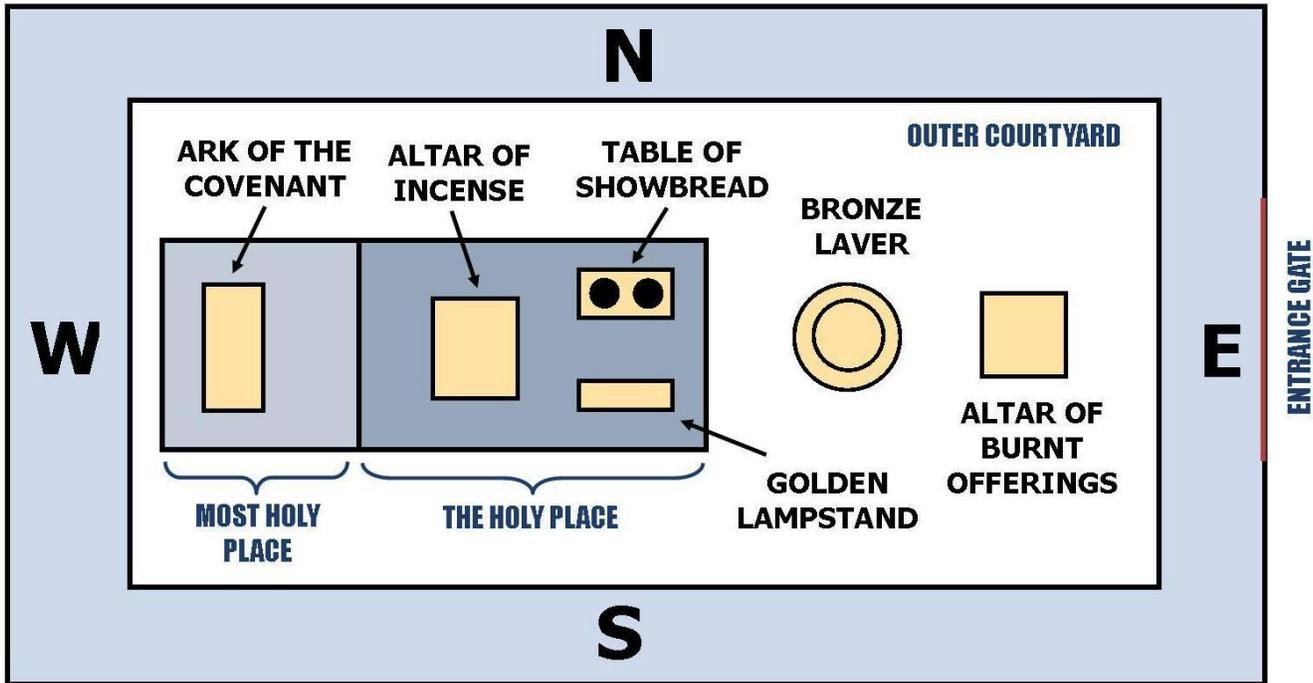


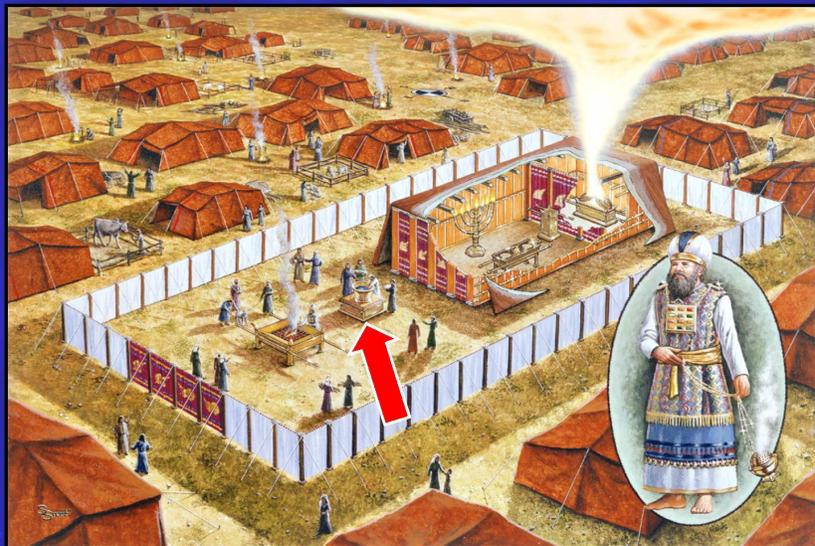
# TABERNACLE TRUTHS - III

A PATTERN FOR REVELATION & RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST THROUGH WORSHIP & PRAYER

## THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES (EXODUS 35-40)



## The Bronze Laver (Basin)



## TABERNACLE TRUTHS - III

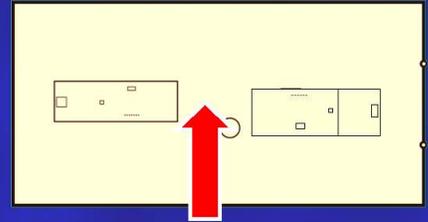
A PATTERN FOR REVELATION & RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST THROUGH WORSHIP & PRAYER

