



THE PERSON OF  
**JESUS**  
**CHRIST**

FRANCK KVASKOFF

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST



# The Person of Jesus Christ

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**BIOGRAPHY**

Franck became a born-again Christian in 1986 in Brisbane, Australia at the age of 22. It was in 2006 in the south of France that God revealed to him His desire to use him to spread His Gospel. Franck then began to seriously study the Bible, and to write his first Bible studies. It is only 7 years later that he created the ministry The Real Good News in Australia as well as “La Vraie Bonne Nouvelle” in France, after having received a solid training from the Holy Spirit.

Franck does not consider himself a writer, but simply a Christian who recounts what he experiences in his personal life. His books in the form of biblical studies are often enriched with anecdotes from his life wherein he does not hesitate to reveal his mistakes along the way; we also sometimes discover situations with his family. He is a person who places great emphasis on loving his neighbor. This is why Franck likes to pray to heal the sick, but also to teach people to help them enter into autonomy in Jesus. His main goal is to see a Church that uses all that God has given us, but also to see as many people as possible go through the new birth.

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**M**any people on Earth have heard about Him. You, of course, who are Christians as well.

But do you really know who Jesus Christ is? What is His character? And what are His priorities?

Knowing Him better, is the opportunity to have a deeper relationship with Him, and also to help me avoid errors in my Christian life.

Some will say: *"I thought that Jesus viewed things in a certain way"*, but unfortunately, too many Christians remain on too much of a superficial relationship with the person of Jesus Christ.

The Bible reveals that Jesus Christ has always existed. He was there when God made the creation, because He is the word of God. Imagine that you have the ability to isolate your speech, everything you say, everything that is the audible purpose of your thoughts, isolate it from your being. Well, God has done that.

***John 1:1-3 (AMP)*** *In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and [b]the Word was God Himself. He was [continually existing] in the beginning [co-eternally] with God. All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him not even one thing was made that has come into being.*

This Word, God embodied it in a human being, Jesus Christ. The Bible says that nothing has been done without Him. Since the day when Adam and Eve sinned, God began to put in place His rescue plan.

After having disobeyed, Adam and Eve lost eternal life with God, when He drove them out of the Garden of Eden.

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This plan, which God set in place, would allow humans to regain an eternity with Him. In all the Old Testament, every action, every word, every decision God made, was for one purpose: to prepare for the coming of Jesus on Earth.

The mission of Jesus Christ on Earth, therefore, had been prepared a long time ago. The plan was well established, well prepared. Jesus did not "improvise" in His Ministry. He did not do anything His Father did not ask Him to do. He was fully focused on His mission by being in constant communication with His Father.

Jesus did not wait to be an adult to begin His mission, He was fully aware that His coming on earth would aim to restore humanity to its original condition.

That day He had preferred to remain in the temple in Jerusalem to speak with the doctors of the Law, to learn, to improve, instead of staying with His companions perhaps. Like every year, the parents of Jesus came to Jerusalem with other families. But Jesus remained focused on His mission.

***Luke 2:45-46*** *So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.*

This is a very good example for us today. As soon as Jesus was aware of His role on Earth, He understood that He had to learn, to improve and move forward. Despite the fact that He was only twelve years old, He wasted no time. Jesus could have thought: *"I'm only 12 years old, I am still young, at twelve years old you have fun, and you don't think about improving, I still have time"*.

I am not saying that children from the age of twelve should not be thinking about playing, I am not making a parallel with children, but with people who only met Jesus recently. If you are born again very recently, do not think that things are going to produce results from themselves. You have to keep ahead of your improvement.

As Jesus went by himself to the temple and stayed there for three days, and yet, because His parents came to pick Him up, you also go ahead of things. Seek to improve yourself, to grow in knowledge, study the Bible, and have a permanent relationship with God your Father, Jesus your brother, with the Spirit who is holy. If you are reading this study this already proves that you are in a good approach.

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**Luke 2: 49** *And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"*

It is very clear in the Bible that Jesus was just as human as we are.

**Hebrews 5:8** *though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.*

Jesus, when He was on Earth, had a body, a soul, and a spirit. He was made exactly in the same way that we are today. Some may say: *"But no, Jesus was the Son of God, He was perfect, He did not have the same struggles as me."*

The only difference on this point is that Jesus did not succumb to any temptations in His life, but He had to strive just as hard as we would do when facing a temptation.

**Hebrews 5:8** shows us that He had to learn through suffering. There was also therefore in Jesus a struggle between His spirit, His soul, and His body. (For more detail see my study Body, Soul and Spirit). As we are today, Jesus was confronted with choices. Throughout His life on Earth, satan had not ceased to find opportunity to afflict Him. But He never fell.

So now I can so totally identify myself with Him. He isn't a "super man" who had in Him a strength that allowed Him to suffer no temptation. Any model I would like to identify with must be accessible, be reachable. Otherwise I will live one frustration after another. Our Father is just and He loves us, that is why I must never think that I will never become like Jesus, the perfect model.

**John 14:12** *says: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.*

The relationship He had with His Father is possible to any other human being, but there will be choices and decisions to be made. Of course not everyone is called to remain single, not working, and live from cities to villages in order to proclaim the Gospel. But it is very important that each one is well aware, and with confidence, of the plans that God has for him or for her. The Holy Spirit is a great help for this. (For more details see my study on The Holy Spirit).

Whether you are a child, a teenager, or an adult, know that Jesus went through

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the path that you are going through at this moment, and he has gone through it successfully.

But let's go back for a moment to the days of Jesus' youth. The Bible does not give us many details with concerning these times. Simply that He was submitted to His parents and there was in Him a constant positive evolution.

**Luke 2:51-52** *Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*

This development had a dual effect: one spiritual and the other one human. His growth and His evolution were visible before God and before men. That is to say, His relationship with God increased and became stronger and stronger, more and more intimate. But this growth was also noticeable from a human point of view. Jesus did not leave the other people indifferent. His words, His attitudes, His actions showed that He had a strong and intimate relationship with God the Father.

The lesson that I learn from this is always make sure that my spiritual evolution bears fruit around me. I can't say that I pray two hours every day, that I have great moments in prayer, without having any fruit "in the physical realm" of this relationship.

Unfortunately, it happens sometimes that some Christians swell with pride because they spend some strong spiritual moments or boast saying: *"I pray two hours every day, I'm very spiritual!"* In this specific case, it is no longer a relationship with God, it is a relationship with themselves, selfish and self-centred relationship.

Don't say to yourself: *"Yes, he is right, some people act like that sometimes, but it doesn't concern me, I think I am humble enough not to fall into such a trap"*.

satan himself fell into this trap, and it is also in this same trap he tried to bring down Jesus: whether in the desert, or when Peter told Him that it was not compulsory for Him to go through the cross in **Mark 8:33**. *But Jesus, turning and looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter, and said: Get behind me, Satan! Because*

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*you do not understand the things of God, you're only interested in human thoughts.*

When the serpent came to talk to Eve, he didn't tell her: *"Come on Eve eat this fruit, God does not want you to but go ahead anyway!"* No, he made the thing more attractive by giving the impression that it was a good thing to eat this fruit. It is quite possible that the snake had several conversations with Eve about this, things have perhaps gone on for months before Eve succumbed.

He also appealed to the human ambition of Jesus when, in the desert he said: *"I offer you all these kingdoms if you will bow before me"*.

The trap is to make things appear much less significant than they are in reality: *"Look at this fruit, after all it is only a fruit, nothing important"*. Apparently yes, but this gesture has revolutionized the whole of humanity.

Jesus had this faculty of knowing what was important and what was less important. Why? Because He had this constant relationship with His Father through the Holy Spirit.

On several occasions in His teachings, Jesus did not hide the fact that He did nothing of Himself.

**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.*

In this verse Jesus says that He does only what He sees. To see something I must either be present or have some kind of connection that will allow me to see.

Often there can be a misunderstanding by some in reading the Gospels in believing Jesus was the only one to decide all His acts and words. But no, this verse and many others tell us that He was only doing what His Father told Him to do. He had a total submission to God His Father. This submission did not weigh on Him at all, on the contrary. Jesus understood the order of things. All He received that did not come from His Father, would not be of much use to Him in His mission on Earth.

It is an order of things that I have to perfectly assimilate and integrate into my life. Just like Jesus, I must have this relationship with my Father so that I do only

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what He wants me to do. Then you might say, easier said than done.

Yes, but that doesn't mean it's impossible. I sometimes make this remark to myself: *"How surprised or even a little "ashamed" I would be if I could see all the useless prayers I have made; how much time I have wasted, which I could have used in a much more effective way; all those prayers that were not in God's plans".*

I am aware that I may shock some people by writing this, but it is the truth. Ask yourself the question when someone asks you to pray for this or that situation: *"What is your plan Daddy for this situation? How do you see things?"*

The Holy Spirit and the Word are there to reveal to me the will of God. That is why Jesus had 100% success in His prayers; He prayed according to the will of His Father. And the will of God will be far better than any human decision in all situations.

If you deepen your relationship with the Holy Spirit, you will see that with a little bit of time you will need less and less time to know the will of God in a given situation, but also in your own life.

I often met Christians who wanted to have a powerful life with God... but without any action on their part. For some it is laziness, for others a poor understanding of the Scriptures saying: *"God gives us everything by grace, we have nothing to do".*

Understand that it is very easy to take verses from the Bible, get them out of context to support a human idea that I have conceived in my soul. Everything is about balance in the spiritual life.

I often say that the Christian life makes me think of a tightrope walker who walks on his rope. If he doesn't want to fall, he must keep a good balance. If he leans a little too much on the left or on the right, he will fall. The Bible is a whole thing, it forms a general idea which is the love of God toward humans. When I think receiving a thought from God, it has to fit with this general idea. Yes it is true, God gives us everything by grace, without us doing anything to deserve it. But it is also true that I have to put my life in conditions to enjoy what God has given me, thanks to the faith I have received.

If I want to receive God's will and His plan for my life, God has already given it to

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me in His grace. This is very good news for which I can rejoice. Hooray, I got it! Great, I have God's will for my life!

But let me tell you that you will not receive anything at all if you do not take the necessary time in praying and reading the Bible, for this plan to arrive in all its clarity in your spirit. Do you understand the balance of this situation?

Jesus received the instructions of His Father through prayer, but also because from His youth, He was reading the Scriptures. He knew the whole history of the people of God, the prophets, how God had acted throughout this history with His people. When He was in the desert, He quoted the Scriptures to the devil to prove to him that he was wrong. But also with the scribes, the Pharisees, He quoted the Scriptures to show them their unwholesome motives.

**Matthew 12:3-5** *But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?"*

There are still many other examples where Jesus used the scriptures in His Ministry. **Luke 4: 12** *And Jesus answered and said to him, "It has been said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"*

In all that God gives us there's a balance. If I do not respect this balance, I would get nothing. Not because God wants to punish me, not at all. No one can love you more than God loves you already. I will get nothing because by nature we are distant from God, away from His concepts. Yes today the contact has been restored through Jesus, but I have to put myself in a condition of active faith to get this contact open. Jesus made constant efforts to maintain this contact with His Father.

Jesus put all chances on His side to succeed in His mission. He chose the right priorities in His life. We might think that Jesus had been tempted only to the moment He was baptized and He went into the desert led by the Spirit.

**Hebrews 4:15** *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our*

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*weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

Since His youth, Jesus had to face all kinds of temptations: lying when He was little, rebel at His teenage time, not starting a family because it surely could not exercise fully His Ministry, etc... He did not hesitate to give up some things in His life. Jesus did not make these choices reluctantly, all on the contrary.

I think that we all as Christians have faced some choices, some renunciations. I am not saying that the Christian life must be a penance or a renunciation of all non-spiritual things. Here again there is always the same balance to be respected. As I said, we have all without exception made some choices that will influence our lives for good or for bad. And it is very important to be aware of the consequences of those choices.

