



**Worldwide**  
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***Church in the new reality***

**AFFI 2021**

**Apostolic Fellowship International**

## Giovanni Traettino

### Welcome and thanks

As we confidently look forward to the possibility of an AFI Consultation “in the flesh” in 2022 (at least we hope so!), we are thankful to God – and to technology, I add – for the opportunity, following on from last year, to hold this second Consultation online. For this I would like to offer my personal gratitude and that of the Executive to the Secretariat for their work, and to the technical staff who today are making it possible and are working on it. Thank you!

I would also like to thank the Executive for their important contribution in preparing the **Programme**, the willingness and hard work of the two main speakers in preparing their contributions which will help us in our thinking over these two days, and the contribution of one of our “Founding Fathers” for tomorrow’s “Devotional”. They are:

1. First, *Pastor Carlos Mraida* on the subject “*The end of what we used to be, the beginning of what we really are – Thirty Apostolic Strategies*”.
  2. Second, *Pastor Vinci Barros* on the subject “*Jesus, the perfect Model*”.
  3. Tomorrow morning, *Pastor Ernest Komanapalli* for the “Devotional”.
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### Introduction

#### **New Paradigms – An Important Change**

*Pastor Carlos Mraida*, to whom I am grateful, in his excellent and thought-provoking contribution to this AFI session, speaks of this time marked by the Covid pandemic as a crucial transition towards “a new phase”; a “historic” transition *forging* “new paradigms” and *witnessing* a major cultural shift. He refers to a “fluid” time, a transition to a new epoch [from the modern to the post-modern], an authentic, revolutionary, epoch-making change. “New paradigms” and “change” are the key words.

#### **The Touchstone**

Then *Pastor Vinci Barros* also deserves our gratitude. He too has recalled our attention – in a way that is strategic for this time – to the person of Jesus (Christ at the centre! “*When I am lifted up... I will draw all people to myself.*”<sup>1</sup>), to Jesus’ life and conduct, to the crucial importance *for us* of following in Christ’s footsteps. In other words, being disciples! Indeed, we have been called to look to Christ at all times, in all seasons and cultures, to gaze upon his face, to be his disciples, to be “*transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jn 12:32.

<sup>2</sup> 2Cor 3:18.

### Newness and Continuity

So then, we are exhorted on the one hand – even in this “season” – to remain open to the changes brought by the “kingdom” approaching from the future. On the other hand, to remain faithfully grounded on the “touchstone”, the “rock of ages”, eternal and unchangeable, which is the Lord himself. He is “*the same yesterday and today and forever.*”<sup>3</sup> This is the ageless, intercultural, eternal “profile” of the Son of God, the Lord who is the Christ.

### Thinking Paradigmatically

I recently read a superbly enlightening passage by the well-known evangelical theologian Robert E. Webber, on the importance of “paradigm thinking”<sup>4</sup>. He maintains that this approach, applied to the history of Christianity, helps us to understand that “since its beginning, the Christian faith has been filtered through a variety of cultures.” And that “in each of these cultures Christianity has been primarily communicated through one or more dominant principles (‘paradigms’).” He quotes several examples. In the classical period, the focus was on “Mystery”; in the Middle Ages on the “Institution”, during the Reformation on Individualism, in the modern (Enlightenment) period on Reason, and now finally, in the postmodern era, back to the “Mystery” paradigm. What this tells us is that, in ways that we may not recognise, we too are children of our age and probably think, to a greater or lesser degree, with the paradigms of our time, similarly “filtering” our ideas of Christianity.

Webber further proposes:

- “Paradigm thinking also provides us with an intelligent way to deal with times of transition. For example, we currently acknowledge that the Christian faith incarnated in the modern culture, with its philosophical assumption of a mechanistic world understood through empirical methodology, is eroding. The cultural revolutions are in the process of ushering us into a new era. In this swirl of change, many are seeking to honestly incarnate the historic faith in the emerging culture. This goal will not be accomplished by abandoning the past, but by seeking out the transcultural framework of faith (i.e. the rule of faith) that has been blessed by sociocultural particularity in every period of church history.<sup>5</sup>
- **“Therefore – he concludes – the point of integration with a new culture is not to restore that cultural form of Christianity, but to recover the universally accepted framework of faith that originated with the apostles, was developed by the Fathers, and has been handed down by the church in its liturgical and theological traditions.** This hermeneutic<sup>6</sup> allows us to face the changing cultural situation with integrity. Our calling is not to reinvent the Christian faith, but, in keeping with the past, to carry forward what the church has affirmed from its beginning. **We**

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<sup>3</sup> Heb 13:8.