### TABERNACLE PATTERN:

## THE BELIEVER'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH

# The Bronze Laver

(Exodus 30:17-21; 40:7, 30-32)



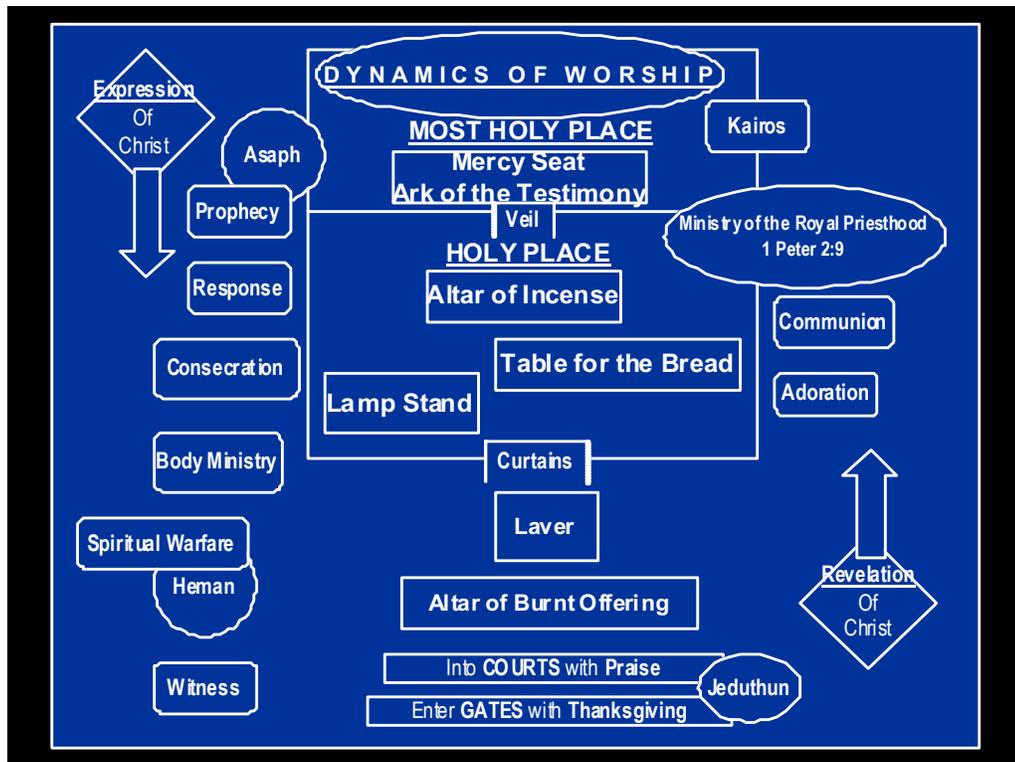
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## Exodus 30:17-21

17 "The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 18 "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. 19 Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; 20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire *sacrifice* to the LORD. 21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."