I remember the day where the oldest of our boys had started his weekend with a birthday celebration on a Friday night. He came back home late at night and of course went to bed immediately. Then the next day he planned to get up early for a morning of fishing. He had just returned from his fishing trip and got ready to go to a youth meeting at our Church. But come Sunday afternoon, I remember telling him: "Did you have time to read and pray these days?" I already knew the answer. He told me: "No Dad, but don't worry, I think about it". He confessed to me some time after, that because of this kind of choice in his life, he felt it was much more difficult to know God's will in his life, more difficult also to catch up with the communion he had lost when this time lasted longer than a weekend.

But today I have to say that we are proud of him. Growing up and making the right choices, he began to see a little clearer what God's will was for him.

Let's look at a few miracles done by Jesus.

The wedding of Cana. It is the first of the miracles He did which the Bible talks about, but perhaps not the first that Jesus has done. Because when His mother Mary comes and tells Him that there is no more wine, I don't think that she expected Jesus to go and fetch wine with his Apostles from the corner shop.

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There is something in Mary's remark like: "Jesus, do something that you alone are capable of doing here." It is therefore possible that Mary has been already witnessed miracle on the part of her son Jesus.

**John 2:1-8** *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. 3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece. Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.*

It is clear that Jesus knew that He would be sacrificed to save humanity by saying "My hour has not yet come". He knew the totality of his mission: taking the sins of all mankind upon himself, so that every human being would see all his past, present, and future sins forgiven.

We can find some clues about the meaning of this miracle. There were six vases that were used for the purification of the Jews. Six, shows here the human being in all his limits. Jesus turned water, which was meant for purification, into wine. This wine symbolizes His blood, which today is the symbol of the gift He gave us so that our sins might be forgiven, and so that we might receive eternal life, spiritual authority, and receive all the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

**Mark 14:24** *And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.*

These vases could contain about three measures. Three, for the perfection of His act. Three for the action of the Trinity in our lives: without a relationship with God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, there will be no balanced development in our lives as Christians.

Let's look at **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?*

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We see in this verse all the perfection of Jesus' entire mission on earth. God today has given us absolutely everything He has, and if He has been able to do this, it is because the whole mission of Jesus has been perfect, without a hitch, without a fault. (For more details see my study: I Take and Use My Authority).

Remember when Jesus was taken down from the cross after His death. When a soldier thrust a spear into Jesus' side, water and blood flowed out. So now we find the water that was turned into wine at that wedding at Cana. We can now say that if this miracle was the first recorded in the Bible, it is because Jesus wanted to proclaim His marriage with the Church.

**Matthew 25:6** *“And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’*

Not a marriage to "any church, building or denomination". But with all those who agree to follow His teaching, all those who have understood this true good news, all those who have been born again.

He shows in this miracle that He is there to change our imperfect lives, ephemeral to make them eternal, like those six vases whose function was to purify, but with water it remained imperfect, unfulfilled. But with the power of the cross in my life, it is the open door to perfection and eternity.

A few weeks after the wedding at Cana, Jesus went to the temple for His first Passover feast since He began to proclaim the good news.

Here is another facet of the character of Jesus.

**John 2:15** *When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.*

It is obvious that in this example Jesus is angry.

"What!" Jesus gets angry? "

Yes, my brothers and sisters, Jesus has been angry several times in His Ministry on Earth. But then:

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**Romans 12:9** *Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good...*

Romans tells me to hate that which is evil, and I see that Jesus gets angry. Is there an injustice somewhere?

No, not at all.

Paul tells us in **Ephesians 4:26 (GNT)** *if you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day.*

So it is possible to get angry without sinning? Yes, because Paul says it clearly. So where is the solution?

Many of the attitudes in our lives as Christians are simply misapplied. And because they are misapplied, we think that these things do not come from God.

In fact, it's all in the manner, which this manner will only reflect the state of my soul when I'm angry. "If you are angry, do not sin". The problem is that many times when I feel anger rising within me, I gradually add sometimes hatred, contempt, pride or smugness to it, and all these things make anger become destructive, not constructive.

Anger is a feeling that comes from God, but often satan tries to add all these attributes to it. Our human nature takes them on very well too. If I renew my soul regularly I will put all the chances on my side not to sin when I am angry. (For more details see my study "Spirit, Soul and Body").

When Jesus experienced this anger, it was in the face of this attitude of sellers and buyers. It was not uncontrolled anger, sudden anger, no. John 2:15 tells us that Jesus made a whip. It takes some time to make a whip. You have to search for ropes and then braid them together. So Jesus had plenty of time to think about what he was doing. It was not an uncontrolled anger, but on the contrary a well thought-out and measured act.

The Jews were supposed to come to the temple once a year to celebrate Passover by bringing a sacrifice that would come from them, something they would truly have given with all the gratitude of their hearts to God for bringing them out of Egyptian slavery. But instead, it was just an opportunity for some to make a financial profit, and for others an easy purchase without really being

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grateful to God.

But Jesus did not stop there. He became angry in the temple during the first year of His ministry in Jerusalem, but also two years later during the last year of His ministry in the same place in Jerusalem ***Matt 21:13***.

He also wanted by these two actions, at the beginning and at the end of his ministry, to show that He is the one who came, who started the process to be the perfect sacrifice, that sacrifice that would be done once and for all, that would be acquired forever, and that one would never have to go back.

Jews came to the temple that day from all over the region to celebrate the end of slavery in Egypt. Jesus, for His part, came to bring out anyone who wished to come out of all forms of slavery.

Let us note an important point.

When He drove the merchants out of the temple, He told them in ***John 2:16***, "*Do not make my Father's house a house of merchandise!*" We notice that Jesus was in His house, the temple was His house, it was His dwelling place, for Jesus was in God and God was in Him (John 10:38). Moreover, He speaks of "His Father's house"; we are not talking about "our Father" here, but Jesus speaks of His house, of His temple. He was not arrested for that. If Jesus had broken the Law, the priests would not have hesitated to seize the opportunity to have Him arrested. But they did not.

Jews, merchants, money changers, or buyers came to this festival to celebrate the release from slavery, but on their way to the temple, to sell, buy, or change money, they would put themselves back under another slavery. It was the pinnacle of religiosity. The Jews came to celebrate the coming out of slavery, but in celebrating this feast they were putting themselves back under another slavery.

By this first action at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus proclaimed His arrival to also show that the stone temple would soon be no use anymore. Then on the last Easter before His crucifixion, Jesus returned to the temple.

Note that things had not changed; there was still trade in the temple. Obviously the Jews had not put the teaching into practice.

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Don't think that Jesus in both cases acted like an almost hysterical man, screaming in all ways and losing His temper.

As we have already said above, Jesus was angry without sinning.

Let's look at in **Mark 11:17** *Then He taught, saying to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.' "*

We often imagine Jesus shouting: "You have made my house a den of thieves!!!" But not at all, it did not happen like that, it is an important point to realize.

Mark 11:17 says that Jesus was teaching when He said this. It is not by shouting that people are taught, and Jesus knew it. At the same time He also healed the blind and the lame.

We also see that everyone was struck by His teaching, even the children in the temple were praising Jesus (Matt 21:15): we cannot say that the people in the temple were terrorized by Jesus' intervention.

In no way do I want to minimize the two interventions of Jesus in the temple. Yes, He made a whip to overturn the tables and drive out the animals. In those ancient times whipping was the punishment for a recognized fault (**Deut 25:2**). The Bible does not mention any protest or rebellion on the part of these Jews who were driven out. They were guilty.

So you may ask me, why using violence?

Of course, today there would be no question of such an act. First of all, because no one on earth could act as the Son who came to restore the temple in three days, and because the law in most Western countries does not permit it. And because, as we said earlier, Jesus is God.

He said in **John 14:11** *Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.*

The temple was Jesus' home, His property. It is a bit like when a landlord comes home after a long absence and finds people who have changed some of the rules of his house.

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But let's go a little deeper into this intervention of Jesus in the temple.

Far beyond the fact that the Jews had changed the rules by introducing dishonest commerce into the temple, this is not what motivated Jesus to do so. Contrary to what people might think, Jesus was not touched by seeing this to such an extent that He could not bear it, and had no choice but to kick everyone out.

This practice of the merchants did not date from the previous week, it was not new. Just think that Jesus, since His childhood, went to the temple at every Passover feast with His parents. Nowhere in the Bible does it mention that Jesus did anything to stop this practice. That doesn't mean He agreed. But for more than 22 years He said nothing, He did nothing. Yet every year He went to the temple for the feast.

So why did He act in the first year of His ministry, and also in the last year?

Since our world was created by God, it has been divided into several periods that follow one another.

Without going into details, when Adam and Eve were created, this was the period we will name:

- «The fullness with God ».

Then Adam and Eve disobeyed:

- "The fall".

Then the world is sinking into the sin up to forget about God:

- "Decadence".

Then God reveals Himself to Abram:

- "Rediscovery".

Then God gives the Law to Moses:

- "The Law".

We are not always aware of it, but when Jesus was born we were still under the Law. And this period of the Law lasted until the resurrection of Jesus. That's when

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the period of grace began.

This was a major change in our world. It wasn't really like the other periods that followed. This time, there was a need for a whole teaching to be able to enter fully into this period of grace. That's why it was like a time of overlap. This period of overlap lasted the entire time of Jesus' ministry.

And this is the true intention of Jesus who drove the merchants out of the temple: to mark this period of overlap and then to mark the beginning of the period of grace.

When in the first year of His ministry He drove all the merchants out of the temple and taught and healed the sick, it was to proclaim:

"Now the time of grace is coming, a period of overlapping is beginning".

With this first act in the temple, Jesus marked the beginning of the change of time in our world. If we were to put words to this first act, we could say, "The Messiah begins His teaching on earth. Soon there will be no more sacrifices, no more Laws to fulfill, no more Temple. »

We could also quote Isaiah's prophecies about the coming of the Messiah as:

***Isaiah 9:6*** *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

If Jesus had to talk about this act in the temple, He would have said: "Change has started, I begin my teaching, the grace period is nearby, be careful, listen!"

Then followed three years of teaching of Jesus.

Now we come to the last year of the Ministry of Jesus where for the 2nd time He drives out the merchants from the temple.

This time His act marks the end of the overlap period. And once again, if we were to put words on the act of Jesus, we might say: "Now this is the end of my teaching on Earth, I gave you all that you need. The grace period is at the door. Now no need of sacrifices anymore, no more need of temple."

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This is another facet of the personality of Jesus.

It is very important not to judge the facts too quickly. I can tell you that a majority of you reading this study, were sure that Jesus only came to do a bit of cleaning in the temple. In any case, it wasn't His goal.

All the words and deeds of Jesus were for the sole purpose of allowing the generation, and all those who would follow, to be able to enter this grace period so they could live it to the fullest.

It can happen that you may read a passage from the Bible, which apparently does not stick with that. In this case you will need to consider and read this passage again, because it means that you have not understood and misinterpreted it. (For more details see my study on "How to study the Bible").

The next day (**Matt 21:18**), after driving out the merchants for the 2nd time and teaching in the temple, Jesus walks past a fig tree.

**Mark 11: 12-14** *Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.*

Once again here we could have the impression that Jesus is acting in an annoyed and complacent way. You might think that Jesus is hungry, and because He finds nothing to eat on the tree, he cursed this tree.

At that time, when a fig tree had leaves, it also had figs. If the fig tree had leaves, figs were also to be on the tree. But clearly, this fig tree had leaves but no figs.

Jesus had to approach the tree to check that there were figs. But when he came close, He saw that there were no figs.

Here again, keep in mind that we are still in a context of teaching. Every

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circumstance for Jesus was subject to teaching. He knew that He would only have 3 years and a half to complete this task, not one more year. This fig tree, seen from afar must have been beautiful, tall and strong. From a distance, nothing distinguished it from other fig trees that would be full of fruit.

We can bring up at least two lessons from this word that Jesus has pronounced against this fig tree.

The first one is easy, since the next day, when Jesus and His disciples pass by the fig tree again, Peter notices that the tree is dead from the root.