<sup>4</sup> Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith – Rethinking evangelicalism for a postmodern world* Baker Book House, 1999, pp. 16-17.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.* pp.16-17.

<sup>6</sup> “Interpretation”. Of texts, certainly; but also, as in this case, of human life.

**change**, therefore, as one of my friends said, **‘not to be different, but to remain the same.’** Right now we are caught up in the throes of changing from modernity to post-modern times. So let’s look at this shift more closely to figure out how we ought to change to remain the same.”<sup>7</sup>

Pastor Mraida, in his paper, seeks to help us in making this transition: to help us to be open to change, in a time as “fluid” as our own, “to remain the same.” This means, at the same time as we understand the ebb and flow of the ages with the paradigms that have characterised them, discerning the abiding, trans-geographical and trans-cultural “inheritance”, the *scarlet thread* [i.e. the defining, fundamental elements] of the “*faith once for all entrusted to God’s holy people*”.<sup>8</sup> Or in other words, as times and seasons come and go, as one generation succeeds another and amidst the “tumult of history”, the essence and the abiding identity of the “true” church. Allow me, for once, to use this adjective. I mean *the substance* and *the continuity* of the “church” through the alternating changes in its historical circumstances, in political regimes, in economic structures and models of society, customs and ways of thinking. In a word, of the “culture that is us” – as Mraida reminds us – and which we produce.

### **The Antiquity and Modernity of the Apostolic and Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creeds**

The *Apostolic Creed* – probably dating from the second century – was and is believed and confessed by the early church, through the centuries, and still today by all Christians. It is one of those basic documents which, though variously “read” in the different intervening cultures, have preserved some of the abiding, fundamental and defining elements of the Christian faith. I am thinking particularly of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and its function in “begetting” the church: the church of the Trinity. In fact the church – “*Creatura Spiritus*”<sup>9</sup> – is mentioned in the same article, the third, as the Holy Spirit.

And my thoughts go – in continuity with this, and as another example – to the faith defined in the *Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed* as to the distinctive characteristics of the church: “*I believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic church*”. For the early church as for the post-modern one, the fundamentals are the same: Oneness, Holiness, Catholicity and Apostolicity. And its apostolicity, the apostolic foundation – of course on the foundation of Christ – serves to promote unity, holiness, catholicity and – here we believe this too – apostolicity.

**A spiritual and cultural challenge** – and so we come to our dreams (in part already dreamt, but not yet fully realised), to what we are dreaming of for the time that lies before us. A time that must be embraced, made our own, “espoused” in a special way by a “fellowship” – I prefer the word “*koinonia*” – such as the *Apostolic Fellowship International*, or AFI, is called to be. With the courage

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<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.* pp.16-17.

<sup>8</sup> Jude 3.

<sup>9</sup> Thus described by the Fathers. But also as “*Creatura Verbi*” and “*Creatura Patris*”.

needed to **go to the frontier** pointed out to us by the Apostles' Creed, to carry over *"the faith received once and for all by the saints"* into the time that is coming to meet us from the future. A time in which – when we reach the promised "fulness" – the dream will be fulfilled; because "the future belongs to the Lord". This is the perspective of the Scriptures. We believe it. The "apocalypses" feared by so many are merely the scenarios, the times through which the pilgrim "bride" is called to travel on a journey of growing enlightenment and transformation which will bring her to the "fulness" – partial but real – of God's purpose for each individual and each church in its generation. And then for the whole church, the whole Body of Christ, at his Return, at the end time, the church of the Lamb, that of the ultimate wedding. In the meantime we let ourselves be directed by the declaration of intent of our "spiritual family". The way for us is the way of Christ in the post-modern world. The life for us is the life of Christ in the post-modern world. The style for us is the style of Christ. Until the Lamb's wedding feast. Until the final gathering in.

