

So therefore, the taking and passing of tests gives you the right to advance one more class closer to completing your studies, allowing you to graduate, and then to enter your chosen field, thereby fulfilling your desires. Likewise, the ultimate good of the wilderness is for your spiritual advancement to get you to where you desire, the Promised Land, with the capacity to enjoy its fruit to the fullest! *“It is He [God] who is giving you power [by IC] to make wealth [glory blessings] that He may confirm His covenant,”* Dt. 8:18.

God's covenant and promise to us is that He will bless us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that *“grace and peace be ours in the fullest measure,”* 1 Peter 1:2. And, *“according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again ... to obtain an inheritance ... reserved in heaven for you,”* 1 Peter 1:3,4.

And lastly, a set of scriptures I especially like concerning the promises which await for us in Orbit 9 are found in Jeremiah. *“I will rejoice over them [Orbit 9 believers] to do them good .... I am going to bring on them all the good [the best] that I am promising them,”* Jer. 32:41,42.

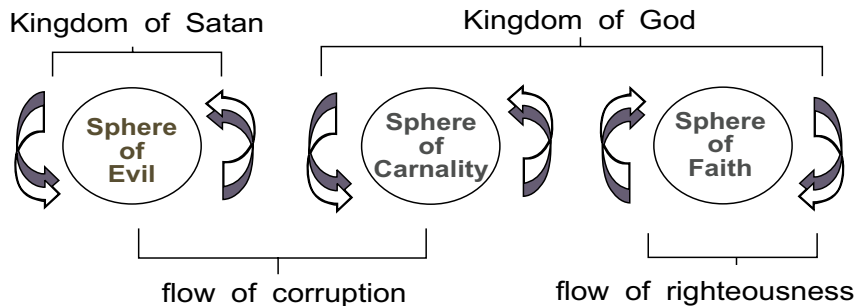
All this awaits the believer who can consistently pass the various tests and trails, which are given to build our capacity, so that we can indeed hold and possess God's FULLEST MEASURE. Yes, the tests are difficult, perhaps causing much mental and emotional suffering. But God's love for us is sure and unending. It's not a mushy, lovey- dovey kind of love which drips with emotionalism, but what some might call a tough, objective love based on our ultimate good, and not swayed or influenced by the short-term pain or hardship we might endure. Like an athletic trainer who turns a deaf ear to his student's moaning and groaning through his scheduled workout, God does likewise as we go through ours. And for good cause—God desires to bless us, period! But we first must have the capacity to receive His superabundance. So like that athletic trainer, God builds up our backbone and muscle by engaging us in spiritual exercises. And there is no greater training ground than the wilderness. And he who passes all the tests God has specifically designed for him graduates into Orbit 9 and will receive his DISCIPLE OF CHRIST degree.

## **REAPING WHAT YOU SOW**

Before we begin with the Orbit 9 experience, we need to stop and review Orbits 7 and 8. We will do this by comparing this soul building

program of the Sphere of Faith resident to that of a believer in the Sphere of Carnality, or even the nominal (in name only) Christian in the Sphere of Evil, both of which have their own systems by which a resident believes he is advancing in God's plan. We must first remember from *THE POWER SPHERES*, that these three spheres don't flow in the same direction.

### THE POWER SPHERES



The Sphere of Faith has a power flow (clockwise) which renews the soul, whereas the Spheres of Carnality and Evil have a power flow (counterclockwise) of corruption. Those within the Sphere of Faith live unto God. They work toward pleasing Him. It is their ambition (2 Cor. 5:9). It is this attitude which renews and transforms their minds. It is these individuals who have willingly surrendered their wills unto the will of the lord Jesus Christ. However, the residents of the Sphere of Evil and the Sphere of Carnality live unto self. This is their focus and attention. They simply refuse to fully surrender their will unto God. And whether they be churchgoers, charitable, or community-service oriented, this is no indication of faith in God. And He is not impressed. The best of our best in the flesh is filth. God says, “*all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment* [literally, a ‘menstruous cloth.’],” Is. 64:6.