**Mark 11:20-21** *Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. 21 And Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away."*

Then immediately Jesus teaches the Apostles on the power of the words associated with faith. It says in **Mark 11:22** *Jesus spoke, and said to them: have faith in God.*

This was an opportunity to show the Apostles that Jesus was the Incarnate Word of God. The same Word that has created the whole universe, this Word which, through His permanent effect, holds all the planets without them falling into nothingness. This Word which, when it is mixed with faith can accomplish everything without any limit. (For more details on this subject see my study "I take and I use my authority").

Now let's look at this passage as well in **Matthew 21:28-31** *"But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you.*

To put us in context, this episode takes place on the same day that Jesus cursed the fig tree. He goes to the temple and is taken to task by the Chief priests and the elders who ask Him: "Tell us, by what authority do you do these things, or who is the one who gave you this authority? "

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Jesus answers them with this parable of **Matthew 21:28**.

In other words, it is not enough to look like, it is not enough to be like... to be able to enter into the Kingdom of grace. It is exactly like the fig tree. He looked like but it was not. From a distance, we might have thought that it was bearing fruit, but it was not.

This is one of the most important foundations of the teaching of Jesus. If I had to choose only one, it would be this one. Because this foundation, once acquired and integrated into my life, will allow me to access all the other stages of the teaching of the Gospel.

If I pretend to be, it's like I'm nothing. If I pretend to have, it is as if I have nothing. And in both cases I will be treated as one who is not or as one who does not have.

So I think that many who read this study will say, "But that doesn't concern me."

Are you sure about that?

A little over 20 years ago, when I had been a Christian for a few years, I had a painful experience that showed me that I was not what I let it appear. When I say painful it is in the human, carnal sense. But this experience was a spiritual deliverance for me.

My first job was in a very large car dealership, I was a mechanic, long before I became a Christian. At that time my life was mixed with all kinds of more or less honest actions. I remember one night when I broke into the garage where I worked to steal equipment.

A few years later I met Jesus who had transformed my life. I had become a Christian. Everything was going well, I had since stopped all the dishonest actions in my life, it was something I had settled, I no longer thought about it. Several years later, I still had this material at home, and I used it from time to time, but it didn't bother me. Of course, there were a couple of times when I thought about how I got it, but I thought, "I'm not going to throw it away."

One day we were in a prayer meeting at church, and my pastor at that time gave a word of knowledge. More than 25 years later I remember it like it was yesterday. It said, "You have things in your house that don't belong to you. You must give them back."

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You all know that feeling when a word concerns you, but we pretend it's not for us. We try to persuade ourselves by all means that it is not for ourselves. That's what I did that day when I heard that word. But you all also know that feeling when we stop struggling because we have understood and we feel that the Holy Spirit is testifying to us again and again in our spirit. But often our soul refuses this thought of the Holy Spirit in our spirit. And then after a while the soul submits, and that's a good thing.

I understood that I was not the one I was showing. I looked like a good, honest Christian. But I wasn't. Like this fig tree, from a distance I looked good and beautiful, but if digging a little deeper I was just a former thief who had kept some of his loot.

I skip the details because it's not our subject, but of course I went to return all the material. The humiliation was strong, but the deliverance was even stronger. When I came out of the boss's office where I had confessed everything to him, returned everything and compensated, I felt a lightness, an enormous freedom. I was now like a fig tree bearing beautiful figs.

Jesus had that personality that made Him a teacher at all times. His mission was His whole life. His primary goal was to pass on this true good news to the Jews, so that later on they could pass it on to all mankind. This task was made all the harder by the fact that He had to show a perfect balance in His teaching, a perfect balance in the way He performed miracles.

Why?

Have you ever wondered why Jesus had to silence the demons who said that He was the son of God?

In **Luke 4:34-35** saying, *“Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!”* But Jesus rebuked him, saying, *“Be quiet, and come out of him!”* And when the demon had thrown him in their midst, it came out of him and did not hurt him.

Or why did He say, when He has just healed a leper in **Matthew 8:4** *And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one...”*

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Or again, when He has just restored the sight to two blinds persons to whom He recommends not to tell anyone?...

In **Matthew 9:30** *And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it."*

But also in **Matthew 16:20** *Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.*

And many other passages where Jesus recommends not to say anything. But why, will you tell me?

Jesus had a balance that He had to respect when teaching the good news throughout His ministry. We are not always aware of it, but that balance was paramount. If Jesus had not respected this balance the whole process of the cross could have been suppressed.

Jesus did not just repeatedly warn people not to say anything about some of His miracles or about certain situations He experienced with His apostles. Remember in Matthew 9:30, it is written that He severely told them not to say anything. If Jesus spoke severely, it was not an option not to say anything, but a real necessity.

This is yet another example of Jesus' personality. Understand this. Jesus came down from heaven to earth to fulfill this Law that no one before Him could accomplish, and thereby give every human being free access to eternal life with God.

But a whole process had to not only be put in place, but also be accomplished in its entirety.

It would have been very easy for Jesus to announce the good news, to perform all kinds of miracles and to say to everyone: "I am the Son of God, I have come to offer you eternal life. I am the Messiah."

What would have happened then?

Well, I can tell you that if Jesus had done this, no one would be saved today, no one would be a Christian. It is even likely that the name of Jesus Christ would have been forgotten.

In order for all this process we were talking about to happen in its entirety, the

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Son of God had to die on the cross. Well, I can tell you that if Jesus had not somehow "limited" the spread of His ministry, the Jews would have all recognized Him as the long-awaited Messiah. And those same Jews would never have accepted Jesus being crucified. They would never have agreed to kill their God by crucifying Him. They would never have accepted that the priests would hand Him over to the Romans to be judged. If all the Jewish people had experienced all these miracles, all these spiritual experiences through one another's stories, all these things would have made them realize that Jesus was really God, incarnated in a man.

The balance was as follows: Jesus had to announce, to teach, so that His teaching would continue after His death on the cross. As many people as possible should have understood the good news. But the limit was not to be exceeded under any circumstances, otherwise too many of the people would understand that He was the Messiah, and in this case no judgment, no condemnation, no crucifixion, no ultimate sacrifice once and for all. And then the devil would have won. Certainly the Messiah would have come, but he would have lived all his life as a revered king. And many would have ensured that no one would make an attempt on His life. This reaction would have been purely carnal on the part of the people. But if Jesus had let His teaching, His miracles, free rein, that is what would have happened. And that would have been the end of mankind.

***John 6:15*** *Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.*

Jesus couldn't even commit suicide to accomplish this universal sacrifice, because in this case there would have been no spiritual value.

Do you now understand what Jesus faced all His life on earth? It was a situation that He could not tell anyone about. It was something He had to live alone. Jesus was with His disciples every day during His ministry, but in many situations He was alone. And He overcame this loneliness, this lack of understanding of others about Him, with great success.

Even though He could say, seeing the moment of His sacrifice coming in ***Matthew***

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**26:38** *Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."*

At this moment, it is the soul of Jesus that is sad, it is His human part.

As we said earlier, one of Jesus' goals was that his ministry should not end a few years after His death. This ministry was to continue until His return when He came to pick up His Church. And for this the apostles had to be autonomous.

Autonomy is what allows me to act alone, without outside help. It is what allows me to feel confident. When I am autonomous in one area, I am at peace because I know that I will not have any problem in accomplishing anything in that area. It was very important that the apostles could be autonomous after Jesus' death.

You are going to tell me that the apostles were far from being autonomous when they were in the upper room waiting for the Holy Spirit of which they knew little at that time. But if I am writing all this to you today, it is because they have succeeded. If you have the opportunity to read the Word of God in the Bible, it means that they have succeeded, hallelujah.

And in order to help the apostles become autonomous, Jesus proceeded in several ways. We are going to look at one of them in a little more detail.

One day the apostles asked Jesus to increase their faith. **Luke 17:5** *And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."*

This was following a conversation Jesus had with the apostles, in which He explained that we should forgive our brother (or sister) as many times as necessary in a single day. This statement had the effect of something the apostles could not do. They thought: "We will never do it on our own". And they were right about that. That is why they asked Jesus to increase their faith.

Have you ever asked God to increase your faith? If you have, has God increased your faith?

Well I doubt very much that God has answered this kind of prayer. Forgive me if I shock you, but the reality is that God does not answer this kind of prayer.

Let's take a look together.

Did Jesus answer them: "Very well, my brothers, so you want more faith? Then sit here and I will pray for you so that you may receive more faith. Or did Jesus answer them: "That's very good what you're asking me here, you've understood that you need more faith to be able to forgive as many times as necessary in a day".

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No, Jesus didn't say any of that, He didn't even allude to it.

But why?

Quite simply because my faith cannot be increased under any circumstances. What do you mean, my faith cannot be increased?!

That's right, your faith cannot be increased.

The solution lies in Jesus' answer to the apostles. **Luke 17:6** *So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.*

For years I have found the words of Luke 17:6 quite harsh. I said to myself: but it comes from a good intention. The apostles ask Jesus for more faith, they want to improve. So it is not very encouraging for Jesus to answer in this way.

But today, thanks to the Holy Spirit who teaches me, I have understood these words. It is not harsh, it is just the opposite. These are very encouraging words from Jesus.

Let us look at **Romans 12:3**, it is the end of the verse which concerns us here.

**Romans 12:3** ... *as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

At that time a measure was frequently used for traders on the markets. For an oil seller, for example, the measure was a container that was used to give the same volume of oil for a given amount of money. This was to ensure that neither the trader nor the buyer was disadvantaged. With the measure, everyone who made a purchase was sure to have the same volume.

In Romans 12:3 it is the same thing. There is no mention of several measures, or different volumes of measures. No, it is the same measure. God used the same measure to give faith to each of His children. We ALL received the same measure of faith. And that is why I cannot increase my faith, and why God cannot increase my faith, because I have already received the whole measure.

Now we understand why Jesus did not answer the apostles: "Yes my brothers, I will pray to increase your faith".

But before you think about **Luke 22:32** and ask "But then it is all very well to have the same measure of faith, but why did Jesus say to Peter: *"But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me,*

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*strengthen your brethren.”*

We have indeed all received the same dose of faith. But that doesn't mean that we all use the dose we have received.

Suppose I have a 10-litre container of oil in my kitchen at home. I may be facing several situations.

When I am preparing a meal and I need oil, I will go and take some from my container. But if I don't know how much oil is left in it, I'll take just enough, and even less to save money. Or I could also be sure that there is only the equivalent of a glass of oil left in that 10-litre container, and then I will stupidly deprive myself of the oil I need. I could also forget that I have this 10-litre container in my cupboard, and cook without the oil I need for my meal.

In other words, Jesus said in Luke 17:6. If you used even a millimetre of the measure of faith you already have within you, you could perform miracles that would be out of proportion to your need. Of course there is no great benefit in uprooting a tree and throwing it into the sea, or telling a mountain to throw itself into the sea. These images are there to make us understand that we all have the same potential of faith inside, but not everyone knows it, and not everyone activates it by making this word of Roman 12:3 a certainty in his mind.

I have very good news for you today. You have received the same measure of faith as Peter, John, James, Paul and Jesus Himself. This potential is already in you, all you have to do is activate it. (For more details see my study *Faith, the compulsory link*).

Let's go back to Jesus who wanted the apostles to become autonomous.

Now these apostles knew that they did not need to increase their faith because they had already received the maximum.

Some times before this, Jesus was with a crowd following him. He had taught this crowd all day long. Then He decided to cross the sea to go to the other shore.

**Mark 4:35** *On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side.”*

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This lake, which Jesus and the apostles were about to cross, was about 13 km wide. It was dark, and everyone set out to cross the lake of Gennesaret. This lake is situated about 200 m below sea level and it is famous for its storms due to rapid temperature changes. Large storms and whirlwinds form regularly. In the days of Jesus this phenomenon was already active. Some of the apostles must have already been affected by this phenomenon due to their work as fishermen.

