction of His never-ending love makes us different and leads us into the second calling. Only one who is loved and accepts His love unconditionally can be filled with it and serve others. **Only the beloved can love.**

In the first calling, by personally following, abiding in Him, and communicating with Jesus, you are blessed, but in the second, you become a blessing to others. In the Old Testament, we read that God first promised to bless Abraham and only then to make him a blessing to all the nations of the earth.

Genesis 12:2 “I will make you into a great nation, and **I will bless you**; I will make your name great, and **you will be a blessing**.

The first calling feeds you and gives you seed, the second - sows seed and feeds others. When we abide in Him, we grow and are nourished by His grace, love, devotion and self-denial. Then our lives become blessed, we receive the seed, the loaves of bread, and the fish from which we are nourished and grow. But later, when He molds us and makes us His servants, then the sowing time comes, and we sow and feed others. Then the tree, feeding on the substances flowing through the roots, ripens the fruit and distributes it to others. When the sowing time comes, the seed ripens and our personal communication with Him becomes firm and unshakeable, then next to the first call "follow me" we hear His words "*you give them to eat*". But don't forget that the second calling "*give them something to eat*" doesn't cancel the first one and doesn't make it any less or done already. Your priority still remains to follow Him and let your roots sink deep into His knowledge and love, because it depends on how much fruit your tree will ripen.

Colossians 2:7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

The glory of God vs the power of God. In the first call, God's glory is at work, which reveals what Jesus is like, and in the second - God's power, which reveals what He does. Most of the time, all our attention goes only to the power of God and to the second calling because we often confuse the glory of God and the power of God. God's power is not for the first calling, i.e. for relationship with Him, devotion, love and drawing to Him. In the first calling, there is no power of God that shakes us with special signs and wonders. The essence of the first calling is the glory of God, when His Spirit touches your spirit directly and without intermediaries. Such a touch is nothing but becoming one with Him. At the beginning of spiritual maturity, closed in secret, seeking His face and approaching Him, we expect special experiences and His power, but much more than God's power is intended for this calling. It is the glory of God, which is the face of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of **God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.**

When the fullness of Christ, His unconditional love, dedication, self-sacrifice, self-denial, humility and full surrender of life touch your spirit, then your insides shine with His glory. Then the most wonderful thing happens in your life - His love begets love in you, His devotion and self-denial begets the same in you. More on that later, but there is nothing greater and more glorious than the face of Christ shining and visible in your first call, when you are just the two of you looking into each other's eyes. Then you will change from His beauty becoming like Him. Without the touch of His Spirit and a personal look at Him, all activities, works and efforts are meaningless because they reflect only

ourselves. But if you, renewed in His image, serve others, then even the smallest word spoken by your lips can change someone's life.

It is quite different in the second calling, where we serve others and where it is not the glory of God but the power of God that is at work. Here it reveals not what Jesus is like, but what He does. We observe healings, deliverances, other signs and wonders that testify and invite others to know Jesus personally. The second calling is fruitless and impossible without the power of God, the gifts of the Spirit, and the anointing. The power of God, the gifts of the Spirit, which work in the second calling, can be transmitted by the laying on of hands, one can see their manifestation not only in the soul (filled feelings), in the body (healings), but also in nature (signs, miracles).

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders **laid their hands on you.**

However, it is impossible to transmit the glory of God by the laying on of hands, which only works in a personal calling and is visible only to you. Only God and you can see it. Your relationship with the Lord cannot be seen, handed over by the laying on of hands, this relationship is based on His love, sacrifice, self-denial. Only He sees it. You cannot boast before anyone except Him and before Him. It is a secret between you both that will be revealed in heaven.

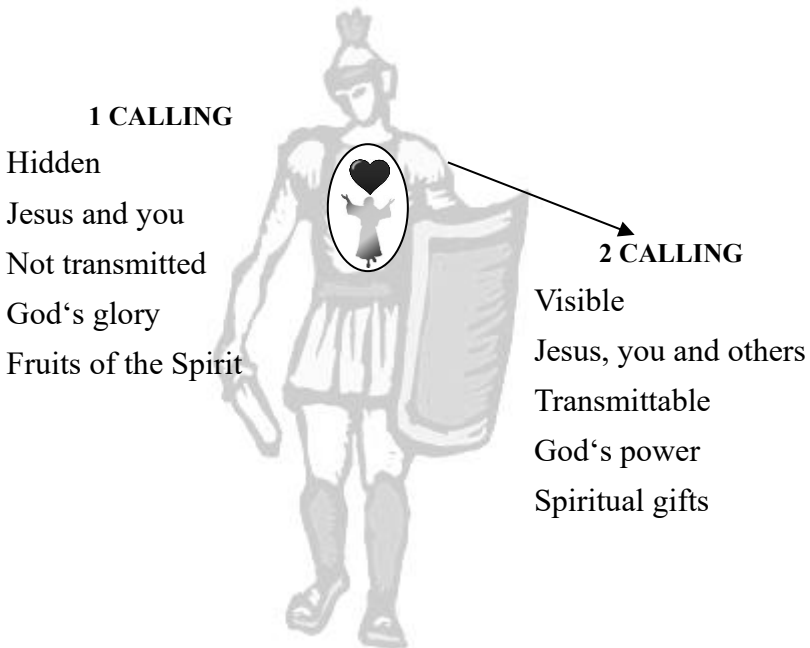
1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will

expose the motives of the heart. At that time **each** will receive their praise from God.

Different purpose. When we confuse the purpose of these callings and try to misuse any of them, we become confused, frustrated and lost. How often do we try to apply our first calling to the service of others, when we hope that our personal relationship with the Lord, the touch of His Spirit on our spirit, will touch others as well. But how confused we are when all this does not heal the sick, cast out demons, and perform signs and wonders. In such cases, we are surprised to feel a "coldness" in our service, thinking that we cannot connect and understand each other. Deluded, we think that it is someone else's fault that nothing is happening, we look for a hidden sin and blame each other. Remembering how real and true the Lord is in your heart and seeing that despite such wonderful and close relationship with Him, nothing happens, you start looking for the guilt. But all it takes is entering into the second calling and being in the right place at the right time. Namely, in the service of others you need to enter the second calling and use not the fruits of the Spirit, but the gifts and weapons of the Spirit, surrender not to His glory, but to His power. About the second calling and preparation for the anointing later.

The same frustration and confusion befall us when we try to apply the second calling in place of the first. When after a mighty ministry in which the power of God healed the sick and our bodies fell to the ground, unable to withstand His power, when indescribable assurance and faith in signs and wonders filled us, when His power flowed through our whole body, we return home and suddenly feel no more and we see not His power, but only silence. Then we begin to think that we have lost the anointing, that we have strayed somewhere and missed

His power. Why does nothing happen, why do I no longer experience anything when I pray in secret, which I experienced so clearly and saw in the ministry? Then, not understanding the silence and simple communication that He desires, we begin to think that we have lost His power, that we have gone wrong or missed somewhere. God's power and anointing are for service, not fellowship with Him. These two callings work differently and serve different purposes, which is why it is so important to maintain, not mix, and recognize them both in your life. We look very different when we operate in our first and second callings. David singing, praising, opening his heart, dressed only in a shirt, dancing and praising the Lord, but a completely different David, who rushes to the front lines like a lion, fights with courage and confidence.



4 CHAPTER

First calling

The first calling to follow and remain in Christ, like the first love, is the most important, the first and the main call in your life. It begins when you hear the message about Jesus, give Him your life and accept Him into your heart. From this moment the new life starts as you follow Him and grow in His knowledge. You are coming from your life into another - divine, supernatural, wonderful and eternal. This is your new and permanent place, eternal home, clothing and body, - Jesus Christ.

Often, we underestimate this calling and put it in one prayer, when we pray a prayer of repentance, receive Christ into our heart and lay it aside, ready to run and serve Him and live for Him. However, how great, deep and wonderful is His knowledge and this calling, that Paul considered everything as nothing and a loss, just so that he could go deeper into this journey, just so that he could run after Jesus and immerse himself in Him with all his heart.

Philippians 3:8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.

Before his conversion, Paul diligently studied the Scriptures and knew them in detail, but still he did not know Jesus. But when the Holy Spirit dwelt in his heart, He opened the depths of Christ. In Paul's time, there was no New Testament, but the Holy

Spirit revealed to Paul, through the images described in the Old Testament, how to go deeper into Christ. The Holy Spirit used the image of God's temple described in the Old Testament as a "model" of Christ. Paul wrote in his letter to the Jews that it is not possible to talk about this in detail, because the inside of Christ is hidden in these images. By reading about the temple, the things in it and its arrangement, we can look into the interior being of Christ and see the way the Holy Spirit leads us in Christ. The structure of God's temple says so much about Christ that Paul wrote in his letter to the Jews:

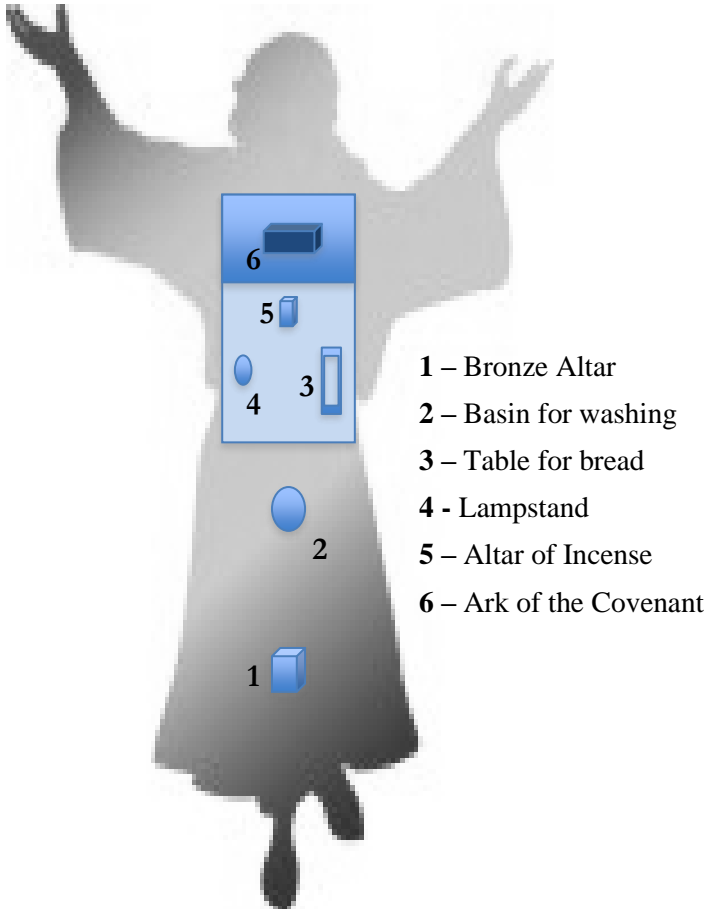
Hebrews 5:11 **We have much to say about this**, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand.

So, what should we talk a lot about - about the temple or about Christ, who is our real temple, where we live, go deep and are led by the Holy Spirit?

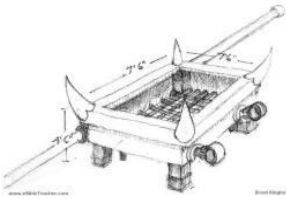
So, let's talk about our heavenly temple where the Lord has placed us. We enter it through the gate. There is no other way to get in than through the gate. Jesus has said directly and without comparison that He is the gate, and no one comes to God except through Him. When you invite Jesus into your life and accept Him by faith as the Son of God and the sent Savior, then not only does He come into your life, but you enter through the door into His life.

John 10:7 Therefore Jesus said again, "Very truly I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep.

Through the door you enter the heavenly temple, the plan and structure of which are described in the Old Testament to the smallest detail. Why did God give so much attention to the description of the temple, not forgetting even the smallest detail, pillar, covering or ornament. It is all about Christ. When you get inside, everything around you is Christ: the little nail and ornament is Christ, the ceiling and floor is Christ, the supports and coverings are Christ. Everything and everywhere around you is Jesus Christ. So, see where you enter and where the Holy Spirit leads you.



A Christian's Life in the Courtyard. Only when we enter the temple of God and are placed in Christ, we see the bronze altar before our eyes. It is the first revelation, the first sight that our spiritual eyes see. Without this revelation and knowledge, further movement in Christ is impossible. Knowing Christ for everyone begins with His sacrifice for our sins, with His death on the cross. Christ was offered as a burnt offering, a guilt offering, and a sin offering. There is nothing around this altar, but as described in the Old Testament, this is where we reconcile ourselves to God by stretching our hands over the sacrifice's head and transferring our sins to the sacrifice.



Leviticus 8:14 He then presented the bull for the sin offering, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head.

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world and all can come and receive His forgiveness and reconciliation with God. But only those who come personally and stretch out their hands over the sacrifice's head receive it, because hands **stretched out in faith** over Jesus' sacrifice bring real forgiveness and peace into our lives. Then it is no longer a symbolic meaning or a religion, but a personal revelation of His forgiveness and justification.

Romans 3:25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—**to be received by faith.** <...>

In the courtyard at the altar, Jesus, as the lamb of God, is "slain" for your sins, His life and blood are poured out on the altar, He

is punished by death, and you stand, accepting His life and forgiveness by faith. In this place of the inner court, all guilt and condemnation in us disappears, the conscience is made clean and calm by the action of His blood, without the slightest reproach. Without this revelation and purification, further movement in Christ is impossible. Because only with a clean conscience and boldness can one approach the Lord.