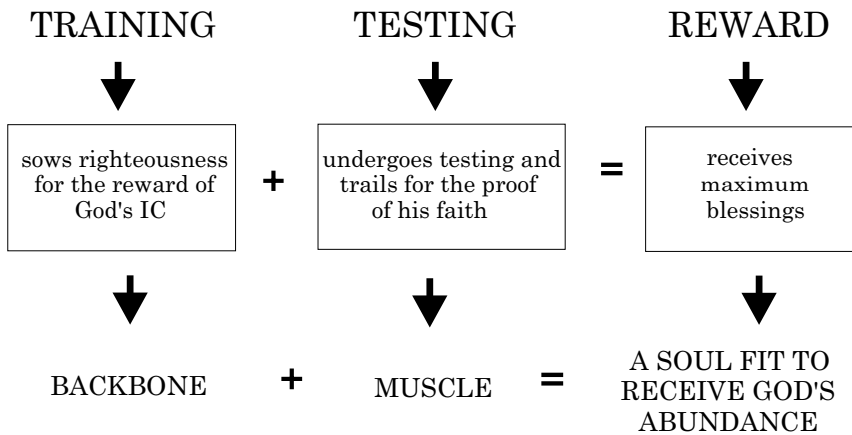
*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. (Galatians 6: 7-8)*

Let us view the word “sowing” as referring to how we live our lives, and “reap” as our recompense. We either live our lives unto God or self. Let us also view sowing to the Spirit as being “God-based, love given,” versus sowing unto the flesh, or being “man-based, lust driven.” The latter are self-deceived in that they believe God will bless a life of

service and good works, as opposed to he who abides by God's Word and will. It is this attitude that mocks (or holds God's grace policy in contempt) God. For God has *already* decided to bless man, but *not on the basis of works, lest any man should boast* (Eph. 2:9), but on his capacity and measure of soul to receive God's blessings.

I now want to illustrate the differences by which the Sphere of Faith believer goes about working towards God's glory as opposed to the carnal Christian's plan. Both seek to please God and perfect their souls, but one by God's Wisdom and the other by his own counsel.

## PERFECTION BY THE SPIRIT



As you can see from the above diagram, this believer was diligent in learning God's Word, underwent the testing and trials that faith requires—every *Word of God is tested* (Pro. 30:5), and reaped a soul with backbone and muscle. Therefore this believer's soul was spiritually fit and strong having the capacity to receive the glory blessings. It is this believer who will not be distracted from Christ, nor will he forget God and become proud as a result of superabundance.

Now let's look at the means by which the residents of the Sphere of Carnality, and to some extent the Sphere of Evil resident—specifically the nominal, name only Christian—sows or works towards their salvation, and the results it has upon their souls. On the following page, I have two sections for this study. Section A is for the more

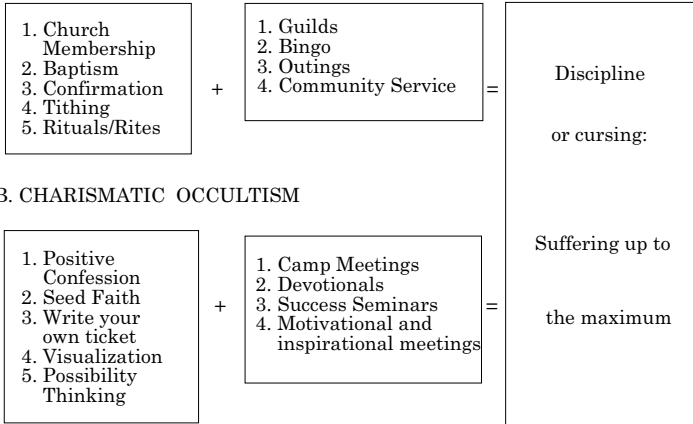
traditional, rite and ritual, denominational adherent. And section B is for the Charismatic, who seems to be better focused on God's hand, rather than face.

## PERFECTION BY THE FLESH

TRAINING                  PLAYING                  PUNISHMENT



A: DENOMINATIONAL RELIGION



SPINELESS, WHINEY + FLABBY = SPIRITUALLY WEAK,  
UNFIT, NO CAPACITY

The above sketch reflects the man who is prone to service and works as a means to please God and gain His favor, rather than through faith alone, and defines what I refer to as a *religious* man as opposed to a man faithful to the living Christ. It has been my observation that religion is man's attempt to please God through organizing various institutions to act as a light to shine upon his efforts to gain God's pleasure and man's approbation. These are the results of man's IQ, and in some instances, witchcraft or occultism. And do not confuse the issue because some of the leaders of these movements or organizations are very intelligent, charismatic, or decent, sincere, and loving people. They would not be successful if they were not. But that is NOT to be our criteria for judging truth from error. Nor is truth to be judged by experiences, no matter how supernatural they may be or appear. Satan is a master of such deception.

