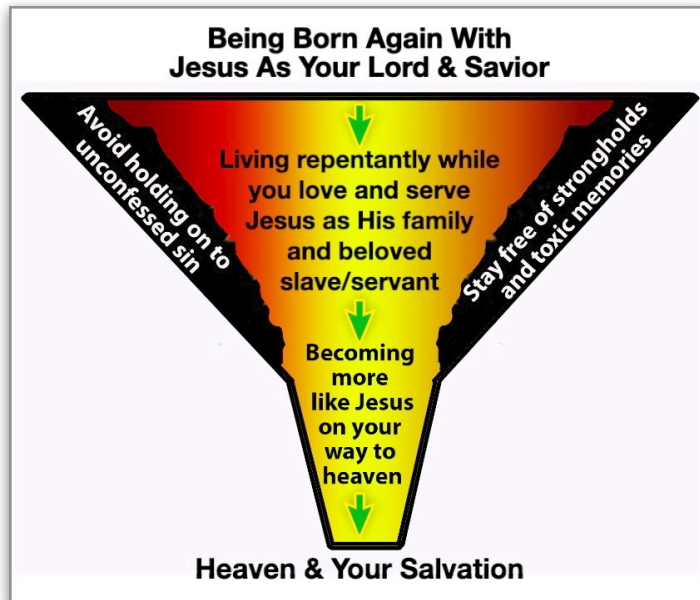


Have You Seen What We've Seen? (Observation 10)

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In this Teaching Email we'll discuss how the advancement of our Lord's Kingdom is hampered by those who fail to be diligent to ***"take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ"*** (2Corinthians 10:5). The Lordship of Jesus in your life and in those journeying alongside you to your salvation is greatly strengthened by following this one command! Every thought you bring into obedience to Christ to evaluate whether this is something *He would think* makes you just that much more like Him. And keep in your awareness forefront where true fellowship must originate: ***"That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ"*** (1John 1:3).

To share authentic fellowship with our Father and Lord Jesus means you must embrace their distinct demarcation between the *light of righteousness* and the *darkness of sin* (depicted in A). The contrast is clearly black and white. But sadly, many in Christianity perceive the light of righteousness and the darkness of sin as a sliding scale: there's the *not so sinful* down to the *really sinful* (B). They get this idea by comparing themselves to other people they consider more sinful than themselves. This comparison generates the false belief that the *grey area of sin* isn't so wrong. Countering this lie is God's Word which commands, ***"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us"*** (Hebrews 12:1).



The mindset of the righteous who walk in the light in the center of the funnel is to always ask themselves when considering an action or decision, ***"What's right about it?"*** But those who enjoy any degree of darkness on the sides ask, ***"What's wrong with it?"*** The Truth is, ***"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth"*** (1John 1:6).

If your spiritual journey finds you by grace eager to *persistently remain* in the light of the funnel center, you may be grieved or even frustrated by people who consider themselves Christians but persistently cling to the darkness on the funnel sides.

You may find yourself becoming disheartened or even exasperated as you try to spur them to repent and/or demolish the strongholds or toxicity you see in them, and they mock your loving tenacity. So consider this: If they refuse to receive the reality of what you're confronting them about, you need to move on in obediently serving our Lord Jesus. He wants to use you in the

Kingdom He came to establish. Like Paul, turn over to Satan those who want darkness (1Corinthians 5:5). In your love for them, it's the most merciful thing you can do.