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full **assurance that faith brings**, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

No one can approach Him with guilt or a condemning past, for only the clean can be invited deeper into His knowledge. When you wait and cleanse your conscience with deeds, feelings and experiences, then you walk around this altar **with hands down**. You know all about the altar, about the fact that Jesus died for your sins, but you do not extend the hands of faith and do not receive personal revelation, constantly walking in condemnation, although you are already in Christ, and you are saved. You absolutely need to reach out and accept by faith complete release from guilt, condemnation, self-analysis, and self-improvement. This sacrifice affects not only your past, present, but also your future. A damaged conscience that constantly accuses you based on your works, experiences, but not His blood, will keep you in the courtyard right at the entrance and hinder your growth in knowing Him, which is why it is so important to stop at this altar and stretch out your hands in faith, accepting full forgiveness and justification. Many think that when we make a mistake, we have to come back to this altar again and Christ has to be offered again for your sins, and you

have to lay the groundwork of justification, grace, and forgiveness again and again. You go back again and walk around this altar, laying the same foundations. But Christ died once for all, His forgiveness and justification is done for your whole life, even for future mistakes. He does not need to die again, and you need to be justified again and again.

Hebrews 7:27 Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins **once for all** when he offered himself.

In the Old Testament, when a man stretched his hands over the head of a sacrifice, it was cut, and the offering's blood was poured out. However, the sacrifice was later burned on the altar. It points to the crucifixion of Jesus body and His death. By staying at the altar, Jesus' sacrifice begins to affect not only our conscience, but also our behaviour, because our flesh is crucified and dies with Jesus. It happens by the same faith.

Romans 6:6 For we know that **our old self was crucified with him** so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—

Here our old life, our old past, and the works of the flesh die: fornication, impurity, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, envying, malice, divisions, jealousies, murders, drunkenness, orgies, and the like (*Galatians 5:19-21*).

In the letter to the Hebrews, it is written that we come to God having cleansed our hearts from an impure conscience and **washed our bodies with clean water** (*Hebrews 10:22*). Washing the body with clean water represents a change in our visible behaviour because of the word of God. There are only two things in the courtyard: a bronze altar and a basin. This laver symbolizes the word of God, which when we read and look at, we see ourselves and which washes and cleanses us. The primary effect of God's word on us is a change in visible behaviour. Even before his death, Jesus told his disciples that they were clean because of the word. The visible behaviour of the disciples had already changed because of God's word.

John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

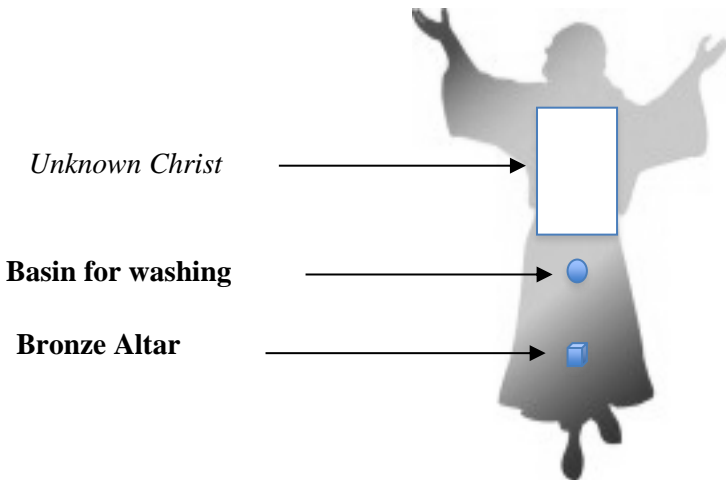


The word of God, working together with the blood of Jesus, cleanses us from the works of the flesh and the guilt. This is immediately reflected in our behaviour: an alcoholic stops drinking, a drug addict stops taking drugs, a fornicator stops fornicating, a thief stops stealing. This effect of the word of God and the blood of Jesus in the inner court is immediately noticeable and visible to all.

The inner courtyard is only the beginning of knowing Christ, the basics of His knowledge, which prepare us for further growing in His image and going from the inner courtyard to the Holy Place. There is nothing in the courtyard except a bronze altar and a laver. The purpose of this courtyard is to cleanse our conscience from dead works through faith in His blood, crucify our sinful nature, change our behaviour by washing us with

God's word, and prepare us to go to the Holy Place of God's temple - to a deeper knowledge of Christ.

Christians and churches built and living in the inner courtyard of the temple have a specific teaching, service, communication and prayer life. Likewise, the word of God works differently in the inner court and in the Holy Part of the temple.



Teaching in the courtyard. Christians and churches living in the inner courtyard are characterized by the teaching of the crucifixion of the works of the flesh and are focused on exhortations, explanations and teaching how to behave. Visible works and changes and good behaviour are mostly emphasized and valued. All that is aimed at and taught to Christians in the courtyard is good and correct behaviour: stopped smoking, drinking, fornicating, started taking care of the family, was degraded, and now has a decent job, a harmonious family, a

well-provided life. The change is clear and visible to all, because man has passed from darkness to light. Accepting Jesus into the heart and entering Him (into the inner courtyard, as into the initial knowledge of Jesus) is clearly reflected in the Christian's behaviour.

In the inner courtyard is also laid the foundation of justification through faith in the blood of Jesus and the assurance of salvation. Some churches and Christians choose only the preaching of grace or only the themes of the crucifixion of the body and the washing of our behaviour by God's word. In this way, in the inner courtyard they know Jesus, only as a bronze altar or, only as a laver. Every Christian need Christ, both as an altar and as a laver. If only grace is preached, but the works of the body are not enlightened, then such a Christian always stands right at the entrance gate, close to the world, so after a while he may turn back. However, if one forgets and stops talking about grace and justification through faith in His blood, and the emphasis is only on washing the body with the word of God, such a church or Christian can stop and become entrenched in self-righteousness and self-improvement. Therefore, in the inner courtyard it is important that the Christian is taught both grace and the crucifixion of the body.

God's word in the courtyard. In the inner courtyard, God's word acts as a basin of water that changes our behaviour. The clean and righteous life of a Christian is mostly emphasized here. If a Christian behaves nicely, has no carnal sins, and does good deeds, this is a limit beyond which one cannot move further. God's good will is known in the inner courtyard. Here we do not yet know the acceptable and perfect will of God. The washing of our conscience, the crucifixion of the works of the flesh, and the purified and changed conduct according to the word of God,

is the good will of God. This is the beginning that we all pass through, because it is impossible to at once be in the Holy of Holies without passing through the inner court and establishing ourselves in those truths that the Holy Spirit reveals and teaches us in the inner court. But there is much more to where the Holy Spirit is leading and preparing us in this wonderful journey of knowing Christ. It is a pity that many Christians and churches linger and remain for a long time or all their lives in the inner courtyard, walking in circles around the altar and the laver and laying the same foundations of faith.

A life of prayer in the courtyard. In the inner courtyard, the life of prayer revolves around the axis of "ask and you shall receive" (*Luke 11:9*). Knowing Christ in the courtyard works by asking and receiving from the Lord a blessing, an answer, a job, a family, provision, help, support, purification, faith, guidance, healing, etc. Prayers in the courtyard centre and revolve around ourselves: Lord, help, grant, bless, heal, intercede, help, protect, answer, show, teach, give. Christ is the only way to solve problems. Visible answers, quick and efficient ways to get help at the right time are expected in the inner courtyard.

In the inner courtyard, the struggle with carnality is reflected in the life of prayer. When we begin to pray, we are attacked by impure and intrusive thoughts, at first it is difficult to pray, and we repeat the requests several times. As we linger longer in the courtyard, we make lists of prayers and repeat them every day. The inner courtyard is characterized by an open space, so when we pray in this place, the enemy attacks us through various thoughts and sent temptations. Many Christians are afraid that strange, impure and anti-God thoughts sound in their minds during prayer, but these are just thoughts sent by the enemy. The entrance of the enemy through the mind is possible only in the

inner court, because the other parts of the temple of God are closed. Both in life and in prayer, each of us needs to begin and pass through the inner courtyard of the temple, so do not be afraid and do not be surprised if you find it difficult at the beginning of the prayer. Just don't stop and stay all the time in the inner courtyard but wait for the Holy Spirit to invite you to go further, where there is a wonderful knowledge of Christ, His closeness and communion with Him.

Relationship in the courtyard. The inner courtyard of the temple, it is the widest place where every Christian comes and where there are many believers. Communication with other Christians in this courtyard is based on talking about how to change behaviour as well as questioning and answering, "what to do in a specific situation". Most of the time, communication is dominated by the following topics: what Christ has done in my life, what to ask from Him and how to get it, what works to do and what kind of behaviour He likes.

Churches and Christians in the inner courtyard tend to be quite categorical and emphasize that only they have full knowledge and only here is the truth. This thinking is typical because the courtyard is the first and so far, the only place they know. The Holy Place and the Holy of Holies is still a mystery and an unknown part of the knowledge of Christ. In the teaching of such Christians visible results are mostly valued: good behaviour, cleanliness, decency, answers received from the Lord (I asked, and He answered me, provided help, took care of me, etc.). In the life of these Christians, Christ has already touched the body (carnal sins and works crucified) but has not yet fully occupied the heart.

The inner courtyard of the temple is the beginning of knowing Christ. This is where every Christian comes in. But it's a pity that many stay in the courtyard all their lives. They are saved, but they only have the initial knowledge of Christ (brass altar and laver), when He, meanwhile, calls them to go further to full knowledge of Him. Therefore, the Lord has placed pastors and teachers in the church who patiently shepherd, explain, teach and encourage the Christians in the inner courtyard to go further into the unknown part of Christ. They cannot lead, but they encourage, teach and help you find your own way and surrender to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That is why it is so important that all ministries work in the church, so that most of them do not remain in the inner courtyard all the time but go further to a mature knowledge of Christ. Witnesses and evangelists bring a person to the inner courtyard, but if there is no pastor and teacher in this courtyard, then the newly converted Christian will walk in circles all the time and settle here for a long time.

Transition to the Holy part of the temple. Isn't everything **just** good behaviour? Isn't Christ **just** a solution to your and other people's problems? Isn't receiving from Him all there is to know? Aren't miracles all you can dream of? When the Holy Spirit confirms the truths of His sacrifice and the cross in your heart, when His word cleanses you from the sins and works of the flesh, then the Holy Spirit causes a thirst for His knowledge in you. It is a sign and an invitation to go to the Holy part of the temple. This desire is given by the Holy Spirit, who alone can draw and lead you in Christ. In your heart, instead of wanting to see what Jesus did and what He is doing now, a desire is born - what is He like? In the inner courtyard, our attention was focused on what Christ had done: deliverance from alcoholism, drugs, healing from sickness and depression - but now our eyes long to see what the One who did all this is like. In the inner

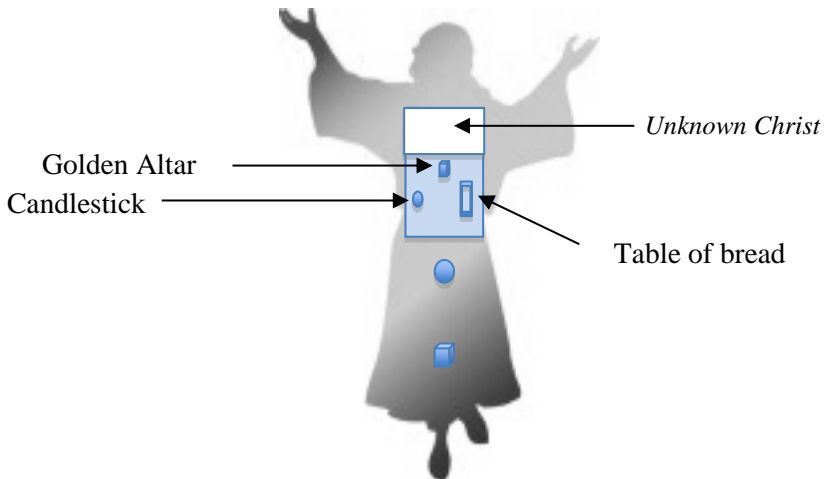
court we lose our carnality, crucifying it with its lusts and works, and cleansed by His word, we begin to go on.

Christian life in the Holy part. A veil separates the inner courtyard from the Holy part, as if we should pass through the curtain that separates these two parts. This is the only thing that separates us from the hidden treasures in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, bringing us into the Holy part, takes us beyond the limit of this invisible veil, removing it from our mind. In the courtyard we were convinced that everything was known that we knew the truth, but a new thirst makes us search. And then a wonderful thing happens in our life, because the Holy Spirit renews our mind according to the word of God and we see that there is something more than the inner courtyard, that Christ calls us to his fellowship, that our renewed mind opens the door to the Holy, to the acceptable will of God. As long as we think the way we want or the way we feel, then we cannot understand and see what He has given and prepared for us, then we stand and trample at the entrance to the Holy part of the temple.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

There are three objects in the Holy place: a table of bread, a candlestick and a golden altar. Each of them is a new part of knowing Christ. Everything in this room is Jesus. We enter a narrower, smaller and closed room, where there is no more outside light. There is less of you in the Holy place, and more of Christ, because you enter without your flesh, which you left crucified in the inner courtyard. New depths of knowing Christ

open up here. As in the inner courtyard, the Christians living in the Holy place are characterized by a specific teaching, relationship and prayer life. God's word also works differently. Many Christian churches and denominations are located in the inner courtyard, much fewer of them have reached the Holy place.



Teaching in the Holy place. Christians and churches living in the Holy place are characterized by teaching about death to self and self-denial, about discipleship in the place of being, literally, saved. Here, the inner decision to follow Jesus, self-denial, true and authentic discipleship are mostly emphasized and valued.

Luke 14:27 And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

If in the courtyard we lose our carnal desires, then in the Holy place we lose our old self. Loss is not what I have or what I do, but what I am becomes the main light of His word that illuminates our lives and shows us the way to walk. If in the courtyard we "ask and receive", then here we "seek and find Jesus as the person".

