

- Systemic Teaching about Christian Life -

Rooted and Established *“in Christ”*

Series:
Walking in
Newness of Life

3rd Edition – Oct/2019 – English Translation – Oct/2019
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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.*

The free availability of this material has been just the adoption of a similar practical example of how the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, distributes life of the source of living water to those who thirst for it.

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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.

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C1. “Walking” without Withdrawing from “Living in Christ”

This new material is a sequence of the subject entitled To Be, To Abide, To Live, To Walk and To Bear Fruit “in Christ,” and has the purpose of further deepening some specific and practical aspects of daily life in relation to the position that is made possible “in Christ” for a Christian to be able to experience his or her new creature condition in the Lord.

In the Christian life, there are times when it is necessary to look at some fundamental aspects of Christian teaching separately to broaden the understanding of each of them, but there also are other moments when these same aspects need to be seen together in order to understand about their joint functioning.

Although the first subject of this series aims to highlight each of the specific topics considered in its title, it is also already clear from the previous theme that all its main points are connected, should merge in the practical life of a Christian or that the possibility of experiencing them is granted by the Lord so that they may work together for a mutual and complementary support.

For instance, **the possibility that a Christian can come to experience the position of “being in Christ” is complemented by the condition of Christians being called to do so continuously, that is, by the condition that they can also “abide in Christ.” Similarly, the condition of “living in Christ” has its support and complement also in the possibility that a Christian can “walk in Christ.”**

The call for a Christian “to be in Christ,” when also associated with the aspect of him or her being able to “abide in Christ,” shows that this call from God does not refer to a vocation in which a Christian is invited to be in Christ sporadically. God's call refers to an invitation in which the Lord calls every Christian to “be in Christ” continually, everywhere, and at all times so that one also may live, walk, be nourished, and be strengthened continually in the Lord.

Similarly, God's call for a Christian to “walk in Christ” even in the present world and even in a mortal and fragile body, in addition to the call to “live in Christ,” aims to show that God's call for Christians also contemplates a full possibility for them to be able “to walk in the world” without needing to withdraw from “living in Christ.”

Therefore, “walking in Christ” is also expressed by the work or behavior of Christians in the present world “without them departing from living in Christ.”

For some people, the expression “to live” mentioned in the last paragraph perhaps may sound strange, because in several languages around the world, the term “to live” is also used to define where a person dwells. In several cultures, the matter of where a person lives has the same idea or meaning of the question of where one inhabits.

In practice, however, there can be many circumstances in which the truth is not reflected when it is stated that the place in which a person lives is also the place in which one dwells or inhabits, for a person's life is not limited to the place in which one resides.

If the place in which a person dwells also expressed the fullness of what one lives, all the time that, for example, a person spends in his or her outside work, or “outside of his or her place,” could not be considered as an activity of one's life.

In a sense, absolutely everything a person does encompasses what is considered under the expression “to live,” although not everything one does is done in the same place or where one dwells.

Thus, **when God teaches us that the call to “be and abide in Christ” also encompasses “walking in Christ,” God is making it clear that the possibility of a Christian being able to “be and abiding in Christ” also refers to an invitation to a Christian to remain in this condition at all times and wherever one walks, for God is powerful to support him or her always and in “all things.”**

2 Corinthians 9: 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

9 As it is written: "He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever."

10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness,

11 while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

On the natural level, a person does not live just where one resides, but wherever one moves with his or her natural body, which similarly applies also to the spiritual life in the Lord of an individual.

When God admonishes Christians to “walk without ceasing to live in Christ,” He is also teaching His children that the offer of life in Christ does not refer to an offer of a condition of life that can only be found in specific physical locations, but which can be found wherever and whenever there is a need for this life, that is, everywhere and every moment of an individual's existence.

Is not one of Christ's names precisely Immanuel, that is, God with us?

Matthew 1: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

Matthew 28: 20(b) ... and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

And was it not the grandeur of God's presence continually with the psalmist that made him so amazed about God's greatness and sovereignty?

Psalms 139: 1 For the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.

- O LORD, You have searched me and known me.*
- 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off.*
- 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways.*
- 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O LORD, You know it altogether.*
- 5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me.*
- 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it.*
- 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?*
- 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there.*
- 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,*
- 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me.*
- 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me;*
- 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.*

As discussed in the subject entitled as Works, Services, and Labors, as well as in the theme on Vocation, Calling, and Election, the proposition of a mentality that seeks to introduce divisions in God's call to the Christian life, as if it could be divided to apply only to spiritual aspects and not the natural ones, is a profoundly corrupted proposition, as well as it also is highly distorted the proposition of concepts that claim that the Christian life is preponderantly for material benefits or just for the present world.

The call to “walk in Christ” is presented by God to show that Christians can “be in Christ” even when they are acting on the natural aspects through their mortal bodies.

On the other hand, **the call to “walk in Christ” in everything they do, “remaining continually in the position of living in Christ,” also shows that all provision or spiritual resources for Christians to “walk in Christ” in everything comes from the heavenly and spiritual kingdom in which the Lord Jesus Christ is seated in the heavenly places at the right hand of the Father of Lights.**

Although God's call for people to be in Christ also includes abiding in everything in Christ, expressed by living and walking without ceasing to be in Christ, the real perception of these multiple aspects of God's call and its practice may require special attention of Christians to be perceived, assimilated and practiced indeed by them.

And concerning this broader perception of the multiplicity of aspects of God's call extended to people so that their lives may be lived continuously “in Christ,” it seems to us that some fundamental principles about life in the Lord may also be extracted from a fact occurred in the healing of a blind man at the time when the Lord Jesus was in the flesh on Earth, as narrated below:

- Mark 8: 22 Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him.*
- 23 So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.*
- 24 And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking."*
- 25 Then He put His hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly.*

One aspect that distinguishes the healing described in the last text referenced above from the other healing actions that the Lord Jesus operated at the time He was in the flesh in the world is that this particular healing took place in two stages.

In the first stage of the mentioned healing process, the blind man came to see people as trees, but he also defined them as men because they walked.

Already in the second stage of the quoted healing, the healed man came to distinguish everything clearly or perfectly.

Although the text in reference does not state it directly, it seems to us reasonable to draw from it that there is a deliberated action of the Lord Jesus Christ to perform this healing in two stages, for the Lord Jesus Christ did not lack the power to heal a blind man with just one action or in one step, which had already been done by Him on several other occasions.

At His time in the flesh in the world, the Lord Jesus Christ also used His actions of healing to instruct people about the kingdom of God and the spiritual principles that guide this kingdom. The Lord Jesus Christ came to demonstrate the effects caused by the working of the kingdom of God in the world, but also to announce and preach about the eternal characteristics of this same kingdom, which go beyond the aspects known and measurable by natural science.

In the last example seen above, firstly a healing of physical blindness can be observed, but in His ministry, the Lord Jesus taught even much more about the spiritual blindness to which human beings come to be submitted. The Lord Jesus Christ even denounced strikingly the spiritual blindness by which the religious leaders were taken and which these leaders also spread to the people, as exemplified below:

- Matthew 23: 24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!*
- 25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.*
- 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.*
- 27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.*
- 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

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.**

John 9: 39 **And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind."**

Returning, then, to the above example of the fact narrated in the Gospel according to Mark, it is possible to observe in it two aspects that the man previously blind had not seen before being healed and which he came to see respectively at two different moments. And through the healing process that the Lord manifested to the blind man, we think that it is possible to extract from the text that there is an intermediate blindness that a person may have about human beings, but that there is also a more profound blindness that represents an even worse degree because it keeps an individual subject to not distinguishing about human beings what the Lord longs for him or her to clearly distinguish about them.

Because the Lord asked the man partially healed about what he came to see and then fulfilled the complete healing process of his sight, it can be observed that the Lord did not seek only an intermediate or partial vision for this man, but a full view of what he, through the Lord, would be able to come to see.

Thus, a first spiritual blindness that a person in the world may have, apart from or independently of natural blindness, is in the fact that one may not realize that he or she, as well as other people, are like trees, and as such, they are also called to grow and produce. In one's likeness to a tree of which is expected to be fruitful, each person will be accountable to God for what one has done or produced in his or her life through one's body, an aspect exemplified by some texts that follow:

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.