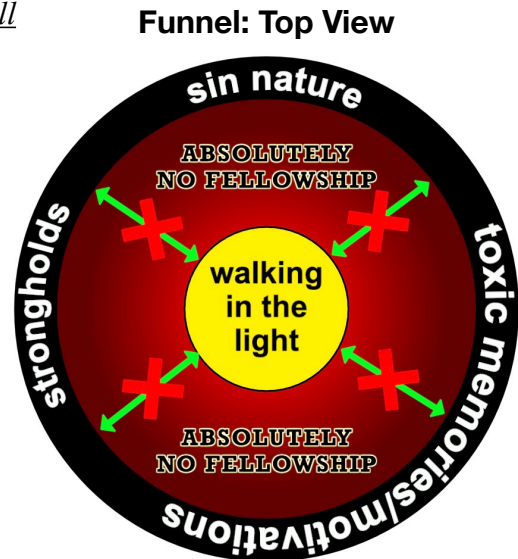
God's Word is clear in the accusation against those who cling doggedly to the darkness of unconfessed sin, strongholds, and/or toxic memories:

"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life [salvation]" (John 8:12).

"For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?" (2Corinthians 6:14).

"For you were once darkness [on the funnel sides], but now you are light in the Lord [heading toward heaven and your salvation]. Live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8).

"Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them [confront darkness]" (Ephesians 5:11).



First, if you walk in the light which genuine repentance produces, you gratefully appreciate the price our Lord Jesus paid to redeem you from darkness. You're sensitive to repent quickly when you do sin, and with a clean heart and clear conscience you can confront any darkness in those who want to journey with you on their way to heaven and salvation. But if someone along the journey is trying to conceal their darkness, the Spirit will produce an inner stirring within you. Call it **"Divine disquiet."** You have an ongoing inner discomfort about the spiritual condition of another person. Sometimes the best thing you can do is ask them, "What are you trying to hide from our Lord?"

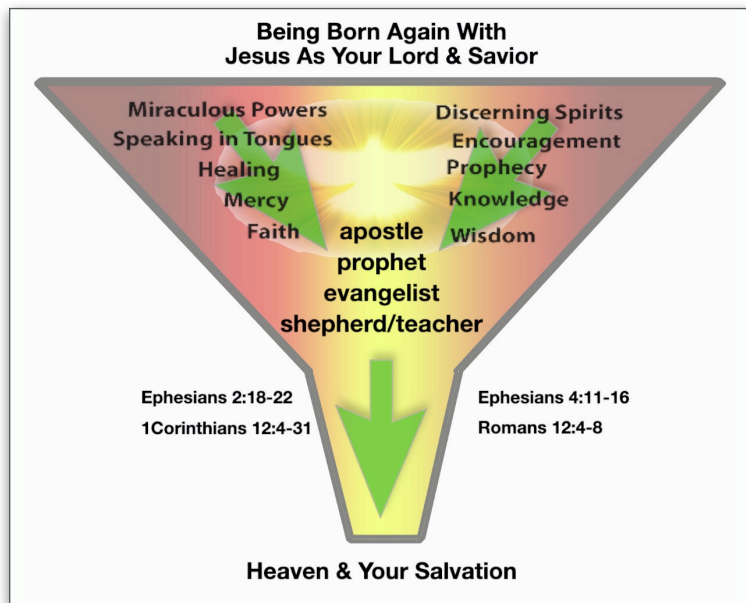
We who follow Jesus as our Lord have experienced His love, and out of that love we **MUST** confront others when their actions or attitudes produce apprehension in us. Stop and consider. Even now maybe you're realizing you are experiencing uneasiness about the darkness lodged in someone you care about. Don't let this tension persist! Jesus wouldn't! When you're diligent to help remove any ongoing source of apprehension caused by people you care about, you're serving both them and Him out of love.

So if your desire is to remain in the light in the center of the funnel to your salvation and continue proceeding down it, take these actions of Christ's love and obedience: •confront any darkness in yourself, •confront it in those you care about, •don't allow those who are fearful to confront someone stop you from that step of obedient love.

For more on the destructive tyranny of apprehension in relationships and how to confront others effectively to bring authentic reconciliation, download for free our book, *Growing Relationships Through Confrontation* <<https://restorationministries.org/download/grtcr.pdf>>; also our Teaching Emails: 10. *Apprehension: The Silent Destroyer* <<https://restorationmin>

istries.org/download/10.june25-05%20(1).pdf>; and 19. *Replacing Apprehension With Love* <[https://restorationministries.org/download/19.dec22-05%20\(1\).pdf](https://restorationministries.org/download/19.dec22-05%20(1).pdf)>.

