

- Systemic Teaching about Christian Life -



The Law of Understanding

Series:
The Life of the
Christian in the World

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General Considerations about Using This Material:

The subject presented in this material aims to provide support to knowledge and an in-depth study of the Bible and the Christian life.

Based on the understanding that in the Christian Bible is contained the consolidation of fundamental and formal records of the writings inspired by God for humanity and each person of it, the contents exposed in this material are not intended to add, ever, anything to the Bible, nor ever remove anything from it. The aim through this subject is to contribute to the exploration of what already was registered and passed on to us over thousands of years of history by the One Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth.

The contents presented on the next pages, of course, intend to address just a portion of the essential themes of life displayed with such great amplitude in the Bible. On the other hand, however, this subject is presented in a grouped, colligated, organized and systematized manner with the objective to serve as an aid to knowledge and understanding of the Christian life without losing sight of the main aspects of it.

Ecclesiastes 12: 11 The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd.

Related words put together, as told in the biblical text above, serve as goads and nails for fixing supports and help for the life of people that hear and receive them. Therefore, one objective of this material is to study and seek a broader understanding of the truths handed down to us by the Unique Pastor and God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth.

We would still like to suggest that the reading and studying of this material also should always be accompanied by prudence and proper investigation, believing that this is a very healthy habit to be practiced toward any material presented to a person.

The act of acceptance, rejection, or “retaining what is good,” is a personal and individual attribute given to those who receive the wisdom from God and which should be exercised or used by them toward all that comes into their hands.

Proverbs 8: 12 "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, And find out knowledge and discretion.

Acts 17: 11 These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Proverbs 16: 1 The preparations of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, But the LORD weighs the spirits.

3 Commit your works to the LORD, And your thoughts will be established.

More details about these initial considerations are posted at www.zoominchristianlife.org.

Ronald Gortz and Irmelin Gortz, servants of the Lord Jesus Christ!

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*Revelation 21: 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."
6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*

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*1Timothy 2: 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

More details about these initial considerations are posted at www.zoominchristianlife.org.

Contents

Contents	4
C1. The Essential Role of Remaining in Christ and of the Knowledge of Truth to Enjoying the Truth that Sets Free.....	5
C2. The Multiple Laws in Life and the Law of Understanding	9
C3. To Discern and To Judge.....	19
C4. The so-called Spiritual Coverings or Guidance that Seek to Atrophy the Law of Understanding in People.....	31
C5. The Understanding that Produces Growth in the Knowledge of the Lord and His Will	44
Bibliography.....	50

C1. The Essential Role of Remaining in Christ and of the Knowledge of Truth to Enjoying the Truth that Sets Free

In the first subject of this series which is entitled *The Life of the Christian in the World*, it has been extensively commented that the central principle of a Christian's life is related to the Christian practicing continually the “work of faith in the Lord and of abiding in Christ.”

God, through His Gospel, offers salvation so that people can be delivered from bondage to sin and darkness, but also that an even higher purpose of salvation can be attained, which is the reconciliation and fellowship of those who are saved with the Creator of their lives.

2 Corinthians 5: 18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Through the salvation offered by God, human beings are not only called for deliverance from that which imprisons them, but they are also invited to draw near to that what they were deprived of access.

Nevertheless, what we would like to emphasize here is that the human being, through the salvation offered by God, has access to the aspects that this salvation offers, and not necessarily to what people think salvation should offer them.

The salvation offered by the Eternal Lord to human beings makes available what people truly need for eternal life, making it crucial that what is offered to them by the Lord also becomes known in a more precise or profound way.

Considering that the newness of life in the Lord is offered to people as an offer to be voluntarily accepted by the recipients of it, it also becomes necessary for people to have access to information about what is being offered and the option for what is offered to them by God.

Thus, **in order for people to know what is offered to them through the salvation provided by God, the Scriptures teach that one of the main benefits offered by the heavenly salvation is the possibility of every Christian being able to “abide in Christ” for also, through Him, reaching the “knowledge of the truth” which, in turn, cooperates with the truth that grants “true freedom” upon the one who knows and receives it in one's life.**

*John 8: 31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.
32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

If we look closely once more at this last text, we can see that although "truth," which is Christ, is the liberating agent of a person, it is by "knowledge of the truth or Christ" that an individual reaches the position in which one can choose more intensely, widely, and precisely for the liberating action of the truth or Christ in one's favor.

Knowledge of truth is a means by which a person can place oneself in a position where the truth acts more directly and objectively in one's life and in favor of it, for a part of the action of the truth for the sake of an individual also depends on the will and the consent of the latter on the work of the truth or Christ in his or her life.

When, however, a person despises the knowledge of the truth, one also despises several aspects of the truth that would benefit him or her in the most diverse areas of one's life.

When a person disregards the knowledge of the truth, one begins to make decisions based on deceit and lies, and it is also according to these aspects that one, then, starts to sow in one's life, reaping, afterward, ties and slavery pertinent to that which opposes the truth.

*2 Thessalonians 2: 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,
10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*

*Galatians 6: 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.
8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

If a person, for instance, resists accepting the truth that only the Lord Jesus Christ is the way for an individual to be delivered from bondage to sin, to the condemnatory law, and to darkness, and insists on wanting to obtain this deliverance through that which cannot free him or her, this person deprives oneself of the liberation offered by the Lord by disregarding the truth and giving credit to the lie that can never provide the desired freedom.

On the other hand, some people may claim that they did not know the liberating truth of the Lord and, therefore, they have not followed it yet, thus showing us once again that **it is in the knowledge of the truth that a person finds the point of the possibility of choosing to become associated with the truth or some specific aspect of it.**

Therefore, to differentiate the “knowledge of the truth” from the “truth” itself may be of the utmost importance for a person to associate more consistently with the truth and the results that come from it. Remembering, still, that the human being is called to know the truth and not to create or define the characteristics of it, for it has existed since before the creation of the human race and is the very expression of an immutable attribute of God.

*John 14: 6 **Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."***

*John 16: 13 **However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.***

*Psalms 89: 14 **Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.***

*John 1: 14 **And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.***

*17 **For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.***

Truth is pre-existing to the human being and does not need to be formulated and conceived by the human race. Truth is a virtue of God that was and continues to be manifested and offered by the Lord to all the people of the world through Jesus Christ.

Thus, to say that the truth sets free or to say that the Lord Jesus Christ makes people free are expressions that are equivalent.

*John 8: 36 **Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.***

A significant challenge of people regarding the truth, then, consists in knowing it as the Lord wants them to know it, and this, so that they also relate to it to the point of attaining the benefits of knowing and choosing the truth.

Presenting the preceding in other words, we might say that truth itself teaches that:

⇒ 1) **The truth is the liberating agent that every human being needs;**

- ⇒ 2) **It is necessary for a person to come to know the truth so that one may benefit from the truth to the extent that the truth makes him or her reach true freedom;**
- ⇒ 3) **The knowledge of the truth, in turn, is given by the action of remaining in the relationship with it or with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ, the One Who is the expression of the eternal truth.**

As seen in the first text of John 8 above, **the Lord Jesus Christ, the very expression of truth, teaches that it is through remaining in His teachings that a person attains knowledge of the truth, which, in turn, enables an individual to have access to the option for the truth that makes free.**

In abiding in Christ and His teachings, a person has the way to the knowledge of the truth, which, in turn, is the path to the option for the action of the truth in favor of the one who longs for it for freedom and life.

Therefore, the practice of “abiding in Christ” causes the one who exercises it to become a person “taught by the Lord,” which, in turn, results in a knowledge of the truth according to the truth. And this, so that the truth may manifest freedom for eternal life to be experienced by the one who believes in the truth and receives it in the heart.

1 Timothy 2: 3 **For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,
4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

John 5: 24 **Most assuredly, I say to you, "he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."**

2 Thessalonians 2: 13 **But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,
14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

2 John 1: 2 **Because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:
3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.**

C2. The Multiple Laws in Life and the Law of Understanding

Following the line of the previous chapter regarding the fact that knowledge of truth plays a crucial role in the action of truth in favor of a person's freedom, it can be observed that this aspect is described several times in the Scriptures and under different prisms so that it stands in high prominence or does not pass unnoticed in any way.