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In this study, as we look at the patterns contained in the Tabernacle, we apply, as it were, each pattern firstly to the idea of growing in our Revelation of Christ and Relationship with Christ. And then, we also apply the pattern to the activities (i.e. spiritual disciplines) of Worship and Prayer. The next Tabernacle pattern we will consider is that of “The Believer’s Spiritual Growth”.

### Revelation of Christ & Relationship with Christ: “He Who Sanctifies”<sup>1</sup>

The Laver speaks of the Person of Christ, that is, “**He Who Sanctifies**”. And water in the Laver speaks of Christ’s ministry of Sanctification. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes: “Christ ... loved the church and gave Himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> so **that He might sanctify her**, having cleansed her **by the washing of water with the word**, <sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.”<sup>2</sup>

“Sanctification” is part of the Salvation “package” or process, “without which, the writer to the Hebrews says, no one will see God”.<sup>3</sup> There is an “initial Sanctification”<sup>4</sup> for those who through

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<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 2:11

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 5:25b-27

<sup>3</sup> Hebrews 12:14

<sup>4</sup> Romans 6:22; 1 Corinthians 1:30

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faith<sup>5</sup> receive the Spirit of Christ, and therefore belong to Him.<sup>6</sup> This Sanctification is an initial “setting apart”, which warrants for us the scriptural title of “saints” or “holy ones”.<sup>7</sup> But then there are also a number of aspects with regards to “Sanctification” which have to do with the Christian’s spiritual growth and maturity after initial regeneration. They are:

- Cleansing of sin which results in growth in holiness<sup>8</sup>
- Partaking of the Divine nature.<sup>9</sup> (The Divine nature can be seen in “The Beatitudes”<sup>10</sup> and “The Fruit of the Spirit”<sup>11</sup>)<sup>12</sup>
- “Transformation” through the renewing of the mind<sup>13</sup> and also through the beholding of Christ.<sup>14</sup> It is primarily this aspect of “Transformation” which we will consider in this Tabernacle pattern.

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<sup>5</sup> Ephesians 2:8

<sup>6</sup> Romans 8:9

<sup>7</sup> Greek: *hagios* e.g. Acts 9:13, 32, 41; Romans 1:7; 15:25-26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1

<sup>8</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7; 2 Thessalonians 2:13

<sup>9</sup> 2 Peter 1:2-8

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 5:3-12

<sup>11</sup> Galatians 5:22-25

<sup>12</sup> Also see 2 Peter 1:3-9 for traits of the Divine nature.

<sup>13</sup> Romans 12:2

<sup>14</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18

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A comparison between **the Altar of Burnt Offering** as representing **Justification** and **the Laver** as representing **Sanctification** will also help to define what is meant by the term “Sanctification”.

The apostle John wrote: <sup>6</sup>“This is the One who came by **water** and **blood**, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. <sup>7</sup>For there are three that testify: <sup>8</sup>the Spirit and **the water** and **the blood**; and the three are in agreement.”<sup>15</sup>

In this passage, we can see **the blood** as representing **the Altar of Burnt Offering**, and **the water** as representing **the Laver**. The blood **at the Altar of the Cross** sanctifies, that is “sets apart”, the unbeliever to become one who now belongs to Christ. The believer then continues to be sanctified **at the Laver** by “the washing of water with the word”. **At the Altar of Burnt Offering**, “... the blood of His Son cleanses us from all sin”<sup>16</sup> That is, the cross of Christ cleanses us of inherited sin and deals with our depraved spiritual position before a holy God. **At the Laver**, “the washing of the water with the word” sanctifies and cleanses us”<sup>17</sup> of acquired sin and deals with our defiled spiritual condition before a holy God. **The Altar of Brunt Offering** deals with past-tense sanctification. **The Laver** deals with present-tense sanctification.