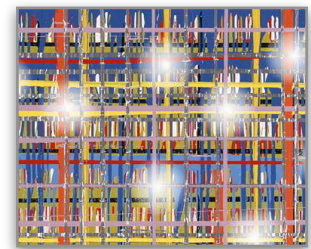
“If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen” (1Peter 4:11).



One of the greatest relational detriments caused by darkness that's entertained among our Lord's followers is this: Tolerated darkness keeps us from collectively experiencing the power of His Spirit through the gifts He's apportioned every follower of Jesus. Specifically, the darkness of unrepentance and strongholds in your soul prevents the Spirit from using you for our Fathers' purposes to be accomplished through you. Please, don't hinder His use of you by living in darkness or by fellowshiping with those who choose darkness over light!

The Kingdom which our Lord is establishing through His called-out ones requires the power of each spiritual gift His Spirit apports and uses in followers of Jesus who live in His light. Every person in the Kingdom has a unique role, and not everyone's role is the same. It's essential that you not only know your own role in the Spirit, but also that you really don't want to fall short in your responsibility to let the Spirit use you.

Let's review the imagery of our Lord Jesus using His followers as stitches in the fabric He is weaving. Staying on the sides of the funnel is like creating holes in His fabric. His Spirit can't use those who are clinging to darkness. If you walk in the light, you need to see yourself as *His stitch* – His spiritual gift in you being knitted together with others in the light to serve His Lordship. No stitch is the same, no gift is the same. Take these differences to heart:



- God speaks to release His message through gifts such as prophecy and tongues.
- God reveals truths through gifts such as apostle, teaching, knowledge, wisdom, evangelism, missions, exhortation, and interpretation of tongues.
- The Holy Spirit bestows gifts that produce action to bless others. These gifts include giving, healing, helping, mercy, and miracles.

- The gifts of administration and leadership can see the combination of people and goals from God's vantage point and can offer recommendations and guidance to achieve His purposes.
- The gift of faith is the calm certainty that gives a believer a "fearless abandon" to do the will of God.

We've presented you with all of this so that if you belong to Jesus and He is Lord of your life, then focus unconditionally on remaining in the light of the funnel center throughout your entire pilgrimage to your salvation. Take to heart our Lord's faithful assurance: **"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life"** (John 8:12). The apostle whom our Lord especially loved reiterates these amazing promises made to those who keep trusting Jesus by walking in His steps of love and obedience: **"But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin"** (1John 1:7). As you keep walking in the light, mutually keep encouraging each other who also remain in the funnel center to press on toward your salvation as your combined gifts are used by the His Spirit.

You'll find yourselves wonderfully strengthened if you are mutually resolute in cooperating with each other as the Holy Spirit uses the gifts He's apportioned to each of you. If you're married, let this mutual identifying and use of your giftings begin with both of you, and then extend outward to include others. We've previously written this observation and it's worth repeating: Our Lord already knew which spiritual gifts you and your spouse would be apportioned long before you even knew each other. You had certain reasons why you married each other. But in His loving omniscience He knew beforehand how the *combination* of your gifts would serve Him and bring glory to your heavenly Father. Isn't that wonderful??? You just need to keep being vessels of blessing one another through helping each other walk in the light and flee the darkness no matter what form it takes. That's how you keep your home filled with light and wholeness and peace.

Both the love of our Lord Jesus as well as His divine power is experienced and entrusted to those who by grace abide in the center of the funnel – those who will sacrifice everything to be His next stitch in His divine fabric. Hold dearly to this truth: The King of Light is the light in the center of funnel! Walk in it!

Mike & Sue

(2Peter 1:3,4; 1John 4:9)