Searching for and knowing Jesus as a person, but not what He has or does, becomes a key part of teaching in the Holy place. Why do we need to seek Him if He can show us right away? Finding Jesus yourself without the help of the Holy Spirit is impossible. It is impossible to see a needle in a haystack without accurate revelation. So why does He want us to seek and take so long when He could show us right away and allow Himself to be found? Something happens when we seek Him, when our heart yearns and pours itself out before Him. In the search, we pour out and give away everything we have and lose ourselves, as it were, pouring out the old and becoming new wineskins ready to receive the new wine. It is impossible to find without searching and searching - without losing yourself. As soon as we lose ourselves and die to ourselves, then He allows Himself to be discovered, as if we were there all the time, without noticing Him only because we saw ourselves.

When Jesus spoke about the kingdom of heaven, He compared it to a treasure hidden in the ground. Most of us have found this treasure, we know and admire Christ, we can tell a lot about Him, but we cannot really experience Him. We have Him, we know where He is, but we cannot use that treasure.

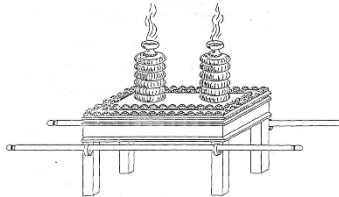
Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he

hid it again, and then in his joy went and **sold all he had** and bought that field.

In this parable, Jesus revealed that as long as we do not sell everything we have, i.e. we do not lose ourselves and do not die to ourselves, then we cannot really use this treasure, until Christ does not become a reality in us, but remains only a dream and a desire. This is not about selling material possessions because they are not all we have. All we have is ourselves, the whole "I", so only after losing ourselves do we become His disciples, and the person of Christ is not just a known treasure, but a real person and reality in our lives.

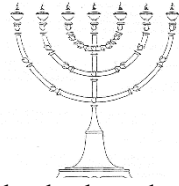
If in the inner courtyard we know the good will of God, then in the Holy place we find the acceptable will of God. It is more than the good will of God, because here we discover and know Him by emptying and losing ourselves. This is God's acceptable will, but don't stop because God's perfect will is still waiting for you.

God's word in the Holy place. In the Holy place, the word of God works differently than in the inner court. We enter a more closed room, where there is no longer any outside light, but only a candlestick standing in front of a table of bread. On this table are loaves of bread, symbolizing Jesus as the living bread coming down from on high. Jesus has said that He is the true bread of life.



John 6:48 I am the bread of life.

We feed on Him as bread. Communion with Christ becomes real and personal through the word of God. But there is another object standing in front of the table. This is a candlestick. God's word becomes illuminated by revelation in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit reveals the word of God, which becomes not only the bread of life, but also light.



John 8:12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

All of a sudden, our heart lights up while reading the same verses. Something has changed. In the courtyard we used to read His word, trying to correct our behaviour, studying it as a code, as if washing with water and becoming cleaner, but now His word comes alive, like light and bread. The word becomes so alive and clear, illuminated by the Holy Spirit. He is no longer a simple sink, but bread on the table and light in the heart. Things that were previously overlooked and obscured become so clear, understandable and simple. Before that, we used to repeat various confessions of God's word in the courtyard, as if thinking that frequent repetition convinces God, but in the Holy place, one sentence is enough and everything is true. We no longer need to convince ourselves, prove and pressure ourselves, because we begin to see a concrete and real person - Jesus - in His word.

Jesus becomes a real person, communication with Him is close and intimate, His actions are supernatural. But that's where the vast majority of us stop, settling down for good. After

discovering such a close and wonderful communion with Jesus after the courtyard, we settle down. It is better than the inner court, and the knowledge is deeper, but it is still the perfect will of God and the Holy of Holies, the place to which He calls and for which the whole temple exists. Don't stay in the Holy place for the rest of your life, no matter how wonderful, beautiful and supernatural it may seem.

The life of prayer in the Holy place. The life of prayer in the Holy place is not about finding answers, gifts or solutions to problems, but about a specific person and a close relationship with Him. Prayers in this place are directed to Jesus: praise, glorification, looking at Him, pouring out the heart and all of oneself before Him, experiencing love, joy and closeness with Him. The knowledge of Jesus becomes real in prayer, and His person shines in our heart in various colours. Communication with Jesus fills our prayers. We become like Mary who sits at His feet and looks at Him. Prayer lists, frequent repetitions and confessions, struggles with the flesh and all kinds of thoughts, problems and requests remained in the inner courtyard, but here He is - a real person, attracting to Himself with beauty and love. Instead of what He does, we see what He is like.

Two-thirds of our previous prayers change or disappear. Repeated prayers with various pleas "protect, help, strengthen, save, answer, provide and give" remain in the inner courtyard, as the light of His word changes our heart, giving birth to strong faith. We no longer need to pray "protect, take care" at every step, because His word becomes a living verse in our heart, saying that He protects and cares for us all the time. Many problems and requests go away because now living faith in His word knows that He loves us, protects us and cares for us. Now, indeed, we begin to seek the kingdom of heaven. Personal

prayers are replaced by seeking Him, rejoicing in Him, and walking toward Him. The thoughts sent by the enemy no longer enter the sanctuary, because this room of the temple is closed. Praying becomes so simple and easy. The transition from the inner courtyard to the Holy can be experienced, both in each individual prayer, and reflected in our entire prayer life.

Relationship in the Holy place. Relationship between Christians also changes in this place. Personal relationship with the Lord is also reflected in communication with others. Sincerity, love, mercy become essential clothes of relationship. The main axis of relationship becomes the desire for the other to know such close relationship with the Lord as you have, so that the person next to you is also happy, safe and secure in Him. We are ready to sympathize, help, care, give without reproach, grieve and rejoice together. A personal relationship with Jesus is reflected in our conversations, prayers, and communication. We are more and more able to bear and bear the shortcomings and difficulties of others, the weaknesses and carnality of new believers, and we become less categorical than in the inner courtyard, because we already know that there is a Holy place and we understand that the level of knowledge is different, so we accept others with shortcomings.

But on the other hand, relationship in the Holy place changes, as it were, narrowing down, because we enter a tighter room. In the inner courtyard, we used to rush and communicate with everyone, we went to conferences and tried to be active and find our service, but in the Holy place we spend more time in personal relationship with the Lord and with those who are here. This does not mean that the Christian separates himself from others, on the contrary, in this place he can more easily accept others without raising preconditions due to differences in

teaching and level of knowledge. However, there are fewer Christians in the Holy place, because not all believers fit here, but only disciples. In the inner court we lost our flesh, and in the Holy place we lose and empty ourselves. But before entering the Holy of Holies, there is a golden altar on which we will have to place our whole being as a new creation, so that Jesus will fill us with overflow, taking into his hands our new life.

Transition to the Holy of Holies. Before we enter the Holy of Holies, we have already crucified our carnality in the courtyard, having renounced ourselves and our old self in the Holy of Holies, but we are still afraid to let go of the control of our new life. Before we go any further, strange things begin to happen to us. In the Holy place, we are so close to Christ, filled with His love, we constantly feel His kindness and peace, but we are so afraid of losing "this feeling and state" that we keep it in our hands with all our might. But all of this is starting to slip out of our hands and control. Suddenly we notice that we are no longer able to control our feelings, to maintain a state of kindness and love. Everything seems to be the opposite - when others are filled with His closeness and love, we no longer feel anything and become dry and unspiritual in the eyes of others. Trying with all our might to preserve and control our feelings and spiritual state, we hear the voice of the Holy Spirit "let it go". Yes, let it go of all control of your new creation and put it in God's hands. We come to the golden altar, which is so different from the bronze one in the courtyard.

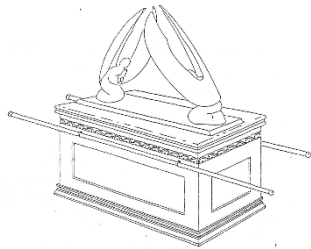
Here only incense is offered as a sweet smell to the Lord. He brings us to this altar on which we place our whole self - a new person created in the image of God. We surrender everything: our plans, service, work, dreams, good and bad

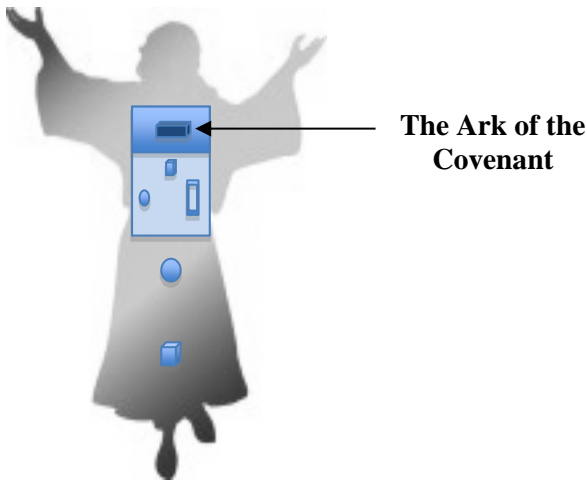


feelings, our will and future. We become with Christ a living and immortal sacrifice, an immobile instrument prepared to be used for His honour and glory, a quiet and surrendered to master. Then He is ready to usher us into the Holy of Holies.

Romans 12:1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Christian life in the Holy of Holies. This is the narrowest and main part of the temple, with room for only one person. It is such a tight space that only one person can stand. And that one person is Jesus. You are gone in the Holy of Holies. You can no longer say anything about yourself, your needs, feelings, desires, you no longer feel or react to yourself, because He becomes more real than you. Only God speaks in the Holy of Holies, and the only light is His glory above the throne of grace. There is only one object in the Holy of Holies, the ark of the covenant, above which is the throne of grace and from which His voice proceeds and dwells the glory of God. This is Jesus.





You become completely filled with Him. This does not mean that you are "super spiritual" or something shining and special. You still look like an earthen vessel and everyone who looks at you sees nothing special. However, you have already lost your carnality, your old self, your mind is filled with His word, and your feelings are no longer yours, because you have given them into the hands of Jesus, your will, plans, past, present and future are also laid on the altar. You have nothing left but Jesus. This is the work of the Holy Spirit, which He performs, leading to the full knowledge of the truth. It does not take anything away from you, but by revealing the beauty of Jesus, it encourages you to give yourself and accept Him.

Teaching in the Holy of Holies. Many think that life in the Holy of Holies is possible only in heaven, that being one with Christ is a dream, a myth, or a symbolic meaning that can only be fulfilled in heaven. However, before Jesus left his disciples, He prayed that becoming one with Him would become a reality already in the life on earth. We often imagine that such a Christian must radiate visible light or raise the dead every day.

But living in the Holy of Holies is filling your insides with Christ while remaining a simple earthly vessel. There are many churches and Christian denominations located on the road from the inner courtyard to the Holy of Holies, which, having learned some part of the teaching, stop and establish themselves in one place. As the room narrows, there are fewer who do not stop and go all the way to the Holy of Holies. In this place, teaching is based not on getting something from Him, not on seeking, but on knocking on the door of His life.

Luke 11:9 “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; **knock and the door will be opened to you.**

When Jesus knocks on the door of our life and we open it, then He enters our life, but in the Holy of Holies we knock on the door of His life. Then He opens and lets us into the centre of His heart, revealing to us His perfect will. We enter fully into His life, becoming one with Him. Now He fills us so that it is no longer we who live, but He in us. This is God's perfect will to which He calls. To live according to the word of God in the inner court is the good will of God, to seek and find Jesus is the acceptable will of God, but to enter into His life, losing all of yourself, and to be filled with His overflowing life, is the perfect will of God.

In the Holy of Holies there is a true union with Jesus, where His love begets love, where the Lord glorifies the Lord, where He speaks, and He answers. And all this is happening in your earthly vessel, in which you are no longer present. Christians and churches living in the Holy of Holies are characterized by the teaching of serving and worshiping in the Spirit. It is not simple praise and singing, but the worship of Christ as King and

Lord. Being in the Holy of Holies, as being in the Spirit, was also experienced by the apostle John. At the beginning of the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John does not see Jesus, to whose chest he was hugging on the ground, but Jesus, from whose eyes a flame of fire spreads, whose feet are like a furnace, who comes in the clouds and upon seeing whom John falls to the ground as if dead.

God's word in the Holy of Holies. God's word works differently in this place than in the inner courtyard or the Holy place. Here he is not just a basin of water or bread and light, here He is a person - Jesus Christ, who speaks through our lips. It is no longer just the Word; it is the Person in us. When you read His word, then you are reading about yourself, because Christ lives in you.

A life of prayer in the Holy of Holies. In prayer, having entered the Holy of Holies, we remain silent. Here there is more silence than talk. In this place, the life of prayer becomes not a request, a communication, a search, but a knock. He uses our lips and worships Himself. We are gone, now only His Spirit speaks. The Holy of Holies is the only place in the temple where only God speaks. There are no longer any of our requests, desires or quests. Here we are silent, and God speaks. The Holy Spirit opens our lips, but He speaks.

Relationship in the Holy of Holies. Christians living in the Holy of Holies have fewer talks or pleasant sittings. What unites them is no longer a sense of closeness, a good spiritual state or people with a similar character and dear to the heart, but Christ. They communicate with each other as with Christ, being strangers and having no attachment to each other, yet seeing Christ. To others, such Christians often seem rude and strange. Believers who live

in the inner courtyard or in the Holy place are sometimes offended when they think that such servants of God are proud, because they do not devote so much time to communication, having a good time and discussing about one or another denomination and Christian. In their communication, there is less and less discussion about the Christian's problems, solutions, analysis of situations, because their wonderful topic is He - the real and active person Jesus. They are, as it were, unpredictable, but at the same time humble and patient, able to show a stranger the kind of attention that Christ showed to the Samaritan woman. There is no categorization left in communication, because the Christian live in this place knows that there is an inner courtyard and the Holy place, in which he has been and where he returns to serve others, descending and communicating with others on the level at which he meets them. Christians and churches living in this place are often despised and accused of being too spiritual or too condescending and tolerant of others. They are less noticeable, but the most criticized. Christians living here are not seen, because the death of Christ begins to work in them, bearing fruit in others. They are covered by the death of Christ, but bear fruit in the Christians around them. Where they go, there is a blessing, but they themselves remain unnoticed or criticized. They bear the insults calmly because their old self is dead. They are simply gone.