So here is Jesus and the apostles on their way across the lake. But after a while the storm is rising. And the apostles begin to struggle with the waves and the wind. Until they got to the point where they thought they were going to lose their lives.

**Mark 4:37-38** *And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. <sup>38</sup> But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"*

Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat. Do you think Jesus didn't know that the storm was there? Do you think that the boat was not shaken strongly? I am not saying that He was pretending to be asleep, not at all.

I am simply saying that Jesus was not unaware that the boat was shaken, and that, even half-asleep, He knew that the sea was not calm. Yet He did not get up. He did not say: "My brothers, I see that you are not making it, let me help you by ordering the wind to calm down".

No, Jesus did not say any of that.

He let His apostles use the measure of faith they had received. But our brother apostles were still in the midst of their master's training and panic began to win them over. I don't blame the apostles, because at the beginning of my Christian life (as they were) I would probably have done the same thing. And Jesus didn't blame them in any way.

**Mark 4:38-40** *But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How*

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*is it that you have no faith?"*

So they woke up Jesus who was sleeping. They all panicked and said to Him something like: "Can't you see that we are dying? "

And Jesus replied: "But remember that you have received the faith that God has given you, you are able to manage on your own. The faith that is in you gives you the power of authority over the elements".

But as we said earlier, Jesus did not reproach them, but rather encouraged them. When Jesus says in Mark 4:40, "How is it that you have no faith?". This meant: "This storm is at your reach, you have all the faith you need to command it to calm down, it is at your reach". "Look, I'll show you".

**Mark 4:39** *Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.*

It was their first lesson in autonomy.

When they arrived on the other side, Jesus prepared them to continue to grow in this autonomy. Without going into too much detail, Jesus prepared them to cast out demons.

**Mark 5:1-2** *Then they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes. And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,...*

You can read all the details by continuing Mark 5.

He was preparing them because in a few days he would send them to spread the good news, heal the sick, cast out demons, and set people free.

For this we get to **Mark 5:22-23** *And behold, one of the rulers of the synagogue came, Jairus by name. And when he saw Him, he fell at His feet and begged Him earnestly, saying, "My little daughter lies at the point of death. Come and lay Your hands on her, that she may be healed, and she will live."*

Then if you continue on after **Mark 5:23** you find the healing of a woman. Then in the same period of time in **Matthew 9:27** we find the healing of a leper and two blind people.

Also in the same days the apostles witnessed that people' unbelief can be a barrier to healing and miracles. We find this in **Matthew 13: 54-58**, when Jesus

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was not able to perform many miracles because He was with the people who had known Him since childhood.

Now was about to begin the putting into practice of these past few days.

**Mark 6:7-12** *And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. <sup>8</sup> He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in their money belts— <sup>9</sup> but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics. <sup>10</sup> Also He said to them, “In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. <sup>11</sup> And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!” <sup>12</sup> So they went out and preached that people should repent.*

Now the apostles had all the necessary tools to go out and announce repentance. The previous few days had been rich in training for them. They had seen how to cast out demons, how to heal the sick from various diseases, but also that they could be confronted with the unbelief of the people which would strongly prevent miracles. I am not saying that all unbelief blocks miracles, fortunately it does not. I am simply saying that when facing unbelief, things are much more difficult, but not impossible. And we can say that these days and months of formation were well used by the apostles, because on their return they were all exited, even astonished to have sometimes been able to accomplish everything they did.

Then, always with the aim of autonomy, we arrived a few weeks later.

**Mark 6:30-31** *Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. <sup>31</sup> And He said to them, “Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.” For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.*

Autonomy doesn't mean rushing into things without thinking, it is important to know your limits. When Jesus told His disciples to rest, it was in a spirit of wisdom. It's easy to get into activities without thinking, but you can easily get to a point where you are forced to stop that time. It is very important to know your limits so that you can stop when you need to.

This is another facet of Jesus' personality that is very important.

A little later, Jesus has just retired by himself, then He is moved by a crowd that comes to Him to listen to His teaching and be healed. It was the end of the day,

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night was beginning to fall, and the crowd was still there. Jesus still healed many sick people, taught repentance.

**Luke 9:12-13** *When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country, and lodge and get provisions; for we are in a deserted place here." <sup>13</sup> But He said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless we go and buy food for all these people."*

And the lesson on autonomy continues.

The reflex of the apostles is unfortunately still there, at least in part. Yet they have just spent several days without Jesus, casting out demons, announcing the good news, healing the sick. But the carnal side appears again. "Master, send them away so that they can find food for themselves".

Once again, Jesus does not reproach them in any way.

But the formation continues. "Give them something to eat yourselves".

How many times have I prayed to God or Jesus to do the work for me! I did it out of ignorance. And I must say that the answer was very rare. Today I have understood that there are things that are up to me. There are things for which it is not worth asking God for.

Why?

Because it is up to me to do it, because God has given me everything I need to do it, because God has given me all the authority I need to do it. How did Jesus manage to give food to all this crowd? He performed a miracle. The multiplication of food.

Do you think that when Jesus said to these apostles, "Give them something to eat yourselves", He meant: Go to the local shops and ask them if they would give food to all this crowd? Of course not, Jesus did not mean that. Jesus said in His words: "You have the potential to give them food. You have all the faith to multiply a little food and give it to those thousands who are hungry". But once again the apostles had not understood what Jesus wanted them to realise.

**Mark 6:52** *For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.*

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Not having learned a lesson does not necessarily mean that you are not making progress. And Jesus knew this, which is why he didn't reproach them. On the contrary, He remained calm and always encouraging. This does not imply that Jesus would do all the work for them, not at all.

Let's look at the rest of this adventure, Jesus does not give up until the lesson is learned. Today for us Christians, Jesus is not with us here on earth as He was with His disciples. I have often in the past thought that I would have liked to have lived in Jesus' time. To be with Him, to ask all the questions I wanted to ask. But it was until I understood that we have much better than Jesus in flesh and blood with us: the Holy Spirit, our best friend.

Many Christians think that He is the one who comes to comfort me when I am sad or going through an ordeal. Jesus said of Him in **John 14:26** *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

That day Jesus called Him the Comforter because He was speaking to Jewish people under Roman rule, people who had been subjected to the Romans. Jesus meant that the Holy Spirit could console them from this domination, but in no way limiting the action of the Holy Spirit has any consolation for us Christians today.

He will teach you all things. All things are "all things". Not only biblical things, not only the teaching of Jesus. But absolutely everything you need to know, to learn, to know how to do, in your work, in your studies. My three children know that the Holy Spirit is there to help them remember what they have already revised in their exams, in the tests at school. They know that He is the one who will help them understand in class or at university when the teacher's explanation is difficult to assimilate.

In the continuation of His lesson on autonomy, Jesus asks the apostles to return now to the other side where they had come from a few weeks before. If I were in the place of the apostles, I think I would have remembered the storm not so long ago. And I thought I wouldn't have been too keen to go back.

**Matthew 14:22** *Immediately Jesus made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away.*

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Jesus had to force them into the boat. They didn't feel like it. It is as if Jesus said: "Gentlemen, a few weeks ago we saw authority mixed with faith, but you didn't understand then. So this time you are going to go on your own. Don't worry, you have everything you need. I will keep an eye on you.

**Mark 6:47** *Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land.*

It was about 6pm when they boarded the boat to go to the other side, 13 kms away. I say about 6pm because the boat was already in the middle of the lake and it was getting dark. We can therefore conclude that the disciples left before dark, in the late evening.

**Mark 6:48** *Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.*

The apostles had to face a headwind. I am not an expert in this field but it seems to me that in this case it is very difficult to navigate against the wind. In any case they had chosen to row because it was surely the best thing rather than hoisting the sail if they had one. The fourth watch of the night was at least 3am. Imagine these apostles, some of them sailors, rowing for long hours. We saw that they left before nightfall. We will say without taking any risks that they had been at sea for at least 7 hours.

7 hours rowing, tired, with the memory of the last crossing. Yet this time we can easily notice the evolution in their attitude. There is no sign of panic, no anger, but our brothers are rowing, and have been rowing for hours. Then Jesus saw them from the hill where he had stayed to pray. It was almost dawn, Jesus had spent a good part of the night praying. We will come back to this fact a little later. Jesus knew from the start that He would cross the lake by walking on the water. He had planned to go on foot, because when He reached the level of the boat, it is written "that He wanted to pass them by", or like the Amplified Bible say: "And He acted as if He meant to pass by them".

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**Mark 6:48 (AMPC)** *And having seen that they were troubled and tormented in [their] rowing, for the wind was against them, about the fourth watch of the night [between 3:00-6:00 a.m.] He came to them, walking [directly] on the sea. And He acted as if He meant to pass by them.*

So Jesus did not come to get into the boat with the others. He had planned to cross on foot. It was a normal phenomenon for Him. And He didn't reach the boat and say: "Look, I'm walking on the water", as if He wanted to show that He was the strongest, the one who did things that no one else could do. No, He didn't. Walking on water was "almost" normal for Jesus.

When Peter said to Him in other words: "Master, I want to do as you do, I want to reach your level, I want to bear the same fruits as you do". Jesus didn't answer him: "No, no Peter, don't even try to get out of the boat, because there you are dealing with something too serious for you".

This is another trait of Jesus' personality. We had already seen that He was always encouraging His apostles, but not only that, He never made anyone feel any superiority in His teaching, His aim was that His disciples should arrive at the same point as Him.

Unfortunately, it happens that some teachers today keep people at a lower level of knowledge than they do. They don't give their methods of study, they don't always address the deep points of their teaching. Often it is because they are afraid that people will go further because it is a way for them to maintain their position as teacher leaders.

Jesus was not like that. He knew that He only had a bit more than 3 years to form a team that could, after His death on the cross, continue to spread the true good news. And in all His teaching we can feel that He constantly pushes His disciples to surpass themselves, to always improve because there is so much more to discover. And the same goes for you, whatever your spiritual level is.

A brother with whom I study regularly told me one day: "What I love most about God is knowing that I will never reach the end, that I will always have something to learn no matter what spiritual level I reach". I find this thought very true and very strong at the same time.

**Matthew 14:26-28** *And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were*

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*troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."*

What a beautiful reaction from Jesus. "Do not be afraid!". This is another wonderful example of protection and benevolence on the part of Jesus. And our brother Peter understood and integrated Jesus' words perfectly. He took them for himself. He was the only one to show this boldness. All the others contented themselves with calming their fears with the words of Jesus. But Peter went further, because he understood that Jesus was proposing to them to go beyond. He remembered the whole lesson of autonomy that Jesus had started a few weeks earlier: the first crossing, going out to announce the good news, the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, then this second crossing. Of course he had not assimilated everything at 100%, and that was not the goal. The main thing is to move forward, to have a constant progression.

Peter surely remembered these words of Jesus when he was in practically the same situation a few weeks earlier. There was the same kind of storm, the same boat, and Jesus said to them, "Where is your faith? ». Or in other words: "Try to surpass yourself, make an effort to believe and put into practice everything I have been teaching you since the first day". Peter understood that this was the perfect opportunity for him to go one step beyond.

***Matthew 14:28-29*** *And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." <sup>29</sup> So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.*

I have often heard about Peter walking on water in a way that he was a little weak, or as someone who did not have enough faith.

Have you ever walked on water?

Well, neither have I!

Peter is often seen as one who often misses what he tries. But why is that? Have you ever asked yourself this question?

Think for a moment.

Pierre, it's true, had a strong temperament. Always the first in many things, but

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also sometimes the last, you might say. For example when he started to sink in the water, or when the rooster crowed three times (for more details on this see my study named "*The repentance*"). But as they say, he who does nothing is sure not to make a mistake.

Peter was a go-getter, and like any go-getter, at the beginning, when he was in training, he stumbled a few times.

Can we say for all that that his attempts were failures?

Absolutely not. Quite the contrary.

Peter was able to walk on water because of his faith, and because he understood that he could take the words of Jesus - which is no less than THE word of God - and see them activate in his own life. (For more details on this subject see my study named "And I see it come to pass").

