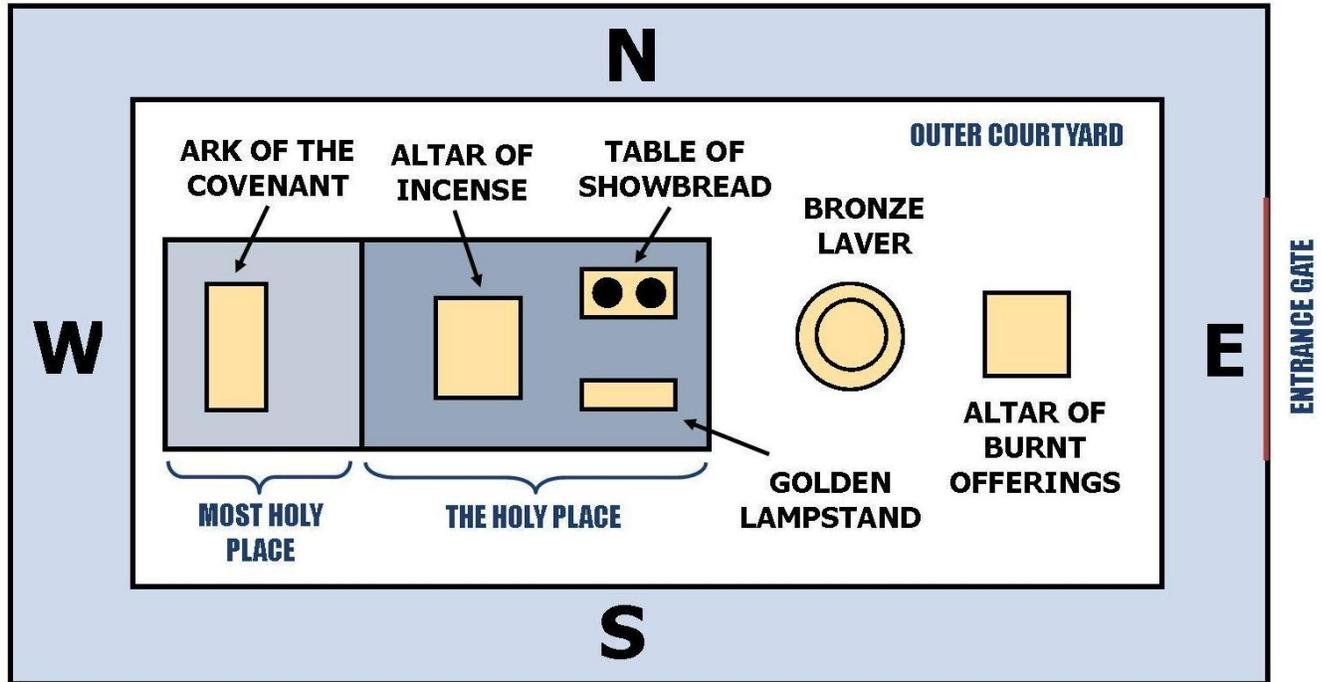


## TABERNACLE TRUTHS - V

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

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



## The Holy Place



The Measurements and Materials



The Golden Lampstand



The Table of Showbread



The Altar of Incense

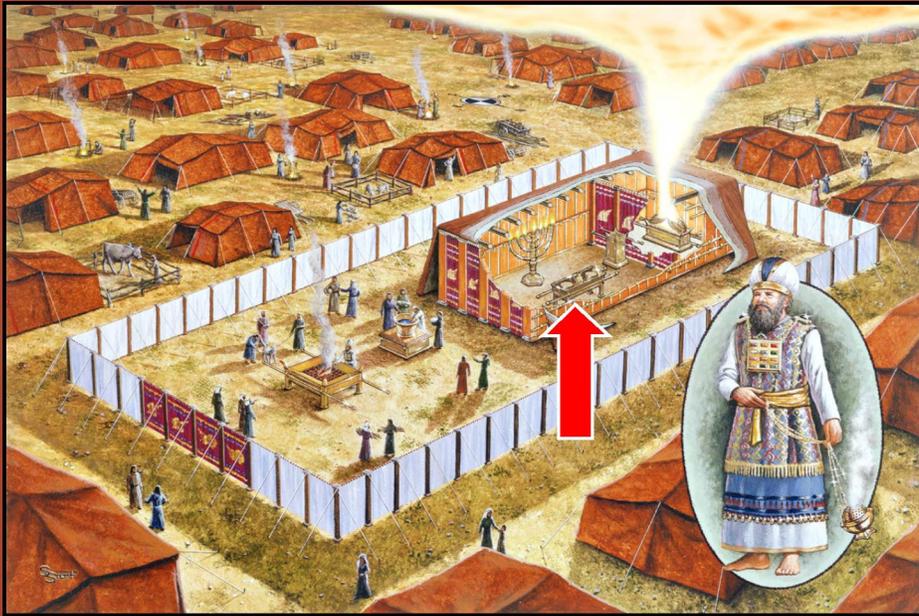


The Veil

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### The Table of Showbread



Now, as we continue to look in the Holy Place, the next piece of furniture we will consider is The Table for the Bread – also referred to as The Table of Showbread;<sup>1</sup> but the more commonly accepted translation is The Table for The Bread of the Presence<sup>2</sup>. The Hebrew adjective describing the Bread, *paniym*<sup>3</sup>, can mean “face” or “presence”. The Bread of the Presence which was on the table was to be “before the Lord”<sup>4</sup>, that is, “... set (it) in order