Apostle Paul, when visiting churches, looked simple, speechless, sometimes sick, spoke with fear and trembling, nothing special was seen in him, only an earthly vessel. Some criticized and doubted his apostleship, but wherever he appeared, the power of God was at work, bearing fruit in others. He appeared simple, humble, or immeasurably strict and "carnal", ordering how to behave or exhorting and begging with tears. It was difficult for some to understand what Paul really is: is he strict, as he writes in his letters, or gentle and kind, as he

appeared when he came? It didn't matter to Povilas how he would be received and how those around him would judge him. When he came to the Holy of Holies, he stopped valuing himself, as if he no longer existed. All that remained in his life was Christ.

1 Corinthians 4:3 I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself.

Turning back, you will be amazed at what the Lord can do on the road between the inner court and the Holy of Holies.

5 CHAPTER

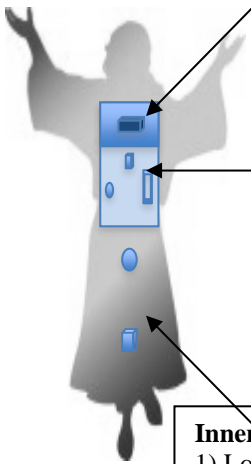
Between the courtyard and the Holy of Holies

God's word says that Jesus opened the way to the Holy of Holies. Although the road is free, it is not shortened. There is no detour or short cut to the Holy of Holies. You will still need to pass the inner courtyard and the Holy place. Our flesh wants to get into the Holy of Holies as quickly as possible and avoid crucifixion, it longs to leap quickly and efficiently across the courtyard. Likewise, our old self wants to avoid the Holy place, so that it does not have to die to itself, so that it can take a shortcut to the Holy of Holies. We ourselves are incapable of reaching the goal, so we need an assistant and a guide, the Holy Spirit, who alone can connect us to the death of Jesus, make us thirsty and lead us into the Holy of Holies, into the full and mature age of knowing Christ. You cannot walk this path on your own, but you must be guided. Therefore, more and more often in your life you will hear a call and a gentle invitation to "come". It is the Holy Spirit that draws you and guides you. He will complete everything, just don't stop and surrender to His guidance. He will call you with His voice "come" from the inner courtyard to the Holy place, from the Holy place to the Holy of Holies. Every day you will hear His voice "come".

The path from the inner courtyard to the Holy of Holies is the path of losing our self and discovering Jesus. The more you lose yourself, the more you find Jesus, the more you pour yourself out, the more you are filled with His life. It doesn't happen by doing some work, praying, applying a principle or a special confession. It only happens while responding to His voice. At the end of the road, a surprise awaits you - you will lose yourself, but you will find Jesus.

Matthew 10:39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

You need someone to nail you to the cross together with Jesus, because you cannot and do not want to nail yourself. You also need someone who will revive the dead in your life and raise you up together with Jesus. You need the Holy Spirit. Going on your



Holy of Holies

- 1) Surrendering our new self / Christ in me
- 2) Knock and the doors shall be opened
- 3) Perfect will of God

Holy place

- 1) Losing our old self / Discovering the person of Jesus
- 2) Seek and you shall find
- 3) Acceptable will of God

Inner courtyard

- 1) Losing the carnality / Discovering "What Jesus did"
- 2) Ask and you shall receive
- 3) Good will of God

own
can only
lead you
astray.

At the beginning of the journey, in the inner courtyard, you feel like everyone need you and you know everything, and when you

come to the Holy of Holies, you are the smallest of all, and you feel as if you need everyone. Apostle Paul wrote in his first letters that he does not seem inferior to the so-called "famous" apostles, but in the last letters he says that he is the least and is not even worthy to be called an apostle. In this journey he lost everything to win Christ. We begin in the inner courtyard of the widest place, where there are many other things beside Jesus in our lives, and we end in the Holy of Holies, where only Christ remains.

Communicating with Christians in various parts of the temple.

On this path, we meet many believers and disciples with various levels of knowledge of Christ, seeing various churches and denominations on our way. Many of them are in Christ, fully saved and justified, but how many disputes and disagreements arise simply because many of them, having stopped and settled in a certain place in the temple, stop walking and establish themselves in the only revealed truth. The Christian in the inner court cannot grow suddenly to the level of knowledge that is in the Holy of Holies, but the Christian here can descend to the inner court and minister to the latter. The Apostle Paul writes that when we meet a Christian who has a lower level of knowledge, we should keep our faith and knowledge to ourselves and show it only to God. The apostle Paul calls for communication between Christians living in different parts of the temple to be based on service, love and acceptance of each other without arguments, pressure to change or accept another level of knowledge. In his letters, Paul pleads with us to bear one another's burdens, faults and weaknesses and accept one another without prejudice, judgment, or condescension.

Ephesians 4:2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Each place of the temple has a different teaching and emphasis on different subjects. These differences often lead to disputes, strife and the establishment of various denominations. We often see that a newly converted Christian cannot immediately accept the teachings and things presented in the Holy of Holies or the Holy place. Paul writes that he could not speak to the believers in the Corinthian church as to spiritual ones but had to communicate as to infants who are still carnal, still uncrucified in their carnality and living in the inner court.

1 Corinthians 3:1 Brothers and sisters, **I could not** address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ.

A Christian with a higher level of knowledge cannot impose his teaching in the inner courtyard, because he will be rejected, misunderstood, and as a result, divisions will occur. Likewise, if the Christian in the inner courtyard is fed the same teaching and word all the time, he will not grow, stop and settle here forever. Therefore, it is so important for the church to have constant teaching of His word and going deeper, growing from one level of faith and knowledge to another, from one level of glory to another. And who can arrange all this, know and serve food on time? Only the Holy Spirit, who knows and searches our hearts, can do this. Therefore, the most important thing in your life is surrendering to His guidance - whether it is an individual Christian or the whole church, because you can only get lost by managing and organizing yourself. You need the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

6 CHAPTER

Second calling

The purpose of the second calling. The second calling to serve others with His power, to experience and see great signs and wonders is perhaps the most desired and sought calling in a Christian's life. But it is a second calling, following the first, and is discovered only by remaining in the first. The purpose of serving others is always directed to Christ - to serve others with God's strength and gifts, growing in the knowledge of Christ and helping the Christians around to reach the perfect age of maturity in Jesus Christ. The purpose of the second calling is not to evangelize, to attract and increase the number of believers, to solve problems, to communicate well, to fill the church with people or to keep them, to receive His gifts and become a pastor or an evangelist. The purpose of this calling is to make every person an authentic disciple of Christ, a perfect man of spirit who has reached a mature level of knowledge of Christ.

Colossians 1:28 He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may **present everyone fully mature in Christ.**

What is the essential thing for the second calling? Perhaps the most frequently asked questions about the second calling are: how to discover it, how to find out what service the Lord has prepared for me, who I am and what gifts I have, how to serve others, how to be fruitful and bear a hundredfold fruit that will last?

Only after accepting Jesus into our hearts and becoming babies in Jesus Christ, we immediately begin to look for a second calling, trying to understand who I am: a pastor, an evangelist, a prophet, an organizer? Fascinated by the servants of God around us, we try various ministries in our lives, trying to find our calling. We press as hard as we can, trying our best to serve others and bear fruit. However, very often we are disappointed, seeing that our efforts do not bring the fruits of abundance that we dreamed of and expected. When we see an anointed man of God through whom God's power and wisdom flow, we also try to do the same and apply various methods and principles that seem to work in the life of such a servant of God. However, we are disappointed that after so much effort and "pushing" nothing changes in our lives. Why is it so easy for others, seemingly without effort and their own strength, as if they have a supernatural anointing from God and are swimming in the river, carried by the current of the Spirit? Why do you need so much strength, sweat, effort and time to achieve even a fraction of what God's servants are achieving? Why do you need to "push" when everything works out for them without any "push" as if guided by invisible hands? What do they have that you don't, what works for them, what doesn't work for you?

You need a **real working** anointing of the Holy Spirit. Without this anointing, your life can only be natural, simple and without the power of God. Despite the best wishes, efforts and desires, without the anointing of the Holy Spirit in action, it is impossible to bear a hundredfold harvest. Anointing is the power of the Holy Spirit through which the Lord, His character and His works are revealed.

Why is anointing necessary? Why can't I bear much fruit if I communicate so sincerely and closely with Jesus, if I feel His

presence so clearly and enjoy Him every day? Isn't the first calling and my personal relationship with the Lord enough? Why is another anointing of the Holy Spirit necessary? Many of us confuse ourselves by thinking that if our relationship with the Lord is wonderful and beautiful, then this is enough for Him to work powerfully in our service. However, the second calling works differently and is fruitless without the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit. The anointing is not for relationship with the Lord, but for service to others.

Even before he was anointed as king, David was communicating with the Lord, glorifying Him and serving his father. He knew the Lord, and the Lord knew David. Their relationship was already personal. But it was only after the prophet Samuel anointed David to be the king of Israel that the Holy Spirit came upon him, giving him the power to be what David was called to be. David then began to serve his people as king, leading Israel out of oppression.

1 Samuel 16:13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David.

We also read in the New Testament that although the apostles had direct relationship with Jesus, they were cleansed, strengthened and saw the risen Lord, but they could not do anything and make anything fruitful until the moment when the Holy Spirit descended on them on the day of Pentecost, anointing them to be witnesses and giving strength to serve others.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

We also see the anointing of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' ministry to people. The Lord, while living on earth, was perfect, sinless and in constant communication with the Father. Their relationship was continuous, but Jesus did nothing of Himself and waited for the anointing of the Holy Spirit to touch His head. The Lord did not rely on his own perfect qualities but waited patiently for thirty years to be anointed by the power of the Holy Spirit to serve others. When the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus in the Jordan river, from that moment His life on earth changed because He was anointed to serve others. He was still in human body and still communicating with the Father, but something wonderful and powerful began to work in His ministry, like oil flowing through His body and touching others.

Acts 10:38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

The Lord, like each of us, needed the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was dependent on the Holy Spirit all his life and did not rely on the fact that he knows the Father, communicates with Him constantly and is perfect. Also in your life, in order to be able to bear a hundredfold harvest, you need a real working anointing of the Holy Spirit, regardless of how long, closely and wonderfully you communicate with the Lord.

Being in the first calling and remaining in Him, you grow in the knowledge of Jesus to a mature age, becoming a beautiful and green olive tree, bearing fruit and full of ripe olives.

Psalms 52:8 But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God; I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever.

At a mature and fertile age, you will reach a point where you will have to decide if you want to move on. In this place, each of us can stop and enjoy ripe olives for the rest of our lives, salvation, provision, being loved and loving, helping others and serving in the church. No one will force you, pressure you to go further, not even the Lord. But one day you will certainly hear His question: "Do you want to go further, do you want to bear a hundredfold fruit and see the anointing of the Holy Spirit really working in your life, or do you want to have a great measure of it, not a few drops that fall on your head sometimes, but constantly flowing oil of the Holy Spirit?" Every Christian who has reached the age of fruitfulness is faced with a choice - will you allow the Lord to squeeze oil from the ripe olives hanging on your tree?

You cannot squeeze the oil out of yourself, achieve or earn the anointing, but you can let Him do it. All He desires is permission to press the oil in your life. If you want Him to use you powerfully, you need the anointing of the Holy Spirit that is actually working. Do not be afraid or dismayed, for He can do it. This anointing is not a one-time event, an automatic process, a principle, or a symbol. If you accept to be trained and guided, then the Lord will bring you into the second calling, anointing and enabling you to be an instrument of His glory.

We receive everything from God as a gift, without any reproaches or exceptions. Like salvation, anointing is given to every Christian. The word "Christ" means "anointed one", and "Christian" means one like Christ, i.e. also anointed. We are all anointed to serve, bear fruit, and be used for His glory and honour. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is given as a gift to every Christian, but in order for it to begin to work, a certain process must go through - oil must begin to flow from the pressed olive. We all grow olives, but few accept the Lord's pressing oil from these fruits. Everyone has olives, but not everyone has oil.

As in the first calling, so in the second, you must be brought into the anointing. Many do not agree to go all the way because it "costs". Many of us are surprised to hear that anointing "costs". How!? After all, the Lord gave us everything as a gift, now we just need to use it. However, if we look at the lives of all the servants of God, through whom the Lord worked and works powerfully, we can notice that all of them paid the "price" for this anointing. They did not buy or acquire anything but paid the price without money because they accepted the Lord to press the oil in their lives.

Isaiah 55 :1 “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you **who have no money**, come, **buy** and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

Before you give your consent, the Lord will show you how the Holy Spirit presses the oil from the olives, so that you will not be afraid and would rely on His guidance. Jesus, while walking with his disciples on earth, after some time began to talk about humiliation, crucifixion and death. He did not immediately start

talking about it, but when the disciples were strengthened in faith, the Lord began to teach them about the upcoming events, as it were, preparing them for something.