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<sup>15</sup> 1 John 5:6-8

<sup>16</sup> 1 John 1:7b

<sup>17</sup> Ephesians 5:26

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### **A PATTERN FOR REVELATION & RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST THROUGH WORSHIP & PRAYER**

The method of Christ's sanctifying work is **"by the washing of water with the word"**. In John's gospel, we see Jesus Himself speaking of this. He told His disciples, "You are already **clean because of the word** which I have spoken to you."<sup>18</sup> Here, He is referring to that **initial sanctification**. At another time, He referred to this **initial sanctification as "having been bathed"** and the **ongoing sanctification as "washing feet"**.<sup>19</sup> He also made clear that the instrument of sanctification was **the word of God**.<sup>20</sup>

### **A Pattern for Worship & Prayer: Presenting-Yielding-Surrendering**

What role does the Laver play in Worship and Prayer? We have been discussing "Sanctification" as an ongoing process in the Christian's spiritual growth and maturity, and that is a cleansing of sin resulting in a growth in holiness.<sup>21</sup> But, besides the cleansing away of sin, growth in holiness is also growth in Christ-likeness - partaking of His Divine nature,<sup>22</sup> and being transformed into His image. As I said previously, it is this term, "Transformation", which we will primarily be considering.

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<sup>18</sup> John 15:3

<sup>19</sup> John 13:10

<sup>20</sup> John 17:17

<sup>21</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7; 2 Thessalonians 2:13

<sup>22</sup> 2 Peter 1:2-8

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Sanctification and Transformation are not only related, but in a very real sense, they are synonymous. **Sanctification** takes place by the “**washing of water with the word**”; and **Transformation** takes place by the “**renewing of the mind**”<sup>23</sup>, which is also **by the word**. The role of the Laver in Worship and Prayer is this: It is a place in our approach into the presence of God in Spirit and truth where we **see Christ** by way of **revelation**, and in **beholding Him**, we are **changed – transformed – into His image**. In the activities of Worship and Prayer we **PRESENT** ourselves, **YIELD** ourselves, **SURRENDER** ourselves to God for this very purpose – to allow His word and Spirit **to reveal Christ** and **to transform us** into the image of Christ.

There are two places in his epistles where Paul speaks of Transformation: In Romans 12:1-2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18. In these two passages he explains to us how Transformation takes place.

In Romans 12:1-2, Paul encouraged the Church: “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present** your bodies a **living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, *which is your **spiritual service of worship***.<sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind, so that you may **prove** what **the will of God** is, that which is good and acceptable and

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<sup>23</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18

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perfect.”<sup>24</sup> Paul referred to this as **“your spiritual service of worship”**<sup>25</sup>; and gave us key words that tell us some significant things about worship in Spirit and truth.

The first is the word **“present”**. The Greek word, *paristemi*, literally means to “yield” or “surrender”.<sup>26</sup> What is to be “presented”? The Greek words Paul uses tell us that we are to present our “bodies”<sup>27</sup>, that is, our whole being, including our “mind”<sup>28</sup>, which is the seat of the soul: the heart of our will, mind and emotions. In Worship and Prayer, we are to **present, yield and surrender** our whole beings to God as a **“living sacrifice”** and a “holy sacrifice”, that is a sacrifice consecrated to God.

Paul indicate that when we present ourselves to God in worship so that we are yielded and surrendered to Him, this enables us to **“prove what the will of God is”**. What could this mean? The Greek word translated “prove”, *dokimazo*, actually means to **“examine”, and by implication to “approve”**.<sup>29</sup> I understand this to mean that when we present ourselves to God in Worship and Prayer, yielded and surrendered, God will in various ways - most usually through His word – show us His will

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<sup>24</sup> Romans 12:1-2

<sup>25</sup> Greek: *logikos*, Strong’s # 3050: “rational” + *lateria*, Strong’s # 2999: “service”; i.e. “rational service” involving the will and the mind.

<sup>26</sup> Strong’s # 3936. Paul also uses this word in Romans 6:13, 16, & 19

<sup>27</sup> Greek: *soma*

<sup>28</sup> Greek: *nous*

<sup>29</sup> Strong’s # 1381

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regarding Himself, His Church, or our personal lives.<sup>30</sup> And He actually gives us the opportunity **to examine it and choose to approve it**, that is, to say: “Yes, Lord. May it be done to me according to your word<sup>31</sup>. Amen, so be it.” This is truly amazing!

