



# CITY CHAPEL

## SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

### DISCIPLESHIP LEVEL – LESSON 4 THE ALTAR (2)

#### Introduction

We looked at the example of our Lord Jesus in His application of this Altar principle. His prayer life and communion with The Father is the model for the Follower of Christ.

Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Luke 11:1

There was something the Disciples saw in the way and manner that our Lord prayed which prompted the request that He should teach them how to do the same.

#### THE INNER AND OUTER COURT

Every functional Believer should have what can be best described as the inner and outer life. Just like the Tabernacle we referenced in the previous lesson, there are different compartments or levels in our devotional life.

The Outer Court was for the general public, the Inner Court was for a select class of ministers within the Temple whilst the Holy of Holies was only for one person, the High Priest.

Purely as an analogy and revelation (not doctrine), we can apply this same sequence to our lives. As a guide, the public court represents our church community life, including external things like listening to a favourite preacher, books, internet consumption, music, TV programmes etc.

The Inner Court represents a more private core like your family, your accountability prayer partner, spouse, mentor, core team, pastor etc. This level see and know things which the public do not see or know. They form a protective support structure to your life journey. The names and faces may change over time but the structure remains.



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The Holy of Holies represents the space and honour and worship that is reserved ONLY for God. This is the Secret Place of your heart and spirit where the Holy Spirit of God whispers and talks to you in a way ONLY HE CAN.

We see this general principle in the life of Jesus:

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." <sup>37</sup> And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. <sup>38</sup> Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." <sup>39</sup> He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*." Matthew 26:36-39

Jesus had just finished having the Passover with His wider disciples in the Upper Room (Outer Court). He takes them all to the Garden of Gethsemane. He then selects His core team of Peter, James and John to join Him in Prayer where He opens up to them emotionally (The Inner Court).

He then leaves this core group and goes a little further into His private prayer with God alone (Holy of Holies).

If you carefully read the Gospels, you will see this sequence or principle repeated where Jesus operated on these three levels constantly. He worshipped at the Feast (John 7:37). He attended public functions like the Cana Wedding (John 2:20).

He had a select core group who went with Him to special places like the mount of Transfiguration (Luke 17:1) and Jarius' House (Mark 5:37). Other times He was alone praying as we studied in the previous lesson.

We see something similar with Moses in Exodus 24 as he is invited by God to come UP into His Presence. Moses starts out (9) with Seventy Israel elders, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu. He then proceeds further only with Joshua (13). The he Moses proceeds further alone (18).



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### ALTAR ADVANTAGES FOR THE BODY

<sup>27</sup> But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. 1 Corinthians 9:27

I beseech<sup>1</sup> you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which* is your <sup>1</sup>reasonable service. Romans 12:1

The principle of having a viable helps the Earth-suit we live in to be subjected to the discipline of our devotional life. It helps the physical body to stay dead and under the control of the Christian's will.

The Body then becomes an instrument of service and not an obstruction of the Believer's spiritual life and focus. The flesh is weak even though our spirit is willing and engaged with God. Jesus taught that we should fast and pray to minimise the pull of temptation.

This is not works but wisdom for living in a fallen world where the enemy is prowling and seeking to place obstacles in the way of the Believer.

### ALTAR ADVANTAGES FOR THE SOUL

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Romans 12:2

<sup>18</sup> the eyes of your <sup>1</sup>understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints Ephesians 1:18

The entrance of the Word of God brings light and understanding to the mind and soul. The study of the Bible, reading and reflection help to transform the thinking patterns of Christians.

The Word of God impacts the Body, the Soul and Spirit. Therefore constant exposure to the living Word of God transforms thought thinking patterns. There are countless testimonies of people whose lives have been changed by the altar..

A good example is Peter's story in the Book of Acts where he encounters God in his prayer time (Acts 10:9-16). The revelation that comes to Peter changes

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his cultural thinking pattern so that he becomes open to the idea that non-Jews could have access to the Gospel and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### SPIRITUAL ADVANTAGES OF THE ALTAR

But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. <sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." John 4: 23-24

<sup>2</sup>For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands *him*; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. 1 Corinthians 14: 2

The Altar of our Heart is essentially spiritual. We must not succumb to the temptation of reducing the Christian's altar and intimacy with God to purely mental and intellectual interaction.

At the altar God speaks and His Word strengthens the Believer and emboldens them. The main reason why the early church and the persecuted church were so effective was because of the Grace and Power that flowed out from their closet of prayer.

This is what this Last Days Church needs to recover. The energy and life that comes from the Throne Room of God cannot be resisted by the world, the flesh or the enemy.

When the early church prayed, buildings were shaken. When they worshipped, prison doors were flung open and earthquakes occurred. Same human beings like us, same God we have, but different altars!

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### WHAT HAPPENS AT THE ALTAR

- Worship – the scriptures talk about us bringing the fruit of our lips in worship to God. Abraham worshipped at his altar to God. David was renown for his heart of worship to God.
- Prayer – we have looked at the prayer life of Jesus which is the barometer or standard. A natural offshoot of spending time with God is prayer.
- Communion – this is slightly different from prayer because sometimes that is one way. Communion is always two ways. Heart to heart and spirit to spirit. God said to Moses, there I will commune with you.
- Revelation – In His Light we see light. This is a perfect description of what or how the altar and presence of God impacts us. We come into supernatural knowledge as a result of stepping into His Throne room. The eyes of our understanding is lit up and we see or know things beyond our natural faculties
- Angelic Activity – when Jesus prayed and wrestled with God’s will in the Garden, an Angel showed up to give Him strength. When Moses encountered God at the burning bush, an Angel showed up. When Daniel was praying, an Angel showed up
- Prophecy/Destiny – The future is revealed at the Altar. As Abraham met with God, He prophesied and showed him that he would become the Father of many nations. Gideon knew his purpose and real name as he communed with God.
- Wisdom/Instruction – This is a practical overflow of the closet which comes in very handy for those with responsibilities and jobs that require wit and thinking. Joseph received dream interpretation as he communed with God. Daniel the same. Joshua got the answer to the Jericho knotty situation.
- Joy – This is a very powerful force. It is like ‘Life Fuel’. The energy that equips you to travel over the very tricky and challenging terrain of life.



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Joy is the overcoming power of God that energises the believer in spite of walls, goliaths and red seas.

and The Disciple is a follower of Christ in all seasons, situations, in private and public; in everything and everywhere. The underlying principle that made our Lord overcome all the way to the Cross is what we will dwell on in this chapter. There is an inherent driving energy that distinguishes the true believer from the religious Church attender. We will examine this key and aim to enable the reader to become an Overcomer and constantly victorious in all areas of life and faith.