Furthermore, God is not in the sideshow business. Yet, try to tell this to those who yell and scream, and wave their arms all about, and stomp their feet, and work themselves into an emotional frenzy. And stay away from ministries which are centered around judging others, or those who promote miracles and success stories, or prophecy, or the “we are gods” movement where you can have what YOU say. We are in this world for one reason: to have what GOD says. We are to glorify Him by advancing to maturity. Therefore, our criteria in judging ministries must be whether or not a ministry is “God-based, love given”. God permits the “man-based, lust driven” ministries, those founded upon “*strange doctrines*” (i.e., write your own ticket, seed- faith, believe and receive, name it and claim it, etc.) (1 Tim. 1:3), for the purpose of testing us to see whether or not we will remain faithful to Him, or succumb to our old nature: greed and covetousness.

*If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, “let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,” you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the Lord your God is testing you to find out if you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Dt. 13:1-3)*

Countless ministries are seducing believers with deceptive practices from the true way in which God has commanded us to walk. They do so with “*confident assertions*” (1 Tim. 1:7), but they simply do not understand, nor have grasped the mind of Christ. Therefore, they have missed the path of righteousness. But you need not be misled. Through the teaching materials of *Open Hand Ministries*, I reveal to you from scripture God's administration, the power spheres, and how they determine our lifestyle or our orbit. And above all, how to determine whether or not you are in the faith through positional and experiential sanctification. God's way is the Sphere of Faith and our path is to advance from Orbit 7 to Orbit 8 and to graduate into Orbit 9.

## **THE ORBIT 9 EXPERIENCE**

We now enter into an experience that has no rival, and there is nothing with which to compare this singular, most fantastic experience in all of life, except for that which it has been patterned after, the Garden of Eden. Orbit 9 is a life of JOY, and therefore, this Orbit

defines joy as a result of passing the righteousness training and the obedience testing programs and casts aside the idea that joy is something that can be worked up, or had just for the asking.

As we have seen, the Orbit 8 experience is one of sorrow and anguish with much travail. The believer in this Orbit is like a pregnant woman who is having contractions. But *“when she gives birth to the child, she remembers the anguish no more, for joy that a child has been born into the world” (Jn. 16:21)*. Likewise, the suffering of Orbit 8 will be turned to joy in Orbit 9.

Wilderness testing can bring tears to the most unemotional in the Sphere of Faith, but joy will come in the morning. The testing had a purpose, and that was to fashion God's new creation into a vessel unto His service. The new believer is like a diamond in the rough. He must go through much polishing to display God's brilliance and glory. Or, like precious metals which must go through the refining process, the believer must be refined before he will be given his commission. *“Take away the dross from the silver, and there comes out a vessel for the smith,” Pr. 25:4.*

The dross is the man-based, lust driven attitude, which Paul refers to as the old-man (Col. 3:9). The old-man is that self-reliant attitude that had saturated our thinking while residing in the Sphere of Evil, and it can only be removed through the purification process of obedience to God's truth (1 Pt. 1:22). And because God is training us for leadership, we must be pure and we must be strong. The wilderness does both. *“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service,” 1 Tim. 1:12.*

The Apostle Paul was strengthened through much testing by Christ for he was found faithful and therefore he was put into service. Before we are commissioned by God, we too must be found faithful. We must be vessels purified by the furnace of affliction before we can be used by God for His glory. Paul said this to his young disciple, Timothy.