<sup>1</sup> NKJV

<sup>2</sup> ESV, GWT, LEB, NASB, NIV, NRSV

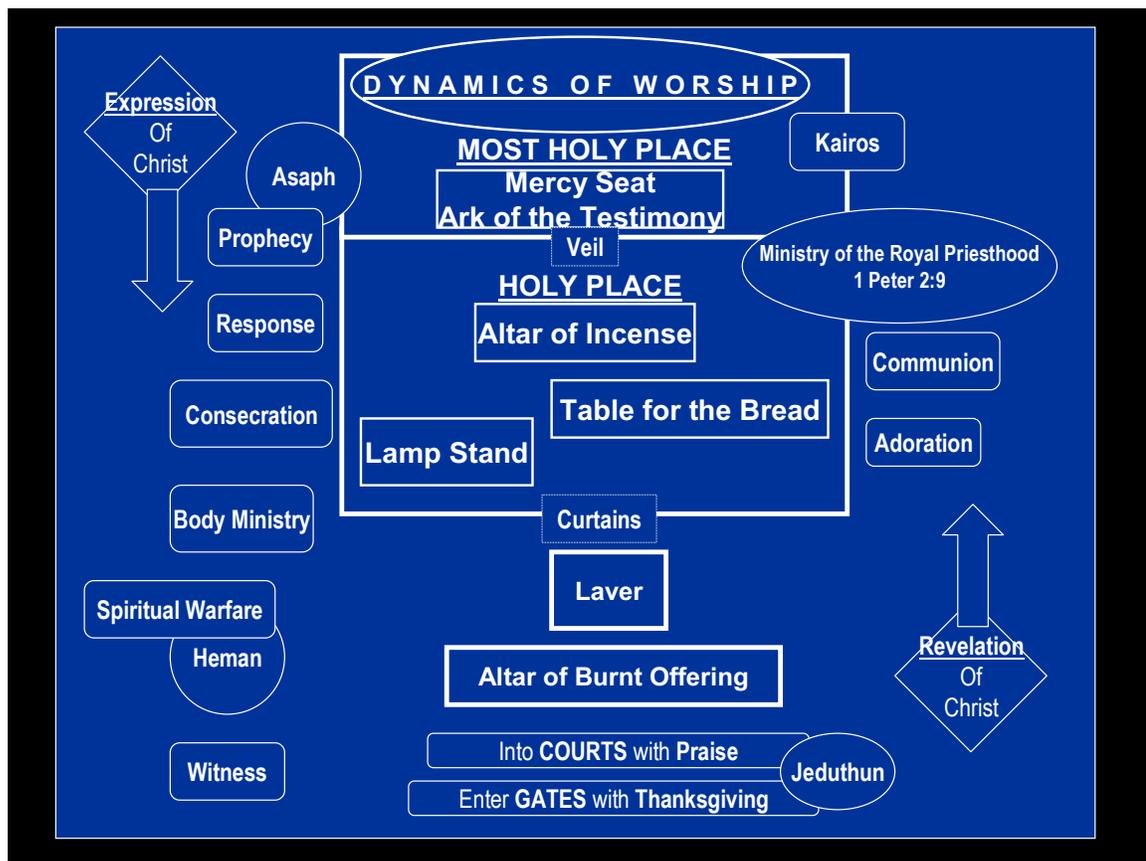
<sup>3</sup> Strong's # 6440

<sup>4</sup> Exodus 25:30

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before the LORD continually”.<sup>5</sup> This explains why it was referred to as the Bread of the **Presence**: It was the Bread of the “face”, that is, the Bread which is continually before the face of God. The NKJV uses the phrase “showbread”,<sup>6</sup> that is, the Bread which is continually “on show” before God.



<sup>5</sup> Leviticus 24:8

<sup>6</sup> KJV “showbread”

## **TABERNACLE TRUTHS - V**

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

In this study, as we look at the patterns contained in the Tabernacle, we will apply, as it were, each pattern firstly to the idea of growing in our Revelation of Christ and Relationship with Christ. And then, we will