### **Ishmael and Isaac**

A final warning. In every generation "the Abrahamic church" has given birth to its Ishmaels and its Isaacs, and Isaac to its Esaus and its Jacobs... And so on. In Egypt, in the desert, in the promised land... Let us not be discouraged. Thank God, there is good in every season. Thank God for the Isaacs, the Josephs, the Jacobs... Let us thank God for all of them. And – a vital lesson – once they have been born, let us not slaughter the Ishmaels. Let us not despise Egypt, let us learn from our deserts. All things work together for good for those who love God. And he loves us!

*Giovanni Traettino*

## Carlos Mraida

### The end of what we used to be, the beginning of what we really are THIRTY APOSTOLIC STRATEGIES

This is the second encounter of AFI by Zoom. Thus it is a clear sign that we are living a new reality in the world, in the church, in our ministries, implying that we face very difficult pastoral decisions. I will try to be pragmatic. I want to suggest thirty strategies for our apostolic ministries. Here is the first.

**Strategy #1:** *I encourage you to have what I call a Personal Encounter with the Holy Spirit. A personal retreat with two objectives: a renewal of the Holy Spirit in your life and the search for revelation and wisdom for yourself and your pastors for the time in which we live.*

We have had to face considerable stress. When we are denied our regular and well-known routines, we discover our own vulnerability, as well as our urgent need of the strengthening presence of the Holy Spirit. We need him to help us to see what is ahead and teach us what we need to know and guide us to all truth.

**Strategy #2:** *Once you have had your "Personal Encounter with the Holy Spirit", I encourage you to have a "Apostolic-Pastoral Encounter with the Holy Spirit": a direct or virtual retreat **with the pastors** that make up your apostolic network in which you seek the Lord with the same two objectives, and that you share the suggestions you receive in this consultation of AFI, and whatever the Spirit reveals to you in your personal encounter with him. You will need a retreat of more than one day, or more than one retreat.*

We are at the end of an epoch and these moments are rather traumatic. But not all the ends of an epoch should be seen as times of loss. For the end of one season becomes the background where the beginning of something new occurs. And it constitutes for me the great opportunity to develop ecclesial and leadership models more in line with the biblical model and more specific to the new reality. In order for this to be the case, I think we need to understand what is happening and share it with our pastors, so that they too might transfer it to their leaders and congregations.

#### ***Understanding the changes that occur***

The reality has changed. To deny this would invite more problems and delay the processes of renewal that God wants to carry out. My perception is that many pastors believe that the current situation is like a parenthesis. That is, they believe that we were living in a normal mode, then the pandemic came and opened a parenthesis, but at some point it will pass, the parenthesis will close, and we return to the earlier normality. But we are not dealing with a simple parenthesis or a pause, but with a change of epoch.

During the pandemic our pastors have faced a variety of challenges: the suspension of face-to-face meetings, the use of technology, networks and digital platforms, without prior preparation, the question of offerings and finances, difficulties in receiving the pastoral stipend, the maintenance of personnel, the cost of unused buildings or their loss, the death of members in their congregations, the migration of members from their congregations to others that use more effectively these virtual means, etc. Some churches and pastors have

responded well. Unfortunately, many have not. One consulting firm presented the following statistics: only 35% of the members returned to face-to-face meetings. Some 32% decided to drop out. 18% attend multiple congregations on-line. And 15% decided to change their congregation.<sup>1</sup>

Experiencing the pandemic has been disruptive for everyone. It is as if someone had cut off our electric current and we had to respond in ways for which we were unprepared. The majority adapted quickly. But entering a new era is not as simple as turning on the light switch. As Karl Vaters suggests, it is more like being discharged from the hospital and initiating a long and slow process of rehabilitation.

With the authorization to return to face-to-face meetings, pastors tell us: “The meetings began again, but the people didn’t come”. The complaint of many is that the city congregations with more resources “have stolen many of our members”. One pastor from the city of Mar del Plata, in Argentina, indicated that 80% of the churches that used a rented building as their temple, closed down. In my country, there is a process of forced renewal of pastoral leadership, since more than 250 of the pastors died.