Luke 18:32 He will be delivered over to the Gentiles.
They will mock him, insult him and spit on him;

Why did the Lord warn and speak about this? Why does the Holy Spirit warn of upcoming events and preparation for the anointing? The Lord wants you not to be afraid and not to be disturbed when there will be storms, pressures in your life, as if someone bent his hand low over you, crushing and pressing your olives. Before his suffering and in the most difficult hour, Jesus encouraged the disciples, urged them not to be afraid because in fact, the process of pressure, although unpleasant, yields a wonderful fruit - flowing oil. Jesus prayed in a garden of olive trees called Gethsemane, which means "the place where oil is pressed". Along with Him, His disciples also passed through this pressure, who were overcome with sorrow and confusion. Having just seen Jesus received with joy by people in Jerusalem, and watching Lazarus raised from the dead, they were now filled with sorrow and confusion. Why did Jesus warn his disciples about this before the crucifixion? He encouraged and revealed this in advance so that they would not be frightened and disturbed by these events, because after this pressure and crushing, the anointing oil that was poured out on the disciples on the day of Pentecost came out of Jesus' life. This helped the disciples of Jesus to go through, survive, endure and receive this oil.

By His grace, He will lead you to the calling, so that the anointing will really work in your life, so that it is not catchy phrases, principles and confessions, but a real and living Person

whom you love and follow wherever He goes. Therefore, before that, the Holy Spirit shows and warns about what the Lord will do. Do not be afraid or dismayed, for He can do it. You will not do this in your own strength, but do not ignore what the Spirit says about the things that will be in your path and how He will lead you in grace and victory to the real working anointing of the Holy Spirit. If only one truth is preached about grace, that all your path will be smooth, without valleys and pits, that is only one side of the coin. You can choose to look only in this direction, but if you want to know the fullness of Christ and act in real anointing, then commit yourself to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and He will do everything for you, showing you more than you see. It will declare what will happen, teach, comfort, guide and work in your life. But He won't do anything without your consent, so before you say "yes" to His call, look at how the oil flows, pressed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

7 CHAPTER

Anointing

When Jesus taught about the kingdom of heaven, He spoke in parables, using agricultural and daily life things. Therefore, even for an uneducated person of that time, His word was accessible and understandable. In the Old and New Testaments, anointing and the power of the Holy Spirit were symbolized by the oil that was used to anoint kings, prophets and other men of God who were called by the Lord to do certain works. This anointing gave them supernatural abilities and strength to fulfil God's calling.

It was clear and understandable to every person of that time how the oil used to anoint God's servants was made. The oil production process is now happening not in the material world, but in the spiritual world, and it can happen in your life as well. So, what is this process?

Olive trees were one of the main sources of livelihood for the Israelites during the Old and New Testaments. The fields of olive trees symbolized the fertility and prosperity of the whole country. As an olive tree looks beautiful with ripe olives, so beautiful, blessed and fruitful is your life. The Lord compares our life filled with His word to a fruitful tree planted by a spring of pure water. However, when the harvest season comes, the owner, who has nurtured, grown and cared for the olive tree all the time, begins to behave strangely and incomprehensible to it.

The owner of the olive tree takes a wooden stick and starts hitting the branches of the tree so that the shrivelled olives fall to the ground. Then he takes hold of the trunk of the tree and shakes it several times so that all the ripe olives fall to the ground. After collecting the fallen olives, he pours them onto a

stone plate and rolls a stone over them, thus starting the pressing-crushing process. A heavy stone presses and crushes the stacked olives, from which the liquid oil begins to flow little by little. The olives are crushed, the pits fall out, and the flowing liquid oil is collected in a separate container. Then it is poured into a container dug in the ground and left to stand for some time. Standing in this pit, the liquid oil is purified, i.e. the water settles, and the oil collects at the top. After this purification, the host comes and kneeling, collects the thick and high-quality oil from the container on the ground and pours it into a container.

At the time of Jesus' life on earth, this process of oil production was known and understood by every person, because they did it constantly. This image tells us a lot about what the Holy Spirit does when we ask for His powerful anointing and let Him press the oil into our lives. This does not mean that He sends us sickness, poverty or some kind of horror, because the source of such things is the devil, but various tribulations come into our lives that squeeze out the oil that flows with His power into the lives of others.

The enemy often deceives and says that God sends us sicknesses, calamities and other difficulties for us to carry them as a "cross". Such difficulties and various misfortunes are not our cross. Some Christians accept the calamities and sufferings sent by the devil, accepting them as afflictions from God. However, the Lord encourages us to resist the devil and such sufferings he sends. It has nothing to do with God's will. However, other storms and difficulties come into our lives that are actually blessings. So, briefly about what happens in your life, when the oil is being produced.

A stick and shaking. The first thing that brings fertility into your life is the master hitting your olive tree with a wooden stick. This wooden staff symbolizes the cross of Jesus. Jesus's

sacrifice and His death on the cross is not only your justification and forgiveness, but also your death. You, together with Him, led by the Holy Spirit, die to yourself. There will be events and situations in your life when the choice to be with Christ and die to self will cost you respect, work, family, friends, favourable opportunities and a comfortable environment. The apostle Paul wrote that the death of Jesus was actually working in his life every day. It is not just a symbolic meaning or a "legal" aspect of Christ's death. It becomes a reality and a working force in your life through the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:31 I face death every day—yes, just as surely as I boast about you in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You don't need to specifically look for such circumstances, give up everything arbitrarily, but whenever the Holy Spirit will encourage you to choose the cross of Jesus and die to yourself, then do not be afraid, because He will keep and strengthen you.

Sometimes we don't understand why something strange is happening in our lives, as if our tree was shaken and the fruits fallen on the ground from it.

1 Peter 4:12 Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though **something strange were happening** to you.

Also, sometimes the wind starts to blow into our lives, as if trying to destroy and take away what we have. Jesus warned in advance about rains, storms and wind, both in the life of the unbeliever and the believer. This wind comes only to reveal the strength of God's word in us. There are storms in our lives that refine us and show us how steadfast His word is. It is not our behaviour, thoughts, feelings or will that is firm, but God's word is immovable. The Lord shows before all the angels, authorities

and principalities in the heavenly realms how steadfast and refined His word is. He does not test us because He knows beforehand what is in our hearts. He longs to open up and show everyone the strength of His word: "Look, see what My word is worth, how firm and immovable, tested and powerful." He is not testing us, but he is publicly showing the power of His word. Will you allow Him to demonstrate the reliability of His word in your life? How can you see this firmness if the word in you will not be bent and shaken? The storm does not break you, but the foundations of your house, so that everyone can see how strong your rock is on which you live.

Matthew 7:25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

There are circumstances and situations in your life when nothing seems to work, when circumstances do not change and all support and reinforcement disappear, leaving only one foundation and only possibility - His word. The Lord never anoints our mind, feelings, will or behaviour, He anoints His word, so don't be surprised if there are moments when you have nothing left in your life but this support. After such a storm, you will come out strong only because of His word. He does not strengthen you, but His word in you. He will give you a chance to discover this strength, so don't be surprised when the other supports are removed. Then the word of God in you will become tested, able to bless others, like flowing oil.

Pressure - crushing. This is the main process of oil production and the part we would like to avoid. When we think of ministry, we usually picture ourselves in the pulpit preaching, prophesying, and seeing the power of God healing the sick, casting out demons, and changing people's hearts. As we read

about the apostle Paul's ministry, we willingly pick out the parts where the power of God works mightily through him. However, we often don't see the second half of the ministry, during which Paul is under pressure. Two processes take place at the same time: the olives are pressed and crushed and the oil flows. We want to see oil flowing, but we don't want to see pressure and crushing. Paul, speaking of his ministry, revealed the full picture, without hiding the price he pays for this anointing and flowing oil.

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 We are **hard pressed** on every side, but not crushed; **perplexed**, but not in despair; **persecuted**, but not abandoned; **struck down**, but not destroyed.

The death of Jesus and His life were at work in Paul's life, but these two parts of the knowledge of Christ were at work in different places: the death, pressure, and crushing of Jesus were at work in him, and the life of Jesus and the flowing oil in others. Paul paid the "price" for such a great move of God: he did not buy, he did not acquire, he did not earn, he was not exclusive. He simply gave his consent to the Holy Spirit to do everything in his life.

2 Corinthians 4:12 So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

The Holy Spirit reveals the mystery of how the anointing works through images and parables. Indeed, the oil that comes from pressing and crushing the olives is a new quality, a new power that can shake the earth and raise the dead. The first church in Jerusalem experienced a period of great awakening after Pentecost, when the number of disciples increased, the church grew, and all believers enjoyed Favor with God and men. But

after a while, persecution and tribulation began. They could no longer make free choices, live well and behave as they were used to. They were scattered throughout Samaria and beyond. But this tribulation, in fact, made the anointing oil flow even stronger and further, so that the power of God's word spread beyond the borders of Judea and attracted the saved with even greater force.

The apostle Paul was one of those who experienced the most pressures, persecutions and was pressured, both from without (persecution) and from within (fear). However, he fully surrendered to the work of the Holy Spirit, believing that whether in life or death, Jesus would still be exalted in him. He was convinced that everything that happens in life turns out for the good of those who love God. Therefore, he realized that the weaknesses revealed in him produced immeasurably great strength.

2 Corinthians 12:10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Storage in a pit – taking oil from the pit. When liquid oil came out of the olives after pressing and crushing, it was not pure and high-quality, because there was still water in the oil. To make the oil really good, the owner would pour it into a hole dug in the ground and let it sit for a while to allow the water to separate and settle and the pure oil to rise to the surface. This is what sometimes happens in our lives, when there comes a time when it seems that the Lord forgets us and puts us aside, as if healing the wounds caused by pressing oil. At such moments, we are simply put aside, as if waiting for something. This is one of the most important moments in a Christian's life - waiting for the Lord. We are so taught to be active, to move, to strive and to

work, that we do not know what it really means to wait on the Lord. This waiting in us refines the anointing and makes it thick. This is not just a waste of time. As we wait on the Lord, our strength is renewed, we gain strength that comes from within with new strength and a thick anointing. Unimportant things in our hearts settle and disappear like water, and all that is meant for Jesus rises to the surface like precious and thick oil that is used for the support, revival, strengthening and joy of others.

Isaiah 40:31 but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

While waiting for the Lord, the passive side of "death to self" works in us. The Lord encourages us to wait and trust Him, so that while waiting, we die to ourselves, our efforts, plans and imaginations, and His word becomes our support and the only possibility. It is the passive side of "death to self" that the Holy Spirit reveals in us. There is also the active side of "death to self" when we need to take an active step of faith leading to the death of Jesus. More on that a little later.

This test of time is an integral part of the life of every Christian who desires to be qualified for the second calling. This is very important because when we receive the Lord, we soar like eagles with new power and thick anointing. Adam did not receive the Lord and was tempted, King Saul did not receive the prophet Samuel and took his own strength and initiative to defend Israel, which cost him his anointing and later his life. Therefore, it is very important to rely on the Lord and wait for His wind that lifts our wings and takes us to the right place at the right time.

1 Peter 5:6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

After separating the oil from the water, we need to collect it. The only way to do this is to kneel on the ground and low down to pick it up. Likewise, the anointing works in our lives only when we are humble.

James 4:6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows Favor to the humble."

After reading about the oil production process, you might want to do it yourself right away and have it as soon as possible. But don't forget that your hands can't do it. There are many ascetics, monks, self-developers and tormentors who train themselves with punishments, refusal of food, prohibition of marriage, enforced sorrow or renunciation of material comforts. This is not the right way. The Holy Spirit Himself will encourage and teach you to bring yourself to the Lord out of love without any conditions. The Lord does not take away joy, love, peace. On the contrary, even in difficult situations, He desires that we remain safe, calm, loved and loving, full of joy and freedom of spirit. Don't be afraid of circumstances, people's opinions and feelings that can scare you, no matter how much it oppresses and crushes you.

8 CHAPTER

How to keep the anointing?

When the real anointing of the Holy Spirit will begin to work in your life, next to the described oil production process, a few more pillars of God's word will help you maintain the anointing and grow in it, going from faith to faith, from glory to glory.

Surrender. Complete submission to the work of the Holy Spirit and His guidance is the cornerstone of the unceasing operation of the anointing. We live in a time where all around us we hear exhortations, commands and pressures to run, hurry, do, conquer, receive, take by faith, grab and hold. Meanwhile, the guidance of the Holy Spirit is based on complete surrender into His hands. It has become a very difficult and incomprehensible thing in our society. Unconditional surrender is not simply doing nothing and waiting, but an open and active trust of the heart in His work and guidance. You can't see it from the outside, but believe me, the Lord sees and knows everything when you put yourself in His hands. He answers every beat of your heart that beats for Him.

In the Old Testament, it is described how the priests Aaron and his sons were prepared for service. The Lord commanded Moses to bring them to the tent of meeting, wash them with water, clothe them, anoint them and sanctify them.

Exodus 40:12-13 “Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance to the tent of meeting and wash them with water. Then dress Aaron in the sacred garments, anoint him and consecrate him so he may serve me as priest.

All Aaron had to do was surrender and rely on whatever Moses was doing. Aaron didn't have to wash himself, dress himself, or do anything else. In this passage, Moses is the image of the Holy Spirit, showing that the only key to successful service to others is complete devotion and trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Only He can do the Lord's work in us and through us. He alone causes thirst and draws us to the temple, He washes us with the word of God, clothes us with Christ, produces oil in our lives, anoints us, sets us apart and sanctifies us for service. However, He does everything the way He wants - in His time, in His methods, in His ways and in His own way. You just have to agree and surrender.

Before the anointing, Aaron was clothed in priestly garments. The anointing oil could not be poured directly on the body, but only on the clothes. The Lord forbade the use of oil and to anoint the body. We often think that the Lord anoints our abilities and qualities, but until we are clothed with Christ, the anointing does not work. The anointing works only through the new creation, only through the garment of Jesus.