We always have the choice of taking out the positive or the negative from a situation. Personally, I don't find there is any negative in Peter's action, but it is a great encouragement for me to activate all the faith I have received.

We can now be sure that one of Jesus' objectives was to make His apostles autonomous. He spent a lot of time and energy on it. It was a very important point for Him, and even essential.

Why essential?

The apostles understood quite late that Jesus would not be with them for the rest of their lives, despite the fact that Jesus told them so several times. The apostles therefore did not have this understanding of the need to grow up independently. But Jesus did. He knew that if His apostles did not grow in this sense, after His death on the cross, they would be an easy prey for Satan and his demons to quickly extinguish the good news.

For us Christians today, autonomy is also essential. And unfortunately many Christians do not possess it. They are far too dependent on their brothers or sisters, or even on their leaders. Be careful not to confuse being autonomous with being isolated and wanting to do everything alone. There is a balance between the two.

On the one hand we need each other, and on the other hand we need to know how to manage things on our own with the Holy Spirit when a circumstance

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obliges us to do so. This is very important.

If I am still dependent on my brother, my sister, my pastor, etc... satan will quickly find the loophole to bring me down. It will even be very easy for him, all he will have to do is isolate me from the people I am dependent on. And then, as I will be lost, without anyone to come to my rescue, without anyone to be there to advise me what to do, I will really be an easy prey that the devil will not hesitate for a single moment to put down.

Don't live on the faith of someone else, because that someone else also has weak points, whoever they are. And if that person stumbles or falls, you will stumble or fall with them.

As I said earlier, I am not advocating isolation under any circumstances. We need fellowship, as the Bible teaches. But in this communion we must all be well aware that each one of us has to evolve continuously.

Some time ago I was sharing this teaching with a Christian friend of mine. And she said to me: *“But what do you do with James 5:14 ‘Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord’?”*

Yes of course, if we form a body, it is to help one another, but in no way to make assistance of comfort. I mean to do something in place of my brother or sister, when it is up to him or her to do that thing. And I understand that it is easy to fall into a misunderstanding of James 5:14. But if we take the time to look for the context, here is the situation in the case of James 5:14.

It was about 45 years after the death of Jesus. The Church of Jesus Christ has been under persecution for at least 10 years if we consider that in 35 AD (**Acts 8:1**) *Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.*

James is speaking here to the Christian Jews who were dispersed away from Jerusalem as a result of what happened in Acts 8:1. These Jews who suffered persecution are therefore in great moral distress, overwhelmed by the persecutions, some of them even lost their lives like Stephen. And there, James exhorts them so that they may regain the mental strength to continue the fight

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of the Christian life.

The Greek word in James 5:14 translated as "sick" is not necessarily a physical illness. This word is used 18 times in the NT to refer to a physical illness, but it is also used 14 times in the NT to refer to a moral illness, spiritual fatigue, a suffering of life. This is what we could call today a depressive condition.

These Christians were therefore not in a strong enough condition to overcome this hardship. And it was again in a vision of full autonomy that James said to them: "My brothers and sisters, I understand that your situation is difficult because of the persecutions you are experiencing. I understand that you find it difficult to pray, that you find it difficult to activate all the faith you have received. But above all don't remain in this condition, you have lost part of your autonomy and you are vulnerable before the devil. In your case, you need stronger brothers to help you to regain your mental strength, your autonomy. So call the elders of the church to help you by praying for you, so that you can regain your strong and powerful position in Jesus Christ.

Here is a passage from James that is often misunderstood and therefore misapplied. This passage shows us once again how important it is to remain autonomous, in order for my team with the Holy Spirit to be effective.

I think that it is now clear to you that I do not teach an isolated Christian life without fellowship. On the contrary, a powerful life for each one of us, which can include times when we need each other to help each other.

Assisting my brother or sister excessively is not helping him or her, on the contrary, it is holding him or her down in his or her weakness. And Jesus knew this, He applied this rule for his apostles. He constantly pushed them to surpass themselves, to use the potential they had received. Remember **Matthew 14:16** *But Jesus said to them, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."*

Many times, as we said above, Jesus used miracles to proclaim, to help people understand, to declare. Here is another example that will help us to better understand His personality.

We are about a year before the crucifixion of Jesus. He was with His disciples walking with them to reach the village of Bethany, a little more than 20 km from Jerusalem.

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**Luke 10:38** *Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.*

There He met a woman named Martha who invited Him to come to her house where she lived with her sister Mary. We do not know if their brother Lazarus lived with them, but we can assume so. We can easily suppose that Jesus taught them while they were all in the house, but also that Jesus befriended Martha, Mary and Lazarus. We have this confirmation in **John 11:5** *Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.*

It would be hard to imagine that Jesus could love this family without first getting to know them, without spending time talking to them all together.

It is about 2 to 3 months after Jesus met Martha, Mary and Lazarus that we come to the passage in John 11 where Lazarus became ill. John's gospel is the only one that tells us about the illness and resurrection of Lazarus.

**John 11:1-7** *Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup>It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. <sup>3</sup>Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." <sup>4</sup>When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." <sup>5</sup>Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup>So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. <sup>7</sup>Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."*

Several things may be of interest to us in the above verses.

First of all, we are reassured when we read that Jesus says that Lazarus will not die: "*This sickness is not unto death*". Then He goes on to say that Lazarus became sick so that this sickness might show the glorious power of God, but also so that it might serve to manifest the glory of the Son of God.

Things seem to get more complicated when we now read that Jesus does not run to Bethany to heal His friend Lazarus. On the contrary, he remains where he is for two more days.

Why is He doing this?

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Verse 7 tells us that not far from Bethany people are trying to kill Jesus. We might think that He could have been afraid to go to Bethany. After all Jesus had already stayed in one place to avoid being killed. We could also think that Jesus thought about it and that after two days He changed His mind and went to Bethany.

Not at all.

For verses 9 and 10 tell us just the opposite. When Jesus decided that it was time to leave, His disciples told Him that it was not wise to go because it was too dangerous for Him, but also for them. And Jesus answers them with **verses 9 and 10** saying: *“Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”*

By understanding what Jesus says in these two verses, we are assured that He fears no one, that He is not afraid of those who are after His life. But with this answer Jesus wants to make it clear to His disciples that they should not fear for their lives either, because fear would cause them to act in a wrong way.

In these verses the light represents God, His kingdom on earth. And just as there is a time of light and a time of night in a day, so there is always a choice to follow what God tells us in His word, or to follow what my flesh (my body and soul) tells me, or what an evil spirit may suggest me. And here, Jesus says to His disciples: "Beware, do not be mistaken. Don't let your soul or your body dominate you, as they generate fear in this circumstance. You will always have the choice to follow My teaching, or to follow what your flesh tells you. Choose the light so that you do not stumble. »

These two verses are a good teaching for us Christians as well. In every circumstance of our lives, we always have the choice to follow the teaching of the good news or not, even though sometimes this teaching might not seem like a wise decision at human sight. Making the choice of light will always be positive for us, because we will not fall. Even if this path seems difficult or impossible, making this choice is by far the best thing for me.

Jesus did not dwell on this subject because there was no need to talk about it for hours. The fact was, the disciples should not give in to panic.

Not everyone understood this, because we read in **verse 16**: *“Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”* He was resigned.

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The Bible does not tell us if after the resurrection of Lazarus, Thomas understood the lesson. But in other passages it speaks of Thomas who still had doubts, especially after Jesus resurrected. He was distrustful, he needed his body to confirm things with his eyes.

So don't be like Thomas. Not that he was a bad person, not at all, because he was an apostle and a disciple of Jesus. But I am sure that Thomas would have saved a lot of time and therefore would have gone further in activating the faith he had received, if he had allowed his soul to submit to his spirit so that all his faith could take place in him.

We have now understood that Jesus left for Bethany 2 days after he was told of Lazarus' illness.

Can we say that Jesus willingly let Lazarus die in order to raise him up?

Yes, I think it can be said that. We could consider Jesus' attitude very harsh. He let His friend die, and on top of that He asked His disciples to follow Him at the risk of their lives. But this is not the case. Every opportunity was good for Jesus so that His disciples could move forward in their spiritual lives.

Let us note an important fact. Jesus does not just say, "Follow me, we are going, and do not panic". But He says in **verse 11**: *These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."*

But again the disciples do not understand. They thought that Lazarus is sleeping to rest from his illness and that he will be healed. It is as if they were saying, "Is it really worth going? If he sleeps he will be healed. »

It was a word of encouragement from Jesus. "Lazarus is dead, but don't worry, I'm going to raise him up. And I am glad that I was not near him so that you can see with your eyes what you are about to see, and understand what I am going to proclaim by this miracle".

So they all set off for Bethany, it was about 1 or 2 days' walk.

When they arrived in sight of Lazarus' house, he had already been dead for 4 days. It is important to see the scene clearly. Many people from Jerusalem had come to Martha and Mary to support them because of Lazarus' death. So we are in a house full of people, maybe 30, 40 or 50 people. The mourning period lasted 30 days. It also seems that this family was quite wealthy and influential, because

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of the Jews who came from Jerusalem, but also because of the expensive perfume that Mary anointed Jesus with in John 12:3.

Then Martha learns that Jesus has almost arrived, she goes to meet Him outside the village of Bethany. This is a wonderful demonstration of faith on the part of Martha. Of course she asks Jesus why He was not there earlier, which is quite normal; in the same way that we could have asked a person who we have been expected for at least 4 days. But Martha is sure that Jesus could not only have healed her brother Lazarus if He had arrived before his death, but could also have resurrected him even after 4 days. There is no doubt in Martha's mind that Jesus is all-powerful, no matter what obstacle is in front of Him.

***John 11:22*** *But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.*

***John 11:24*** *Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."*

***John 11:27*** *She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."*

Martha has the assurance that Jesus is the Messiah, that He is the Son of Almighty God, that He is the one who will give eternal life to the one who believes.

This is not written in the text, but reading verse 28 we can see that Jesus must have spoken with Martha about Mary. Jesus also wanted to tell Mary that her brother would rise from the dead, and maybe some other things.

***John 11:28-29*** *And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him.*

Through this miracle, by raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus will proclaim that He is the one who came to give eternal life to all those who have died spiritually, that He is the one and only one who will voluntarily give His life so that all those who believe in Him may have eternal life. But not only that, we will see it later.

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Many wonder why Jesus wept when He arrived at the tomb of Lazarus in verse 35. The text tells us that the Jews present thought it was because He loved Lazarus. Of course these Jews had no idea that a few minutes later Lazarus would be resurrected by Jesus. We know that this is not the reason for Jesus' tears.

First of all, it is important to understand the word "wept". The Greek word used suggests tears flowing silently over the face. Jesus did not burst into tears. He did not cry in a way that would attract attention or sympathy. Tears simply flowed silently over Jesus' face without a sound.

Now that this point has been clarified, we can move forward in our thinking. I have heard several versions about "Jesus' tears". Some explain that they are due to the fact that Jesus wept because of a lack of faith on the part of Mary or Martha. This version cannot be accepted and we will see why.

We have said above that Jesus brought about this miracle by letting Lazarus die. But also that through this resurrection He proclaims that He is the Christ, the Son of God who gives life.

Jesus knew that in a short time He would voluntarily offer His life so that this proclamation could be fulfilled. But He also knew that although all humans will potentially have received eternal life through His sacrifice, not all will accept it, not all will integrate it into their lives. And these people will remain dead for all eternity.

Not all the Jews present that day had understood this. This thought was beginning to grow in Jesus' mind. He saw these Jews in ignorance of the Messiah before their eyes because of sin and religiosity. Seeing all these people in front of and around Him, Jesus was filled with compassion, and at the same time with sadness because He knew that despite the gift of His life, not all people would benefit from it.

He had said this from the beginning. This sickness is to glorify the Son, this sickness will serve to proclaim and make people understand through his story, that the Son of God came to earth and that it is through Him alone that anyone will have access to life for eternity.