### ***Understanding the two hermeneutical horizons***

The pandemic has served as a catalytic agent that accelerated a process of decadence that would normally require years. This is true, not only in society, but also in relation to the model of church and pastoral ministry. We have been developing a model that was no longer relevant for the transformation of society, and lacked pertinence for the believers themselves. More than 50% of those who call themselves evangelical, are not involved in any congregation. That is to say, such a model was no longer viable for them. For many years I have been saying that such a model for the church already had a signed death certificate. The pandemic has now buried it under several feet of dirt.

Several paradigms of church and leadership have ceased to be viable. These paradigms were the ways in which the church sought to give shape to the eternal truths of the Word in a specific historical and cultural context. Every cultural change provokes a change of paradigms. The church delayed in understanding the cultural changes that were taking place. Therefore, the models for church, pastoral ministry and for missions that were valid in an earlier time were no longer useful. Some of them, because they were not faithful to the Word, others for lack of relevance to the changing reality. But unfortunately, the church was not adequately aware of this and continued functioning with a model that was neither biblical no relevant. The pandemic accelerated those cultural changes and some of those models will no longer function.

When the crisis provokes such a profound change, a vacuum is produced, in which what was once vital is no longer, and that which is to replace it is still undefined. This is a great opportunity, so that the apostolic ministry of the church is involved in the effort to re-read the Word in order to recover the biblical paradigms. Every reading of the Word is conditioned by our cultural lenses. But if we are able to make the effort to extract the eternal principles from the situational questions and, above all, from our ecclesial and ministerial presuppositions that we keep repeating, then at least our cultural reading will be pertinent for our time.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.wavesprogram.com/members](http://www.wavesprogram.com/members)

Apostolic ministry must nourish itself through knowledge of the other hermeneutical horizon, which is the new reality. Reading, consulting with the experts and surrounding ourselves with younger elements that understand the new world. And with the spirit of revelation reinterpret that information, and with the spirit of wisdom channel that knowledge into practice. Out of the fusion of the horizons of the Word and that of the new reality, will come new forms for the church, missions and pastoral ministry that are more faithful and more pertinent.

**Strategy #3:** *Work with your pastors on the concept of the two hermeneutical horizons. That of the Word that never changes and which should become incarnate in the reality that is always changing.*

**Strategy #4:** *Investigate what changes have already been produced and those that the tendencies indicate are ahead. Share this with your pastors.*

**Strategy #5:** *Meet with adolescents and young people and ask them how they feel, how they understand the reality, what changes they are perceiving, in what is the best way they believe they can fulfill the mission today. Share with your pastors what you learn, and encourage them to do the same.*

### ***Understanding the change of paradigms for church and leadership***

It is important to avoid falling into oversimplification, supposing that everything is reduced to knowing what things we can continue to do face-to-face and what remains virtual. We should rather use the moment to rethink the church. I suggest some changes.

#### ***1. Toward a reduction of the church as institution and growth of the church as community.***

In practice the church has two dimensions. First, it is a community, the Body of Christ. And then it is structured also as an institution. The church is first born as a community: the people begin to convert, be baptized and disciplined, and when a group is formed, the church starts to structure itself as an institution: with personnel, buildings, programs, activities. It functions as an institution to serve the church as a community, and to represent it legally, among the entities that make up society. Ed Kivitz, whom I follow in this, reminds us that not all of us that make up the church community are members of the church institution. There are persons that congregate in the meetings, in the home groups, that follow the virtual programming, that feel themselves part of the community, yet are not members of the institution. We must include the children, who are part of the church community.

In the same way, there are members of the church institution that are not members of the church, the Body of Christ. Already in the year 1000 there was a theological debate between Anselmo and Abelard. Anselmo said: anyone who does not know the church as mother does not have God as father. He was speaking of the church as an institution, at that time the Apostolic Roman Catholic Church. And Abelard, responded that: God has many that the church does not have, and the church has many that God does not have.

In our days the church as institution is experiencing a reduction. Buildings that are no longer used as before, reduction in the number of personnel, offices that have been decentralized. The temples may be closed, but the church as community continues to function. The church as institution serves the church as community through its programs and activities. In these days it becomes indispensable that the apostolic ministries help the pastors to define which of those programs and activities are essential, which are desirable,

and which should be discontinued. The essential programs and activities are those that the church cannot cease to do since, according to the Bible, they define the church's reason for being. Those that are desirable are the ones that, in the new reality, it would be good for the church to begin to realize. And they are determined by the needs which the world today presents. For example, faced with the pandemic of mental health problems of today, and which will continue to increase, it would be desirable for the churches to offer interdisciplinary pastoral counseling open to the community, attended by pastors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and medical physicians.