Matthew 7: 17 **Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.**

2 Corinthians 5: 10 **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.**

However, having this partial view that a person is, in part, comparable to a tree is not enough, for it is not yet a fully restored view considering that the trees do not have the characteristic of moving or walking around.

The man partially healed of his blindness, as mentioned in the example above, still did not see people as they really were.

So, a second spiritual blindness that may afflict people on Earth occurs when one does not realize that besides having characteristics comparable to the trees, he or she and the other people are also fully persons.

According to the Scriptures, people are comparable in many respects to trees, but they are not identical to trees. They are, above all, people.

If one looks closely at Psalm 1, for instance, one can see that the text states that ***blessed is the “man,” the human being, whose delight is in the law (instruction or will) of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night, becoming so this human being like a tree planted by the rivers of water, but not that this person becomes actually a tree planted by the streams of water.***

Trees do not choose where they want to be planted and do not choose the type of fertilizer that can be placed on the soil in which they are located. Trees may try to stretch their roots to some extent to achieve the rivers of water, but they are limited to become rooted in the fixed soils or places where they have been settled or where their seeds have fallen and germinated.

People, in turn, and although they may be like the trees in many comparative ways, can make diverse choices, move around, make favorable or unfavorable decisions regarding many aspects of life, actions that the trees are not fit enough to do.

In Psalm 1, quoted above, we saw that a person might behave in such a way that one places oneself in the soil of the wicked or in such a way as to be comparable to a tree planted by the rivers of water and which, in due time, bears its fruit. According to the Psalm in reference, the rejection for one soil and the choice for another represents a determining aspect of the kind of actions that a person will produce in his or her life.

A principle similar or equivalent to Psalm 1 was also described by the prophet Jeremiah, as follows:

Jeremiah 17: 5 Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD.

6 For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And shall not see when good comes, But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, In a salt land which is not inhabited.

7 Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD.

8 For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, Which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; But its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, Nor will cease from yielding fruit."

God offers people the possibility of receiving productive potential in Him comparable to good-yielding trees, but those who choose to rely on people over trust in God end up limiting their possibilities to the point of being comparable to a bush or the

production that is carried by the wind. And this, because they have chosen an arid soil, devoid of the flow of the streams of life, and which is not according to the heavenly kingdom or the will of the Heavenly Father.

Therefore, in whom or what a person deposits one's trust will also cooperate with what he or she will resemble or produce, demonstrating, as well in this respect, that although the Scriptures figuratively compare a person to a tree, an individual is a human being with a choice concerning in whom or what one will place his or her trust, something that a tree, naturally or literally speaking, cannot do.

When the man who had been partially healed saw people as trees that walked, he did not see a complete picture but saw it with inconsistencies, for how could people be like trees and walk if trees need to be adequately rooted in the soil to receive the necessary nutrients?

In some respects, people can be "like" or "compared" to trees rooted in soil with access to an appropriate source of life, but if they were only comparable to trees, they, in this way, would not be able to often move around in life without causing harm to themselves by moving away from the ground where they should be firmly rooted.

In the Scriptures, the Lord uses figures of speech to teach us about what the Christian life or the life in Him is. However, when people think that the Christian life is just like the exemplified figures of speech, they are not clearly seeing what is proposed or offered to them from heaven, becoming, in this way, as people who need to reach more advanced stages of healing provided by Christ for their spiritual sight in order to see the picture not only figuratively, but how indeed the Lord longs to grant the newness of life that He offers to human beings.

From a natural standpoint, a person remaining steadfast in Christ, even when one is acting or walking in the most diverse aspects of one's life in the world, may sound as strange as the idea of trees walking. However, when the Lord Jesus teaches that people are more than trees, although they have some characteristics equivalent to trees, the Lord also shows that people can be endowed with heavenly features that support or supply them both in their needs concerning their likeness to trees and in their needs as human beings who need to move around in the world in which they live.

If the information about the possibility that a person can remain continually in Christ, even when one walks in the present world, still generates strangeness for the individual who hears this information, it is because one may still see Christ's proposition as if people were trees and not like people being primarily people and with some characteristics similar to trees.

When an individual still does not distinguish that the figure of speech is an educational way of exemplifying some characteristics of the true figure of what people are and what the Christian life offered to them is, they see inconsistencies such as trees that walk. However, when a person begins to see more clearly how the Lord's proposition of Christian life really is, one can also understand that in the Lord it is possible to be a person and "walk in the world without ceasing to live, to be, or to abide in Christ."

Although some natural trees and humans need both to be on an appropriate ground to grow roots that reach the water streams, the soil to which a Christian is called to be settled is not a stationary natural land in a specific place, but it is a soil that needs to be fully qualified to accompany the Christian wherever he or she is called by the Lord to walk.

Walking encompasses getting around. Walking involves leaving one place and entering another place. To walk includes changing locations, environments, circumstances, and people around. So, also because of this, it is so vital for the Christian to know that he or she is like a tree and a branch of the vine, but that he or she is also more than a natural tree and more than a natural branch.

The Christian is a living person called to be connected with another living individual, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, in turn, and through His Spirit, can move and be everywhere and at all times so that the Christian can always be in the Lord.

Christ is the true soil of the Christian, the true vine, the true root of the righteous, the true and unshakeable foundation, and without Christ, or outside Christ, there is no Christian life at all.

Although Christ is the unshakable foundation, He is also the living soil and can be everywhere to give living water and food to the Christian who is in the world, which is why a Christian can “walk in the world without having to leave the position of being and abiding in Christ.”

For a Christian to be able to walk or move around in the world in such a way that one still remains like a tree planted by the rivers of water, but not exactly like a tree that would have to stand still or in a fixed place, it would also be necessary that the very stream of living waters would be able to accompany each Christian in one's several movements. This aspect, however, can be fully lived or experienced in the Christian life when a person voluntarily practices the abiding in Christ in the way that the Lord offers it.

Christ is the unshakeable foundation and endless stream of the waters of the newness of life that is in the Lord, but despite being unshakable and an unending source, He has the characteristic that He can always be with everyone who opens one's heart to the diverse aspects of this newness of life offered by God.

*John 7: 38 **He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.***
*39(a) **But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive.***

*Acts 2: 25 **For David says concerning Him: “I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.”***

Highlighting once again, when a Christian moves or walks but maintains one's trust in Christ and remains in fellowship with the Lord, the everlasting foundation and the rivers of living waters accompany him or her wherever one goes, for they are placed within the Christian, something that is not generally applicable to mere trees.

“Walking in the world while remaining in Christ in spite of walking” may, in fact, become very difficult to understand if a person thinks that “being in Christ” is related to physical places, to attending some natural place, or to a set of outside rules and activities that are required at these locations.

Thus, it is also because the fact that a Christian needs the eternal foundation and the streams of living waters to be always with him or her that the idea of services or worship in temples made by human hands is so contrary to God's will, for by following this concept, people inappropriately begin to think that it is in the temples that the rivers of waters of the heavenly kingdom might be found or that it is through the temples that God bestows spiritual nourishment upon His children. In this way, however, people do not become able to “walk in the world while abiding in Christ,” or simply called “walking in Christ.”

*Acts 7: 48 **However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:***

*49 **“Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD, Or what is the place of My rest?”***

*50 **Has My hand not made all these things?”***

*51 **You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.***

*Psalms 34: 18 **The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.***

*Psalms 51: 17 **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart. These, O God, You will not despise.***

*Isaiah 57: 15 **For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones."***

When people begin to give primacy to natural or physical places to try to obtain the novelty of life offered by God, and not to the living and continual presence of the rivers of living water in the very heart of every individual who has received Christ as the Lord of one's life, they end up with a limited concept or mentality regarding the understanding of the possibilities of life they could come to experience with Christ or in Christ outside the temples to which so many people so easily and mistakenly become attached or become so fond of them.

Although “abiding in Christ and His instructions of life” is comparable to a planted tree where one may have access to the streams of living water, “abiding in Christ and His instructions of life” is also equated with the example of becoming “clothed with Christ” or “putting on the whole armor of God,” which, in turn, is granted so that a Christian may always remain in it, wherever he or she may “walk.”

Even though a Christian who abides in the Lord is comparable to a tree planted by the rivers of living water, every redeemed person in the Lord also receives the right or condition of becoming a son of God, so that, as a son, one may know that the Lord Jesus is granted to dwell in him or her

and for the Christian to be in the Lord so that one may be provided everywhere and at all times with everything necessary to one's heart and life according to the new creature in Christ.