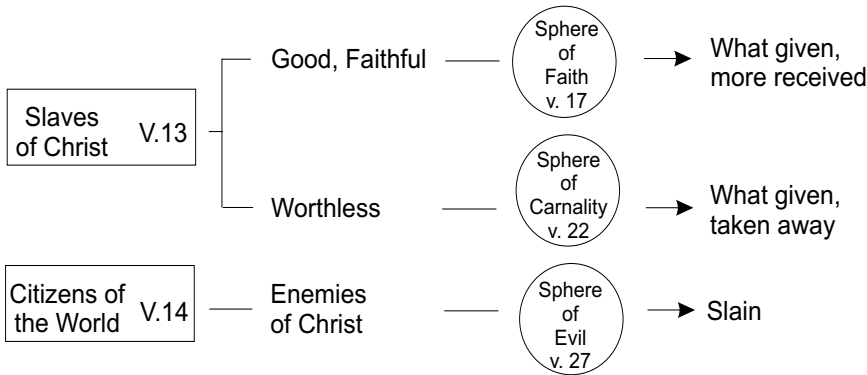
*If a man cleanses himself from these things  
[dishonorable practices of the Kingdom of Satan], he  
will be a vessel for honor, sanctified [Orbit 9  
believer] useful to the Master, prepared for every  
good work. (2 Tim. 2.21)*

## ENTERING INTO THE MASTER'S JOY

It is within the Sphere of faith that the believer begins to experience true intimacy with Christ. For it is only unto the faithful that Christ will reveal Himself (John 14:21). And as the faithful believer progresses in his spiritual development, his intimacy with Christ becomes more profound and his relationship further quickened. And upon spiritual maturity, Christ fully and completely embraces the believer, having found the believer's love for Him genuine and true. This is God's way under His administration. From *THE POWER SPHERES*, we learned of God's system to bless the faithful under His administration. We learned of the two kingdoms He administers, and of the three power spheres, one of which influences each man, woman and child. And we also learned that life in each power sphere has certain consequences. As a review, let us look at God's administration from the viewpoint of Luke 19.

In this parable of the money, we have representatives of all three power spheres, the Sphere of Evil (v. 14), Carnality (v. 20), and Faith (v. 16,18). These are divided into kingdoms, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. The citizens of the world represent the unsaved in Satan's kingdom residing in the Sphere of Evil, and the slaves of Christ represent those in the Kingdom of God. The good and faithful slave is he who resides in the Sphere of Faith, and the worthless slave is he who resides in the Sphere of Carnality.

### THE GOOD, THE CARNAL, THE EVIL



Now Christ gave His slaves an equal amount of money, so that they might go and do business. He then left them and vowed to return. And when Christ returned to see how they did in their business, He found some slaves were faithful, while others were not.

Let's take Christ's example of money in this parable and use it here as a metaphor for God's Word. His slaves were given the Word, and by that word they were to sow righteousness with a view of IC, and advance as far as their diligence would take them. The citizens of the world received nothing, for they refused Christ's authority and therefore His Word. Now, one slave advanced by a factor of 10, another by 5. These were both congratulated, and put in charge of cities to the degree of their advancement. But one slave had nothing to show for his time, and simply gave God back what had been given to him. This slave is a representative of the Sphere of Carnality and lived by IQ, not IC, and therefore couldn't advance. But the other two were commended. Christ told the first slave, "*Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little, be in authority over ten cities,*" Luke 19:17. Similarly, He said likewise to the second slave and in Mt. 25:21, Christ elaborates. "*Well done good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.*"

Here again, we see His slaves receiving to the degree they were faithful. But Christ adds a phrase, "*Enter into the joy of your Master.*" That phrase is not only a declaration of a job well done, but a personal declaration of His love for the Orbit 9 believer. Now, though these scriptures may very well describe judgement in heaven, there is a principle for time I wish to call to your attention. What we are to experience in heaven will have had as its antecedent an experience here in the earth. I refer to this as THE REFLECTION PRINCIPLE.

In this principle, every positive and negative response towards doctrine will be reflected in our eternal state, Mt. 12:36. Therefore, what we receive in heaven (or in hell) must first have had a counterpart in the earth. And because IC alone has value in heaven, man's soul will be reflected in heaven to the degree IC was received and believed in his heart here in the earth. Those who view their faith in terms of good works alone and who seek to be honored for such will be greatly disappointed. Honor will be to those who "*set their minds on things [IC] above,*" Col. 3:2.

The other side of this principle is that we must reflect God's will in the earth as it is done in heaven by means of the Sphere of Faith. And to the degree we glorify God and exalt Christ in the earth, we in turn shall receive the balance of our glory blessings and be exalted by Christ in heaven.