also apply the pattern to the activities (i.e. spiritual disciplines) of Worship and Prayer, bearing in mind that our approach to the Tabernacle Pattern is to consider the on-going Revelation of Christ, Adoration of Christ and Communion with Christ through an inward flow of worship in “the ministry of the royal priesthood”<sup>7</sup>, that is, Entering His Gates with Thanksgiving, into His Courts with Praise, the acknowledgement and forgiveness of sin at the Altar of Burnt Offering, Cleansing and Transformation at the Laver, along with praying the promises in the name of Jesus at the Altar of Incense. And now, we will consider the pattern represented by the Table for the Bread of the Presence:

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<sup>7</sup> 1 Peter 2:5 & 9

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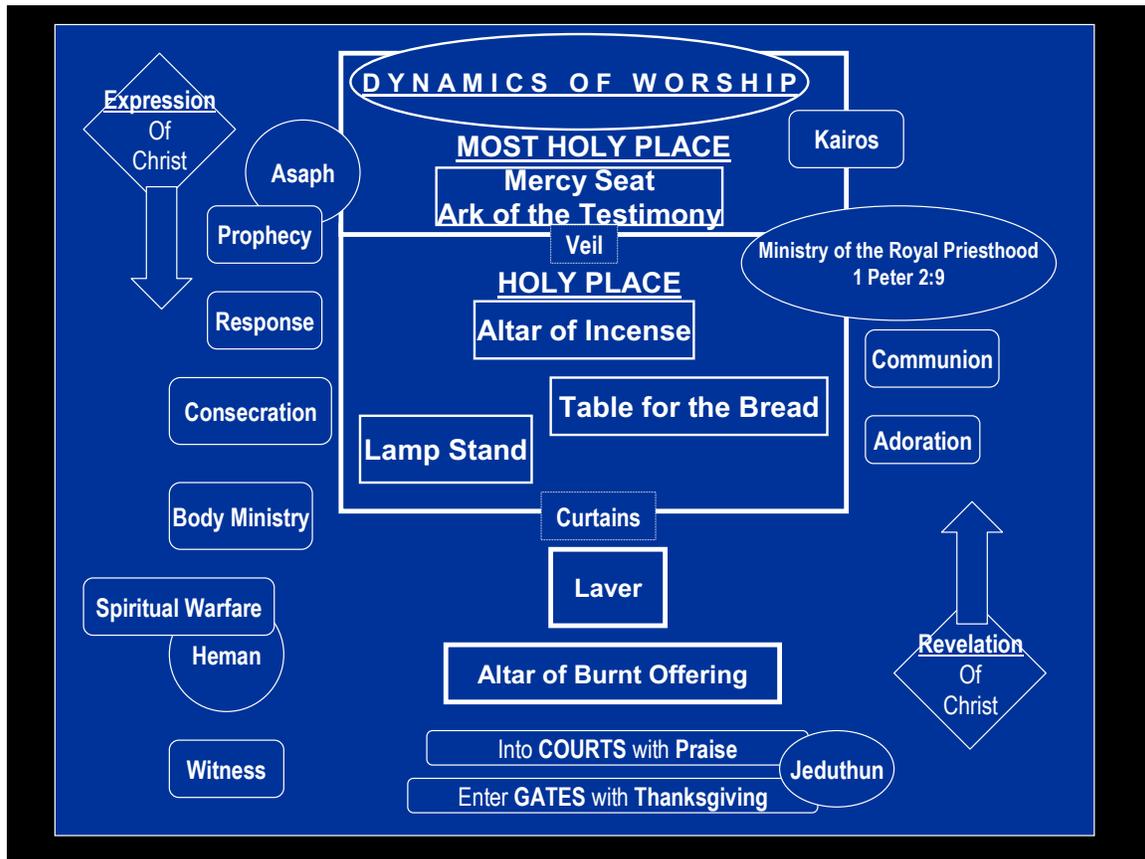
### Exodus 25:23-30