1 John 5: 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

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.

The possibility for a person “to be in Christ,” inclusive when it is necessary to “walk in the present world,” is the mystery that had been kept in God since before the foundation of the world and that, along with the revelation of Christ to humanity, came to be widely unveiled and made available to all who in the world believe in the Lord and accept His testimony.

An individual who believes in the testimony of God and receives Christ Jesus in the heart, through faith in the Heavenly Father's promise, also has the possibility of having Christ in one's life to “walk in the world without having to leave one's living or abiding in Christ,” an aspect which enables a Christian to be, in Christ, like a tree planted by the rivers of living water, but also, or at the same time, making him or her in Christ a child of God who can walk in the world being salt of the Earth and light to the world wherever the Lord leads him or her.

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.

1 John 5: 9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.

10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

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.

When a person puts his or her trust in Christ, one puts oneself in the position of “having Christ” in one's life, but also in the position of “being in Christ,” conditions by which a Christian has the eternal foundation and rivers of living water within oneself so that they accompany him or her also in one's “walking” in the present world.

If, however, a Christian distances oneself from abiding in Christ, one also is no longer able to walk in the present world in conformity with the newness of life offered by God, for in this way, one departs in one's heart from remaining in Christ.

Separated from direct fellowship with Christ, a person moves away from the source that provides the rivers of living water also while he or she needs to move in the present world, rivers that are not in the physical places where some people think they can find this provision, for these places, have the characteristic of being compared by the Lord to broken cisterns of water or pools of water devoid of the real newness of heavenly life.

Jeremiah 2: 12 ***"Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the LORD.***
13 "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water."

Similar to the blind man who was partially healed and came to see people like walking trees, thus visualizing an inappropriate or incoherent picture of the life God offers to all human beings in Christ, so too are those who, in part, announce the possibility of life in Christ or the life of each member of the Body of Christ directly in the “Head” of this Body, but who, together or afterwards, also utter or announce inappropriately that people must come to the established temples to truly obtain the Lord's novelty of life.

Those who preach that people can have God as personal and direct support and protection, but at the same time also teach that people need to be dependent on temples and their meetings to effectively receive the help, protection or covering of the Lord, actually seek to ground or root people in their institutions and religions so that their followers may be like trees without discernment and so that they become dependent on their controls or domains.

Those who preach only partially the freedom that people can have in God, announce, on the one hand, some aspects of this freedom, but on the other hand, they seek to ensnare people by casting teachings upon them through which they try to introduce thoughts aiming at imprisoning them under the domination of their intents and the

services to their places or temples. In their propositions of foundations that will never have the characteristic of a soil associated with the rivers of living water that can fully accompany people in their various daily tasks in the present world, many propose the idea of liberty under conditions which never can indeed grant true freedom.

*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.***

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

The Heavenly Father has established that it is “in Christ,” being Christ also in the hearts of His children, that a person may have access to the ample provision to be able and strengthened to live and walk in the world according to the heavenly will or according to the new creature, for this is the way in which the broad provision of the heavenly life can always accompany an individual and by which a person may have constant access to the streams of living waters in the present and eternity for an eternal life in the Lord.

Similarly to a tree, a Christian is called to extend one's roots to the rivers of living water. However, since the Christian is more than a natural tree, being effectively a person and a son of God who also moves in the world, the streams of living water are granted to him or her “in Christ” in the heart so that they accompany him or her everywhere one is called to go as a child of God.

Christ in the heart of the Christian and the Christian abiding in Christ is the perfect condition for an individual to have fellowship with the life of the Lord, but also to bear fruit according to this novelty of life wherever the Lord leads him or her to walk, whether at home, through the profession, in civil society in general or in the encounters with brothers of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

C2. Who is the One in Whom it is Possible to Live and Walk?

Through the Scriptures, God invites all people to believe in Christ Jesus and to receive Him as the Lord of their lives by the fact that it is also in Christ that every human being can find salvation to be saved from sin, the body of sin, the condemning law, and eternal death, as well as because it also is in Christ that the newness of life according to the will of God or the heavenly kingdom dwells.

And if God calls Christians to “live and walk” in the newness of life granted to them by the heavenly grace, it is because this is also possible to be attained or accomplished; otherwise, the call of the Lord would be just an illustrative, fictitious, and, therefore, false invitation.

If the Lord invites all to “live and walk in Him,” it is because Christ is also powerful to shelter in Himself all who believe in Him, and yet, all of them at the same time.

The Lord Jesus Christ, from eternity, is immeasurably powerful, an aspect revealed in the Scriptures by describing that the Heavenly Father created all things and the human being through the Son of His Love. However, **Christ is also presented to us by the Heavenly Father as fully powerful to embrace and sustain all the creation in Him and to give individual attention to every human being, even dwelling in the hearts of all who receive Him as Lord**, as it may also be noted in the following text:

- Colossians 1: 15* ***He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.***
- 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.***
- 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.***
- 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.***
- 19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,***
20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.
- 21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled***
22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight,
23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.
-

In the face of the greatness presented in the Scriptures about Christ, one might, however, wonder about how can Christ be everywhere if He is in the heavenly places or if He is seated at the right hand of the Heavenly Father?

In response to the above question, we may mention that one of the problems that may lead to this kind of thinking occurs when a person still considers the Lord Jesus only as the Christ revealed in the flesh and does not regard Christ as the One who was resurrected by the Heavenly Father and who has already been eternally established by God as the Unique High Priest and King of Righteousness and Peace according to the Order of Melchizedek. At the current moment or time, Christ is already established as Lord and King over everything, above all human beings, and over all principalities and powers, except, of course, for the Heavenly Father Himself, who has put the Lord Jesus in glory to reign above all.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, indeed came from God in the flesh into the world to die on the cross of Calvary and to provide the path of redemption for humans, but the Lord has also been resurrected by the power of God and is in a position of glory sitting above every principality or power.

The historical act of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary and the effects of this work can never be removed from the existence of the universe, but the Lord Jesus Christ is no longer in a limited fleshly body, and also He is not dead, He has risen according to the power of God.

When God, through the Scriptures, calls us to “live in Christ” and also “walk in Christ,” He does so because this is perfectly and entirely possible due to the fact of what Christ did for us on the cross of Calvary, but also because of the current position that Christ occupies in the present time and which He will occupy for all eternity.

The fact that Christ is the steadfast or unshakeable foundation of life revealed by God to the world and which can be everywhere with those who believe in Him, as well as that He is able to shelter all in Him at the same time, is precisely one of the central aspects of why the Heavenly Father invites us to “live and also walk in Christ.”

To understand that it is indeed possible to “live and also walk in Christ,” it is equally crucial to have an understanding enlightened by God to be instructed appropriately about who the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ Himself is and in whom every Christian is called to be, for part of the novelty of life in Christ also encompasses a newness of knowledge about the Christ in which Christians are called to be and abide.

*2 Corinthians 5: 16(b) **Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.***

*17 **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.***

Several difficulties that some Christians allow to become expressive oppositions or resistance to them, simply grow from the fact that these Christians do not come to see their Lord appropriately as He is presented to them by the Heavenly Father or because they do not know more precisely the Christ who is eternally alive and working in a position of great glory and honor in His regency over the universe.

All people who are “in Christ” are called to attain attitudes in life that would never be possible in the limited capacities of the flesh or the natural man. However, when people become distanced from understanding or accepting the position of Christ regarding

their lives in the present time, they also become subject to limit their faith in the Lord by being distanced from the knowledge of who the Lord who offers them novelty of life is and through whom a Christian can “live and walk in Christ.”

The current condition of Christ, and in which He calls people to “live and walk in Him,” is the condition of the Christ who came into the world to die for sinners once and for all, but who also rose from the dead and is described by John and the Lord Himself as follows:

Revelation 1: 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,
11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."
12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,
13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.
14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;
15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;
16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.
17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.
18 "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."

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Revelation 21:6 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."

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Eternal and Only High Priest before God, the Only Mediator between God and all human beings. He is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the King of Glory, the Only Shepherd and Bishop of people's souls. He is the Lord of hosts and Almighty Lord together with the Heavenly Father, but He is not only the regent of life and the universe, He is as well the very novelty of life to which God calls all people and which God makes available to all who believe in Christ Jesus as the gift of righteousness and life offered by the Heavenly Father.