Similarly to the aspect of the role of the knowledge of the truth regarding the truth, it can also be seen in the Scriptures, as another example, the role that understanding of the aspects that substantiate faith plays in relation to the life of faith in the Lord of an individual.

When faced with the information that the Christian life is to be lived essentially through faith in Christ Jesus, many people, unfortunately, surrender to the inappropriate thought that life through faith is a life of mere obedience where understanding is not relevant, even claiming, in some cases, that faith would be synonymous with "blind or unquestioned obedience."

Nevertheless, the definition of life by mere obedience or devoid of understanding is not the definition of faith that the Lord left recorded in His Scriptures.

Faith, according to the text of Hebrews 11, is the certainty, substance, or firm foundation of hope, showing us that life by faith is accompanied by a broad exposition of Him in Whom a person is invited to place one's trust, as well as it is accompanied by the granting of hopes or promises by which a person is informed in what one should believe with confidence in God, as described and respectively exemplified in the following texts:

*Hebrews 11: 1 **Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.***

*Hebrews 11: 11 **By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.***

The life of faith accompanied by proper understanding, similarly to the description of Hebrews 11, can also be observed in the text that exposes the work of the Gospel in favor of those who receive it, showing that faith in God and the increasing revelation of God's righteousness always walk together.

*Romans 1: 16 **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.***

*17 **For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."***

Life through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which essential aspect is faith in the righteousness of God and the gift of righteousness offered by the Lord to the justification of all who believe in Christ, also relies on the growing revelation of this righteousness and the gift of righteousness through the Gospel of God so that a person may know in what or in whom one is believing in his or her advance in faith.

The Scriptures do not describe the expectation that an individual would believe in Christ, as the gift of righteousness to the justification and life of all who believe in Him, without the person having even heard of the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of salvation which He came to manifest, as explained below:

*Romans 10: 14 **How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?***

Not even from Abraham, regarded as a precursor of life by faith in God, was required to believe in God for his justification without receiving first a pre-announcement of the Gospel of the Lord.

*Galatians 3: 8 **And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."***

The offer of justification, salvation, and life in Christ Jesus is a work widely exposed by God through His Gospel so that people may know about it and may have abundant information about who is the Christ that was sent to accomplish this salvation.

Through the subject of the Systemic Teaching about Christian Life under the title The Gospel of the Promise, we similarly seek to highlight the fact that a Christian is called to be always prepared to expose “the reason of his or her hope,” thus also showing that the “reason of faith” of a person can be presented to other people with understanding and clarity.

*1 Peter 3: 15 **But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.***

Although a person cannot comprehend and explain all the depths of the love and wisdom of God that led the Lord to offer salvation in Christ to all human beings, a Christian can have broad access to the explanation about the fundamental aspects of the Lord's work in Christ Jesus to offer this salvation, as well as sharing it with others.

*1 Timothy 3: 16 **And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.***

The word “*reason*,” used in the last text of 1Peter mentioned above, is the same word used to describe Christ as the “Living Word of God,” but which can also mean “*the logic and set of factors that lead a person to believe in some hope.*”

Many people claim they do not understand God's salvation to believe in it, but, on the other hand, many of these people also do not open the heart for God to show them the basic and essential points of His offer so that they understand the “*reason*” or the “*logic*” of the salvation that the Lord presents to all human beings.

It might be that not all people agree with the facts that the Scriptures present as fundamental for an individual to believe in God and His Gospel, but **faith in God is by no means devoid of many facts that ground the “*reason*” to a person to have faith in Christ.**

Also in the parable of the four types of soil on which the word of God is sown, it can be observed that the understanding of what was sown has a vital role regarding the one who receives the seed to reach the fruits for which the seed was granted, as explained below by the words of the Lord Jesus Himself:

*Matthew 13: 18 **Therefore hear the parable of the sower:**
19 **When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.***

...

*23 **But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.***

We recall here that a more detailed approach to the parable mentioned above has also been described in the subjects The Christian and The Riches and Work Out Your Salvation (Chapters Take Heed How You Hear, and Growth in Faith Comes by Hearing and Hearing by the Word of God).

And continuing to go a little further on the crucial role that the knowledge of the truth, the understanding of the hope granted by God, and the understanding of the word of God may represent for a person to enjoy freedom in Christ and the life of faith in the Lord, we can verify that the Scriptures specifically address this subject also from the standpoint of what is called the “Law of Understanding” or the “Law of the Mind.”

In the book of Romans, chapters 7 and 8, mention is made of various laws that seek to act in people's lives, but among them is also mentioned the relevance of the “Law of Understanding” or the “Law of the Mind” as a central law so that the relationship with the other laws may be done adequately, as follows:

Romans 7: 22 **For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.**

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

In the chapters of the book of Romans presented above, we find references to the law of Moses, to the law of sin and death, to the law of God, to the law of the Spirit and life, but in them, we also find the “law that battles against the Law of Understanding” of a person in order to bring and keep him or her under the law of sin. Showing, therefore, that there is a striking confrontation in the life of an individual that seeks that one does not attain the understanding one should reach on the “Law of one's Understanding” or the “Law of one's Mind,” even though one is surrounded by various laws on the most diverse aspects of life.

Paul, an apostle of Christ, describes that **the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind is so essential that the proper performance or non-performance of it in an individual also reflect, respectively, the aspect of a person being able to serve God or not being able to serve God according to the will of the Lord**, as follows:

Romans 7: 25(b) ... **So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.**

A person who reaches an understanding according to the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind, and thus prevails over the law that battles against him or her, is a person who qualifies to serve God. The opposite, however, can lead an individual to be subject to a life in the flesh, which, in turn, is subject to the law of sin.

The proper relationship or non-relationship of a Christian with the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind can be a determining factor whether this Christian, respectively, will serve God or whether he or she will serve sin. That is, with a proper understanding or with an enlightened mind, the Christian is enabled to serve God, but without the appropriate comprehension, one is inclined to serve sin, even if he or she is already a Christian.

What, then, are some characteristics of the so-called Law of My Understanding or Law of My Mind?

The word “*mind*” or “*understanding*,” in reference in the text of Romans 7 mentioned above, is exposed in the commentaries associated with Strong's lexicon as a term that encompasses “*the faculties of perception, understanding, feelings, or judgment.*” It refers to “*the power of considering and judging soberly, calmly, and impartially,*” or to “*a particular way of thinking or judging, for instance, thoughts, feelings, purposes, and desires.*”

So, without using the benefits of the so-called Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind, a person may find oneself in the situation where he or she is deprived of

adequately understanding the other laws that are in one's surroundings or, in other words, one may become subject to misinterpreting other laws that seek to act in one's life or through one's life.

Therefore, **what the Lord wants people to be aware, even before they seek to understand each of the laws of their surroundings, is for the fact that they first need to be supported by the law that can cause them to understand or discern the other laws appropriately.**

Before a person seeks to obtain an understanding of the most diverse aspects of life, it is the Lord's will that one, first or jointly, reaches a comprehension about the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind, for this law serves as a way or instrument for an adequate understanding of other understandings.

Here, however, we understand that it is imperative to mention that the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind does not merely refer to the natural or scientific knowledge that a person has attained about the various aspects of life in the world.

Before the eyes of the Lord, an enlightened mind, or which is adequately in line with the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind, refers to the heart that is instructed by the heavenly light or is instructed in the will of God to which one is called.

There is one essential point to be highlighted regarding the matter of believing in God with understanding, and that is the fact that the understanding that the Lord wants people to have in the heart is not the understanding according to what a person thinks or what the creation thinks and defines, but rather, according to the truth that proceeds from the Lord Himself.