<sup>23</sup> “You shall make a table of acacia wood, two cubits long and one cubit wide and one and a half cubits high.<sup>24</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold and make a gold border around it. <sup>25</sup> You shall make for it a rim of a handbreadth around *it*; and you shall make a gold border for the rim around it. <sup>26</sup> You shall make four gold rings for it and put rings on the four corners which are on its four feet. <sup>27</sup> The rings shall be close to the rim as holders for the poles to carry the table. <sup>28</sup> You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, so that with them the table may be carried. <sup>29</sup> You shall make its dishes and its pans and its jars and its bowls with which to

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pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. <sup>30</sup> You shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me at all times.”



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### TABERNACLE PATTERN: COMMUNION & FELLOWSHIP

The Bread of the Presence which was on the table was to be **“before the Lord”**<sup>8</sup>, that is, **“... set (it) in order before the LORD continually”**.<sup>9</sup> The phrase **“before the Lord”** speaks of **Communion and Fellowship with God**. Jesus fulfills this character. The apostle John said that Jesus has always been **“with God”**.<sup>10</sup> The Greek word John used, *pros*<sup>11</sup>, means literally **“face to face with God”**, depicting an **intimate communion and fellowship** between the Father and the Son. And the writer to the Hebrew assures us that the risen Christ is still **“face to face with God”**, because as our High Priest<sup>12</sup> He not only has **“appeared in the presence of God for us”**<sup>13</sup>, but now remains seated **“at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty”**<sup>14</sup> **“making intercession for us”**.<sup>15</sup> But also, as our Forerunner<sup>16</sup> He has opened for us **“a new and living way into the Holy Place”**<sup>17</sup> where we too can **“draw near**

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<sup>8</sup> Exodus 25:30

<sup>9</sup> Leviticus 24:8

<sup>10</sup> John 1:1

<sup>11</sup> Strong's # 4314

<sup>12</sup> Hebrews 4:14

<sup>13</sup> Hebrews 9:24

<sup>14</sup> Hebrews 8:1

<sup>15</sup> Hebrews 7:25

<sup>16</sup> Hebrews 6:20

<sup>17</sup> Hebrews 10:19-20

## TABERNACLE TRUTHS - V

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

with confidence”<sup>18</sup> and have **Communion and Fellowship with the Father.**