John 6: 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

John 11: 25(a) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.

The call for a person to believe what Christ has done for him or her on the cross of Calvary is fully necessary and is entirely part of the life of faith of a Christian in the Lord, but so it is also the advancing to believe in each of the virtues of Christ that are revealed to us by God about the risen Christ. These virtues, in turn, are shown to us with the purpose of letting people know Him who at present offers them the newness of life, and this, so that each individual may also come to the Lord to live and walk in the eternal life offered to them by God in Christ Jesus.

When God makes the glory of the condition of the risen Christ widely manifest in the Scriptures, He does so that people may know that Christ is entirely perfect and perfectly positioned to grant the novelty of life offered from the Heavenly Father, and also to know that no action contrary to the Lord can shake the One whom God has appointed to give heavenly and eternal life to everyone who believes in Him according to what the Scriptures manifest about the Lord Jesus.

Moreover, yet another aspect of fundamental importance for knowledge of the breadth of the Lord's presence everywhere, thus enabling Christians to live and also walk in Him, refers to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ works in Christians through the Holy Spirit, through whom a Christian can also be “one with the Lord.”

In the first subject of this series called Walking in Newness of Life, a set of texts of the Scriptures has been highlighted that teaches us that a Christian “being in the Spirit of the Lord” is also equivalent to this Christian “being in the Lord Jesus Christ,” an aspect which, therefore, shows why a Christian can “live and walk in Christ,” for the Holy Spirit is everywhere to enable Christians to reach this call of the Lord to always be in Him.

“Living and walking in Christ” or “living and walking in the Spirit” are equivalent, for the Holy Spirit does everything according to the instruction of Christ and the Heavenly Father, and only according to the instruction of the Lord. Through the Spirit of the Lord, God grants Christians the condition that enables them to be in Christ at all times, and wherever the Lord leads them.

Through “being in the Spirit of the Lord,” a Christian can know Him who came in the flesh, died on the cross, but can also know His risen Lord, who lives forever and who is powerful to receive in Himself all who want to “live and walk in Him.”

By “living and walking in Christ,” being in the Spirit of the Lord, no opposition can prevent a Christian from enjoying the life that is in Christ, because also nothing can prevent Christ Himself, who is seated at the Heavenly Father's right hand, from granting the newness of life to the person who is in Him.

A Christian is called to trust in the Lord to live and walk in Christ, for it is also in Christ that there is an unshakable love for life according to God's will.

Romans 8: 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The fact that knowledge of the greatness of God's glory cooperates with people's faith in the Lord, and thus cooperates for a person to have life in Christ, is one of the main reasons why the devil, from the beginning of the times of the human being on Earth, seeks so incisively to obstruct specifically people's knowledge about the Lord.

One of the most obvious ways in which the devil seeks to turn people away from a life in consonance with God's will refers precisely to the attempts of distorting their understanding of God and the virtues of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in their opposition to the Lord, the powers of darkness even go so far as to propose several false exaltation of Christ as, for example, proclaiming deceitfully Christ as still being a “child God,” still being crucified on a cross, or even claiming that Christ indeed will reign in some future age, but not recognizing that God has established Christ already for the present time as King and Lord over everything and above all.

*2 Corinthians 4: 3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,
4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

Therefore, to remain continually faithful and steadfast in the ever-increasing knowledge of the glory of Christ is one of the most central aspects of the Christian life toward which all Christians should be very vigilant in order to remain sober in the Lord and to avoid that one's heart becomes inclined to unbelief concerning Christ, for through incredulity, a Christian may be led to think that it would not be possible for him or her to “live and walk in Christ” indeed or might be led to despise this glorious invitation extended to him or her by God.

1 Corinthians 15: 34 Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.

Hosea 6: 3 Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.

It is also by the knowledge and by keeping the knowledge of Christ's greatness, revealed in the Gospel of His glory, that a Christian is fortified in faith to believe and to know with conviction that it is also possible for him or her to “live and walk in Christ” at present and despite the world around him or her, for *He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world* (1John 4: 4).

The one who enables a Christian to “live and walk in Christ” is Christ Himself if the Christian inclines one's heart to the Lord Jesus so that He grants him or her support to be “in Christ” every new day. Therefore, it is

vital for a Christian to trust in the Lord and continue to grow and believe in the glory of Christ revealed to him or her.

How sublime or precious it is to speak of the greatness of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and to bear in mind that He is the one who grants life and sustains all who choose to live and walk in Him. Exceedingly amazing is the beauty, glory, power, and majesty of our Lord Jesus, which is why these aspects should always be in the foreground of a Christian's life.

And while concluding this chapter, we would like to mention that at this point we will not go into more specific narratives about the exceedingly great glory of Christ and the Lord's power to sustain people to live and walk in Him just because many aspects of the glory of the Lord Jesus have already been extensively addressed in all subjects of the series on the Gospel of God, and especially in the material on the Gospel of the Glory of God and the Glory of Christ, of which, however, we recall some texts below:

2 Corinthians 4: 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

1 Corinthians 1: 26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.

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."

2 Peter 1: 1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,

3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our “Promised Land” or the soil of our inheritance. The Lord Jesus Christ is the firm foundation of our building. And the Lord Jesus Christ is the One who *is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

Nevertheless, the Lord Jesus Christ is also the One who can be everywhere with the person who chooses to “live and walk in the Lord.” Christ calls us to establish in Him all aspects of our life because of all that He Himself is and is willing to be in favor of everyone who chooses to “live and walk in Him.”

Psalms 16: 1 A Michtam of David.

Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.

- 2 O my soul, you have said to the LORD, "You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You."*
- 3 As for the saints who are on the earth, "They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."*
- 4 Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god; Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer, Nor take up their names on my lips.*
- 5 O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot.*
- 6 The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance.*
- 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.*
- 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.*
- 10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*
- 11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

1 Peter 5: 14(b) Peace to you all who are “in Christ Jesus.”
Amen.

C3. Rooted and Built Up in Christ

When God, through the Scriptures, teaches that a Christian can walk in the world without having to cease to be in Christ because the Lord Jesus is powerful to sustain, in all time and everywhere, every Christian who trusts in the Lord, God is also manifesting His intention for Christians to persevere in living and walking in Christ or to do so continuously.

When God offers us the immeasurable benefit of eternal life in Christ, the Lord does not offer this newness of life to serve as a sporadic benefit, just at some particular times, or in specific places, but to serve as a continuous, permanent, and eternal benefit.

As described also in the subject entitled Vocation, Calling and Election, the “**upward call of God in Christ Jesus**” does not refer to a call to a partial or eventual Christian life, but to a calling in which Christ, the Immanuel, offers to be the “God with us” in everything or all aspects of the life of each person who receives Him as Lord in one's heart.

God's proposition for people to live and walk in Christ is not limited to some specific times or events but is a proposition for the whole life or all time that remains for one person in the world, as well as for one's entire eternal life. The call to be in Christ extends to all periods, age ranges, and places of an individual's life.

*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.***

*2 Peter 3: 10 **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.***
*11 **Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,***
*12 **looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?***

Considering that being in Christ is so precious and fundamental to the present and eternal life of every individual, God repeatedly reiterates His call for Christians to be attentive to abide in Him who is offered to them from heaven by the perfect love of the Lord and who can guide them appropriately in God's will in the most diverse situations of their lives.

As seen in the previous chapter, the Lord Jesus Christ is powerful to support or supply all Christians in all their needs and at all times because He is already seated eternally as Lord of Lords and King of Kings above the Heavens and all the Earth.

And yet, **because of the essential or indispensable condition that being in Christ represents for each person's life, God calls Christians, inclusive, to make being and abiding in Christ a priority target in their lives, calling them to move forward in this purpose to the point of taking root in the Lord by continually practicing remaining in Christ.**

Since life according to the new creature, according to God's will, or in consonance with God's kingdom is granted to be lived in Christ, the Lord longs that Christians also persist in remaining in Christ to grow and be constant in the newness of life given to them through the grace of the Lord, offering them the possibility of becoming firmly “rooted” in Christ.