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**John 11:39-43** *Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying.[a] And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"*

Here we see Martha having a reaction that could contradict her words with Jesus a few moments earlier.

There is a difference between saying something and putting it into practice. Martha had apparently not understood that Lazarus would come back to life at that moment and in that way when she said to Jesus: "He already smells, because he has been here for four days". Martha had understood that Jesus could bring her brother Lazarus back to life, she was sure of it. But she hadn't fully integrated this notion in her.

Can it be said that she lacked faith for all that? No, I don't think so.

She had the faith to believe it, but faced with the situation, she let her soul (her intelligence) take over her mind on this matter. She let herself be led by circumstances. But she didn't stop Jesus in any way from having that stone removed. We can think that Martha had this thought for only a few seconds.

Why?

Simply because Jesus reminded her of what He had said to her earlier. And Martha made this word of Jesus her own. She took it and let it take root in her, and an assurance, an unshakeable hope followed.

How many Christians today are sure that God can act in their lives for such and such a situation?

Practically all of them, you will tell me, and you will be right.

But how many of these Christians would be sure that God would act, now, for this same situation? I think we can take away two thirds of them.

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Many people are sure that God can act in their lives, but when you ask these same people: "Are you sure that God will act now?" that's another thing.

It is something I practice regularly to allow myself to be transformed by God's word. We all have areas of our lives where we need to let God's word take root in us (for more on this see my study on the power of the word called "And I see it come to pass").

This is now becoming very clear thanks to verse 42.

**John 11:42** *And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."*

There is no longer any doubt about Jesus' intentions regarding this miracle. Jesus could, on His own authority, have ordered Lazarus to come out alive. But He proclaimed before everyone that God is His Father that He is the Son, the Messiah who is capable of giving life, so that everyone would remember it, so that when the text of this story would be written by our brother John, everyone would then be able to understand that Jesus alone can give life.

Let us remember, as I said earlier, "To give eternal life, but not only". We are going to see this now.

**John 11:43-44** *Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."*

Lazarus came out alive, resurrected, but still wrapped in strips, and with his face wrapped in a cloth. He was not supposed to see much, nor to be free of all his movements. And this is another thing that Jesus underlines when He says: "Loose him, and let him go".

I often talk to people who have been born again, but who are still as if surrounded by bands. For some, they have been Christians for 5, 10 or even more than 20 years, but they have been fighting the same battles all this time. I certainly don't condemn them, on the contrary I would like to encourage them, thanks to the words of Jesus quoted above.

When we are born again, we pass from spiritual death to eternal life. But the

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process does not stop there. Each one of us can say that, when he (or she) is born again, all their struggles, all their defaults, did not vanish immediately. (For more details on this subject, see my study "The new birth"). I mean that when we access the resurrection with Jesus Christ, this resurrection brings us into a process. We are like Lazarus, alive and well, but still wrapped up with bandages that prevent us from fully living the good news we have received.

Stop for a moment. Think about it.

Are there bandages in your life that prevent you from being truly free?

What I would like to say is that if you have had the same struggles, the same misunderstandings for so many years, there is better than that for you. Jesus, when He said, "*Loose him and let him go*", commanded that each one of us be free in this new life.

So it can be free from pride, alcohol, anger, shyness, instability, attraction to the opposite sex, an inferiority or superiority complex, tobacco, and many other things that block us towards the freedom of the good news of Jesus Christ.

Don't feel condemned by my words, that is not my intention at all. I would simply like you to understand that since the day of your new birth you have entered into this process of liberation. No matter how long it takes, the important thing is that the process does not stop.

This is what I often say to my three children, no matter how long it takes us to understand, and to put into practice the teaching of the good news, the essential thing is to always move forward, to never stop the progression.

What is not normal is to stop this process of sanctification. What I was pointing out above, when I said that I sometimes meet Christians who have been fighting the same battles for so many years, is that these people have stopped this process. They have stopped removing their bandages, they have stopped the transforming action of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Again, I do not condemn them. If this is your case, I don't condemn you, but I want to tell you: "Resume this process that you have stopped. Keep removing those bandages around you, nothing happens effortlessly". A team between the Holy Spirit and you will help you to go through this process.

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I can tell you that 100% of our struggles come from a lack of knowledge. You can turn the problem in any direction, the cause will always be a lack of knowledge of the Word of God.

Do you ever wonder why Jesus was so brilliant in His ministry on earth? It was because He had a knowledge of the Word and a knowledge of the spiritual world that gave Him a full knowledge of His father. At the age of 12 he was already full of knowledge, so much so that it could astonish the doctors of the Law. I encourage you to grow in the knowledge of the Word of God by meditating on it regularly, it is one of the keys to all your problems and aspirations.

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

He teaches us everything, what is spiritual and even what is not. He teaches us how to understand and apply the Word of God, but also in our work, in our studies, at school... All things.

Now we understand a little better why Jesus let Lazarus die, waiting two days before leaving for Bethany. We better understand why Jesus said *"This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."*

Let us remember that Jesus always used encouragement, whether it was towards Martha, Mary, or His apostles who were afraid. Today He has not changed. The only thing that has changed is that Jesus is now in heaven, at the right hand of His Father. He is no longer on earth with us. But we have far better than Jesus in the flesh. We have His Spirit who is Holy in us, and beside us, ready to teach us everything so that we can get rid of those bandages that imprison us.

About 2 months after raising Lazarus from the dead, we are less than a week before the feast of Passover, so there are exactly 6 days left before Jesus is crucified. All the apostles had not yet really realised that Jesus would be handed over and crucified. Jesus knew all this, He knew that the time was near, when He would voluntarily offer His life as a sacrifice. He knew that He would have to suffer, but not only that.

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Do you know that the worst suffering for Jesus was at the time of His crucifixion?

It was not to have suffered physically, it was not to have suffered the outrages, the mockery of people when He was dying on the cross.

The worst suffering was being separated from His Father, being separated from God, being cut off from His presence, no longer being able to feel God in Him.

If this statement shocks or amazes you, it is because you need to know your Father better. It is because you need to understand how essential His presence is in your life. (For more details see my study on The Personality of God).

So Jesus returned to Bethany to visit Martha and Mary. That evening He is invited for supper.

***John 12:1-2*** Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

Once again we will witness a scene that is not due to chance. Let us remember, a few months earlier, Jesus proclaimed His coming to save all mankind by raising Lazarus from the dead.

Today we are back in Bethany, in the same house, where 2 months earlier we mourned the death of Lazarus. There, not at all the same atmosphere. We are around a good meal, perhaps Lazarus was still thanking Jesus for having prayed for him.

***John 12:2-3*** There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

When Mary pours the perfume on Jesus' feet, it is to symbolise His death in advance. Jesus Himself said that it was for the day of His burial. We are in the same house where Jesus was, when He proclaimed that He is the only one who gives eternal life. Even after Jesus' proclamation, it is difficult to know how to access this eternal life. Of course, today, for those who know the Bible, the

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answer is easy.

And as I said at the beginning of this study, Jesus does not leave things unfinished. That day, when he left Mary anointing Him with perfume, He answered Judas, who would have liked to steal part of the sale of that perfume, saying:

**John 12:7** *But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.*

Jesus announced that in order to be able to access this spiritual resurrection, in order to access this eternal life with God, He must die, be sacrificed, He who had never sinned. With this act of Mary, Jesus proclaimed that he had to die so that the resurrection could be activated. And this is almost the most important point. If Jesus had not died on the cross, He could have proclaimed that He could give eternal life, but this proclamation would have stopped there, it would have been followed by nothing. And that is why He said in:

**Matthew 26:12-13** *For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."*

Today all over the world it is said that it is thanks to Jesus' death on the cross that all human beings are eligible for eternal life. And in saying this, it is said that what Mary did symbolically proclaims that it is the death of Jesus that has opened the access to eternal resurrection. That nothing else can give us eternal life with God. This is why Jesus said that what this woman did will be told every time the good news is announced. And today, every time a person announces the gospel and announces that it is through the death of Jesus that everything is activated, he tells and remembers what Mary did, and in this way verse 13 of Matthew 26 is fulfilled.

Have you ever been criticized, falsely accused because of your faith by people close to you, people you love? Jesus also had to face such a situation.

**Mark 3:21 (NIV)** *When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, "He is out of his mind."*

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We are at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. He has just healed a man who had a dry hand, did many miracles and cast out many demons. His popularity was beginning to grow. Then He appointed the twelve apostles. This is what Jesus' parents had learned.

His family thought: "Our son has lost his mind, what he is doing is unreasonable, we must reason with him. »

Some times later, (it cannot be affirmed that it was on the same day, but it is very possible) another passage speaks of Jesus' mother and brothers trying to come and talk to Him through the crowd.

**Matthew 12:46** *While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him.*

His brothers and sisters did not agree with him either.

**John 7:5** *For even His brothers did not believe in him.*

Now, let us look at how Jesus reacted to His family.

One thing is certain, He did not engage in polemics, He did not try to convince them with words or skilful explanations. Jesus knew that this was not the right attitude to have. He could have stopped teaching and doing miracles, to take a moment to go and talk to His family. But that was exactly what the devil wanted, to get Jesus into a polemic with His family and then let things come to a confrontation.

There was a perfect team between the Holy Spirit and Jesus. And Jesus knew exactly where to stand. He didn't go beyond that, He knew how to let the Holy Spirit fulfil his role.

Remember when John's disciples came to Jesus at the request of John, who was in prison, to say to Him: "Are you really the One we are waiting for, or must we wait for another?"

Did Jesus go into great explanations?

Did He try to prove that He was the Messiah by comparing prophecies of the Old Covenant?

No, none of that.

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There are facts that matter more than words. Words can be true or false, they are debatable, they are subject to discussion, they can always be contradicted. Facts are not debatable, they are facts, you cannot add anything to them to remove them, and above all, everyone can appropriate them in their own way.

It's a bit like if I told you: "I can heal you by praying for you". Or I could talk with you about an illness that you and say: "Let me pray for you". Then once the prayer is answered, what can be said to challenge the healing? Absolutely nothing of course.

Why?

Because the fact is there. Because the healing is before my eyes. And this is what Jesus did before the disciples of John. He didn't answer anything, He didn't speak to them while they were looking at Him.

The Bible therefore says that John's disciples stayed at least an hour waiting for Jesus to answer them. During this time they were able to see the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers heal, the deaf hear, and even the dead rise. Jesus waited for John's disciples to see all this and then said to them in other words: "Now that you have seen everything I have done, go and tell John, and let him make up his own mind. I think he will easily understand that I am the one you are all waiting for, the Messiah".

**Luke 7:20-22** *When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?'" And that very hour He cured many of infirmities, afflictions, and evil spirits; and to many blind He gave sight. Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them.*

The Bible tells us a little later that many of Jesus' family finally believed in the good news that Jesus was announcing. We don't know if His entire family believed, but the Bible shows us that some of His brothers wrote epistles, His mother was there at the cross. They had finally understood, thanks to the facts and not thanks to discussions and polemics with Jesus.

Facts are worth more than words, this is the lesson that Jesus taught in these examples with His family or with John's disciples.

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Let me tell you that all explanations, however relevant they may be, will never supplant the powerful facts of the Word. To let the facts speak in our lives, we need to be able to exercise them. Jesus says this in this verse below.

**Mark 16:17** *And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;*

Very often when I speak or hear about Christians, I feel as if I am 2000 years back in time. I think that we have all lived this situation where we hear a person speak as in the Bible. I myself was in this example at the beginning of my conversion. I spoke with the same words that the Bible uses, I used the same expressions, and pushed to the extreme, sometimes even using parables to explain something. What stupidity! I speak for myself of course. But if you recognise yourself in what I am writing, what will follow concerns you, be attentive.

It is very important to be able to desecrate the Bible. Certainly these verses are inspired by God. But I must not prevent myself from changing the way it is written so that everyone can understand it better. Changing the way it is written, but keeping the author's thought, which is essential.