What may be even more amazing is that this practice of **Worship and Prayer “transforms” us**. Paul said that this Transformation takes place by “the renewing of our minds”. The Greek word translated “**renewing**”, *anakainosis*, means to make new in the sense of changing the nature or character of something; not making something “recent”, but making something “different”. So often, we are seeking for God to restore us back to some state which we deemed as good and pleasant; but God is wanting to do something new and different in our hearts and lives. “As it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”<sup>32</sup>

The Greek word translated “**transformed**”, *metamorphoo*, means to change (*meta*) into another form (*morphe*). W.E. Vine says this refers to “... a complete change, which under the power of God (the Holy Spirit) will find expression in character and conduct.”

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<sup>30</sup> By “His word” I mean the reading, preaching and teaching of the scripture. By “various ways” I mean the various “revelatory gifts” listed in 1 Corinthians 12: word of knowledge (v.8), word of wisdom (v.8), prophecy (v.10), discerning of spirits (v.10), tongues and interpretation (v.10). I don’t believe that sound biblical exegesis allows us to adopt an opinion that such gifts have “ceased”.

<sup>31</sup> Luke 1:38

<sup>32</sup> Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9

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Vine also says that the phrase “be transformed” is in the present continuous tense indicating that this transformation is an on-going process.

The Greek word Paul uses is the same word Matthew and Mark use to describe Jesus’ “transfiguration” in their gospels.<sup>33</sup> I believe the word “transfigure” connects with what is said about the Laver in Exodus 38:8. “Moreover, he made the laver of bronze with its base of bronze, from the **mirrors** of the serving women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting.” In those days, “**mirrors**” were made of highly polished bronze; and so, approaching the Laver would be like stepping up to a full-length **mirror**. As he approached it, the image of the high priest would be reflected in the bronze, as well as, in the water which the Laver held. The Holy Spirit Who inspired the writing of the scriptures has **the image of our High Priest,<sup>34</sup> Jesus, being reflected throughout the word**. When we look into the word, as it were, we will see Christ continually revealed. And “**by the washing of water with the word**”, **we are transformed**.

The goal of scripture study should be to see Christ revealed. The goal of worship should be to see Christ revealed. The goal of prayer should be to see Christ revealed. The goal of any and all the activities of the Church should be to see Christ revealed. I say this

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<sup>33</sup> Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2

<sup>34</sup> Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14; 5:10; 6:20; 7:26; 8:1; 9:11

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because the Father's goal is "the summing up of all things in Christ"<sup>35</sup>; because Jesus builds His Church through revelation of Himself<sup>36</sup>; and because it is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to "testify about Christ"<sup>37</sup>.

It is in 2 Corinthians 3:18 where Paul explains that this **seeing Christ revealed is what also transforms us into His image**. In 2 Corinthians 4:6, he tells us that "**the knowledge of the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ**". And in 2 Corinthians 3:18 he writes: "**Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord (in the face of Jesus Christ), we are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.**" Let's "unpack" this verse:

W.E. Vine says the "**the glory<sup>38</sup> of the Lord**" is "**the character and the ways of God as exhibited through Christ**"<sup>39</sup>. And Paul says we "are being transformed...from glory to glory". This Transformation is a process. Paul goes on to say that process of Transformation is "by the Spirit of the Lord", which is to say that "it is God Who is at work in you"<sup>40</sup>. Paul says this is how Transformation happens: by "**beholding**"<sup>41</sup> – by "**beholding the**

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<sup>35</sup> Ephesians 1:10

<sup>36</sup> Matthew 16:17-18

<sup>37</sup> John 15:26

<sup>38</sup> Greek: *doxa*

<sup>39</sup> John 1:14, 17:5, 24, Hebrews 1:3

<sup>40</sup> Philippians 2:13. Also Philippians 1:6

<sup>41</sup> Greek: *katoptrizo* – "as being reflected in a mirror"

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glory of the Lord” “in the face of Jesus Christ”. Transformation happens by way of Revelation – Revelation of Christ. Beholding “the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ” – seeing “the ways and character of God as exhibited through Christ” – we are Transformed into that same image by the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit.