- Proverbs 3: 3 **Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart,***
*4 **And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man.***
*5 **Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding;***
*6 **In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.***
*7 **Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil.***
*8 **It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.***
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The Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind mentioned by Paul, therefore, is correlated with what we have seen in the previous chapter, in the texts above of this chapter, and, for instance, also in the first subject of this series, The Core Principle of Life for a Christian.

According to the Scriptures, the Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind is expressed by the following aspects:

- ⇒ 1) **To trust in the LORD with all the heart and not leaning on the own understanding;**

- ⇒ 2) **To abide in Christ and His teachings to know the truth and to experience the freedom that the knowledge of the truth and the truth itself can produce;**
- ⇒ 3) **To acknowledge that the Lord Jesus is the true vine and that those who believe in Him are the branches, and, yet, that without Christ the branch can do nothing.**

If we look once more at the whole verse we quoted above in a partial way, we can see that **Christ is the essence of the Law of Understanding**:

Romans 7: 25 **I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.**

If the Lord wanted “blind obedience” from people or if the Lord wanted people to walk according to their own or the world's knowledge, He would not have given us texts in the Scriptures like the following:

Ephesians 5: 1 **Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.**
2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.
3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;
4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.
5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.
6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.
7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.
8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light
9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),
10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.
11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.
12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.
13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.
14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep. Arise from the dead. And Christ will give you light."
15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,
16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Seeking to understand the will of God through Christ or by fellowship with Christ is where the so-called Law of Understanding or Law of the Mind is found, and through which a person comes to be aware of the truth that is powerful to operate freedom and victory over all the laws that fight against the truth and one's life.

In living and walking in Christ, there is understanding about good, but also about evil, there is understanding about light, but there is also discernment about darkness. In Christ, there is discernment that goes beyond natural comprehension and is the only discernment entirely grounded in the Lord's eternal truth.

1 Corinthians 2: 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.

16 For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ wants us to know the law of the Spirit and life so that we may live according to it, just as He also teaches us to discern the law of sin and death so that we do not follow the way of death and properly abstain from it.

Nevertheless, emphasizing it once more, a central aspect that precedes the understanding of these various laws, both of life and death, is the awareness that it is by the instruction of the Lord Himself that an individual understands the other laws that are around people in the world.

Romans 8: 1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*

John 6: 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

John 5: 39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

40 *But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*

Colossians 2: 1 For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh,

2 *that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ,*

3 *in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

It is God's will for people to have the eyes of understanding widely enlightened about the most diverse aspects of life, but the Lord also wants them to understand the so-called Law of Understanding or the Law of the Mind according to what the Lord says about it, for it is by means of this that the true discernment or enlightening of the eyes of the understanding is given about the truth which proceeds from God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3: 4 And we have such trust through Christ toward God.
5 *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.*

Ephesians 5: 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

Thus, the experience or relationship with the Law of Understanding is expressed by the practice in which an individual exposes to the Lord every proposition of thought that comes to him or her.

The individual who lives in consonance with the Law of Understanding does not immediately or automatically accept or receive the various propositions that come to him or her, that is, one keeps them captive or prevented from acting in one's heart until the Lord gives the discernment on how to deal with them appropriately.

2 Corinthians 10: 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.
4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,
5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

To understand how to understand, or to discern how to learn to understand the will of God, as well as what is not the will of God, or to learn how an appropriate discernment is achieved, is to understand how the Law of Understanding or the Law of My Mind works, which practice allows a person to enjoy repeatedly and increasingly the benefits achieved through this law.

Isaiah 50: 4 The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to hear as the learned.

Isaiah 48: 17 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go."

Psalms 16: 7 I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.

8 I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

James 3: 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

1 John 2: 27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

John 14: 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

The Law of Understanding in action, which allows adequate knowledge of the other essential laws of life according to the will of the Lord, is the Lord instructing the truth and His will for those who accept His instruction.

The Law of Understanding in action is the person seeking in the Lord the instruction that one needs to receive from Christ to act and find oneself in the will of the Heavenly Father, as well as to take the necessary actions to no longer be subject to the yoke of the ways that are opposed to the will of God.

*John 15: 15 **No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.***

*Psalms 25: 5 **Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; On You I wait all the day.***

...
*12 **Who is the man that fears the LORD? Him shall He teach in the way He chooses.***

...
*14 **The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, And He will show them His covenant.***

*Psalms 143: 8 **Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, For in You do I trust; Cause me to know the way in which I should walk, For I lift up my soul to You.***

*9 **Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies; In You I take shelter.***
*10 **Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Your Spirit is good. Lead me in the land of uprightness.***

C3. To Discern and To Judge

Through the subject of the Systemic Teaching about Christian Live under the title The Gospel of the Righteousness of God, we seek to address various aspects and steps that are involved in what is called an action or a process of judgment according to the righteousness of God.

Considering, however, the relevance that the action of judging has regarding the subject of the Law of Understanding, it seems to us of great value to address some topics of the theme about judging also in the present material.

Whether by ignorance, carelessness, or negligence, or whether by evil intent, several people, including some who call themselves Christians, have spread a concept that a Christian should never judge other people or other Christians, claiming that the Scriptures instruct that no one should do it.

Nevertheless, to say that a Christian should not judge his or her neighbor is only a part of what is involved in the action of judging. To assert that one should never judge one's fellow man is a distortion of a series of other concepts of the same Scriptures that only at certain points instruct a person not to judge one's neighbor.

The act of judging or the action of judgment, as has already been seen in other materials of the Systemic Teaching about the Christian Life, encompasses several stages. And when the Scriptures instruct that a person should not judge one's fellow men, they are referring to a very particular point.

The act or action of judging practiced by a judge, for instance, does not begin with the establishment of a sentence or conviction, but rather by a phase of appreciation of what is involved in a process that is proposed to the judge to be put on trial.

A part of the action of a particular judgment refers to the stage where it is sought to discern those involved in that judgment, as well as the facts for which they became involved with the process.

Therefore, **to discern is also part of the act, action, or process of judging.**

When the Scriptures instruct people not to judge their neighbor in matters where it is not pertinent to them to judge, and where it is only pertinent to God, they are usually associated with instructions for a person not to declare sentences about the future of the spiritual life of their fellow men and nor to ascribe to them any judgment of condemnation concerning eternal life. (As described, for instance, in Romans 2).

There are some “judgments” in which only God can accurately discern what goes on in a person's heart. There are “judgments” in which it is the Lord's exclusive prerogative to establish the final condition whether a person will be or not condemned on eternal matters, for only the Lord is the Right Judge and knows every detail of a person's life.

No person is authorized to take the position of God, and, under no circumstances, it is up for a human being to “sentence” one's neighbor with the judgment that is due to God alone to perform.

All the descendants of Adam became associated with sin, and all would be equally condemned if the Lord did not offer His mercy and forgiveness

so that human beings could receive the redemption of the condemnation that passed to hover over them because of their transgressions.

God, through people, admonishes and urges other people about the path that leads to life, as well as the way that leads to death. However, as to the judgment or the judgment sentence regarding the eternal life of each person, it is the Heavenly Father, through Christ, Who judges all and knows what is right to be assigned to each human being. And there is no attribution of this status of Supreme Judge to any other being in the universe.

Acts 10: 36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of all)

37 That word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly,

41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.

No human being should attempt to stand and act in the exclusive prerogatives of God and Christ, even less in the sense of trying to judge their fellow men as a judge who can deliberate about people regarding eternal aspects.

On the other hand, as regards the subject of the Law of Understanding, the matter in relation to the act or action of judging is distinct from the judgment that proclaims eternal sentences, and which practice God would appreciate if all people would soberly and daily adopt it in their lives, as exemplified in the following text:

*1 Thessalonians 5: 21 **Test (prove or judge) all things; hold fast what is good.***

*22 **Abstain from every form of evil.***

Now, how can a person retain what is good and abstain from evil if one does not practice the act of proving or judging, in the sense of discerning, the things and those to which one is exposed or what are presented before him or her?