Being, abiding, living, and walking in Christ is so vital and essential to the life of a Christian that God allows or enables an individual not only to receive newness of life in Christ but also to be established in it firmly or unshakably.

The newness of eternal life that is offered from the kingdom of God to all human beings is effectively granted to an individual when one believes in Christ Jesus as the Lord of his or her life. However, it is by the permanence of a Christian in Christ that this life in the Lord keeps working and growing in the one who did receive it.

Thus, the call to abide in the Lord accompanies the initial receiving of this life, as well as the call to be rooted and established in the Lord accompanies the call to abide in Christ, as exemplified in the texts below:

*Colossians 2: 6 **As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,**
7 **rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.***

*1 Corinthians 15: 56 **The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.**
57 **But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**
58 **Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.***

Walking rooted in something is more than just walking in something.

To walk rooted is to be connected to something in such a way that one or something that is rooted cannot easily be removed from what one is placed in.

Let us still see below the meaning of this word “**rooted**” according to the considerations associated in the Online Bible with Strong's lexicon comments:

Rooted:

To cause to strike root, to strengthen with roots, to render firm, to fix, establish, cause a person or a thing to be thoroughly grounded.

To be rooted in something is to take root in what something is placed, which, in turn, needs time and perseverance in abiding in that what something was placed.

Yet another way of expressing the concept of “**rooted**” is presented in the Scriptures by the use of the expressions “*built up*” or “*edified*” in the Lord, expressions which are also compared to the concept of “**being grounded**” firmly in the Lord, as can be seen in the following text:

Ephesians 3: 14 For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,
16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,
17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height,
19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Experiencing “to live and to walk in Christ” is a wonderful step that a Christian may reach through faith in Christ Jesus, but “living and walking rooted in Christ” is of an even greater magnitude and preciousness, enabling the Christian to be established and built up continually and increasingly in the Lord so that, among others, one may:

- ⇒ 1) To know and understand, with the other saints, which is the width, the length, the depth, and the height of the love of Christ, which exceeds all understanding;
- ⇒ 2) To be filled with all the fullness of God;
- ⇒ 3) To remain unshaken in the Lord until the end, until the time of receiving the crown of eternal righteousness forever.

When Christians lack knowledge of God's love, understanding of the extent of this love, or fullness of the Spirit of the Lord, they do not become deprived of these vital aspects because God does not want to grant them or because God eventually would not have enough and simultaneous provision for all the saints. They lack them because they do not “extend roots” to the rivers of living waters by the fact that they also do not remain long enough or in sufficient constancy to “establish firm roots” in the Lord or to “be adequately grounded” in Christ.

When God calls Christians to persevere in Christ to the point of being rooted in Him, He is not calling them to be subject to a punitive or detrimental obligation to their lives,

or to establish restrictions concerning the access of what is good for them. On the contrary, God calls Christians to achieve the condition of being perfected in the Lord, for it is only in Christ that a Christian can live and walk appropriately according to the good, pleasant, and perfect heavenly will, as it is also outlined in the texts below:

*James 1: 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.***

*Colossians 2: 8 **Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.**
9 **For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;**
10 **and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.***

The expression “**you are complete in Him**” is translated into Portuguese also as “**you are perfected in Him**,” ratifying the text previously exposed that declares that it is “**in Christ**” that a person can come to experience in fact the condition of a new creature granted by heavenly grace.

A Christian is not complete in oneself, but when one is in Christ one is perfected because Christ is perfect, which is why every Christian is called to be and remain in Christ to the point that one is rooted and built up in Him so that this abiding does not become easily or frequently interrupted.

There is no height, depth, length, or width that Christ cannot reach and in which He cannot manifest His power and strength, but in order for this to be a daily reality in the life of Christians, each of them is also called to observe whether one is establishing firm roots or foundations in the Lord.

*1 Corinthians 3: 10 **According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.**
11 **For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.***

When a Christian is willing to allow the Lord Jesus Christ to guide him or her in life, it is vital that one is also aware that the Lord only intends to lead him or her in ways in which this Christian is already sufficiently or firmly rooted or adequately built up to remain “living and walking in Christ” regardless of what will stand before this Christian. But since many Christians do not take root firmly in Christ, and so they are not well rooted in the Lord, they also deprive themselves of enjoying more of Christ's direction and benefits for their lives.

On the other hand, under the direction of the Lord, a Christian may be led several times by the Spirit of the Lord even to places and situations that appear to be devoid of a productive purpose, but which have an objective of rooting or edifying the Christian primarily in Christ for him or her to be prepared beforehand for other works in the Lord. And a situation that exemplifies this kind of action did occur with Paul when, before sending him into the world to exercise the ministry of a preacher and an apostle of His Gospel, Christ guided him to withdraw for three years from his homeland to be first rooted in the Lord.

To grow in the roots toward the rivers of living water to be rooted in Christ, as well as to build steadfast connections with the everlasting foundation to be well-grounded in the Lord, is also to grow or to edify respectively, for mere exterior and superficial growth does not serve as reliable support that a person needs for life.

What sustains a tree is the ground in which it is located, and what supports a building is the foundation upon which it is built-up, considering yet that if the soil or the foundation, respectively, are not appropriate, there is also no way for them to offer proper support. However, even when the ground or foundation is suitable, as is the case with Christ Jesus as the ground and foundation for the life of Christians, if a person does not take root in the soil or connects oneself appropriately with the foundation given by God, one can be subject to become shaken even if the ground and foundation are unshakable.

In His condition of having also come into the world as the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself lived and walked about thirty years on Earth so that God could then lead Him on even more arid or hostile ways to accomplish the Heavenly Father's will. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, in His condition as Son of Man, also had to take root in God and the will of His Heavenly Father so that, once firmly rooted in Him, He could walk on the path subject to the persecution, cross, and death to which He was guided to manifest God's provision of salvation offered to all human beings.

*Hebrews 2: 17 **Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.***

*18 **For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.***

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*Hebrews 5: 7 **(Jesus) who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,***

*8 **though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.***

*9 **And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,***

*10 **called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek."***

The Lord Jesus Christ, when He came to be in His condition of Son of Man, took root in God to the point of doing nothing out of the Heavenly Father's will.

*John 5: 19 **Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."***

*John 4: 34 **Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."***

Shortly after his first personal encounter with Christ, Saul, also called Paul, wanted to go to his acquaintances immediately and preach the Gospel of Christ to them. However, at the beginning of his Christian life, Paul did not know enough about this Gospel, nor was he sufficiently rooted, grounded, and built up in Christ for the oppositions that would come against his life and ministry that he would receive from God, which is why the Lord first led Paul to retire to Arabia for three years. And in this period, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught Paul to be rooted in Him for only after that going to the world as a preacher of the heavenly Gospel.

And here we also remember, **that being rooted or grounded in Christ does not aim just that the world cannot discourage or withdraw a Christian from "living and walking in Christ," but it also aims at protecting the Christian from letting oneself be removed from "living and walking in Christ."**

Every Christian is called by God to be God's dwelling place or temple so that the Lord may always be his or her "God with us in Christ Jesus." However, since God's dwelling in one's life so that one may also dwell in God refers to an offer of life according to the heavenly kingdom, and not a condition of imposition, every Christian is also called to continue persevering in his option for life in Christ, an attitude for which the Lord likewise offers full help to all who choose to be rooted in Him.

*Hebrews 3: 3 **For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.***

*4 **For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.***

*5 **And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward,***

*6 **but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.***

And to conclude this chapter, we would like to mention once again that when a person is rooted and grounded in Christ, the Lord can even lead that person to experience the manifestation of the heavenly glory working through him or her, for by standing in Christ, one will also know to attribute the glory appropriately to Him who sustains his or her life, as well as the whole universe.

Colossians 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.**

4 **When Christ who is our life appears (or will manifest Himself), then you also will appear (be manifested) with Him in glory.**

1 Corinthians 10: 31 **Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.**

C4. The Actions or Practices that Lead a Christian to Become Rooted and Grounded “in Christ”

In a significant part of cases, and according to the mentality of the natural man, when the subject of rooting or edifying something is approached, it is prevalent to think in establishing something in a fixed or materially stable place.