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe** yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

When the sincerity, mercy, love, humility, and other parts of Jesus's garment begin to work in your life, then the anointing touches these qualities, enabling the power of God to flow through them. The oil of the Lord will not touch your old creation, with its habits and characteristics, but will descend on the new one with which the Holy Spirit clothes you.

Exodus 30:32 Do not pour it on anyone else's body and do not make any other oil using the same formula. It is sacred, and you are to consider it sacred.

In the Old Testament, when talking about the use of anointing oil, the Lord indicates that it cannot be used for its own purposes or produced independently. The anointing only works when we serve others, when your service is motivated by love, mercy and humility. Anointing will never work, using it for selfish purposes, trying to hide greed, opportunities for self-expression and honour, the desire to be seen and respected in the church. It is also impossible to make, act out, squeeze, organize, "make feel" or adapt the anointing for your own purposes, because it does not work. The anointing and His power are not your suppressed emotions, feelings of faith, beautiful thoughts or persuasive speech. You are not the source, but only the vessel through which the oil flows.

Introduction - growth. Anointing is not a sudden and instantaneous event, when God's power accidentally falls on you, and you do not understand what and why is happening in the ministry. It grows and flows gradually and leads you from one level of faith and service to another. In the Old Testament, it is written that the anointing oil was poured on Aaron's head and flowed from it down onto the priest's garments. Likewise, the anointing begins to work in your life from above, without your efforts, but only by God's grace and decision. It gradually grows and flows, filling the ministry and enabling it to do more and more every day.

Psalms 133:2 It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe.

When we read in God's word about the working of the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God's servants, we notice that they went from one level of faith to another. Those who tried to enter, grab and hold the anointing on their own - lost it, and those who surrendered to the Lord's guidance, waited for Him to enter and give it, saw great works of God in their lives.

One of the main truths about the anointing of the Holy Spirit is that you must be introduced to it gradually as you grow in faith and follow the Lord. The most striking example of this growing anointing is David. When the prophet Samuel anointed David to be the king of Israel and the Holy Spirit came upon him, David's life changed fundamentally. However, he did not immediately become a king, but was led step by step to the full fulfilment of his calling. David first served King Saul, then was only king of Judah in Hebron for seven years, and finally, king of all Israel in Jerusalem for thirty-three years. David went through various trials and tribulations from being an anointed shepherd of the sheep to becoming a truly visible and active king of Israel. He went from one level of belief and struggle to another. David became a standard in the eyes of God and people, how to achieve what the Lord has called you to and, after achieving it, maintain it throughout your life. Many subsequent kings of Israel have been compared to David, having and attaining the same calling of kingship, but so often not keeping it to the end. What was David's secret, why he remained the king of Israel after God's heart all his life?

The main reason for this was that David never sought and fulfilled this calling himself but left it in God's hands. Despite favourable and unfavourable circumstances, He remained faithful to the Lord, not trying to achieve what He was called to

do with His own hands. David wholeheartedly befriended and supported King Saul's son Jonathan, even though it was so illogical and unfavourable to his calling. Jonathan was the rightful heir to the throne, David's main rival, and would have taken the throne of Israel after Saul's death. This was particularly unfavourable for David. However, he did not look at this, but on the contrary, strengthened and supported Jonathan in every way, sacrificing the promised king's throne in his heart.

However, David's strength and faithfulness to the Lord was revealed in all its beauty in the presence of not difficult, but favourable circumstances and opportunities to fulfil the Lord's calling himself. When King Saul pursued David out of jealousy and wanted to kill him, it so happened that the Lord gave David the opportunity to kill Saul. This possibility was legal under the law and coincided with the Lord's promise and calling to become king. It was a golden and "God-given" opportunity after so many years, hardships and persecutions to fulfil God's promise and calling. Everything was ready, you just had to pick it up.

1 Samuel 24:4 The men said, "**This is the day** the LORD spoke of when he said to you, 'I will give your enemy into your hands for you to deal with as you wish.'" Then David crept up unnoticed and cut off a corner of Saul's robe.

But David remained firm and decided to show everyone not God's anger and judgment against Saul, but His mercy and faithfulness. There are often opportunities in our lives to seize and fulfil God's calling. You can start a church, publicly humiliate an "unspiritual pastor" and, guided by the promise of God given to you long ago, become a leader. You can overcome

a Christian who has slipped, a preacher who has gone astray, a church that has gone out of business, and establish a "spiritual" community with your own strength, which will seek the Lord. But the Lord desires that instead of humiliation and separation, you extend a brotherly hand and help, remaining faithful and ready to live and die with others. Apostle Paul, despite being criticized and not accepted in some churches, remained faithful to them and tried to serve them to the end so that they would reach a mature level of knowledge of Christ together with him. Paul did not compete or divide the churches, but, like a father, nurtured them, regardless of how "spiritual" or "carnal" they were.

2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not say this to condemn you; I have said before that you have such a place in our hearts that we would live or die with you.

When we try to fulfil God's calling and promises by ourselves without the guidance of the Holy Spirit, then we go astray from faith and after a while we stumble, having gone to a dead end without a guide. Never try to grab, win and hold a calling, a position in the church or in front of people by yourself, even though you have great promises from God. He Himself will bring you to your appointed place in His own time.

The introduction to calling and anointing always starts small, when you are taught to serve man before you begin to serve the Lord. Today, Christians so long for independence and belonging "only from the Lord". In this way, pride is imperceptibly cultivated. If you don't know how to serve people, you won't learn how to serve the Lord. When David was anointed to be king, the first place the Holy Spirit led him to was King Saul's house. David began to serve the king and not just any king, but

"unspiritual". David served Saul with all humility, courage, and incredible loyalty even when he was persecuted without cause. David learned the lesson of being faithful where the Lord placed him. When Saul became jealous of David's success in battle, he humiliated David by removing him from the position of commander of the troops and appointing him to be a commander of a thousand (*1 Samuel 18:13*). David not only did not murmur, but with all his heart decided to be faithful even in small things. Therefore, the Lord gave him success in battles with a small group of soldiers. David was faithful in all places and positions, serving Saul and his family until their death.

Also in the Old Testament we read about the prophet Elisha who received a double anointing. Before becoming a mighty prophet, he served Elijah for many years, pouring water on his hands, serving in the household, and patiently learning from him. When the prophet Elijah was taken up and Elisha received the double anointing, many remembered him only as Elijah's servant, the one who poured water on Elijah's hands. However, remaining faithful in the small, and not climbing over the heads of others to win anointing, position and success, Elisha was led to the calling.

2 Kings 3:11 But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, through whom we may inquire of the LORD?" An officer of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah.

Also in your life, you will be led to the anointing step by step. He will teach you to serve man first and to be faithful in small things, so that you may become faithful in greater things and be able to serve the Lord. If you do not know how to serve the

person whom you see, how will you be able to serve the Lord whom you do not see? David was first a servant of Saul and then a king, Elisha was first a servant of Elijah and only then a prophet.

Responding – leaving. Anointing in the ministry is growing. It is a transition from one season of faith and spiritual maturity to another. At first you are in a certain season of faith and grace. You learn, you grow, accepting the word of the Lord, but there comes a moment when the Holy Spirit encourages you and leads you into a new season of faith and spiritual maturity. Every Christian experience this call, as if hearing the voice "come". This is one of the most important moments of growth and initiation into the anointing. The Lord will encourage you to forget the old season, whether it was failures or blessings, and move to a new, fresh and unsurpassed level of faith. Paul, going from one level of faith to another, was not attached to the current situation, no matter how wonderful and blessed it was.

Philippians 3:13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,

The transition from one season of faith to another always begins with the prompting of the Holy Spirit to leave something behind: to leave the old season, the level of faith you have, and go to a new one. The first sign that the Lord is calling you to go into a greater season of anointing, faith and grace will be an invitation to leave something: to leave what you are attached to and used to, to leave a comfortable environment, a settled and familiar life, a place, a denomination, friends, a job, a dream, plans, etc. This is not an self-driven initiative, but you will be encouraged

to do so by the Holy Spirit, witnessing in your heart through the word of God, His servants and circumstances. The only response to this invitation is a step of faith. At this stage there are no confirming signs, emotions and miracles, but only an invitation to leave. Until you take the first step, you won't know the second.

When the prophet Elijah threw his cloak over Elisha who was working in the field and gave him the invitation to follow him, Elisha left his livelihood, work, and relatives to follow Elijah. Elijah didn't tell him at first what the second or third step would be, he didn't show any signs or wonders. Elisha willingly agreed to follow, taking a step by faith alone.

1 Kings 19:21 So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant.

The invitation to leave and lose something is characteristic not only of the beginning of a call, but also marks the beginning of every spiritual season. There were key moments in Abraham's life that marked the seasons of his spiritual growth: leaving his father's land, Lot's separation, giving up his earnings and spoils after his victory over Lot's captors, leaving and parting with Ishmael when he was sent into the wilderness because of Sarah's anger, and the ultimate step into the height of faith is the abandonment and loss of the promised son Isaac. When we read about Abraham's life, we can see that God did not appear to him when he built an altar and called on His name, but when he responded to the call to leave something. After such steps of

Abraham's faith, God would reveal Himself immediately, as if His heart had been stirred by Abraham's faith.

We also read in the New Testament, when the apostles heard the call of Jesus to follow Him, they left what they were used to, what they were attached to and followed Him by faith. Apostle Paul's new season of faith also began with the call of the Holy Spirit to leave the church in Antioch and travel to unknown lands to preach the word of God.

Hearing and responding to the call to leave something behind is the most important moment of spiritual growth and going to a call. Jesus extended such invitations to many, but not all responded. To the rich young man who knew the word of God and obeyed it with all his heart, Jesus also gave an invitation to follow him. This new beginning of the young man's season of faith was marked by a call to leave possessions. But the young man did not respond to this.

Luke 18:22-23 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was very wealthy.

Why does God immediately respond to the faith that follows Jesus, to the faith that loses and leaves something for Jesus? You can pray powerfully all your life, read His word, attend church and serve others, be good in your family and do other good works, but nothing will bring you closer to the Lord than responding to His call to leave something behind, untie yourself from the past and follow Him.

When we hear the Lord's call and invitation to follow and leave something behind, we are often filled with fear and uncertainty. This fear does not leave until we respond to His call. Many Christians settle and live in fear, thinking that this is the way it should be. You can try your best to overcome the fear, but until you respond to His call to leave something, which is prompted by the Holy Spirit, and which only you and the Lord know about, then this fear will remain. In the book of the prophet Isaiah, it is written that fear plagued the Israelites only because they did not respond to the call of the Lord, to His call.

Isaiah 66:4 so I also will choose harsh treatment for them and will bring on them what they dread. For when I called, no one answered, when I spoke, no one listened. They did evil in my sight and chose what displeases me.”

Sometimes we also feel constant fear and cannot get rid of it, as if we were inferior. It may be the result of not responding to His invitation to leave something behind. But when you take the first step of faith and respond to His call, something incredible changes in your heart—fear disappears, and courage replaces it. Where did all this come from? The Lord strengthens the steps of those who walk.

By taking this step with faith, the Lord does another wonderful work in us - led by the Holy Spirit, we die to ourselves in Jesus Christ. Previously, when you had to wait for the Lord by faith, it was the passive side of "death to self", but in this step, the active side of "death to self" will work in your life, because you will need to take a step that kills you, but revives and brings you closer to the Lord.

When David went out in faith to fight against the giant Goliath, it was a step of faith that brought death to himself. David had no chance without the Lord's help and strength to overcome Goliath. The only force that can prompt you to take such a step is complete surrender of your life into God's hands and death to yourself. Likewise, Gideon, when he was left with three hundred poorly armed soldiers against the great army of the enemy, he and these soldiers had already given their lives into the hands of the Lord and died to themselves inside, because without God's help it was impossible to defeat such an enemy. To the unbeliever, the act of both David and Gideon is pure suicide, but faith takes a surrendered and dead instrument and embraces him with force, as if raising him from the dead.

The word of God is full of events and facts that show that the main means of obtaining is loss, and the most direct and safest way to a calling is death to self in Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

These truths about anointing and growth hidden in God's word will work in your life as well. The Holy Spirit will reveal, remind, teach and strengthen you on this path.

9 CHAPTER

Why does the anointing not work?

All of us are anointed by the Holy Spirit to serve others with His power, but why sometimes we don't see this anointing actually working in our lives or it disappears after some time? The word of God reveals to us what are the main reasons that hold back and prevent the power of the Holy Spirit from working, and how, after entering into the anointing, can we remain in it all the time? So, some of them...

The anointing is activated and kept only by following Jesus.

This is one of the main reasons why our lives can be fruitless. The first call to follow Jesus and abide in Him is the main and most important call in your life. Only by being in Him will you become His servant and be led into the second calling. It is the source from which the water flows and from which the anointing flows. God's word says that Christ is the Anointed One and we are His servants who receive this oil from Him. Therefore, if you move away from the source, your container will only work as long as there is oil left in it. To withdraw and come less and less to the source is the main mistake and the reason for the exhaustion of the anointing. You can be pulled away from him by work, busyness, worries about yourself and others, anxiety and anything that stands between you and Jesus. We talked about the first calling and its importance earlier.

The source is always flowing, so faith is always moving in your life as well. It is not your works, behaviour or speech that moves, but faith that moves. After leaving the faith, you can stop and settle into an "orderly" and settled life with familiar surroundings, friends, worries, church, worship, service,

helping others, weddings and funerals, prayers, evangelism and many other good works. However, if there is no following Jesus in all these activities, if He does not lead you anywhere, it means that you have turned away from the source that moves, boils, flows and leads you by faith.

John 7:37-38 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.