Therefore, **the action of judging also encompasses the practice of ascertaining, checking, or examining to discern.**

And in the latter sense, **the Lord wants His children to exercise discernment or judgment on a daily basis and in all circumstances.**

If a Christian could not judge all things, including people, in the sense of discerning people and their attitudes, not to condemn them in the eternal sense, what is described in the first song of the book of Psalms could never be practiced by a Christian.

*Psalms 1: 1 **Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;***

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

If a Christian could not judge, in the sense of discerning the behavior and attitudes of people in the world, the text in which the Lord Jesus teaches that “people shall be known by their fruits” and that people should “beware of false prophets” would as well be of any value and benefit to the Christians.

*Matthew 7: 15 **Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.***

16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

In the text above, the Lord Jesus does not teach that a Christian should sentence or condemn a false prophet eternally, for people may repent of their evil ways and because this is only God's prerogative. However, the Lord also does not say that a person should passively accept what the evil prophets announce and propose. On the contrary, God teaches that every individual should beware of the deceivers and their ruses in order not to be entangled by them.

If a Christian could not judge, in the sense of discerning the behavior and attitudes of the people in the world, one also could not follow the instructions to abstain from the people that the New Testament Scriptures warn to avoid, or one could not even practice the necessary discernment to withdraw from those which the Lord instructs keeping distance.

*1 Corinthians 5: 11 **But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, not even to eat with such a person.***

2 Timothy 3: 1 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:
2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,
4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

1 Timothy 6: 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness,
4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,
5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.
From such withdraw yourself.

The propagation of the improper idea that discerning fellow men is an act of judgment that a Christian should not perform is only of interest to those who do not want to be discerned, for precisely the discernment of their works is what will reveal the kind of corrupted seed that they are spreading and the kind of distorted intents by which they are acting regarding others.

The propagation of the undue concept that discerning the fellow men is an act of judgment that a Christian should not practice is one of the vilest forms of spreading evil, for it proposes that people adopt a state of inertia, torpor, or ignorance, objectifying to make them passive with deception, lying, or other propositions that try to corrupt the truth.

When someone propagates the concept that people should stop judging, in the sense of discerning, one is proposing to lead people to a state of numbness regarding the judgments that should be practiced by each person or to a position of indifference and profound blindness regarding the risks or central aspects of life.

The propagation of the idea or concept that a Christian should not judge, in the sense of discerning everything and everyone, aims to lead people to lack of prudence and lack of sobriety, which absences, in turn, are terrible and cruel enemies of Christians, serving, on the other hand, as weapons of domination and oppression that are used by those who intend evil against others.

The lack of a sober understanding or discernment is a space that the devil seeks to use to impose darkness and dominion upon human beings, but which is often proposed by corrupted and wicked individuals, through men and women who let themselves be

associated and used by deception and destructive intentions to unduly exploit their fellow men.

*Psalms 37: 32 **The wicked watches the righteous, And seeks to slay him.***

*Proverbs 23: 28 **She also lies in wait as for a victim, And increases the unfaithful among men.***

*Proverbs 1: 10 **My son, if sinners entice you, Do not consent.***

Therefore, **in the sense of soberly discerning both good and evil, the practice of judging is essential for every Christian, and it is part of the condition and posture of life that the Heavenly Father objectifies for each of those who have become His children by faith in Christ Jesus.**

*1 Corinthians 2: 15 **But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. (AV)***

OR

*1 Corinthians 2: 15 **But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.***

*Hebrews 5: 14 **But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

*Psalms 27: 11 **Teach me Your way, O LORD, And lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies.***

*1 Corinthians 15: 33 **Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."***

*34 **Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.***

To say that a Christian should not judge, in the sense of soberly discerning all things, besides being a blatant lie regarding what the Scriptures explicitly teach, is an attempt to keep Christians from what they have been called in Christ Jesus.

To propose the idea that Christians should not use sober discernment (or judgment) aims to keep them immature, infant, for in this condition,

even as a child of God, a Christian remains vulnerable to being manipulated and enslaved to the basic principles of the world.

Ephesians 4: 14(b) ... children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.

Galatians 4: 1 Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all.

Sobriety to judge or discern is an integral part of God's grace for a person to walk according to the will of God, as well as to be able to firmly depart from the vain and futile ways that are adopted by people who oppose the direction of God, aspect explained too in the following texts:

*1 Peter 4: 1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin,
2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.
3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*

*Titus 2: 11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,
12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,
13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,
14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

Referring yet to the last text above, we understand that it is important to emphasize, once again, that the discernment that God expects a Christian to practice is not according to the natural understanding of this Christian or the different understandings that the natural man presents.

The discernment that the Lord desires for a Christian to practice is the discernment that acts according to the “Law of Understanding,” according to “*the grace that teaches us.*” It is the discernment that works in consonance with the understanding that is given to a Christian in Christ Jesus or in conformity with the discernment that God allows a Christian to have access through personal fellowship with the Lord.

Together with the teaching that the spiritual man discerns all things, the Scriptures also instruct that it is through Christ that an individual can reach this degree of discernment.

- 1 Corinthians 2: 15* **But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.**
16 **For "who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.**

Paul, further in the last text mentioned above, teaches that it was not for him to judge himself, but rather to judge himself according to what the Lord would say or show to him about his life, as follows:

- 1 Corinthians 4: 1* **Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.**
2 **Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.**
3 **But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself.**
4 **For I know nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.**
5 **Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.**

The human being by one's very reason cannot reach the knowledge of God and cannot discern according to the discernment that only the Lord can grant him or her, for the discernment according to the heavenly revelation is a spiritual favor that the Lord gives to those who believe in Him, as it is also exemplified in the following texts:

- Matthew 16: 17* **Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."**

- 1 Corinthians 2: 6* **However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.**
7 **But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,**
8 **which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.**
9 **But 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."**
10 **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.**

11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

The point of reference that the “natural man” uses as a basis for practicing the discernment is very distinct from the point of reference that the “spiritual man” uses.

1 Corinthians 2: 14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

The “natural man” seeks understanding from the accumulation of information, science, and appearances. With the accumulated information, the “natural man” aims to form a set of knowledge to build an understanding to discern other things.

The “natural man,” as a descendant of Adam and Eve, seeks the continuous return to “acquired knowledge” to gain understanding and from this making one's decisions.

Nevertheless, the “knowledge of the natural man,” although it may contribute to countless benefits in the natural affairs of people, will always end up in errors, for it is limited and its experimental basis becomes continually overcome with the occurrence of new facts and more knowledge.

For instance, the “natural man” cannot answer the most essential questions of one's existence, such as one's origin and destiny.

We point out here that the reference to the “natural man” is not necessarily addressed to those who have not yet received Christ, but to all, including Christians, who want to rely on *words taught by human wisdom* or the natural mind, and not by the Law of Understanding in which the person is instructed by the Lord Jesus Christ to understand the will of the Lord for his or her life.

The Law of Understanding, which leads the Christian to serve the Law of God or the will of God, does not have as its primary parameter the accumulated knowledge of men, nor the traditions and cultures of the generations, but it has its primary source of discernment about the instructions of life in the revelation or enlightenment that comes from the Eternal Lord.

Saul, as described in the book of Acts, was a man with a lot of natural knowledge. He was one of the most intellectual men of his time and all human history. However, by the

knowledge he acquired from the natural masters, Saul became an obstinate persecutor of Christians.

Nevertheless, later in his life, by a few minutes meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ, and where he saw the light of the Lord's glory, this same Saul had his understanding broadly renewed.

The understanding that had been raised in Saul's life for years, and probably even decades, did not stand in the face of the Law of Understanding in operation through Christ, causing a radical change in Saul's life forever.

From a persecutor of Christians and, therefore, of Christ, after being exposed for a short time to the knowledge that was not taught him by human wisdom, Saul became the most fervent preacher of the Gospel of God. Saul became, as a human being, the most intense announcer of the breadth of the good news that Christ is the offer of salvation and newness of life offered by God to all individuals in all peoples.