When, however, life is observed from the perspective of the kingdom of God, it can be noted that the kingdom of the Lord does not consist of materially established things, but of eternally unshakable things. The whole kingdom of God is grounded in that which cannot be shaken, as discussed more broadly in the subject on The Gospel of the Kingdom of God and according to some texts we recall below:

Hebrews 12: 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."**

27 **Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain.**

28 **Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.**

29 **For our God is a consuming fire.**

Psalms 62: 6 **He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be moved.**

Psalms 55: 22 **Cast your burden on the LORD, And He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved.**

Acts 2: 25 **For David says concerning Him: "I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken."**

God calls His children to take root, foundation, and to be edified “in Christ,” because “in Christ,” neither the Christian oneself nor what one builds in the Lord are shakable. God wants the Christian to “live and walk in Christ” because, in the Lord, the benefits of salvation and newness of life are rooted in the Rock and the Refuge that are eternally unshakable.

In the themes of the New Creation in Christ series, it has also been emphasized, by the respective Scriptures, that there is no force or person in the world that can turn a Christian away from the “love that is in Christ,” unless the Christian oneself permits this to occur by neglecting the “being in Christ,” which, in turn, as highlighted in the previous chapter, also encompasses “taking root or to be grounded in the Lord” while it is the appropriate time to do so.

In one's resemblance to the trees or branches of a vine, though not exactly like them, and although Christ Himself and the Lord's provision for Christians can never be shaken, the choices a Christian makes in one's life also end up defining whether he or she comes or does not come to be rooted in Christ or whether one abides or does not remain in the true vine.

In the theme Watchful in Prayer, it has been highlighted the vital condition of perseverance in "living in Christ" so that the Christian may remain in a sober state of life in the Lord, as well as in the material entitled Work Out Your Salvation it has been addressed the possibility that a Christian has to always grow in this "living in Christ." Here, however, we would like to stress that every Christian is equally called to "take root and be grounded in Christ" so that one may be firmly established in the Lord in the face of a world hostile to God and the will of the Lord, so that each Christian, individually, does not come to be shaken by the instability or inconstancy that is manifested daily in the present world.

"To become rooted or grounded in Christ," however, as well as watching in prayer, refer to actions in which the active participation of the Christian is necessary. Even though God helps in all those who choose the way of becoming firmly established in the Lord, there are aspects in this option that also depend on each person's cooperation.

Although "in Christ" is the firm and unshakable foundation of the Christian's life, the decision to remain or not "in Christ" is also associated with the Christian performing acts that demonstrate his or her renewed choice for the newness of life in the Lord. It is the Lord who gives the newness of life to everyone who is in Him, but it is each person who chooses whether to live and walk, or not, in the Lord.

And to mention a first active action whereby a Christian can cooperate with the permanence in one's choice for the unshakable life in the Lord and His kingdom, we recall the last text of the book of Hebrews mentioned above, in which we are taught that a practical way for a Christian to remain steadfast in the unshakeable kingdom of God is a person "to retain in one's life the grace of God granted to him or her."

Just as a Christian received Christ, so he or she is also called to walk in Christ. That is, just as the Christian received salvation as the result of God's grace and righteousness, so a Christian is also called to walk in God's grace, knowing that it is not by one's own power, by the deeds of the flesh, or by the deeds of the law that a Christian comes to be established or rooted in Christ.

Although a Christian is called to contribute to one's own establishment in Christ, and even though this Christian might be very fruitful in the Lord, it, ultimately, is still not the very works of a Christian that sustain him or her unshakable. Even if a Christian is called to participate in getting rooted or grounded in the Lord, the only One who effectively sustains a Christian steadfast is God because of His love, mercy, and grace toward this Christian.

As much fruit as a branch may have produced or is still producing, thus demonstrating its cooperation with the life that the vine gives it, it is not the fruits that sustain the branch, but the vine to which the branch is attached. That is why the need for holding on the grace, by which access the reconciliation and fellowship with God are granted, is also so indispensable.

2 Corinthians 12: 9 **And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

Hebrews 4: 15 **For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.**

16 **Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.**

Romans 11: 18(b) **Remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.**

And considering the mention made once again above about the branch and the vine, we may also see in this example a second active action that a Christian is called to do and which is directly related to a person becoming settled or established in the Lord.

One part of the Scriptures that have been mentioned in most of the themes of the Systemic Teaching about Christian Life is the text about the True Vine and the branches, which, therefore, we would like to recall below once again:

John 15: 4 **Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.**

5 **I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**

6 **If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.**

Although this text has been approached several times in other subjects referenced above, it seems to us that there is an intriguing aspect that has not yet been addressed in the mentioned themes.

By repeatedly looking at this last text in reference, it may seem to some that there is a vacuum in the situation narrated in it.

In the above narrative, one can first see a promise from the Lord that whoever abides in Him will also have Christ abiding in him or her, and thus, one will bear much fruit. It is a statement or assurance from the Lord that it will be so.

Secondly, it is possible to observe that the Lord also makes a promise that the one who does not abide in Christ, like a fruitless branch, will be cut off and cast out.

The intriguing aspect of the text in reference, however, concerns the following questions:

⇒ How, then, can someone not stay and need to be cut off?

- ⇒ If someone yet needs to be cut off, is he or she still not connected to the vine?
- ⇒ And if a person is still connected, does he or she still not abiding in the vine?
- ⇒ Is it possible, then, for a person to come to Christ, connect with Him, and yet not be in Him?

Although figuratively, the text of John 15 states that it is possible, indeed, for a branch to be associated with the vine but no longer remaining in it, which is why it can be so crucial for a person to know how this might happen to not incur this condition or to repent from it if one already is in it.

The Lord Jesus would not admonish people about a potential risk if the possibility of such a risk to occur in practical life were not also real, for the Lord is the Truth and, as such, everything He says is also the Truth.

Thus, we understand that an aspect of high relevance to note as to remaining in Christ refers to the point that while a branch in the “natural” world can automatically receive the life of the vine in which it is, not choosing consciously to accept it or reject it, this may be significantly different in the case of a “Christian in Christ,” because the Christian is similar to a branch, but one is also more than a branch. A Christian is a person empowered with will and decision.

In many situations concerning a natural branch, the transfer of life from the vine to the branch occurs automatically when both the vine and the branch are still alive or healthy. In the case of the Christian in Christ, however, the true vine may be continually releasing life, but the branch's nourishment of this life is also conditional upon the branch itself agreeing to accept the life offered to it.

Similarly, it also occurs with the seed of God's word that the Sower Jesus Christ sows into people's hearts, where some people receive it appropriately and see the good fruits coming from it, but where there are also people who reject it in many ways despite that the seed of God is always bestowed as a perfect seed. (Aspect addressed in the theme Work Out Your Salvation, more specifically in the chapter Take Heed How You Hear).

The Lord Jesus Christ is willing to strengthen and instruct those who come to Him, but the effective action of His strengthening and instruction in those who come to Him is also associated with the acceptance of the work that those who come to Christ allow the Lord to perform in their lives.

Regarding the Christian life, it is possible, therefore, for a branch or a Christian to be linked to Christ, but at the same time not allowing Christ to feed him or her indeed or to work freely in one's life. And if Christ is not nourishing a Christian or kept active in the branch, even if in some way the branch is connected to the vine, still considered a Christian, or regarded as a child of God, this branch is no longer actually “remaining” in the vine.

And when a branch that is still attached to the vine does not actually “remain” in the vine because it actively or passively rejects what the vine offers, that branch ceases to strengthen its relationship or connection with the vine, or in other words, it does not become rooted or grounded in Christ, making one's position in the Lord vulnerable.

Although the entire provision for the Christian life is granted to a Christian from God through Christ, the receiving of this life depends, in a very decisive way, more on a Christian's willingness to receive it than the Lord's willingness to give it, for God has already shown that He is willing to grant it abundantly through His love and grace to all who receive Christ into their hearts.

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?**

The phrase “*once saved, always saved,*” or “*saved forever,*” used by some people, although not found explicitly in this way in the Scriptures, may even correctly express a characteristic of God's eternal salvation. This aspect, however, only applies if this statement is also referring to those who also remain in the heavenly salvation and the Lord of this salvation, or those who abide in the true vine without continually rejecting the life that comes from it.

The fact that an individual has been connected to the true vine at a given time but does not continue to receive life from this connection, exposes this individual to a high risk of losing the life that has already been granted to him or her and does not guarantee that the popular said “*once saved, always saved*” continues to apply to this person as many people mistakenly, and contrary to the teaching of Christ, seek emphatically to affirm.