## Revelation of Christ & Relationship with Christ: The Bread of Life

The Table and the Bread of the Presence speak of the Person and Ministry of Christ. The utensils **resting upon the Table** can be seen as the worship ministry of “the royal priesthood”<sup>19</sup>. These utensils consisted of dishes (platters) to carry the bread to the table,<sup>20</sup> pans (spoons) in which to carry the frankincense,<sup>21</sup> jars (covers) and bowls (sacrificial cups) – all vessels used in connection with Meal and Drink Offerings<sup>22</sup> which foreshadowed the worship ministry of “the royal priesthood”. As all of these utensils **rested upon the Table**, so our worship and our Communion and Fellowship with the Father also **rests upon** Christ. As the apostle Paul simply summarized: “We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”.<sup>23</sup>

So, we have the Table, the Bread, the utensils for Meal and Drink offerings - all of this depicts a meal; and the meal speaks of Communion or Fellowship. In the New Testament, it is referred to

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<sup>18</sup> Hebrews 4:16

<sup>19</sup> 1 Peter 2:5 & 9

<sup>20</sup> Ezekiel 46:19-24

<sup>21</sup> Numbers 7:86

<sup>22</sup> Leviticus 23:9-13; 24:5-9; Numbers 15:1-5

<sup>23</sup> Romans 5:1

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as the Lord's Table. With the New Covenant, Jesus has provided His "Table" through which we can have Communion and Fellowship with the Father. The "meal" on the Table is His body and blood, which He has referred to as "true food and true drink".<sup>24</sup> It is this "meal" which is pictured here with the Table of the Presence.

While still on earth, Jesus had said: "For **the bread of God** is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.<sup>25</sup> ....**I am the Bread of Life**<sup>26</sup>.... Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood **abides in Me, and I in him**. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me."<sup>27</sup> As His disciples said, "This is a difficult statement."<sup>28</sup> But in the context, Jesus explained what He meant by "eating and drinking" of Him: He said it involved "**coming**" to Him<sup>29</sup>; and those who were "**coming**" to Him were those who had been "**hearing and learning from the**

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<sup>24</sup> John 6:53-57

<sup>25</sup> John 6:33

<sup>26</sup> John 6:35, 48

<sup>27</sup> John 6:53-57

<sup>28</sup> John 6:60

<sup>29</sup> John 6:37, 44, 45

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Father”<sup>30</sup>. Jesus said that “eating and drinking” of Him involved “**beholding**” Him and “**believing**” Him.<sup>31</sup> In other words, it involves carrying on intimate relationship with Him – coming into His Presence for Communion and Fellowship with Him.

### A Pattern for Worship & Prayer: **THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD**

The crucifixion was Jesus’ Sin Offering of His own body and blood for our atonement. After His crucifixion, Jesus was buried, and then, at least three different times after His resurrection,<sup>32</sup> He chose a meal as a vehicle for **Communion and Fellowship**.<sup>33</sup> This **Communion and Fellowship** is Christ’s ultimate intention in our redemption: The risen Christ announced to the Church: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will **dine with him and he with Me**.”<sup>34</sup> He desires the **Communion and Fellowship** of a Meal with us.

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<sup>30</sup> John 6:45

<sup>31</sup> John 6:40, 47

<sup>32</sup> In fulfillment of the Spring Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and First Fruits (Leviticus 23; Luke 22-24).

See my booklet, “The Table & The Feast”.

<sup>33</sup> Luke 24:30-31, 41-43, and John 21:9-13

<sup>34</sup> Revelation 3:20

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This **Communion and Fellowship** is the Father's eternal purpose in the creation and in the new creation: The apostle Paul told the Church: "He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless **before Him** in love"<sup>35</sup> even as "the bread of the Presence was on the table **before the Lord** at all times."<sup>36</sup>

The term, "Practice of the Presence of God", has been coined with reference to the writings of Nicholas Herman of French Lorraine (1605-1691), who was known as "Brother Lawrence". His writing very much applies to the individual devotional life.<sup>37</sup> But here I would like to focus on how the term "The Practice of the Presence of God" can apply to the Church when gathered together for community Worship and Prayer.