Thus, also through Saul's testimony, we can observe that the understanding granted by God is something very different from the knowledge that people aim to gain by accumulating information. The understanding given by God is not a process limited to natural knowledge, but it is an understanding that is accompanied by the Lord's light on aspects that surpass the natural conceptions and purposes of life.

A person, year after year, may be engaged in intensive tasks to increase his or her body of information, even about God and about Christ, but still not come to realize the real meaning of what one dedicates oneself so much for not having the eyes of the comprehension open to see what can only be seen through the Law of Understanding in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, **when God grants understanding to an individual, the “eyes of spiritual understanding” are also opened to him or her, a reason why this is also the kind of discernment that God wants to give by the “Law of Understanding” on the aspects that primarily matter for a life guided by God and for a person to walk in the path of eternal life.**

Romans 8: 14 ***For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.***

And as mentioned earlier, **once a person “understands something” because God has made that clear to him or her, one also finds oneself in a condition where one can serve the Law of God or the will of God in that which was granted to him or her to understand.**

Saul had devoted himself to the extreme in the fulfillment of the Law of Moses. However, when he understood that Christ had already fulfilled all the Law of Moses and that Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness of all who believe in the Lord, he ceased immediately to serve the Law of Moses and began to live the will of God for his life, which, in Christ, was according to the grace of God and according to the direction of the Holy Spirit.

When Saul received the understanding that serving the Law of Moses was a work of the flesh without profitable spiritual results for his life or any other person, he

abandoned the service to that which was not under God's approval because he understood what was right and what was not right before God, and especially because he as well wanted to reach the novelty that was proposed to him by the Lord, coming to the point of declaring the following words:

Philippians 3: 7 **But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.**

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ

9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.

Saul, also called Paul, did not prefer Christ because someone imposed upon him an ordinance to follow the Lord, as was the practice for those who were subject to the law of Moses. Saul chose Christ because he understood, by the Law of Understanding, who was the One Who had called him to the righteousness which could truly reconcile him with the Eternal Father.

In this way, **without the Law of Understanding it is possible and common for people in the world to adopt many rules, many laws, and be zealous of these laws aiming to achieve salvation or as if the search for them could be an acceptable form of serving God, remaining thereby, however, with the mind obscured for the fact that in doing so they are mistaken in the heart and continue to serve sin.**

Romans 10: 1 **Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.**

2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Romans 7: 25(b) **So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.**

To seek to establish the righteousness of men before God is to serve sin, even if it is done as if it is with zeal for God.

Doing something wrong without understanding, even with zeal, does not make it right!

Doing something right, but with the wrong motivation, does not make the wrong reason right!

Doing morally correct actions, but on the wrong foundation, does not make the wrong foundation right!

Thus, God does indeed desire that His people may have a proper understanding so that they serve the good will of the Lord according to the heavenly understanding, and so cease to serve sin.

Therefore, **one of the first things a Christian should understand in his or her Christian life is the fact that there is the “Law of Understanding” and that God wants this law to be continually active or acting in His sons and daughters.**

Having a sober discernment or the Law of Understanding available or in operation obviously does not mean that the Christian needs to know all things and nor that God will show him or her all the things that this Christian wants to know in his or her curiosity. It means, however, that whatever is necessary for a Christian to live and walk in wisdom or for taking appropriate decisions and actions will be available to him or her in the Lord.

Additionally, **knowing that God desires to grant a person the understanding of important subjects when it is fitting to comprehend them may even be much more relevant than understanding many scattered subjects. And this is something that is also contemplated in the discernment that comes from the Lord.**

More crucial than knowing many things is the Christian knowing that he or she has access to the One in Whom is all the wisdom, knowledge, and instruction to carry out, through Christ, the appropriate judgment in the moments in which one needs to perform it.

More relevant than having accumulated knowledge is learning to be instructed and guided by the One Who knows utterly all things and how every aspect should be adequately applied in each moment.

Psalms 32: 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.

John 8: 12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

The person who learns the principle that the understanding one needs is in Christ, and that one needs to take one's thoughts and the thoughts that are proposed to him or her captive to the Lord, may rest from the need of assimilating excessive knowledge, for even what a person has already learned and forgotten, the Lord is mighty to teach them again when it is necessary.

John 14: 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Ecclesiastes 12 :12 And further, my son, be admonished by these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is wearisome to the flesh.

13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.

14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Discernment according to the Law of Understanding is not based on human intelligence accumulated for centuries and neither in the so-called “artificial intelligence” with a high degree of probability assessments, which could never or will never be able to provide a way to eternal life. Discernment according to the Law of Understanding acts in consonance with the living and perfect truth that is from eternity to eternity and which, when necessary, knows how to manifest itself also particularly in the most different moments in which a person needs it.

God grants His support and allows human beings in general to know and accomplish many things, but those who apply themselves to walk according to the Law of Understanding, which primarily operates by fellowship with the One Who gives instructions for the novelty of life in the Lord, fulfill the will of God because they also learned the way to first discern it according to the wisdom that is granted from above.

Ephesians 5: 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Christ is the agent of God Who makes the Law of Understanding work effectively in us. What also means to say that He is our agent and source of all appropriate discernment, for He knows everything and everyone to instruct, according to righteousness and truth, all those who believe in Him and receive Him as Lord.

1 John 5: 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

C4. The so-called Spiritual Coverings or Guidance that Seek to Atrophy the Law of Understanding in People

A fundamental understanding to be obtained by a Christian is the knowledge that Christ is the mystery of God through whom all other understandings for a life according to the wisdom of God can be obtained.

1 Corinthians 1: 30 **But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption,**
31 **that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."**

A Christian who lives in the world and indeed wants to live the Christian life needs the grace of God to "understand" that "it is Christ Who gives true understanding" about what actually matters for a life according to the Lord's will.

Ephesians 5: 14 **Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise (or stand up) from the dead, And Christ will give you light."**

"To understand," in turn, is more than having information. "To understand" is to know, including from experience, about the functioning of something and to have an appropriate comprehension about the consequences of following a path or despising it.

"To understand the Law of Understanding," therefore, is to know how the Lord Jesus Christ works to grant us understanding for a discernment according to the eyes of God, but also how He acts to give us the understanding of how we can accomplish the various stages of God's will in the personal life.

Nevertheless, as we mentioned in previous chapters, there are many people who are resistant to God's will and who also try to generate resistance to God's will in other people because they do not want them to be free in the Lord and do not want others to experience the true freedom that becomes much more noticeable once the truth is known.

And considering that the understanding that leads a person to live and walk in God comes from the knowledge imparted by the relationship or fellowship with Christ, it is this relationship or fellowship that those who resist God seek to harm or even interrupt in the most diverse ways even in the lives of others.

Since it is by the abiding in the fellowship with Christ that a person is taught to know the truth that sets free, it is also the interruption of the continual remaining in Christ that will be the target of those who want to deprive people of the knowledge of the truth.

Considering that the practice of fellowship with Christ is the aspect by which a person has one's faculties exercised to discern good as well as evil, it is the active fellowship of people with Christ that many seek to disturb to withdraw them from the knowledge of the truth.

If, however, someone presented a proposition that one's goal is to undermine the fellowship of people with Christ, so that these would not know the truth and become enslaved to deception, many people would not want to accept one's proposition exposed so objectively; instead, they would reject it.

Thus, a way in which many have tried to keep people from the clarity of discernment of the truth that is found in the fellowship with the Lord is the use of propositions of alternative ways which are proclaimed as ways that also grant the understanding and discernment of the Lord, in which, however, people are directed to certain conditions and practices that end up causing them to move away from the continual fellowship with Christ and, consequently, also from the understanding granted by God.

Being exposed to the teachings and information that other people utter about Christ is very different from what the Law of Understanding proposes through the personal fellowship of an individual with the Lord.

In the world, there are many people, ministries, or institutions who claim to announce the teachings and the truth of Christ, but that in the practice of their propositions act in the sense of hindering the direct fellowship of each person with the Lord.