When we gathered in family, talking about the Bible with my wife and 3 children, sometimes one of us would speak in a language very much taken from the Bible. We used to say: "Speak 2011, I don't understand! ». It had almost become a game. But after a while, everyone understood that we had to explain biblical things in the language of our time.

I'm not saying that we shouldn't quote the Bible, don't get me wrong, that's not my point at all. Of course it is very important, and even primordial, to know as many verses of the Bible as possible, because it is the Word of God. But I'm just saying that sometimes we are so immersed in this biblical environment that we forget that our language has evolved since the last biblical translations. As a result, sometimes our arguments or explanations are formulated with words that we no longer use today. But before transcribing a passage we must be sure that we have perfectly assimilated what it means.

Some Christians, and even some pastors, have the impression that because they will use "biblical language" expressions, their words will hit deeper, will challenge more. It is quite the opposite!

This is why many Christians today are out of time in their speech, and this is because of their language.

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Remember this. It is not the words we use that make the power of God's Word in us, but it is the thoughts that generate them, and the faith that we add to them. I am not saying that it is a bad thing for ourselves to speak the language of the Bible in our everyday conversation, but what is certain is that it is a bad thing for others. Because my message can only be passed on to 'insiders'. And because of this I considerably reduce the impact of my words when I speak about the Bible.

Reread the Gospels and you will see that Jesus spoke a language of His time. When He spoke to farmers, He took examples of the earth, of seeds, of birds coming to eat the sprouts, etc.... When He spoke to sinners, He took examples of the sea, fish, nets, etc.

Why?

So that people would understand what He was talking about.

Then you're going to tell me, why the parables? Why did Jesus take many examples where He spoke in a slightly half-worded way to explain things?

There are two main reasons why Jesus spoke in parables. One of them, the one we are interested in in this subject, is that not everyone had to fully understand that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. Because in this case, (as we have already said above) all the people would have opposed His crucifixion. And if that had been the case, I would unfortunately not be writing this study, nor would you be reading it. Then comes a time, at the end of His mission on earth, when Jesus changes His way of speaking to the apostles.

***John 16:27-29*** *for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.” His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech!*

We are now at the end of Jesus' mission on earth. We are almost at the time when Jesus is to be crucified. After this crucifixion, the good news can finally be spread in its fullest form. By this I mean that the victory of Jesus will have been achieved and we will all be able to bear the fruit of it. So no more parables, no more half-word explanations. There is no longer any fear that all the people will prevent the execution of Jesus. The good news can now be proclaimed in its full scope.

We don't have many examples when Jesus continued to teach the apostles

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during the 40 days after the crucifixion, but I am sure that He no longer used any parables. All these explanations and teachings were now "in clear language".

Today there is no need for parables. For those who have fallen into these examples, stop talking in parables, stop speaking or explaining in a language that few people understand. This is absolutely not necessary. On the contrary, you are just putting a fog around your explanations. Talking like the Bible won't make me a more spiritual Christian.

There are those who use this language to make themselves somehow superior, and this is pure pride. And there are also those who use this language because they are afraid of distorting the Bible by transposing the teaching into a language that everyone understands. They have not understood that the power of the Word is not in the form, but in my thought and in my faith.

In this example we can get to know Jesus even better. He was not a mysterious and austere man, as some may think. Quite the contrary.

Do you now understand why Jesus spoke a lot in parables?

Very often I hear such complicated teachings, they are not within everyone's reach, you almost need a dictionary. There are also people who use modern language, but it is far too confusing. I think that people who use too many complicated words and phrases in their teaching don't really feel that their teaching is so complicated, relevant and as powerful as that. So they add to it with scholarly words and complicated sentences.

One day I was with a brother with whom I regularly did Bible studies. I had given him my study on the new birth so that he could meditate on it. We had been studying together for about a year. He knew my way of teaching. The following session, when we saw each other again, his first remark was: "I didn't think that you write in such a simple way, it's really easy to understand". I was very happy with that remark. For me, the goal was reached, to write in a way that everyone could understand, regardless of their level of education or social background.

There is nothing more powerful than the message of the good news. Don't try to complicate it, don't try to embellish it, it must remain simple but powerful. Instead, focus on producing the power of this message in your lives rather than adding human elements. This is what I try to do in my own life. I haven't fully

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achieved it, and of course I am still learning how to use the power of the message of Jesus Christ on a regular basis.

We are now coming to the end of Jesus' ministry. It would have taken far too long in this study to talk about all the examples that can help us to better understand His personality. I can understand that some may think it is a pity that I did not take the time to deal with this or that example from the Gospels, but I have chosen the situations that I thought were most important so that we can put the teaching into practice in our lives. Because without a practical application that will bring about a change in our lives, knowledge is useless.

Let us now look at the Last Supper.

There is still a lot to be said here, but we are going to focus on the personality of Jesus. He knew that His time had come. It was the last meal He would have with the apostles. This time He could tell them clearly what was to come.

Let us look at **Luke 22:15** *Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;*

Jesus was apparently looking forward to this moment with His apostles. He was looking forward to this moment. Was it because it was the last meal?

No, not at all.

Yes, Jesus was looking forward to this moment with great joy. A great joy? Yes, because He had finally arrived at the crucial moment of His life on earth, He had arrived at the moment when He was going to reveal how to take full advantage of His sacrifice on the cross. It was now that He was going to be able to explain to them how to make His presence last in our lives after His death. This is why Jesus had such a great desire to establish this Holy Communion, because it is one of the keys to our life as Christians.

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But in order to fully enjoy it, we have to understand it. And I have to say that very few Christians have fully realised the reason for this holy supper, and what it implies in their lives today. (For more details on this subject read my study on the Lord's Supper).

More than 15 years ago, we were with two Christian families in a chalet in the mountains for a week's holiday. One morning we were talking about the Lord's Supper. And I was explaining to my friend how I felt about having bread and wine on Sundays in church. He was from Indiana in the United States and told me he had heard many different versions on this subject.

I said to him: "Have you ever wondered why Jesus chose bread and wine to symbolise His blood and His body?"

He replied, "No, I never thought about that".

Then I told him that bread and wine were staple foods at the time. Even though food has become considerably more diverse in the West, bread and wine are still today, in many countries, the staple food, with exceptions in some parts of the world. But there are more countries where this is the case, rather than the other way around.

I continued my explanation by saying that Paul tells us about Jesus in **1 Cor 11:24** *"... do this in remembrance of me"*. It is therefore something that should, among other things, remind us of the person of Jesus in our lives. And how remembering what Jesus has done for us? With something we need, food.

We are obliged to eat at least two to three times a day in normal times. Well it is every time we eat that we should remember that Jesus died for us. Every time I eat and drink the staple food of my country, I should remember that Jesus voluntarily gave His life, so that I may live for eternity, but not only that.

He also willingly gave His life so that I could have a life as powerful as He had on earth. I don't mean that everyone is called to be a great teacher or evangelist, but everyone at our level, for those who are parents, in our families first, and around us, we are called to live this powerful life that Jesus Himself lived. This was the first time I explained my vision of the Lord's Supper, and my friend was very strengthened by it. He would now see things differently every time he had a meal.

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Understand this, if Jesus spoke about His blood and His body it was for a very specific reason. In the Bible the soul is represented by everything that has a blood system. The soul is there to manage the body. When Jesus said in:

**Matthew 26:27-28** *Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

When I was born again, I integrated this process of the Lord's Supper into who I was. I integrated the soul and body of Jesus. As I take the Lord's Supper, I remember that the soul and body of Jesus are integrated or grafted into me. His whole human person, without sin, is now in me, His way of thinking, His priorities, all His qualities.

But then you are going to tell me that you don't see much of the fruit of this. Yes, this is true for many Christians. But most of them have not understood this process and therefore do not know the potential that is within them. They take the Lord's Supper as a ritual and nothing else. Others have understood it but find it difficult to live it fully. This is my case. I am far from having the same fruits that Jesus had in my life. But that doesn't mean that I don't believe that I have integrated the soul and body of Jesus in me. Yes of course the whole being of Jesus is in me, His Spirit, His soul and His body. And this is what pushes me forward and gives me the energy and motivation to do it. Paul said in:

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

He says "it is no longer I who live". Paul had understood and integrated this principle into his life. But this did not mean that he no longer sinned. Having the whole being of Jesus in us does not make us sinless. Yes, God considers us spiritually sinning no more, but on a human level, our soul and body continue to sin. Should I be discouraged by this, or should I consider that because I do not see all the fruit of Jesus in me, His Spirit, soul and body are not in me?

Not at all.

Knowing this will make me want more and more fruit. When I am discouraged, I must remember that the soul and body of Jesus have been grafted into me. And

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later Jesus also gave away His Spirit who is Holy. That is why celebrating the Holy Communion every time I have the opportunity is very important, because it will remind me of this whole process, it will remind me of all the potential that God has put in me through Jesus Christ.

Very often when I am in a congregation where the Lord's Supper is celebrated, I am saddened by the way it is celebrated. Unfortunately, it happens that most of time what is read to the congregation is the passage of:

**1 Corinthians 11:23-29** *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner[d] eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

This passage is of course not bad in itself, quite the contrary, but it is often misinterpreted because Paul said it in a very particular context. Often the congregation is asked to examine themselves according to verse 28. And everyone bows their heads, and searches within him if there is any sin that he has not confessed to God, so that they will not have a judgment against him. As a result, Christians who have misinterpreted these verses lose enormous power in their lives. I have even heard Christians tell me several times that if you have sinned too much you should not take the Lord's Supper.

What mistakes!

These kinds of thoughts only make the devil happy, because it is he who has put them in the heads of those who practice them. I have nothing against these people, I have been one of them in the past, some of them are among my very good friends, but they have not understood the meaning of the Lord's Supper, and above all, they are depriving themselves of the enormous potential that

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Jesus left them as a legacy.

Don't misunderstand me, in no way do I condemn my brothers and sisters who practise these kinds of ideas. On the contrary, most of them do it out of ignorance, and they are victims of the teaching they have received. I love them, and I long for them to come to that knowledge of the Lord's Supper that will unleash their full potential. If this is your case, do not remain in this narrow perspective. Live the Lord's Supper as Jesus established it.

Remember, if Jesus said that He longed to live this Easter moment with His apostles, it was because He had a great desire to reveal the principle of the Lord's Supper to them. We are not going to dwell on this subject because I would like us to stay on the personality of Jesus. For more details you can obtain my study on the Lord's Supper.

Jesus knew that the moment when He would be offered for all mankind was at hand. Through the teaching of the Lord's Supper He has just given the means to put into practice all the teaching He has been giving for the past three years. Once again, it is essential that every Christian has fully integrated this principle in his life. Otherwise he will not see much of the teaching Jesus gave take shape in his everyday life.

Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him.

Do you think He was angry with him?

No, not at all, because He knew it had to happen. He knew that without His life offered voluntarily, no human being would have been able to access the life of power to flow into eternity.

After this meal, a very human idea arose among the apostles. Who could be considered the greatest?

***Luke 22:24*** *Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.*

This is a very down-to-earth reaction, an idea that comes from the depths of the flesh, which is the greatest?

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They needed to compare themselves to each other. They hadn't yet understood that they were all part of one body, and that each one had a different function, but that it was all these functions together that formed a well-coordinated structure. When I feel the need to measure myself up against others, it's because I'm not sure what I'm worth.

Imagine for a moment what Jesus might have thought... He has just spent more than 3 years with them, revealing to them all the mechanisms of the kingdom. He explained, and explained again. He took very practical examples to help them understand better. Then comes the moment when He gives the explanation of, how to be able to achieve all this in their lives, so that the good news may not fade away after His death. And then what do His companions do? They wonder who is the greatest. It is possible that the apostles began to understand that Jesus would soon no longer be with them. So they might have wondered who would be the one to carry on after Jesus. Who would be best able to take up the role? But it is also quite possible that this idea that germinated in them was only the result of a thirst to put themselves forward, to supplant their companions. Jesus could have said to Himself: "Oh no, they haven't understood anything, but how am I going to make them understand?"