This is a quote from the writing of Brother Lawrence: "I make it my business only to preserve **in His holy presence**, wherein I keep myself by a simple attention, and a general fond regard to God, which I may call an actual **presence of God**; or to speak better, an habitual, **silent and secret conversation of the soul with God.**" So, we can see that Brother Lawrence was devoted to **Communion and Fellowship in the Presence of God**. This is what is meant by **The Practice of the Presence of God**. I would like to

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<sup>35</sup> Ephesians 1:4

<sup>36</sup> Exodus 25:30

<sup>37</sup> See my booklet, "The Practice of the Presence of God"

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comment on two things he mentioned: 1) **“silent conversation”** and 2) **“secret conversation”**:

Regarding **“silent conversation”**: Silence is a discipline of learning to control speech; that is, when to speak and when not to speak<sup>38</sup> - including when and when not to speak to God. The wisdom of Solomon says: “There is a time to speak and a time to be silent”.<sup>39</sup> Solomon also said: “Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and **draw near to listen** rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools.”<sup>40</sup> “Draw near to listen....” Prayer should be two-way communication involving our speaking to God and listening as He speaks to us.

We should not think that times of silence during community worship and prayer are “dead spots” to be avoided or needing to be filled in with human words. Silence is a discipline of learning to listen, that is, to hear spiritually. “Hearing God” is one of Lord’s fundamental intentions for His people:

A literal translation of Genesis 3:8 reads: “And they (Adam and Eve) **heard the voice<sup>41</sup> of the Lord** (while they were) walking in the garden during the breeze<sup>42</sup> of the day.” Here we see that **the voice of God is associated with the presence of God**. Most

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<sup>38</sup> Regarding our speech with others: Ecclesiastes 3:7; Proverbs 12:23; 15:23; 16:32; 17:27-28; 25:11 & 28; James 1:19 & 26; 3:1-2; 1 Peter 4:11.

<sup>39</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:7

<sup>40</sup> Ecclesiastes 5:1

<sup>41</sup> Strong’s # 6963: *kole*: a vocal sound; see vv. 9-10

<sup>42</sup> Strong’s # 7307: *ruach*: spirit, wind, breeze

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commentators view this passage as depicting a daily **communion and fellowship** that took place between God and Man before their fall into sin. Before the Fall, it was normal to **listen to the voice of the Lord**. And still today, it is normal for those who have the Spirit of Christ to **listen to the voice of the Lord**, for He said, “My sheep **hear My voice**”.<sup>43</sup>

In Deuteronomy 8:3 God told us that “Man does not live by bread alone, but by **everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord**.” And we know that this is the verse Jesus quoted to Satan in the wilderness to make the point that spiritual food is more important than natural food.<sup>44</sup> But we can also see from this verse that Man must **listen to what God is saying** for spiritual nourishment.

In the scriptures, we see the story of Samuel, the last of the judges and the first of the prophets, learning to discern **the voice of the Lord** as part of the process of spiritual maturity.<sup>45</sup>

Regarding “**secret conversation**”: In Exodus 33:11 it says, “The Lord used to speak to Moses **face to face**, just as a man speaks to his **friend**.” In the ministry of “the royal priesthood”<sup>46</sup>, every believer can hear God speak to him as a **Friend**.

In one of his songs David wrote: “The **friendship** of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his

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<sup>43</sup> John 10:4, 16, 27

<sup>44</sup> Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4

<sup>45</sup> 1 Samuel 3:1-10

<sup>46</sup> 1 Peter 2:5 & 9

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covenant.”<sup>47</sup> This is Oswald Chambers’ comment on this verse: “What is the sign of a friend? Is it that he tells you his secret sorrows? No, it is that he tells you his secret joys. Many people will confide their secret sorrows to you, but the final mark of intimacy is when they share their secret joys with you. Have we ever let God tell us any of His joys? Or are we continually telling God our secrets, leaving Him no time to talk to us? At the beginning of our Christian life we are full of requests to God. But then we find that God wants to get us into an intimate relationship with Himself— to get us in touch with His purposes. Are we so intimately united to Jesus Christ’s idea of prayer— “Your will be done” (Matthew 6:10) — that we catch the secrets of God?”<sup>48</sup>