To speak of Christ, but at the same time to overburden people with activities or to induce them to the precepts which in practice separate them from Christ, may have the appearance of acts of godliness, but which, in their essence, are subtly corrupted and perverse propositions by the fact of acting in the direction of stealing the time of individuals that would be due to their personal fellowship with the Lord.

In several parts of the Scriptures, Christians are warned to beware of misleading and subtle propositions that seek to keep them from abiding in Christ, as presented in another example below:

Colossians 2: 16 ***So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,***

17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.

20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations

21 ("Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,"

22 which all concern things which perish with the using) according to the commandments and doctrines of men?

23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

3: 1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

- 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.***
3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

No set of works that robs people of the intimacy or the personal fellowship with the Lord is accepted by God as a work done to Him or His honor and glory, for before wanting the works of people, God wants them to have fellowship with Him through Jesus Christ.

God does not ask and will not ask for the involvement of a Christian with works that require of him or her to withdraw from fellowship and intimacy with Christ.

Although some people claim that the exposure of others to their teachings is like people remaining in personal fellowship with Christ, being taught about Christ and relating personally to Christ are, respectively, widely different aspects and as well with very distinct effects.

As for the Law of Understanding, it is by fellowship with Christ that a person is instructed and prepared for proper discernment in the most diverse aspects of one's life, and not only by the knowledge that others expose about Christ or His teachings.

Paul, as an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, often began his ministry in some region through the proclamation about the person of Christ and the work of salvation offered by the Lord and His Gospel, but he did not do so without in the sequence also exposing his very well-defined and clearly stated final goal, namely:

Colossians 1: 26 ***The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.***

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

There are many works or ministries in the world that proclaim Christ, but that, at the same time, in their community ordinances and conduct, oppose the active fellowship of people with the Lord, trying to prevent them from enjoying the life that is available to them only in Christ Jesus.

In the name of “helping people to know Christ” through their services, meetings, tasks, and assignments that they place upon the individuals, many so-called Christian workers or ministries work precisely to keep people dissociated from the practice of remaining in the personal fellowship with Christ.

When a person is instructed to come directly to Christ and practice this instruction, Christ teaches him or her to live and walk personally in God, which as well means to make the remission of the time of life. However, this is also against the goals of those

who want to subjugate others to their dominations, denominations, or institutions so that the latter serve the first in their interests and not those of Christ Jesus.

When the Scriptures teach Christians to “walk in the light,” as seen in the text of Ephesians 5 already quoted in this material, we see that God instructs His children to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ to be enlightened on the heavenly will, and not before men and women, even if these are called priests, spiritual fathers, leaders, guides, pastors, reverends, mentors, or other similar names.

When the disciples of Christ asked Him about prayer, the Lord answered them directly the following words:

*Matthew 6: 5 **And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.***

*6 **But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.***

If God wants to answer a disciple of the Lord through another person, He is God and is free to do so, just as He sometimes does. However, **the search for a response or provision that a Christian needs to receive from God should begin with the personal and individual condition of this person presenting oneself to the Lord Himself.**

So, the works, institutions, ministries, or persons who oppose the intimacy of Christians with God are often precisely those who claim to act “*in the name of Christ*,” but which show themselves not being indeed of Christ when they act to prevent people from actually standing personally and directly before the Lord, opposing that through what the Lord expresses His salvation and guidance to those who believe in Him.

*Isaiah 30: 15 **For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: "In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." But you would not.***

*Matthew 11 :27 **All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.***

*28 **Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.***

*29 **Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.***

*30 **For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.***

To walk being led primarily by the flow of the world or religious institutions, which are also a form of expression of what the world is, only in a veiled way, is to keep

oneself from the primary purpose declared by God to human beings, which is, firstly, fellowship with the Lord and life guided by Him.

Walking led primarily by the flow of the world or religious institutions, including those that seek to appear as Christian, is to walk the path that leads people who follow this flow to waste time, life, and the word of God sowed in the heart.

Jeremiah 12: 13 They have sown wheat but reaped thorns; They have put themselves to pain but do not profit. But be ashamed of your harvest Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

Luke 8: 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

Thus, when the text of chapter 5 of Ephesians instructs Christians to make the remission of time because the days are evil, it does not initially call them to do many works, but it exhorts them to seek first to understand God's will for, then, act objectively and fruitfully according to the divine will.

Doing God's will is to accomplish what the Lord instructs to be done, and not to do what people think they should do to God based on their particular interpretations of the Scriptures or, still, what others instruct them to do by declaring that their instructions are given "*in the name of God.*"

The will of God for Christians may still be seen by two great aspects, as follows:

- ⇒ The first aspect is related to the general will or desire of God for all Christians. It refers to the set of general principles on which God wants every Christian to have a sober understanding.
- ⇒ The second aspect is related to the will of God for each specific life or the specific purpose that God has for each of His children, as well as their families, professions, or works.

By fellowship with God, the Lord, on the one hand, acts in such a way that the eyes of the understanding of His children become enlightened so that each of them may understand the instructions that God proclaims in general. On the other hand, however, the Lord also acts in such a way that every Christian can see how God's instructions can be applied truthfully in one's heart and actions. That is why those who do not want people to have freedom in the Lord raise so many oppositions so that others do not reach appropriate and direct fellowship with Christ.

In the theme titled The Letter or Life from the series on Suggestions for Reading and Studying the Bible, it was seen that the study of the Scriptures, when accompanied by fellowship with the Lord, Who rose and lives forever, is an abundant source of spiritual food, understanding, and life. On the other hand, however, when it is done without the instruction of the Lord, it can become a "letter that kills."

Without personal fellowship with the Lord, the Scriptures, including those directed more specifically at Christians, may become an alternative way where people try to fulfill the letter of the Scriptures by human understanding and effort instead of doing it by the understanding and the grace that the Lord wants to give to people.

When the Scriptures teach Christians to “walk in the light,” as seen in the text of Ephesians 5 already quoted in this material, we see that God instructs His children to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ to be enlightened on the heavenly will, and not before men and women, even if these are called priests, spiritual fathers, leaders, guides, pastors, reverends, mentors, or other similar names.

The fulfillment of Christian precepts dissociated from the living, personal, and continuous relationship with Christ is a proposition for people to go back to contenting themselves with a life under a set of pre-established commandments, showing that this proposition expresses a path that is like the way of the Law of Moses.

Proposing a return to the Law of Moses or even just to the systematic way in which it was tried to live under this law is an intention to replace the living fellowship with God by a relationship with pre-defined doctrines and that seeks to lead people to think that they are walking according to the instruction and discernment of God, without actually doing it.

No set of precepts can replace the living fellowship of an individual with the Lord Jesus Christ. Even if the precepts of a proposed set of rules have been taken from the Scriptures and considered by a large group of people as special doctrines, the attempt to follow them, by human effort, cannot provide all that is necessary for a person to make proper discernment in all the situations of his or her life.

Who grants life to the “Law of Understanding” are not the Scriptures, but it is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who lives forever and shares novelty of life through the fellowship of every person with Him.

One detail that can be observed in the propositions that present suggestions or ordinances for people to walk according to the doctrines formulated around particular groups is that they also lead those who adopt them not to discern that in following these partial doctrines of the Scriptures, they end up adopting a departure from the dependence of Christ and the living and dynamic discernment about the application or not of each precept. These propositions claim to offer a path of freedom and discernment but that, in practice, enslaves people by proposing that they should live by the rules and not by personal fellowship with Christ.

Throughout history, God already allowed that it became demonstrated that life under a law composed of a set of rules could not predict all the situations that people would encounter in life. However good a written law could be, as was the case with the Law of Moses, the life of subjection to it could not confer wisdom for people applying each of its rules at all times that they needed to follow them, for people forgot the commandments of the law or did not know how to handle them when there was some variation in their life context.