Departing from the source, no matter how fruitful, great, important and powerful ministry you have, is one of the reasons for the weakening of the anointing. When you see how powerfully the Lord uses you, you can lose the source, trusting in your own strength that the Lord will sustain you with as much oil as He has stored up. But, always be with Jesus, personally communicating with Him and taking time to rest and be under His wings, away from socializing, work, prayer lists, caring for others, rushing and serving. Only for this purpose is the Lord's rest, the time when you draw water from His strength, when the anointing is refreshed and thickened. Find time, no matter how busy you are, set it aside only for Him - not for service, but for enjoying and admiring the Lord, being only with Him without any reasons. You will be surprised how the anointing thickens when you touch the Anointed One.

Introduction to anointing. Another reason why we do not have the anointing of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives is because we do not accept to be introduced to the anointing and to be taught. We talked about the preparation for anointing, when the olives are turned into flowing oil, earlier. Most of the time, we

do not agree to be taught and guided because of unwillingness to "pay the price", fear, doubts and haste. When you still don't see the anointing working in reality, you may think that something is wrong with you or that the Lord has forgotten and "written off" you. The desire to see and have everything immediately and right now confuses and stops you in your tracks. If the anointing doesn't work the way you want it to, it doesn't mean it won't. The Lord is preparing you for this and making the oil, the most important thing is not to stop and do not doubt His strength, plan, abilities, time and ways to do it. Trust and place yourself in His hands. You will be amazed at what He can do in your life.

Changing the anointing with your abilities. When we desire to serve, but do not want to be taught and introduced to the anointing, then we look for ways to start "using" the Holy Spirit as soon as possible instead of "being used". Then we rush to take everything into our hands by faith, including the Holy Spirit to use as a thing. But the Holy Spirit is a Person who uses us but does not submit to our control. It simply does not allow itself to be used.

When you don't find and receive His supernatural anointing, then you stop and try to find your simple and natural abilities. You begin to examine your character and look for something that you can apply in the ministry, what you like and what you can do. Perhaps you could engage in certain activities using your previous abilities, or by adapting the opportunities and situations that arise to suit yourself, serve others. Then you do what you used to do in the world, applying it in the church. This does not mean that the Lord does not want and does not use our abilities in the church and in serving others, or that we need to drop everything, stop and wait for a supernatural anointing. No!

However, if you desire to bear a hundredfold harvest and see the unceasing operation of His power, which can turn the desert into a blooming garden and revive thousands of thirsty ones, then let yourself be taught and led by the Holy Spirit, do not stop and do not settle in any place of your heart, but follow Jesus who will lead you to the goal. If you want to serve as God's anointed men serve, your abilities, experience, and circumstances will not be enough for you. Don't settle for your abilities forever.

The operation of the anointing depends on the season. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is for a specific purpose, ministry, and season. When you serve others, that's when the anointing works. It is not designed for communication with Jesus. If the Lord has anointed you to be a preacher and you see how God's power really works when you preach, it does not mean that it will work when there are no people around you. The anointing only works for a certain time, not twenty-four hours a day, but when you are ministering to others. As soon as you get off the pulpit and go home, the oil will stop flowing. He will not flow and work when you are at home with your family or praying in your room. However, as soon as there is at least one person near you, at least one empty vessel that needs God's word, oil will begin to flow through you.

In the Old Testament, we read about a miracle when the prophet Elijah told a poor widow to borrow many empty vessels and fill them with oil from the only vessel in her house. This miraculous multiplication of oil and flow into other vessels did not stop until there was at least one empty vessel nearby. However, when all the containers were filled, the oil stopped flowing as well.

2 Kings 4:6 When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one." But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped flowing.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit in your life depends on the people around you who need to be ministered to. If there is even one person who needs to be ministered to, the oil will not stop flowing in you and you will always have fresh strength and supernatural abilities to serve. However, do not be alarmed if you do not feel or see this power when you are in another environment.

When the Lord produces oil in you, you don't need any effort to "press yourself" and earn for the power of the Holy Spirit to work. Regardless of your emotional state, fatigue or special preparation, as soon as you take the first step, the anointing begins to work and you gain fresh strength. If the Lord has anointed you to be an evangelist, then regardless of how you feel, as soon as you open your mouth and begin to preach the message of salvation, the waters will stir within you and the anointing will begin to pour on others without any effort. It is not your ability, merit, result or effort. It is His work.

There is another reason why sometimes the anointing works differently, as it were, weakening, withdrawing, or taking on a different form and expression. Anointing also has seasons of faith and spiritual maturity. Elijah was anointed as a prophet to the nation of Israel, but this anointing worked differently at different times of his life. We see Elijah prophesying against King Ahab, but we also see him living in the wilderness, one act of prophetic anointing when Elijah lives with a widow outside of Israel and another on Mount Carmel, fighting against false prophets. One act of anointing when Elijah stood before the

whole nation, and another when he travelled through the desert and experienced the glory of the Lord on Mount Horeb. He had the anointing of a prophet, but it did not always work in the same way. The reason for this was not Elijah's mistake, sin, mistrust, or error. These were the different seasons of his spiritual growth determined by the Lord's will and decision.

Therefore, do not be surprised if His anointing will work differently in your life and there will be seasons when He is silent. It does not mean that you have gone astray, sinned, or lost the anointing and promises of God. There are also seasons of faith in your life when there will be days when His anointing will seem to work in you effortlessly and easily, but there will be days when it will not manifest itself or will work differently and not the way you are used to.

The anointing is poured out only over the ministry. The Lord pours His oil only on the ministry that is personally planned and prepared for you. The anointing will work only over your head, only over the ministry to which you are called. And this will be the only area where the desires of your spirit will burn, where your spirit will recover and feel carried by the current of the Holy Spirit. Only in your personally assigned ministry will you be nurtured, only there will you see supernatural abilities and guidance.

One of the possible reasons for the anointing to disappear is jumping into a ministry and calling that is not for you. It can be very good works, initiative and activity, but do not leave your place because there is an anointing for you.

1 Corinthians 12:29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

Sometimes we want to copy the ministries of others, to be the same famous preachers, teachers, miracle workers and pastors. Misled by our own desires, we try to sincerely make every effort to become such and be able to serve in the church. Then it takes so much strength, worldly methods, sweat and "push". However, only in the service to which you are called, His anointing flows, only here everything comes easily without sweat, "pushing" and enormous efforts. You are guided and strengthened by His power in your ministry. In the Old Testament we read that Saul was anointed king of Israel. However, when he moved on to another calling, the Lord's anointing stopped flowing into his life, and Saul's heart hardened and turned away from the Lord. Before the battle with the Philistines, the prophet Samuel told Saul to wait for him so that he could offer sacrifices. Only Samuel, as God's priest, prophet and judge, could offer sacrifices for the king and the entire nation.

1 Samuel 13:8-9 He waited seven days, the time set by Samuel; but Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and Saul's men began to scatter. So he said, "Bring me the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings." And Saul offered up the burnt offering.

However, not having received Samuel, Saul himself began the sacrifice and entered the calling of the priest, to which he was not appointed. From that moment on, the anointing stopped flowing in his life.

We also read about King Uzziah of Judea who did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. The Lord protected and blessed

him. But when the king became powerful, he became proud in his heart and wanted to enter another calling. He decided to sacrifice and burn incense to the Lord, which was only the service of Aaron and his sons. From this moment on, the anointing, power, and blessing ceased to operate in the king's life.

2 Chronicles 26:18 They confronted King Uzziah and said, "It is not right for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD. That is for the priests, the descendants of Aaron, who have been consecrated to burn incense. Leave the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful; and you will not be honoured by the LORD God."

The Lord, when building the church, distributes and gives callings, ministries and abilities according to His will. You have a ministry just for you personally, into which He leads you, and in which there is full provision, support, and strength. Don't leave this place. Maybe you think you can do anything for the Lord, but inside you have the witness of the Holy Spirit revealing to you where your place is. Do not suppress this voice and this guidance, do not turn away from the cloud that hangs over you and waters your ministry. When you leave this cloud, it stops raining in your life, because it is not the cloud that follows you, but you must follow it. When you are faithful where the Lord has placed you, then you grow and are led by the Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul in his letters urges you to remain faithful and act according to the calling you have received.

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

10 CHAPTER

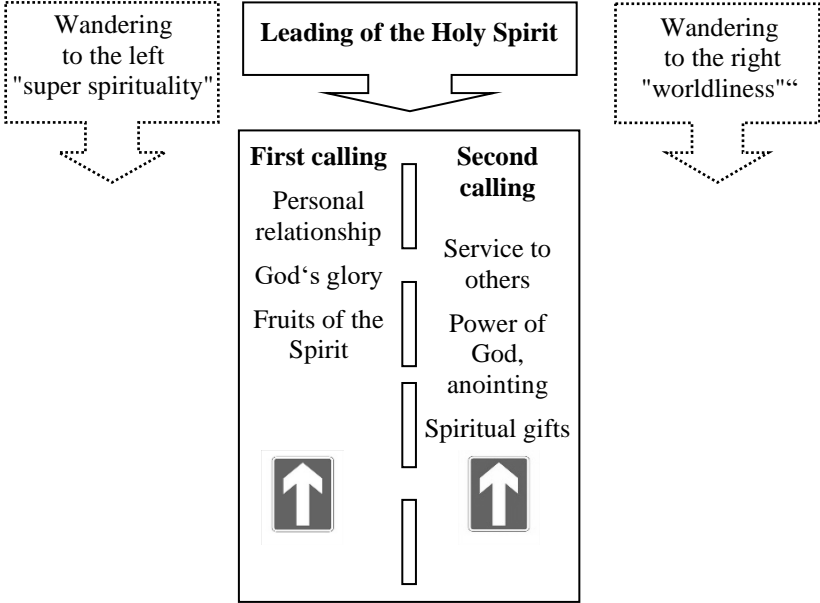
Balance between first and second callings

So, the Lord has two callings for your life. We have already talked about the first call to come, stay in Jesus Christ and grow in knowing Him. We also talked about the second calling to serve others, anointing, leading to it and its maintenance. These two calls are inseparable and interdependent. The Lord in His wisdom has bound them together and made them inseparable, so that you do not go astray.

When you are in your first calling and have a personal relationship with Jesus, He encourages you to serve others, giving you the anointing and strength to do so. On the other hand, when you serve others, you are prompted by the Holy Spirit to return to your first calling and draw strength from the Lord, because your service depends on a personal relationship with the Lord. These two calls cannot do without each other. You cannot serve others without a personal relationship with the Lord, and you cannot be moved to serve others by communicating with Him only.

Only by keeping both calls do you walk in the middle of the road and not stray to the side of the road. When you are trying to fulfil only one calling, you are approaching the edge of the road. If you start moving from the middle of the road to the right and all your time is occupied by service, then the Holy Spirit prompts you to return to the Lord's feet and spend time in personal communication, thus keeping you from going astray. But if you separate yourself and only communicate with the Lord, then He reminds you and encourages you to serve others and to be in the

service He assigned you. The guidance of the Holy Spirit is over these two callings, He guides and teaches you to maintain balance and not to stray aside, neither to the left nor to the right.



It is not possible to choose and be in only one of these callings. Personal relationship with the Lord is the main, essential and most important calling. It depends on the Holy Spirit when and how you will be introduced to the ministry, but if you communicate only with the Lord, separate yourself and lose your second calling, then you will be perplexed. The Apostle Paul wrote in his letter that he must preach the Gospel to others because this is his duty to which he was called.

1 Corinthians 9 :16 For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!

However, if you immerse yourself only in the service, even if it is appointed by the Lord, you can quickly become tired and suppress the anointing poured into you, because you need rest in the Lord and time for personal communication with Him. Therefore, the main challenge of a mature Christian becomes how to maintain a balance between these callings - between personal relationship with the Lord and service to others? How to separate yourself from the endless work, responsibilities and helping others and find time for the Lord, but how to remain faithful and serve others with all your heart while having relationship with Him?

The Holy Spirit always leads in the middle of the road, and when we slip to the right or to the left, He prompts, encourages and teaches us to obey His leading, bringing us back to the middle of the road. Just over the middle of the road is the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If we ignore His voice and go on our own, then we begin to go astray. If you turn left or right, you lose the most important thing - the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without it, our lives slowly progress in drifting to the right of "worldliness" or to the left of "super-spirituality." The turn to the sides is initially not so drastic, visible and sudden. Straying from the middle of the road happens gradually, slowly, step by step. If we stay in the first step of the error, then we take the second step as well, until finally we are completely off the path.



So, a few steps to the right that lead to "worldliness". The main reason for this error is the setting aside of the first call to follow Jesus and abide in Him.

1. First step to the right. Many good works and activities arise that consume all the time. Christian discussions, communication, discussion of problems become the main pillars of faith. The first signs of spiritual fatigue appear. It is becoming more difficult to pray and communicate with the Lord personally, so more and more often it is replaced by a Christian book, movie or the Internet. The lack of personal relationship the Lord is tried to be compensated by activities, social communication and good works. After a while there is dissatisfaction in the heart and murmuring that nothing changes.


2. Second step to the right. The gap between you and your personal relationship with the Lord is widening. We meet to discuss Christian problems and news (how does that denomination live, do you remember that Christian, what happened to so-and-so), feel good and dream. Less and less is said about Jesus Himself. You want to be only with those with whom it is pleasant to communicate. Reconciling with the "nominal" life of prayer and His word. The personal guidance of the Lord disappears, which is slowly replaced by social communication and works. There are more and more problems that are being tried to be solved by discussions, logic, and social assistance. Fatigue in the service increases, results and perspective are not visible. Usually, Christians try to refresh being in communication with believers dear to their own heart and attitude. Christian prays more and more "out of necessity", trying to "work out" according to the prayer list.