“The **friendship** of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant.” The ASV, ESV and NRSV all use the word “**friendship**”. The NASB uses “**secret**”, and the HCSB uses “**secret counsel**”. The Hebrew word, *sod*,<sup>49</sup> refers to a group gathered in intimate conversation like that “**silent and secret conversation of the soul with God**” which Brother Lawrence referred to. So, “**friendship**” is a good word choice.

Yet, from the second half of the verse we see that what is being discussed is not “personal” in the sense of inconsequential, but rather God revealing His **secret counsels** regarding His kingdom

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<sup>47</sup> Psalm 25:14 ASV, ESV, NRSV

<sup>48</sup> From “My Utmost for His Highest” (June 3)

<sup>49</sup> Strong’s # 5475

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plans and purposes. Jesus said: **“I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”**<sup>50</sup> And the Spirit of Jesus continues to do this today when His Church has **Communion and Fellowship with Him by Practicing His Presence.**

I believe this is the subject matter of Matthew 18:18-20: **“<sup>18</sup> Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup> “Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”** This is to say: His Spirit is **“in our midst”** for the expressed purpose of **discussing with us** what is to be “bound” (forbidden) and “loosed” (allowed). His Spirit is **“in our midst”** for the expressed purpose of **discussing with us** what He desires us to “agree on” and “touch” in prayer.

I’d like to complete this thought by giving a prophetic picture of the Church as represented by a particular woman, for often in the scriptures women are symbolic of the people of God:<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> John 15:15

<sup>51</sup> e.g. Jeremiah 6:2; Galatians 4:26; Revelation 12:1-6, 13-17; 17:1-6; Micah 4:8-10; 7:1-18; Isaiah 62:11; 32:9-15; Zephaniah 3:14; Zechariah 9:9. Ephesians 5 (see verse 32).

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<sup>8</sup> Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who was seated **at the Lord's feet, listening to His word.** <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up *to Him* and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." <sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; <sup>42</sup> but **only one thing is necessary**, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Mary was seated "**at the Lord's feet listening to His word.**"

So, we see Mary, as a symbol of the Church, **listening to the Lord.** But I'd like to point out the obvious: She was seated at the **Lord's feet, listening to His word.**

**"Only one thing is necessary": To listen to what the Spirit of Jesus is saying.** In our media-driven culture there are many voices to hear. Also, when the church gathers, you can hear many voices or you can hear one voice, depending on what you are listening for. You can hear one another, or you can hear Jesus.

In Genesis 49:10 it says: "**... unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.**"<sup>52</sup> This is a prophecy regarding the nations' expectation of and gathering to the Christ – to hear and obey Him

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<sup>52</sup> KJV. "Him" meaning the Messiah. Strong's # 3349: *yiqqahah*: gathering to obey  
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as the Supreme Ruler – “the Head of the body, the Church ... that in everything He might be preeminent.”<sup>53</sup>

When the Church gathers, **to Whom** is it gathering?

**For Whom** is it listening?

When we sing a song, are we **listening** for the thoughts and feelings of Jesus in the words and music?

When we pray, are we **listening** for “Him who searches the hearts (and) knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*”?

When we hear a message, are we **listening to “hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church”**?<sup>54</sup>

Is that not the purpose of our gathering?

Should we not come expecting to encounter **the presence of the living God**?

Should we not be looking to **see and hear Jesus** in the midst of His body?

Should not our intention be to meet with Him, to have **Communion and Fellowship** with Him, to eat of **the Bread of Life** and nourish His life within us?

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<sup>53</sup> Colossians 1:18 ESV

<sup>54</sup> Romans 8:27; Revelation 2:7, 17; 3:6, 13, 22