One of the most eminent problems of the propositions that teach the idea of following some precepts and doctrines conceived or grouped according to the interest of some people in walking by rules, and not by continuous faith in God, is that these propositions present a path that atrophies the practice of daily dependence of the individuals on the Lord,

and which abruptly or gradually distances persons from the fellowship with the unique source of truth and discernment, namely: The Lord Jesus Christ!

A life subject to codes and rules may even seem to be externally more productive at certain times, but it may create profound destruction in the experience that a person should have daily with the Lord and which can be greatly missed by an individual when codes and rules become insufficient for the demands of life.

Similarly, **the propositions of people or institutions that present themselves to offer what they call “spiritual covering” or “spiritual guidance” to the lives of the people who approach them, also offer highly destructive paths. They propose that some few people should exercise themselves in the Law of Understanding in the place of others, where the latter are led to a position of inertia and atrophy as to understanding while waiting for others supposedly to receive spiritual guidance for their lives.**

The propositions of “spiritual covering” or “spiritual guidance” offered by institutions or individuals to their fellow men are proposals that offer alternatives or options to others so that these refrain from doing what it is up to each person to do, proposing that people neglect what they should never neglect and that they believe that they can transfer to others what can never be transferred satisfactorily to their fellows.

The propositions that by so many men, women, and institutions declare to offer “spiritual covering” or “spiritual guidance” to their fellow men are proposals that seek to induce people to accept the deactivation of their eyes of understanding under the pretext that others, who also do not see, watch or see instead of them.

The propositions that call themselves as “spiritual covering” or “spiritual guidance,” where some say they will seek God's instruction for others or instead of others, subtly attempt to induce people who approach them to neglect the personal pursuit of understanding in Christ. They claim that those who offer “spiritual covering or guidance” will do so for others, but in practice, they are propositions that seek that people withdraw themselves from the direct relationship with the Unique Christ who died for them precisely for the purpose that they may have direct fellowship with the Lord.

The apostle Paul, in the text of Romans 7 seen in the first chapter of this material, says ***“I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,”*** through Whom the Lord makes us know the truth and through Whom a person may reach the appropriate understanding to serve God according to the will of the Lord.

The propositions that claim to offer “spiritual covering or guidance,” however, want people to content themselves with other individuals seeking understanding for them or instead of each person looking for the understanding for the personal life in the One that God has appointed to be the giver of the comprehension that is according to the truth.

Those who propose “spiritual covering” to their fellow men are the people who want to alienate others from dependence on Christ, but also from the discernment that Christ gives to those who come to Him, for those

who come to Christ are instructed to discern even those who want to turn them away from Christ.

Matthew 24: 23 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe it.

24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

25 See, I have told you beforehand.

26 Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' do not believe it.

The propositions of the so-called “spiritual coverings,” or also of those who do not use this expression but subtly offer a supposed mediation between people and God, are propositions that attempt to put blocks, obstacles, and veils that are against the unique and true “spiritual covering” endorsed by the Heavenly Father, which is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And when the so-called “spiritual coverings or mediations” succeed in placing blockages that keep people from the understanding or discernment found in their personal fellowship with the Lord, they are also not discerned, by those who submit to them, in their corrupt attempts to make people dependent on the pretense “spiritual mediators,” an aspect also warned by Paul according to his words recorded in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, as follows:

Acts 20: 29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

Finally, after the so-called “mediators or spiritual coverings” have their followers, those who propose this type of way also go on to say that they are the “spiritual authority” over those who have subjected themselves to them, in order to consolidate the subjugation of people under their dominations.

When the alleged “mediators or spiritual coverings” also seek to place themselves as “spiritual authorities” over those who are subject to them, they soon also begin to say that they are unquestionable and start to call as rebels those who question them, thus demonstrating and assuming that their aim is to alienate people from Christ in order to dominate them more and more.

It should be stressed, however, that the rebels of the so-called “spiritual coverings,” firstly, are those who offer themselves for that, for they rebel against what God has clearly established to be recognized only in the Lord Jesus Christ, and rebel against the words directly pronounced by Christ to His disciples while in the flesh on Earth.

*1 Timothy 2: 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,
6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

*Matthew 23: 8 But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.
9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.
10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.*

Many individuals enjoy making propositions of “spiritual covering” or presenting themselves in “positions of pretended mediators” with the purpose of rising above their fellow men, for they do not appreciate the same hierarchical position that the Lord has established for the whole family of God on Earth. And against this equality of position, they resist or withstand with subtly elaborated speeches and presented with an appearance of devotion and service to other people.

The proponents of the so-called “spiritual coverings” may even present them under an appearance of humility or express them with intense charisma and sympathy, but at the same time, they hide the pride around which some unite to rise above others to put themselves in a position of prominence and domination over their followers.

Presenting oneself to be a “spiritual mediator or covering” is something that is proposed by those who do not truly serve others in the sense of announcing to them that God calls each one to a personal fellowship with Christ. When they claim to serve others, they do not assist them according to the truth, but to weaken those who follow them so that they become placed and held in a position of subjugation.

The proponents of the “positions of mediators or spiritual covering” aim to create castes, clergy, or divisions among people, aiming to classify them as those that “provide spiritual covering” and those that are “covered” or “receive covering.”

Romans 16: 17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Moreover, those who lead the so-called “spiritual coverings” enjoy speaking their speeches in the third person while referring to the “assemblies or churches” they lead, as if they were no longer part of the regular people of them. They speak as if they were above members and “churches” subject to them, even coming to call the “churches” they lead as “their churches,” as if the Church of Christ could have more than one rightful owner, head, or spiritual covering.

In opposition to the understanding that Christ is the only Head of each member of His living body, there are those who claim to have the authority to command the lives of others and begin to demand of them an “obedience by obedience,” proposing to raise the obedience to their propositions or to carnal leaders above the understanding of the truth and above faith in God, opposing as well the principle of the Lord that states that **“without faith, it is impossible to please God.”**

Christ called us to freedom of fellowship with Him, with the Holy Spirit, and with the Heavenly Father. However, those who propose a return to commandments grouped by their carnal interests or a return to the so-called “spiritual covering” are those who do not like the freedom that Christ provides for every life that comes to Him, because in Christ, people also discern the corrupted attempts of those who present the propositions that, in a veiled manner, want to turn people away from the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1: 11 **For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe’s household, that there are contentions among you.**

12 **Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ."**

13 **Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**

1 Corinthians 3: 4 **For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?**

The propositions of “blind obedience” to the so-called “spiritual mediators or coverings,” their “doctrines,” or their “leaders” who propose to discern the lives of others or in the place of others, are intended to blind people to the fact that in the world there are many blind people who want to lead other blind people, and this, being damage to both.

Matthew 15: 14 **Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.**

Christ came to grant sight to the blind that they may walk according to the instruction of the Eternal Lord of their lives, and not to give them sight so that they again become blind in the understanding by subjecting themselves once more to their fellow men.

Therefore, to seek to withdraw people from the understanding that there is in Christ about the word and the will of the Lord for their lives is a very perverse thing, for this is one of the fastest and most effective ways in which a person who is not attentive may come even to lose the instructions of the Lord for him or her very quickly, becoming a soil in which the good seeds of the Lord are removed rapidly.

The hardest soil mentioned in the parable of the sower that the Lord Jesus Christ uttered is the soil that lacks the understanding of the words of the kingdom of God.

Matthew 13: 19 **When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.**

So, listening without wanting to understand or without wanting to comprehend the will of God is like hearing with hard or dull ears, and it hardens the heart of those who adopt such an attitude.

Matthew 13: 15 **For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.**

To harden the heart to the voice of the Lord is to resist the understanding of what the Lord, through the Holy Spirit and according to the truth, wants to grant a person about the aspects of his or her life.

Hebrews 12: 25 **See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven,**

26 **whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."**

Hebrews 3: 14 **For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,**

15 **while it is said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."**

Yet, in other words, those who present themselves as “spiritual mediators” or “spiritual covering” are those who want people to hear their voices so that they, abruptly or gradually, forget the voice of the Lord and no longer recognize it when the Lord Jesus Christ speaks directly with them.