Of course, we know that Jesus did not have such a thought towards His brothers.

So let's look at how He dealt with them.

First of all, Jesus does not get annoyed, He does not question 3 years of teaching because the apostles do not have the right reaction. In fact, He keeps in mind the potential of each one of them, He doesn't let their defects cover their qualities. He knows that He has chosen them one by one, and that He has not made a mistake. It is this kind of thought that Jesus keeps in the forefront of His mind. He therefore does not let Himself be led by the circumstances of the situation. Then He goes on to the next step, He shows them that their approach is not good. He teaches them that they have not taken the right path.

He doesn't ruin their thoughts, however. Note that Jesus does not say:

"But how can you have such thoughts? How can you allow yourself to be so blinded by your flesh? I am really disappointed by you, I am not proud of you".

No, Jesus did not say any of that. Once again, He takes the time to explain and

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show them that it is the opposite.

*Luke 22: 26-27 ... he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.*

He doesn't tell them that their idea is not good, He doesn't say that it's a bad thing to try to be a leader. But Jesus is going to show them that it has to be done in the right way. His approach is the complete opposite of what we find in our society today.

In fact, Jesus tells them that to lead is to love, to lead is to invest, to lead is to accept to carry out any of the tasks that need to be done within your team. And Jesus is going to prove it to them in a practical way. He will even do much more than could be asked of the apostles.

I am sure that the apostles did not quite understand what Jesus meant when he said in verse 27 *...And I, however, am among you as one who serves.* But when they saw Jesus beginning to stand up, take a towel, then pour water into a small basin, come closer and kneel down near the first one to wash his feet, the apostles surely began to understand.

***John 13:4-5 ... [Jesus] rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.***

He gave the perfect example of a leader, someone who is first in his team. I don't think, not even once, that one of the apostles washed the feet of Jesus during those 3 years. But Jesus did. He did much more than any member of His team would ever have to do. The message then was, "This is what it means to be the greatest, I am among you as one who serves".

Are you a team leader in a community? Or are you responsible for an activity in your church?

This is a good teaching for you.

All too often I have seen leaders who want to show their authority by imposing things. This attitude made them feel more secure in their leadership position. Or

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others who kept a distance between themselves and their team.

Most of the time, this kind of attitude corresponds to a person who is not qualified for the position he or she occupies. Whoever is sure of his ability to lead his team successfully should not be afraid to place himself as a servant. If he (or she) is sure that it is the Holy Spirit who has placed him (or her) where he (or she) is, and that he (or she) is certain to fulfil his (her) task in the right way according to the teaching that Jesus gave, then there is no need to be afraid. And there people can finally work and lead in peace and serenity. For I can say that he (or she) who is not able to be a servant because he (or she) is afraid of losing his (or her) position cannot fulfil his (her) ministry in the right way. This is 100% sure. And moreover, from this ministry, not much productivity will come out of it.

**Mark 14: 33-36** *And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch." He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."*

How to understand this passage?

Jesus, who was usually so strong, so sure of Himself, how could He feel fear, anguish?

I would like to say that anguish or fear is not the problem. But it's the way we deal with them. Yes, Jesus experienced fear, even anguish. But He did not let that fear or anguish overtake Him.

Who generated this fear and anguish in Jesus? It was His soul, which itself probably transmitted it to His body through contractions, or trembling, the Bible does not say so in this passage.

His spirit kept its role, that of managing His whole being. Yes, the fear was there, and so was the anguish, and He even had to utter them. It is very interesting to analyse verse 36 of Mark 14 in order to understand the struggle that can exist between the soul and the spirit. (For more details see my study on Spirit, Soul, and Body).

**Mark 14:36** *And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."*

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This is one of the few times that Jesus speaks with His soul and then with His spirit in the same verse.

When He says: "Abba, Father, all things are possible to you, take this cup away from me! ».

It is the human side of Jesus that speaks, it is His body and soul, or what the Bible often calls the flesh, a combination of soul and body. At that time, His flesh did not want to be crucified, and made it known by saying so. And what I find wonderful is to see that, immediately, and not in another sentence, nor a few minutes later, but in the same sentence, the spirit of Jesus keeps control of His whole being. It's an immediate reaction of the spirit, He goes on to say: "However, not what I want, but what you want". This is His spirit speaking.

Let's not confuse it with the Holy Spirit, I'm talking about the spirit that was part of Jesus the human being, whose spirit, of course, was helped by the Holy Spirit. This situation is one of the illustrations in Hebrews 4:15.

**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.*

Understand this. It is not a problem to have negative feelings, negative anger, or a desire to sin rising within me. The problem is: how am I going to deal with that thought or feeling? Am I going to let my body push my soul to succumb and finally give in to that thought or feeling? This is the one thing you must not do. Easy to say, you may say, but how do I do it?

Too often we hear things like: "We must resist, we must seek God, or we must pray to Jesus". Yes, all these things are true, but how do we do it, how do we proceed? How do we achieve it? There is a parameter that I unfortunately heard only once or twice in the teachings that I have been able to hear in the churches that we have been part of in more than 25 years of Christian life, and yet it is essential if we want to make our spirit dominate our whole being.

### **The spirit does not impose itself.**

If you wait for your spirit to say to your soul: "Listen, now that's enough, you're going to stop feeding all those unhealthy thoughts, you're going to stop listening to your body when it tells you nonsense! ».

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This kind of thing will NEVER happen.

Why?

Because the spirit does not impose itself.

Our spirit will never take over our flesh (our soul and body) by force. This parameter is extremely important to integrate in us. Because if I haven't understood this, then, often, I will wait for my spirit to proceed to a coup in my being, and take back the power. And as this will never happen, I will be in incomprehension, or even frustration. I will have no victory over my evil thoughts. The devil knows this, and he plays with it, he uses the ignorance of Christians to make them believe anything. Now you will no longer be able to say that you didn't know.

When I have properly integrated this parameter in me, it is important to realise that analysing a thought, a desire, requires an effort. It can be physical or mental depending on whether it comes from my soul or my body, but what is certain is that nothing can be done without an effort on my part.

When Jesus had this thought that said: "If it is possible that this cup will take away from me", we notice, as we said above, that immediately His spirit regained the upper hand. So how was it able to achieve this performance without imposing itself?

The most important factor was the fact that He knew the Word. It is a very crucial thing for us today to know the Word of God. I am not saying that we should know the Bible by heart, but in any case, at least know a few key verses by heart. But for what reason? Just to know how to recite them?

No, although that would be a good thing, but that is not the reason why we should know more and more key verses, and be able to utter them at any time. This is what happened in the situation where Jesus said this sentence. His soul pronounced the fact that He did not want to go to the cross, because His body did not want to be crucified. But immediately His spirit took over, reminding His soul that He was there for this very purpose, that He was the Son, the Messiah awaited to save all mankind. His spirit did not take over by force, but simply by quoting the Word, reminding His soul who He was, and why He was there. And at that moment His soul voluntarily submitted because it was used to it. Understand that our soul has the power to choose between good and evil, but we must help it.

How can we help it?

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With our spirit that will remind it of everything that is written, all that we have already experienced in our team with the Holy Spirit, all that we have learned from Him. And by dint of efforts in this sense, our soul will submit itself, but not without effort on my part.

The example of Jesus in this case can appear to us in the wrong way. We may have the impression that, because He managed to subdue His soul at the same moment, we should necessarily arrive at the same result right away. This is not always the case.

It happens very often that I have to do it over and over again before my soul agrees to submit itself to my spirit. This is again a very important parameter, which the devil will take advantage of if we are not correctly prepared for it. If after a first effort, I see that nothing changes, that my soul is still as vindictive and unsubmitive, I can think: "Well, it doesn't work, what Franck told me in his study doesn't work. Maybe it works for him, but I'm different, it doesn't work for me".

Never believe this, the process is the same for everyone, and it was the same for Jesus too. On this subject, we all function in the same way. You can't always get it right the first time, you have to try, and try again, and it is through perseverance that you will begin to see your soul submit to your spirit.

If it is something you are not practicing, start now.

If it is something you have tried in the past and given up, then start again. And I guarantee that it will not be long before you can see very encouraging results in your being.

This method is not the only one, but this one works, I've tried it! And millions of other Christians before me too. This is what the Bible calls renewing our intelligence. It also tells us to use our spirit as often as possible. I leave you these two verses that will help you, learn them by heart, they are not very long.

***Romans 12:11 (NIV) Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor,...***

***Ephesians 4:23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,***

It is this attitude that enabled Jesus to go to the cross and to be able to carry out His ministry to the end. Knowing how to renew His soul enabled Him to accomplish all that God had planned for Him.

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When He was on the cross, He was there, nailed there for several hours, and then He said :

***John 19:30*** *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

This "It is finished!" that Jesus pronounced is so powerful, so important.

When something is finished, there is nothing more to add to it, or it is not finished. It's like when I have finished a puzzle, if I have put the last piece down, I can say "It's finished ". And if I want to add another piece of the puzzle, I can't, because the puzzle is complete. It is exactly the same image when Jesus said this sentence, and what a wonderful sentence!

Today there is nothing more to add to Jesus' mission. There is nothing more to expect, Jesus has done everything, everything that is written about His ministry, everything that is written about the teaching He has been giving for more than 3 years, there is nothing more to add.

***Roman 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?*

This verse is very clear about the fact that Jesus voluntarily went to the cross. Paul said to the Romans: "Do you think that God would have accepted to sacrifice His son, accepted that He should suffer physically, accepted that He should be cut off from His father's presence, all this for not giving us everything, really everything that God possesses. Do you believe that God would have agreed to pay such a high price so that we Christians today would have only a small part of what God wants to give us? »

No, and fortunately not.

If God has accepted to pay such a huge price it is to give us something equally huge, in proportion to the price He paid with His son.

Today everything is accomplished. Nothing is missing.

We have all the necessary strength, all the necessary capacity, all the necessary potential to fulfil and live the teaching that Jesus has given us in all His power.

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Sometimes I hear things like: "Lord send your revival! ». The Bible doesn't talk about revival. When in any part of the world you suddenly see a strong infatuation with God, it is because brothers and sisters have been motivated, they have done everything with the Holy Spirit as a team to make this infatuation happen. It is not God who suddenly decides to send a craze for His Word on humans. Or others times I hear things like: "Lord, send a new freshness upon us, do something new in us, or open the floodgates of heaven (according to the old covenant)". These are prayers that ignore the fact that everything is accomplished. People think in these cases that God gives things to us drop by drop.

Not at all. Everything is already accomplished.

Often this kind of prayer is inspired from the Psalms or the story of King David. Does this mean that David lived in a time when not everything was accomplished?

Yes of course, not everything was accomplished. The Law had not been accomplished by anyone. That is why David and some people of the Old Covenant needed to say regularly to God: "Open the floodgates of heaven, or, send forth a new freshness, or take not your spirit away from me".

All these prayers are no longer necessary today.

It would be just as ridiculous to continue to make animal sacrifices today as it would be to pray like this.

Today say to yourselves "All is accomplished".

It is also a verse that you have to know by heart and integrate into yourself, so that when the devil wants to make you believe that you are lacking this or that thing from God, you can answer him: "No Satan, or no, evil spirit, you are a liar, because Jesus said everything is accomplished, perhaps I do not manifest this thing, but it is in me because God has already given it to me through Jesus Christ". And if you believe and you have integrated this thought in you, I guarantee you that these are words that shut the mouth of any demon.

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I do not claim to have covered the whole personality of Jesus in this study, far from it. That would have meant writing a whole book, which is not my aim in this study.

I am well aware that this study is already long for a teaching as I am used to do for other subjects. But throughout this writing I forced myself to minimise the pages, but it was not easy, because there is so much to say about His personality.

In any case, if you have come to the end of this text, I hope, and at the same time I am sure, that there are facets of Jesus' personality that you now know, and that will help you to integrate new priorities in your life, so that additional power, joy and stability will come out of it. All this because everything was already accomplished in you, but you didn't have all the knowledge of it.

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