This definition of programs and activities in these categories will help us to simplify the many tasks that evangelical activism has brought to our attention. The road ahead of us will be very demanding for the people, and the fewer the unnecessary activities that we have, the better use we can make of the human resources that we have.

**Strategy # 6:** *Work with your pastors on this change of paradigms. Strengthen the idea of a reduction in the institutional. It is not necessarily a loss, but can be seen as an advance, with outreach and the mission of the church as community.*

**Strategy #7:** *Redefine with your pastors the essence of the mission of the church: What the church cannot cease to do.*

**Strategy #8:** *In groups with your pastors define the current needs of the people in your areas, and propose programs and activities that would be desirable to initiate*

**Strategy #9:** *Analyze with your pastors which of your programs and activities are essential, which are desirable. And encourage them to discontinue those that are unnecessary.*

**Strategy #10:** *Analyze with your pastors the financial budgets of their congregations in the new reality. Which of the personnel oriented toward the institutional can we eliminate? What personnel oriented toward service to the Church as Community will we need to incorporate and sustain?*

It is important to understand that the church as community is a present reality, influential, but not necessarily measurable, structurable, and therefore it is not controllable, manageable. Many of the things that occur in the life of my church as community, I discover after they are already occurring. The brother who provides financial backing for young people so they can study, the sister that volunteers her services in an old folks home, the couple that opens the garage of their home to feed the poor, etc.

Ariovaldo Ramos shows us three concepts of the church in the N.T.: the church of Jesus Christ: *where two or three are gathered in my name I am there*. There is the ecclesia. The church of the apostles. It has an ecclesiological structure, deacons, presbiters, epistles, discipline, norms, government, organization, elections of presbiters. It also appears as the Church of the Holy Spirit, which is the church of the charismas. And it goes through the church of the apostles. And often creates "holy messes", in the church of the apostles. An example: The church of the apostles wanted to limit the group of apostles to twelve. But the Spirit interrupts and sticks Paul in; and not only him, but others as well. And since the apostles had to be twelve, they elect Matthias by sorting, while it remained more than clear that in the will of God, the preeminent apostolic figure was Paul. So it is that the church of the Holy Spirit often reorients the church of the apostles. The manifestation of spiritual gifts, the freedom with which the Spirit moves, even disturbing the apostolic organization, for the ever-present danger is that the church as institution compresses and seeks to institutionalize the church as community. What we are able as persons to control to a certain point is the

institution, but not the community. And this modifies the paradigm of pastoral leadership that seeks to keep everything under control.

In these days the church as institution is reduced and the weight of the church as community is increased. The church as community is structured by two central elements: a network of relationships, and a network of mission. The network of relations keeps the church alive, united and shepherded. The network of mission keeps the church active. These conform the community dimension of the church. The network of relationships has to do with spiritual friendships, mutual pastoring, the care for each other. With the multiplicity of needs, the pastoring of dedicated pastors would not be enough; some forms of mutual pastoring is required.

**Strategy #11:** *Work with your pastors on ways to strengthen the network of relationships. How can interpersonal relations be stimulated? How can mutual pastoring be generated?*

## **2. Toward a church that strengthens the *ecclesia* and perfects it for the *diáspora*.**

There are two expressions of the church: *Ecclesia*, this is the gathering of the church, the congregation. Until now the principal emphasis has been concentrated on this dimension: meetings for worship, events. *Diáspora* is dispersión; it is the church spread out. Today we are experiencing a kind of sacrifice of the dimension *ecclesia*. We are unable to meet as we always have done. It is a time of emphasis on the *diáspora*. The church spread out. And here we have two tasks. The first is to discover in what ways we can strengthen the *Ecclesia*, the need and the possibility of its manifestation. For the biblical mandate to gather is not only still valid<sup>2</sup>, but also because it has a vital role in the edification of the Body of Christ<sup>3</sup>. And in the pandemic, for the emotional health of the people, the congregation of the church is fundamental.