One peculiar, beautiful, and essential aspects of life, both concerning the natural life and the spiritual life to be lived in Christ, is that life is dynamic, but also that the sustenance and nourishment of this life must be active to supply it in its constant dynamic. And where a life receiver stops receiving the life supply or nutrition, there also the life of this recipient begins to decline and is put at risk of coming to its end.

Although Christ can and wants to grant unshakable, endless, uninterrupted, and entirely sufficient heavenly life for all people for them to be able to live and walk in Him, if an individual deprives oneself of receiving the life of Christ, whether by abstaining from the Lord or by not accepting what the Lord wants to give through His heavenly grace, one puts oneself in a position where the branch ceases to receive what is actually necessary to obtain from the Lord to be sustained in Him.

Still continuing to make a comparison of Christians to the branches of the vine, there are some branches that only want to receive from the vine what they themselves wish to receive, and not all that the vine wants to give them or what is indeed necessary to them. If these branches, however, persist in their yearning to be in Christ but without being willing to receive what Christ wants to give them, they may also, through this attitude, become subject to a higher risk of becoming disconnected in a more aggravated way from the connection with the vine, for although some branches claim to want to remain in the vine, they do not really want the true nutrient and working of the vine in them and through them.

And similarly to the figure of a branch of the vine, it also occurs regarding “walking in Christ being at the same time rooted and built up in Christ.” There are people who, in some parts, want to “walk in Christ,” but only in the aspects which they think that are comfortable to them or their own interests. There are people who want to be in Christ

to obtain the protection and blessings of God, but who do not really want to “walk in Christ's will” for their lives, thus putting themselves in a position of incoherence, for how may a person aspire to be in Christ if one, at the same time, wants to choose to be in ways the Lord does not walk or will not accompany him or her?

Still regarding the comparison of a Christian with the branch of the vine, we would like to point out that Christ does not even require a branch that remains in Him to be strong in itself, for the Lord provides the strengthening of the branch if it only actually remains in Christ.

The Lord Jesus wants to share God's newness of life with everyone, but on the other hand, the Lord Jesus also is committed to the Heavenly Father to fulfill the promises that the Father and also He prophesied about the peoples. The Lord Jesus Christ, for example, prophesied that His Gospel would be preached to all nations and peoples coming so the end, and the Lord Jesus will take care to fulfill His word.

In this way, if Christians are attentive and move as Christ moves, they will also participate in the Lord's work. If, however, a Christian does not do it, choosing instead to walk in ways that are contrary to God's purposes, the Lord will not wait indefinitely for this person to repent. The Lord Jesus, in due time, advances in what God has previously announced and concerning which Christ is commissioned to fulfill.

“Walking in Christ” or “walking in the Spirit” is related to the individual practical actions that a person performs under the dependency of the Lord in one's daily life on Earth, but it is also associated with being in Christ walking in the seasons, compasses, and deeds that the Lord is revealing or performing in the present world.

And the aspect addressed in these last paragraphs also leads us to a third active action which a Christian is called to practice and which is also directly related to the aspect of being rooted or grounded in the Lord in order not to be in a weak position before a world hostile to the Heavenly Father's will.

This third active action to be adopted by a Christian, in turn, refers to the matter of a Christian also practicing what the Lord instructs him or her to do.

A Christian becoming a doer of the instruction of Christ, not just a listener, is another action regarding which the Lord Jesus has made a direct and clear correlation for a Christian to work in cooperation for oneself to be rooted or grounded in the Lord or for one's living and walking in Him.

Although part of “living and walking in Christ” includes listening to the Lord's instruction to know the way in which to walk and to understand the actions to do, listening without actually practicing what has been heard may become a similar position of being on the vine but not actually receiving what the vine gives a Christian to live and walk according to the Heavenly Father's will, making the Christian, also in this respect, not firmly rooted or grounded in the Lord.

A person may need understanding, strength, and the strengthening of one's willingness to accomplish something, and these characteristics are achieved in what has been called by the Scriptures as “living in Christ.” However, the granting of these characteristics also aims that what has been received may result in useful actions of this person.

Thus, “performing” practical acts according to the Lord's instruction and in the Lord's strength is also part of the life process that Christ extends to those who abide in Him, occurring the rooting and grounding of a Christian in the Lord also through these practical actions.

Also concerning this third aspect in reference, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when He was in the flesh in the world, once more exemplified the fundamental importance of a Christian being rooted or grounded in Him, as well as He mentioned the manner in which a Christian can do so, namely:

*Matthew 7: 24 **Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:**
25 **and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.**
26 **But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:**
27 **and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.***

*Luke 6: 47 **Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like:**
48 **He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.**
49 **But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.***

According to the last text referenced above, digging deep into the rock, digging deep ditches for the foundations, and laying the foundations in these ditches on the rock are the acts to be done for someone to become grounded or rooted in Christ, acts that are instructed to be accomplished so that what a person builds upon the eternal foundation also remains in the face of a variety of oppositions that may come toward people in the world.

Nevertheless, and despite the above example is intended for people to notice their lives as buildings that need a firm foundation, the most prominence emphasis on the words of the Lord Jesus Christ is more focused on a person, in due time, do the appropriate actions for the building to be firmly grounded, which, in turn, are very clear, namely, to hear the words of Christ, but also to do the words heard from the Lord.

An individual who does not even hear the Lord's instructions is, of course, also deprived of building on God and in consonance with His will. However, in the example of the last text presented above, the Lord Jesus Christ is not considering those who do not hear His words, but those who hear and do them, as well as those who hear but do not do what is said to them.

Therefore, among the very hearers of the words of the Lord, there are two distinct types of people who are distinguished by the behaviors they adopt toward the instructions they have heard from Christ, where a group of people, by their attitudes, works to be rooted or grounded in Christ, while the other, although also being composed of hearers, does not accomplish it.

The two types of people mentioned by Christ in the example cited above refer, both, to persons active in deeds, not being passive regarding work. People of the second group, however, build in their own manner, according to their own will, or not according to the will of God instructed to them. They listen to the words of Christ, but at the time of putting the instruction into practice, they do not do as the Lord instructed them to do.

In other words, people of the second type in reference put themselves in positions that are conflicting with each other and do not allow the proper foundations or roots to be created and established, for concerning listening, they seek to expose themselves to the Lord's words, but as for practicing, they do not remain in Christ, continually interrupting their abiding in Christ and their taking root or grounding in the Lord.

We may observe here, then, that grounding or establishing oneself in the Lord, or allowing oneself to be established by the Lord in the Lord, is not a call for inconstancy in the fellowship with Christ or for a mere theoretical contemplation of the words which the Lord instructs.

Glory to God that His promises are not mere words thrown to the wind and glory to God that they are not merely theoretical.

Job 42: 2 I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.

A person's act of accomplishing what Christ instructs him or her to do, however simple and basic the instruction and action to be practiced might be, is not merely the expression of an isolated or insignificant act, for through all the actions by which a person does the instruction of the Lord, one is also cooperating with being rooted and grounded in the Lord.

When an individual indeed practices what the Lord instructs him or her to do, this person, in addition to being walking in the light for the good of one's life, is also taking root in Christ through repeatedly trusting in the Lord in what one does.

“Practicing” or “performing” God's instruction distinguishes the wise and prudent person from the foolish man, for the Scriptures state that not trusting God to the point of not practicing what He instructs to do, even if one is dedicated to hearing the words of the Lord, is an expression of foolishness and lack of prudence.

By the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ presents the picture of a house as an example, it is possible that some people may think of building material things, but the house is just a symbology. What is really at issue in the example mentioned by the Lord Jesus Christ is the strengthening of one's life in the Lord and the building up of one's life in Christ.

The buildings that a person carries out may encompass a variety of works one does in life, but the central point of the example in reference presented by the Lord Jesus is still the building that was accomplished in the builder's own life, where Christ is the Only everlasting foundation on which an individual can root one's life eternally.