A Christian may serve as an example to other Christians as to how relevant it is for each one to depend on God. A Christian can teach one's fellows about how much the Lord wants fellowship with every member of the Body of Christ and yet show how much this truth is repeatedly presented in the Scriptures.

A Christian may do well in announcing to other people the benefits that God promises to grant to those who draw near to Christ. A Christian may and should pray that the Lord will reveal Himself with grace and mercy to each of His saints.

Nevertheless, a Christian is called always to remain in the firm remembrance that every Christian is called to be personally guided by the Lord in the most diverse aspects or tasks of one's life, as well as that the Lord Jesus Christ does not assign to anyone the position and function of mediator between Him and the Christians or the other human beings.

In this way, **to announce what Christ Himself offers to be for each person is very different from wanting to take the positions or the functions that belong exclusively to the Lord Jesus.**

From the shedding of the blood of Christ for every life, for every sinner, and from the resurrection in glory of Christ, Who now is seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father as the Eternal High Priest and King of Righteousness and Peace, according to the Order of Melchizedek, no one else is authorized by the Lord to stand as mediator between God and humans to provide them with the so-called “spiritual covering.”

*1 Corinthians 7: 23 **You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.***

*Ephesians 4: 15 **But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head, Christ.***

*Galatians 2: 4 **And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage),**
5 **to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.***

The most important voice a Christian needs to learn to hear is not the voice of the people, the world, or the darkness. The chief voice that an individual needs to learn to hear, to experience life with the understanding that comes from the truth and the will of God, is the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ, the One Who knows by name everyone who believes in Him and Who personally calls them to live and walk in Him.

*John 5: 25 **Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.***

*John 10: 27 **My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.***

*Revelation 3: 20 **Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.***

*Galatians 5: 1 **Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.***

C5. The Understanding that Produces Growth in the Knowledge of the Lord and His Will

Once a Christian understands that God has appointed Christ to grant the “understanding of the truth and the will of the Heavenly Father” to all those who believe in Him, the Christian may draw closer to Christ to advance or deepen in the Lord's understanding on more details involved in the most diverse aspects of his or her life.

The Scriptures clearly record that the Lord's desire is for all to know the truth, which is Christ, so that by believing in Christ, and having fellowship with Him, they may overflow with knowledge about the will of God and so that they may also see more and more what the salvation they have received from the Lord encompasses.

1 Timothy 2: 3 ***For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,***
4 ***who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.***
5 ***For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,***
6 ***who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.***

Colossians 1: 9 ***For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;***
10 ***that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;***
11 ***strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;***
12 ***giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.***

The principle of the Law of Understanding, which teaches us that it is through fellowship with Christ that a Christian finds the understanding and discernment one needs to reach about God's will, is so indispensable and precious that the Heavenly Father did not only record this principle in the Scriptures, but He also sent us His Holy Spirit so that, assisted by Him, we might be taught about this immeasurable gift of God that we have graciously or freely in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 2: 12 ***Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.***

Through the assistance of the Holy Spirit sent to us, the Lord wants us to know that the understanding of truth comes from Christ and not from mere human knowledge, regardless of how much the latter becomes multiplied among the people who live in the world.

The natural man and devoid of fellowship with God is not fit to comprehend the fundamental aspect that the eternal truth is Christ and is found in Christ, and nor can one understand that the eternal truth is above what human beings can conceive from the natural knowledge and from the senses by which they acquire the natural knowledge.

*1 Corinthians 2: 13 **These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.***

*14 **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***

*1 Corinthians 2: 9 **But 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."***

*10 **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.***

Moreover, God does not expect or require people to become intelligent and filled with human knowledge so that only after that they might have access to the discernment of the truth that is granted by fellowship with Christ Jesus. The knowledge that God wants people to accept is that the understanding and discernment of the truth and the will of God are in the fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and this is what the human being is so reluctant to let the Holy Spirit teach him or her.

As seen above, **the understanding and discernment of truth are freely given by God through fellowship with Him, not by merit of the natural characteristics of people.**

No matter how much human knowledge a person may accumulate, the understanding and discernment of the Lord's will continue to be given freely to those who open their hearts to receive them through the grace of the Lord and regardless of whether a person is in a more modest condition in the eyes of their fellow men.

*Luke 10: 20 **Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.***

*21 **In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight."***

Natural knowledge, ever since the sin of Adam, has so often manifested itself as a source of competition and pride among human beings. However, the understanding that comes from the gift of God in Christ Jesus, and to which the Holy Spirit assists us to have access, is a source of wisdom and deliverance to all who receive it by grace, through faith, because all who receive it, receive it not by their merits but by the love of God toward them.

- 1 Corinthians 8: 1* **Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.**
- 2* **And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.**
- 3* **But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.**
- 4* **Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.**
- 5* **For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),**
- 6* **yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.**
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Therefore, when the human being dissociates oneself from fellowship with God and considers having the power to discern truth and life primarily by natural understanding, one seeks the path in which one tries to equate oneself with a “god” or “lord” and resists the Unique God and the One Sovereign Lord, putting oneself in the way where a person becomes void in his or her understanding and thoughts regarding the Lord's will.

- Romans 1: 18* **For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**
- 19* **because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.**
- 20* **For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,**
- 21* **because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.**
- 22* **Professing to be wise, they became fools,**
- 23* **and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.**
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Thus, the only alternative in which a person can find discernment for eternal life according to the will of God, as well as about what does not cooperate with this life, is the return to the only source of life and eternal wisdom, which is the One by Whom all life was created and is sustained.

Isaiah 55: 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

It is by perseverance in believing in God and the wisdom that there is in the Lord that a person, by grace, attains knowledge and understanding of the will of the Lord.

James 1: 1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.
2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,
3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.
4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.
5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.
6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.
7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;
8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

The human being, in one's weakness, has difficulty to understand and remain believing that something truly good and beneficial can indeed be freely given to him or her by the grace of God, as outlined more broadly in the subject on "The Gospel of the Grace of God."

Nevertheless, so that neither the human weakness might be raised as an obstacle that prevents a Christian from believing and continuing to believe that it is in Christ that God provides the wisdom to understand and fulfill the heavenly will, the Lord even grants people the Holy Spirit to assist them in their cry to the Lord in favor of this will.

Romans 8: 26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

In addition to declaring His desire for all human beings to know the truth, God also offers all necessary provision for people to be widely assisted to reach this knowledge.

Romans 8: 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

All human knowledge accumulated for centuries, and now so widely available through the most diverse means of sharing and reproduction of the information, although useful in various natural aspects, does not have the capacity to replace the effects and benefits of the direct contact with the source of all the knowledge and wisdom that is in consonance with the truth for a life according to the will of God.

*Romans 12: 2 **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.***

In this way, **when a person believes in Christ and is willing to receive the manifestation of God's love for him or her, the Lord yearns to give this person more of His Spirit so that this individual may see eternal life more and more according to the light of the Lord, as well as for that one may see more and more, according to the wisdom that comes from heaven, what is available to him or her in the same salvation which enables to see that it is in Christ that there is all the understanding or discernment of the truth and the will of God.**

When a person believes and relates to Christ by having Him as the source of the Law of Understanding, one also places oneself in the way of the continual and growing knowledge that from God is given to those who receive Him in their life as the Eternal Lord.

Ephesians 1: 15 till 21

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your 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, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

*Romans 7: 25(a) **I thank God, through (or for) Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God.***

And finally in this theme, **when a person is no longer based on one's understanding and strength, but chooses to live and walk according to the understanding and strength that is given to him or her in the Lord, it is also the life of the Lord that one comes to see expressed or reflected increasingly in his or her very living and walking.**

Galatians 2: 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Bibliography

Note on Biblical Texts referenced:

- 1) The biblical texts without explicit indications of reference were drawn from NKJV Bible, as indicated below.
- 2) Highlights in the biblical texts, such as underline, bold, or similar were added by the author of this study.

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