So, during times of Worship and Prayer, when Christ is revealed to us, our response should be “presenting ourselves as living sacrifices” – “yielding and surrendering” ourselves to the working of the Holy Spirit to transform us into the image of Jesus.

This “yielding and surrendering” is **the beginning of obedience** - obeying what is revealed to us regarding the will of God. Along with “yielding and surrendering”, by definition, obedience involves “**follow-through action**”. Before making this last point on obedience, I think it is good to note that Worship is not only a personal or collective **activity** – it is also a **lifestyle** – our whole life is to be “a living sacrifice”. So, Worship, and particularly this aspect of obedience, goes beyond the times spent in private devotion or times of public Worship. We could say that what is revealed to us during those special times – what we “yield and surrender” to during those special times – is meant to be **lived out in our everyday lives**. In fact, during our everyday lives, God will often give us opportunity to Worship Him by giving us situations in which we can “yield and surrender” to Him in obedience.

I’d like to share some insight I gained regarding this from John 14:21 where Jesus says to His disciples: “He who has My

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commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him **and will disclose Myself to him.**"

A few verses earlier,<sup>42</sup> Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." And here He is saying, "If you keep My commandments, you are the one who loves Me." Then he says that, when we keep His commandments, He will love us, come to us, make His abode with us<sup>43</sup>, and – **He will "disclose" Himself to us.** The Greek word translated "**disclose**" is *emphanizo*<sup>44</sup>, meaning "**manifest**" or "**reveal**". Of this, John Gill says: "(reveal) in a spiritual manner, as when he makes himself known to his people in ordinances, and favours them with communion with him, and they see his beauty, his fulness, his grace and righteousness, his power, and his glory."<sup>45</sup>

Now, let's combine what Jesus is saying here, "If you obey Me, **I will reveal Myself to you**" with what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:18: "If we **behold the glory of the Lord** (in the face of Jesus Christ) we will be **transformed into that same image**". Now this is the insight I'd like to share with you: During times of Worship and

Prayer, the word of God opens up to us the character of God as revealed in Jesus. In our everyday lives, there will be many situations presented to us by God which are opportunities for us to respond to, to "**yield and surrender**" to, in obedience to God's

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<sup>42</sup> V.15

<sup>43</sup> V. 23

<sup>44</sup> Strong's # 1718.

<sup>45</sup> *Exposition of the Entire Bible*

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ways. Let's say, for example, the way Jesus responded to Satan while being tempted in the wilderness<sup>46</sup>; or the way Jesus responded to sinners while suffering unjustly at their hands.<sup>47</sup>

These may be “on the spot” fresh revelations, or reminders of what we have seen in times of Worship and Prayer. In these situations, God is giving us opportunities to “**present ourselves as living sacrifices**”:

We see the situation.

We see how Jesus would respond.

We examine and choose to approve the will of God.

We “yield and surrender”;

and obey by doing what Jesus would do.

Jesus and Paul are telling us that at that moment, **Jesus will come to us and reveal Himself to us; and seeing Him, we will be transformed in His image**, “from one degree of glory to another”.

The obedience is the “switch” that we flip, so to speak; and the revelation and working of the Holy Spirit is the power that is released to transform us into Christ's image. In our everyday lives,

there are many such opportunities. As we continue to present ourselves as living sacrifices, from glory to glory he changes us, and we grow in holiness, as we are transformed into His image and likeness.

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<sup>46</sup> Luke 4:1-13

<sup>47</sup> 1 Peter 2:21-23

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So, like those who came to worship at the feast of Passover said: **“We wish to see Jesus.”**<sup>48</sup> <sup>10</sup> For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For both **He who sanctifies** and those who are sanctified are all from one *Father*; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, <sup>12</sup> saying, **“I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE.”**<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> John 12:21

<sup>49</sup> Hebrews 2:10-12