Therefore, the Orbit 9, spiritually mature believer will experience in his soul the joy of his Master upon graduation. This is true “*joy of the Lord.*” He will also be put in charge of much in the earth, and he will be a candidate for the glory blessings.

Let's look more closely at this personal and intimate love Christ has for those who reach Orbit 9. Proverbs 8 is an exposition on wisdom and teaches us the outcome of those who love IC, which is of course, Christ's wisdom, or ultimately, Christ Himself.

*I love those who love me; and those who diligently seek me [by means of the nutcracker] will find me [IC]. Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, and even pure gold, and my yield than choicest silver. I walk in the way of righteousness [Sphere of Faith] in the midst of the paths of justice [Orbits 7-9] to endow those who love me [Orbit 9] with wealth [glory blessings], that I may fill their treasuries [treasure chests, the heart]. (Pr. 8:17-21)*

Riches, honor, and abundance await those believers who reach spiritual maturity, whose soul is fit by the means of a backbone fashioned with IC and muscles built by testing. These blessings are for time, and because of the “reflection principle,” they will await us to a larger degree in heaven. Or, that which is promised in life to come must first be experienced to a lesser degree in the earth, for God's will is to be done in earth as it is in heaven.

*Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house, or brother or sister or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the Gospel's sake, but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now [glory blessings] in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecution [by those residents of the Sphere of Evil and Carnality]; and in the world to come, eternal life. (Mk. 10.29-30)*

The GLORY BLESSINGS, which the spiritually fit has the capacity and ability to receive, are the basis for “A *LIFE MADE FULL OF JOY.*” This joy gives him a strength, vim, and vigor beyond anything he could believe was possible. And in his joy, he will ride on the heights of the earth.

*Those who wait for the Lord [trusting in Him for their heart's desires while seeking His wisdom] will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary. (Is. 40.31)*

Orbit 9 is where the faithful believer receives the DESIRES OF HIS HEART. It is this believer who kept his focus on Christ even while enduring the wilderness. His endurance indeed proved his delight was in the PERSON of Christ, while the promises remained in his periphery as the reward of his obedience. Any lusts that might have been in his heart will have been done away with in the wilderness. No one can survive such testing unless he is totally focused and occupied with the person of Christ Jesus. Moses “endured, as seeing Him who is unseen,” Hebrews 11:27.

The promised land is where ALL God's promises come true. Jesus said, “If you abide in Me [Koinal Status—faithfulness], and My words abide in you [IC in the heart], ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you,” Jn. 15:7. Jesus then gives the reason it shall be done for those who reach spiritual maturity. He said,

*By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit [graduated into Orbit 9] and so prove to be My disciples [Disciple of Christ degree]...these things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. (Jn. 15.8,11)*

By the giving of the blessings, God is glorified. And if we remember from *THE POWER SPHERES*, we were created to glorify God. “Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory...,” Is. 43:7. So upon reaching spiritual maturity, we become true disciples of Christ, fulfilling our purpose—the glorification of God. God is glorified as we are blessed.

It gets no more sublime than that. In these verses, we see the outcome of all we have been striving for. This is where God desires ALL His children to be, and all have the opportunity in the Sphere of Faith. In John 15:7,8,11, we see the GLORY BLESSINGS defined by Christ. These blessings are given to those who were diligent to learn and persistent in holding fast during stressful and difficult situations. And the Orbit 9 believer is rewarded with WHATEVER he may wish, and by the giving of these blessings, God is glorified, proving we reached discipleship. We then have the joy of our Master in our hearts, and our joy is made full.

## TAKE HOLD AND HOLD FAST

Perhaps nowhere else is the value of God's intimate counsel better given than in Proverbs 3:18, and it best sums up all we have learned. "*She [IC] is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy [blessed] are all who hold her fast.*"

This one verse portrays life in the Sphere of Faith as the believer advances from Orbit 7 all the way to Orbit 9. We TAKE HOLD of IC in the Righteousness Training Program, and store it in our treasure chests, our hearts. And at the appropriate time, God promotes us to the Obedience Training Program in Orbit 8, where we must HOLD FAST to IC, and apply it to each and every test and trial. And the results are that God will promote us to Orbit 9, where we win experience the promises of joy and gladness found in the glory blessings.