1 Corinthians 3: 9 ***For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.***

Ephesians 2: 21 ***in whom (in Christ Jesus) the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,***

1 Corinthians 3: 16 ***Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?***

Psalms 127: 1 ***Unless the LORD builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, The watchman stays awake in vain.***

Matthew 16: 26 ***For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?***

Specifically concerning “walking in Christ,” there are many actions that a Christian can do in a growing manner and as Christ guides him or her to do them. There are instructions from the Lord that are for all Christians in general, and there are instructions that the Lord gives individually and specifically to those who come to Him. However, what we would like to emphasize at the end of this chapter is that the Lord's instructions are not mere deeds to be done for the Lord, but they also work primarily for a Christian to establish one's life firmly and increasingly on the eternal foundation on which one is called to build.

The one who comes to the Lord Jesus Christ, and abides in Him, also has the promise to be taught by the Lord in all that one needs the instruction of God. However, when one is taught by the Lord, one is also called to practice the teaching one receives from God to be more in more rooted and established in Christ so that one as well may abide and grow firmly and continually in the Lord.

James 1: 22 ***But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.***

23 ***For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;***
24 ***for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.***

25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

1 John 2: 28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

1 John 2: 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.
6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

Ephesians 3: 17 ... Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height,
19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

C5. God Firms and Establishes All Who Accept the Heavenly Call to Be Established in Christ Jesus

Although it has already been commented in the previous chapters that God is always willing to cooperate and work with everyone who chooses to be rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus, we would like to conclude the present material by reiterating this aspect once again.

When the Scriptures teach us that God calls Christians to “walk rooted and grounded in Christ and established in the faith in the Lord,” it does not mean that they have to do it all on their own.

The Lord Himself is willing to work in the Christian all that one needs, but as the Christian is also a human being who can make choices, God, in many essential aspects of the Christian life, awaits the Christian's agreement and cooperation so that He, the Lord, performs then His work on the individual who chooses to abide in Christ.

When a Christian puts oneself in a position of humility under the mighty hand of God, the Lord Himself stands in favor of this Christian so that he or she becomes rooted, edified, or grounded in Christ. Therefore, it is first for the Christian to trust in the Lord and, by relying on the Lord through faith, to resist the devil and his temptations, as exemplified by one more text below:

- 1 Peter 5: 6 **Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,***
*7 **casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.***
*8 **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.***
*9 **Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.***
*10 **But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.***

When a person humbles oneself before God, casts one's anxiety upon the Lord and by faith in the strength of the Lord rejects evil, the Lord Himself perfects, firmly establishes, strengthens, and grounds this individual in Him, remembering here still, that humiliation before God is done through prayer and heartbreaking, but also when a person walks in the instructions God gives him or her to do.

Although not every counsel of God may initially seem pleasing to one's natural eyes or expectations, when a person heeds the counsel of the Lord regardless of his or her own understanding or the opinion of others, one also walks in humility with God, believing that the instruction of the Lord is the right and just decision to be followed and practiced.

When, for instance, God instructs a person not to seek revenge on others according to that person's desire or concept of justice, but to submit to the instruction of righteousness coming from the Heavenly Father, one humbles oneself under God's mighty hand, thus letting the Lord lead him or her to see the process unfolding according to the righteousness of the heavenly kingdom and not according to the wrath of men. And by doing so, this person stands in the way of becoming ever more steadfast

in the Lord, in the kingdom of heaven, and in the righteousness that proceeds from God.

When a person, before God, keeps the purpose of wanting to be guided by Christ in everything also to practice what the Lord instructs, God Himself works for this individual becoming rooted, grounded, and established more and more in the faith towards Him.

The fact that one perseveres steadfast in God puts him or her in a position to be widely blessed, for by doing so, one can enjoy even more God's endless mercies and goodness toward him or her.

*James 5: 11 **Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord; that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.***

When a Christian inclines his or her will to God's will and agrees that the Lord's will may come to be fulfilled in one's life, the Lord, through grace, works out His life in favor of the Christian and in the Christian also in the sense of empowering and firming this Christian to fulfill the Heavenly Father's will, which is an expression of what is called in the Scriptures as "living and walking in Christ in a firmly established manner."

There is a variety of aspects in life that some people wait for God to do for them without, however, realizing that it is God who is waiting for their willingness toward Him and the abiding in Christ so that, then, He will act for or in their lives.

The text "***whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved,***" for example, clearly shows us that it is the Lord who indeed accomplishes the heavenly and eternal salvation in the life of an individual, but since salvation is presented as an offer, not as an imposition, the Lord waits for the person's response concerning calling on the name of the Lord for one's salvation.

Similarly, if a Christian who has already received salvation continues to keep the truth that Christ makes known to him or her, the Lord works in favor of this Christian to keep and firmly establish him or her ever more in the Lord Himself.

Let us look at the reality described above also expressed in the very precious words of the Psalm that follows:

*Psalms 91: 9 **Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place,***

*10 **No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;***

*11 **For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.***

*12 **In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.***

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*14 **"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name.***

*15 **He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.***

*16 **With long life I will satisfy him, And show him My salvation."***

When we observe the text of the Psalm above, we can see that the work God requires of a person to be rooted, grounded, or established by the Lord are to trust in Him and to choose the Lord as the place of one's dwelling and refuge, thus remaining for the Lord Himself to provide for the one who clings to Him with love all that one could never provide by oneself for one's life.

*John 6: 29 **Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."***

Yet another example of the Lord's work in steadfastly establishing a person in Christ as a result of one's posture or attitude is related to the subject of repentance.

On the one hand, the Scripture tells us that a person cannot reach repentance by oneself, for it is attainable only because of God's goodness in favoring an individual to attain it, which is one of the points why the Lord sent the Holy Spirit to convince the world of sin, but also of the righteousness and judgment that is in Christ, so that people may come to repentance and their deliverance from slavery to sin and the body of sin.

And if a person wants to choose to repent of his or her condition under the yoke of sin, even if in great weakness to do so, God will surely help him or her to achieve it and to reap the benefits that come from this attitude.

On the other hand, however, even in the face of being able to adopt an attitude of repentance, a person may still choose not to follow this path. Although God, through the Holy Spirit, extends His goodness in the sense of enabling people to repent from the ways contrary to the will of the Lord, the act of repentance itself is up to each person to do, and it is not God who does it for an individual.

If people do not want to choose the path of repentance that the Lord points out to them, they despise the capacity that God grants for repentance and, as a result of this position, they are also not qualified to be instructed in the path of the newness of life for which the Lord calls them.

Returning, then, to the matter of becoming firmly grounded in God through the help granted by the Lord Himself to achieve this goal, we would like to emphasize once more that if there is in us readiness for God's instructions, God also intensifies His action in us so that we may be ever stronger in Him and in His strength.

*Psalms 84: 5 **Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.***

*6 **As they pass through the Valley of Baca, They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools.***

*7 **They go from strength to strength; Each one appears before God in Zion.***

When a person, because of the grace of God, receives the possibility of recognizing and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord of one's life through faith in the heart and the confession of one's mouth, and one does indeed choose this path and remains in it, this person puts oneself as well

in a position to effectively have Christ as Lord working for him or her, among many other aspects, also to become firm and established in Him.

When a Christian continues to confess Christ as Lord of his or her life, one also remains in the condition of having Christ as the High Priest and Eternal King of his or her life, and in which one is empowered by the Lord to draw near to the throne of grace and also receive the grace to walk in the world without needing to stop to be in Christ.

This process of becoming strengthening in the Lord is also mentioned in the Scriptures as “the working or addition of the grace of God where abundant grace has already been poured out.”

*John 1: 15 **John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"***

*16 **And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.***

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

*Romans 5: 17 **For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.***

When the Lord calls us to walk rooted and grounded in Christ and confirmed in the faith in Him, it is because this is entirely possible, for if we live and walk in Christ, we walk in Him who helps us and sustains everything.

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

*Hebrews 10: 23 **Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.***

*Isaiah 41: 13 **For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, Saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'***

When, through the grace of God, a person receives Christ as Lord, one also has at his or her disposal, from the beginning and together with Christ in the heart, the Lord's protection so that one may always continue to believe in God.

In Christ, every Christian has all the provision for the first steps of his or her salvation, but also to be firmly established, rooted, and grounded upon the eternal foundation of the everlasting salvation.

Colossians 2: 6 and 7 **As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.**

Philippians 2: 9 **Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,**
10 **that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,**
11 **and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**
12 **Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;**
13 **for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.**

1 Corinthians 1: 9 **God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

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?**

1 Thessalonians 5: 23 **Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

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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