3. Third step to the right. Jesus becomes a beautiful memory from the "good old days", this story still relevant and interesting, but more and more other substitutes appear: common hobbies, discussions and various social interests. The spirit of the world gradually enters into communication, becoming, simply, a

circle, a social club, a cheerful company, a friendly family. The problems are the same as of unbelievers, the solutions are also the same. The major sins are still avoided (fornication, theft, etc.) but everything else becomes normal. Problems (so-called minor sins) are tried to be covered up with phrases: "the Lord loves and understands", "everything will be fine", "it will be resolved later". Sometimes we pray blessing the food, giving thanks for life. Prayer becomes a heavy load that cannot be borne. It is important that I remain a good Christian without major sins. Trying, simply, to "get life in order" - work, family, hobbies, interests, some kind of activity in which there would be at least a little good work to calm the conscience.

4. Fourth step to the right. Any distinction between believers and other social groups disappears. Disputes, discussions and gossip increase in communication, sometimes the name of Jesus is mentioned. Living with problems becomes "normal", they are solved by the same methods as in the world: compromise, gossip, etc. Major sins come into life as an inevitability. Life becomes a routine, there is not a drop of strength to resist the routine and sin. Prayer and the word of God become a burden and do not work when solving serious and big problems (sins). It is comforting that God still loves because, logically speaking, everyone lives like this.

5. Fifth step to the right. A complete return to the world. Everyone does that. Life is no different from an unbeliever, including major sins. If someone asks if you believe in God, you confidently say yes. It's everything that separates you from others.

It is also possible to deviate to the left. So, a few steps to the left  that lead to "super spirituality". The main reason for this error is the refusal to accept the second calling to serve others.

1. First step to the left. The desire to please God and to achieve the greatest result in the spiritual field, to do something important and great for God. A determination to please God with all one's strength. As a result, communication with other believers becomes more difficult because their spiritual standing is not as good as yours. They are less eager and willing to please the Lord. You are still trying to carry and understand others.

2. Second step to the left. You want to communicate with other less. You feel that you are more spiritual, more humble and more eager to serve Him, so you decide to reach spiritual heights without the help of others and go faster because others "hold back". Your special status gradually sifts out your brothers and sisters, as others become less spiritual. Other Christians follow Jesus too slowly, you want faster results. Common prayers are decreasing, the circle of communication is narrowing. The judgment of others grows in the heart, you notice and think about the shortcomings of others more and more often.

3. Third step to the left. You receive a special mission and are rewarded for such a persistent search for the Lord. The circle of friends is shrinking. There are only a few chosen among whom you are special. You receive greater and greater revelations, as it were, immersing yourself in the real spiritual world. Desiring to be even closer to God, you take additional measures: long fasts, night prayers, and feverishly seek spiritual experiences, revelations, and special confirmations. You communicate only with a few Christians. Condemnation of others grows in the

heart because they are so slow and sluggish in serving God. They do not understand spiritual things at all. You think the main reason for this is their hidden sins, religiosity and worldliness. You're just on fire for God. This is a sign that you are special and the Lord will use you mightily in the future.

4. Fourth step to the left. It seems to you that the Bible is only for beginners, because now you know the depths of the spirit. Others do not know how to read the Bible properly. Almost everyone around you is on a bad path or is just "ordinary". You are being prepared for a special mission. God will prepare you and you will later lead others and learn special things. This is simply your mission and the result of your closeness with God. He likes that you are so devoted. God doesn't have time and energy to mess with others, but you, who have given up a lot for God and thus humbled yourself, are being prepared and dedicated to His glory. You want to please Him even more.

5. Fifth step to the left. You completely separate yourself and become an „apostle“. You love the God created by your revelations, but you can not put up with all unspiritual Christians. You surrender yourself completely to Him, giving up possessions, money, eating less, fasting a lot, praying constantly and taking other additional measures to control yourself so that you can receive revelation and be closer to God. The Bible is only for spiritual beginners, like ABC, revelations and voices become your main guide. You are second in importance in heaven after Christ. You are especially humble because you have almost nothing and you exhaust yourself, you work a lot in prayers for God. You believe that the time will come when all the "unspiritual" will see how much you have done for God and how much God appreciates you.

Such deviations are possible both in the life of an individual believer and in the life of the whole church. However, it is very important that the pastors, leaders and teachers of the church walk in the middle of the road and not go astray, neither to the right nor to the left. The growth of the church depends on them, because as the pastor and leader is, so is the whole church. Therefore, it is especially important to pray and support church pastors, teachers and leaders, so that love and concern for church members are not replaced by control, planning, as well as financial and material things do not become a means to develop and maintain the church structure.

The teaching of Jesus on earth was very different and often incomprehensible to the scribes and interpreters, because this teaching did not contain the commands, instructions and detailed regulations that the Jews of the Old Testament were used to. Jesus' teaching was simple, presented in parables and accompanied by real power to free man from religious commandments. However, before He left His disciples, Jesus gave them only one commandment: to love one another.

John 13:34“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

Commands always establish authority. By leaving only one commandment, Jesus showed that from now on the relationship between His disciples will be based on the single commandment - love. This command establishes the only way of applying authority in the church - love. Love in the church is synonymous with power.

Therefore, in the churches, the Lord places pastors and leaders who are filled with love and care for the members of the church. It was not by chance that the Lord appointed Peter as the leader of the first church, who loved the Lord with all his heart and after three denials, he no longer had any reason to be proud and boast in front of others, as if becoming the smallest, ready to serve others and be a representative of the heavenly authority, which is carried out through love. The Lord did not choose an unstumbled, clean past, scrupulously law-abiding, blameless and well-recommended disciple, or an ever-standing and "problem-free" Christian. Through the example of Peter, the Lord showed that those who love Him are dead to themselves and have nothing to boast about, but are anointed to bear authority through love.

The main work of shepherds is not to take care of the church structure, but its members, not to build abuilding, but to feed the sheep. How often can we observe the establishment of new communities and churches, when at first they try to serve others in love, but then slowly turn to become an organization called "the church". The main reason for this is the replacement of authority exercised through love and concern for church members with control and planning. This slight deviation comes in when church leaders give in to pressure and fail the test of church decline and coming storms. Every community faces this test.

In the Old Testament, we read that the prophet Samuel ordered King Saul to wait for seven days, but when Saul saw that the army was dwindling and the soldiers were running away in fear, he took matters into his own hands, trying to save the army and thus control the deteriorating situation. But in this place, imperceptibly, trust in the Lord was replaced by human control.

Control based on fear has supplanted the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Such tests often happen in churches too, when after great growth and the Lord's blessing, there comes a time when the structure of the church suddenly begins to fall apart, and the number of believers decreases. It is at this moment that the church leaders are tempted to "take everything into their own hands" and control the process by trying to control, plan and various marketing and advertising methods to keep the church members and the whole structure. After seeing the good results of such efforts, the leaders are happy that the structure and finances of the church have stabilized, the number of members has started to grow again, and the various events and activities have increased. However, in this test, the guidance of the Holy Spirit imperceptibly withdraws, and the church becomes a structure, an organization, a social club, and a place where one communicates, has fun, relaxes, and realizes oneself.

Christ never tried to keep Jewish believers around him, even His disciples. Likewise, the first church did not try to maintain the structure, but was clinging to the word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Now it often happens that when such trials come, the anointed Sauls turn into controlling kings who need to defend the structure of the church, maintain it and regulate the sheep. Concern for others gradually turns into control, fear of losing the church replaces the guidance of the Holy Spirit and trust in the Lord, the desire to serve with love is replaced by the desire to have a bigger church. The apostles did not try to maintain a structure, but in obedience to the Holy Spirit, they served others in love, grace and freedom. Not the church, but the people were written in the tablets of their hearts.

Serving in love does not guarantee that there will be no storms, scattering, or loss in the church. The fear of loss and the desire

to protect oneself from problems brings human effort and control into the church. Control is trying to hedge against the future. There is no other way to exercise authority in the church except through love. Other ways and methods do not work or degenerate. Love does not guarantee the absence of loss, but it is the Lord's only way and His only commandment.

The church is the only place where there is freedom to love, believe and serve others without any fear or constraint. It is a place where spiritual food is abundant, where love rules the relationship between believers, and where the Lord's kingdom is truly at work. Only active love, inspired by the Holy Spirit, sets the church apart from other clubs, organizations, circles and structures. Only love and self-sacrifice shine uniquely and allow others to recognize the Lord. A non-believer can come to know us as disciples of Christ, not because we pray loudly and a lot, or because we preach on very deep topics, or because of an emotional, beautiful and charismatic preacher. The Lord and His bride can be recognized from the real love of Jesus that works and guides us.

John 13:35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Only in a true church can you feel free to serve others with love and full devotion. There is no place like this anywhere else.

By serving others in your second calling, you become part of the whole body of the Lord, and your personal knowledge of Jesus in the church goes beyond your own boundaries. The church is a unique place also because it is only in it that a full and deep knowledge of the Lord is possible. Through personal

relationship with Jesus, following Him and serving others, you grow in knowing Him. But you alone are like a finger that can touch but cannot receive. You can touch the apple with your finger, but you can't take it. Only the hand can receive great things. This is the same in your life, despite close personal relationship with the Lord, pure heart and devotion, alone and personally you know the Lord to a limited extent. These limits can be extended by His whole body, i.e. church.

Paul, hearing about the growing love and faith in the Ephesians church, prayed that they would be united and able to know the love that passes all knowledge. You alone can only know a certain part of His love. Realizing the limitations of personal knowledge, Paul prayed that the believers in the Ephesian church would be united by the Holy Spirit and would be able to go beyond the limits of personal knowledge, all together to grasp something more that is possible only in the church.

Ephesians 3:17-19 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people**, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

The first and second callings you have and grow in will gain a new scale and quality when they are combined with the callings of other members of the body of Christ, your brothers and sisters.

EPILOGUE

After reading about the callings of the Lord and the way to them, perhaps you are wondering if all this can happen in your life, will you be able to respond and achieve what the giants of faith mentioned in the Bible have achieved, what other servants of God have achieved throughout the history of the church?

God is not partial and has not chosen special ones. No man can boast and have something special in himself that would make him fit for God's work and His glory. You too can be used powerfully, see His glory and reach the mature age of knowing Christ. We read in the Bible that everyone who responded to God's call was preserved and guided. Therefore, do not be afraid because He wants and is able to fill your life with Christ and lead you on the path of His glory and knowledge.

There are no people ready and able to do what the Lord calls them to do. There are no suitable and special ones, there are only responding ones. The word of God says that the prophet Elijah was just like us, he believed and served the same God as we do.

We read about the prophet Elijah in the Old Testament that he saw and experienced one of the greatest miracles described in the Bible, when God's fire came down from heaven in front of the whole nation and burned the altar, the sacrifice, the water and even the part of the earth on which the altar stood. But after such a victory and a great miracle, Elijah fled for fear of his life. He walked forty days to Mount Horeb in the desert to hear the only question from God: "What are you doing here?". After resting in the cave on this mountain, and waiting for the storm,

the earthquake, and the flames of fire to pass, Elijah heard the same question a second time.

1 Kings 19:13 When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “**What are you doing here, Elijah?**”

Maybe you too, just like Elijah, saw many signs and miracles of the Lord at the beginning of your faith journey, saw His victories and glory, but then you ran away and stopped. Or maybe you hide in a cave and wait for the storms, the earthquake and the burning fire in your life to pass? Both after the victory and after hiding in the cave, the Lord asked Elijah the same question: "What are you doing here?". He asks this question several times so that you can answer it yourself. He doesn't care how difficult and hopeless your situation is, how lukewarm or burning your heart is, what your past or present is. He will still ask you this question: "What are you doing here?"

Perhaps you once served the Lord and loved Him, but now you have run away and retreated into the wilderness, where your life is dry and barren? Or perhaps, you are hiding from challenges in the cave and waiting for difficulties and problems to end in your life? Or maybe you are a good Christian, live a quiet life, attend church, take care of your family, pray, fast and do other good works, but you have never answered this question?

Whoever you are, the day will come when you will definitely hear the question from the Lord: "What are you doing here, what are you doing in your life?" Storm, earthquake and fire will pass

before you hear such a simple and only question from God: "What are you doing here?"

When you know the answer to this question and regardless of your past, glorious or shameful, easy or difficult, your deeds and missteps, you are still willing to accept the call of the Lord to follow and serve Him, then the Lord will strengthen you, give you grace and guidance to return there, where His glory awaits you, where your lost calling awaits you. Regardless of what you think about yourself, what experiences you have gone through, do not doubt God's calling, strength and power to lead you on the path that is in front of you.

In the Old Testament, we read that after fleeing from Israel, wandering in the desert and hiding in a cave, the Lord told Elijah to return to where God's glory, power and calling were.

1 King 19:15 The LORD said to him, “**Go back** the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram, <...>

When you know the answer to the Lord's question "What are you doing here?", then do not be afraid, do not doubt and follow the decision of your heart to return to where your calling is. If you have no calling, come and receive it from the hands of the Lord, if you have stopped and lost it, then come back and go on.

Just don't stop going...

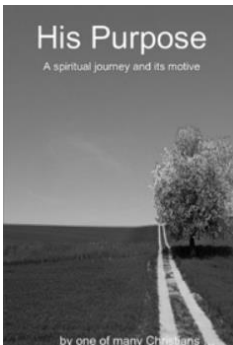
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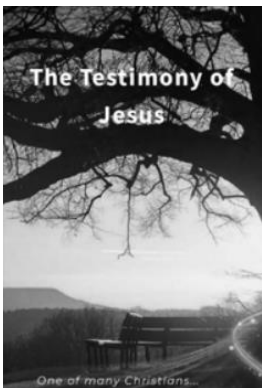
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