The sixth chapter of Deuteronomy teaches us that those who love God by learning His word and gain wisdom from it shall receive the glory blessings. These abundant blessings are described this way:

*It shall come about [after you pass orbits 7 and 8]  
...God [will] bring you to the [promised] land [Orbit 9]  
... to give you great and splendid cities ... houses full of  
all good things ... you shall eat and be satisfied.  
(Dt. 6:10,11)*

All this is possible if we have an attitude of TAKING HOLD AND HOLDING FAST. Such an attitude is imperative if we are to resist the constant barrage of tempting distractions of the world and "go forward" in our spiritual progress. We must employ the heavenward mindset throughout our Christian lives. For there will be other tests as we further advance and grow. "EVERY WORD OF GOD IS TESTED," Pr. 30:5; therefore, testing will be a part of our adult lives, a part of our continuing Christian education. But, as we have learned, tests are opportunities, and these are always for our ultimate good, while ever preparing us for eternity. The more testings we undergo, the higher our rank in heaven will be, if we are found faithful in them. And given the Reflection Principle, the more we glorify God here in the earth, the more we will be honored in heaven. Yet, for Christ's enemies, those who did not want Him to reign over them, eternal destruction and damnation.

## CHOOSE LIFE

Again, the choice is ours. God will not impose His will upon ours. We are free to reject His Word, or accept it as true. But He does want us to know that there are consequences to our choices: life and death, the blessing and curse. We alone are responsible for our destination—both in time and time to come. If we choose wisely, and submit to Christ as our lord and Savior, we will be rewarded with eternal life and the glory blessings. Therefore, let us seek an intimate and personal relationship with Christ Jesus that we might grow and mature unto God's glory. This will only come about by working toward harvesting God's Wisdom and applying it in our daily lives. Successful daily living will be dependent upon keeping our focus upon Christ. And if pleasing Christ is foremost in our thinking, we will experience the power of God and the goodness of His mercy.

But for those who choose not to believe and therefore fail to relinquish self-rule, and turn a deaf ear to God's calling for repentance and faith, there comes a time when there will only be “weeping and gnashing of teeth,” Mt. 13:50.

*The rich man died and was buried. And in Hades ... being in torment ... he cried out, “I am in agony in this flame. Warn [my brothers] lest they also come to this place of torment.” (Lk. 16.22-28)*

The cost is far too great to decide against God's recommendation of choosing life. Therefore, we must convince all men from scripture that their eternal well-being is secured only by dying to self and living unto Christ.

*Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls [planted] into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone [thereby not fulfilling God's purpose for it]; but if it dies [planted] it bears much fruit. He [man-based, lust driven] who loves his life loses it [to hell]; and he [God-based, love given] who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal [in heaven]. (Lk. 12.24-25)*

## FUTURE WORKS: ACHIEVING PEACE IN THE SOUL

If you have already read *THE POWER SPHERES*, you have completed a general study of the Christian life beginning with God's administration and the relevance of the SPHERES OF EVIL, CARNALITY, AND FAITH. You have also learned in this book, *THE INTIMATE COUNSEL OF GOD*, how important the Sphere of Faith is in terms of receiving God's intimate counsel, which enables us to reach Orbit 9, or the spiritually mature state. For it is in this state of maturity that we have the capacity to receive the superabundance of God. In upcoming works, we will explore and define the workings of the soul. Emphasis will be placed on the heart, and how peace is specifically achieved by a step by step process as we humbly submit ourselves to the leadership of Christ—who is “*the way, and the truth, and the life,*” Jn. 14:6.

I wish to thank those of you who have seen the value of this type of ministry for your prayerful support and financial contributions. You are taking an active role in supplying the spiritual needs of the saints through the distribution of this ministry's books to all who desire them—free of charge.

And lastly, I know you share with me the desire to see true unity in the Church. However, we must be of one mind to accomplish this. And this IS possible, but only to the degree we submit our thoughts to *the mind of Christ*, and act upon “*the intimate counsel of God.*”

*May God count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill [your] every desire for goodness, and the work of [your] faith with power, in order that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thess. 1:11-12)*

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