Here we need to evaluate the encounters for worship and community ministration. By introducing the people in huge numbers to a virtual encounter, since we have no alternative, we brought them into the world of possibilities that the evangelical “market” offers today. Many pastors lament that their members have discovered other ministries better prepared technically, musically and with greater pastoral skills, so they are opting out for another congregation. Of course, behind such a decision, there is a lack of discipleship, of adequate pastoral care, and of maturity. But even explaining it thus, it continues to be a painful reality for many pastors. An *upgrade* at the pastors’ level, as well as their meetings, and even in technical aspects, would help. This will not resolve the problem of the lack of maturity, that can only be resolved with genuine discipleship, but at least a massive desertion might be avoided.

Strengthening the dimension *ecclesia*, also has to do with the programs of groups separated by age. Especially children, adolescents, and youth. Those areas need our principal emphasis, adjustments, our investment in personnel and money. For they are the most vulnerable sectors, needing spiritual growth in the various age groups. There is a real threat that these kids go through another year without friendship with similar age groups in the church, and that they develop friendships only with their school companions. This is a stage

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<sup>2</sup> *Hebrews 10.25: Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the importance of congregating, see: *Carlos Mraida, Returning from Captivity, in Consultation of AFI 2020: What is God saying to his church in this time of pandemic?*

of life where the affirmation of faith among their age group is more important than the influence of adults, a stage where we could lose a significant part of their generation. A strategic alliance is needed between the church and the parents to care for these generations, providing attractive programs that lead them into strong spiritual experiences, but also through friendly relations with others their age who have a solid faith.

Another question is: How can we care for the spiritual and emotional health, and pastor those who, due to their age or health, cannot meet face to face?

The second task is to perfect the believers ministerially, providing them with tools for their ministry in the diáspora. This is the Network of Mission. The church in the diáspora fulfilling their mission. Here there is a change of paradigm. In the past we concentrated on training ministries that were developed principally in the temple: those that lead the worship, ushers, those that develop evangelistic or social tasks to be fulfilled in the temple. Now we need to train them to carry out their mission in their neighborhood and work environment. Train the lawyers, housewives, students, to serve, evangelize, heal, liberate their companions in their work environments, persons who have not come to our meeting halls.

**Strategy #12:** *Analyze with your pastors ways to strengthen community worship both face-to-face and virtual, primarily in the spiritual aspect, as well as in the technical, esthetic, musical. Do our resources need to move to a new level? Which of our resources, whether human, technical, material, can you share with them?*

**Strategy #13:** *Develop a proposal for a strategic alliance between the church and the family for pastoring children and adolescents. And distribute it among your pastors.*

**Strategy #14:** *Generate a space for a “brainstorm of ideas” among your pastors about how to carry out pastoral ministry, for the members that are unable to have personal contact with others.*

**Strategy #15:** *Prepare a list of the principal professions of the people in your region and share it with your pastors. And request that each one meet with believers of one of those professions from your congregation and prepare helps to serve, evangelize, disciple others who are close to them. In a later meeting with your pastors, have them share their experience with the rest, so that everyone might develop a plan for training believers in their different professions to carry out their mission in the diáspora.*

### **3. Toward a church of protagonists instead of spectators**

The paradigm whose brevity of usefulness is most obvious is that of the auditorium, where a “religious show” is presented, and in which ten persons minister (pastors and musicians), and the rest receive ministry. Many pastors believe they can continue with this even virtually, and some have even expressed happiness because initially the number of spectators increased over what they had in the face-to-face meetings. But with the return to meetings in person their joy was turned into a letany: “The meetings were renewed, but the people didn’t come”.

In my presentation in AFI 2020, I expressed my perception concerning the future, and unfortunately it came to pass. For that reason I want to repeat it, not as a potential threat, but as a reality for us to work on:

*“If before the pandemic more than 50 % of the believers in all the cities did not attend our meetings, in the post pandemic the percentage will increase. The churches will add the*

*face-to-face worship to the meeting on line, enthusiastic to reach the unreached people. But when this happens, many of those who attended earlier will decide to “watch” the same meeting-show of ten persons from their home, without attending, without travel, without having to “dress up”, without any demands. So that to the deformation of “Let’s go to church” now will be added “Let’s watch the church”. To avoid this outcome, apostolic ministry is needed...whose first and most important action is a renewal in the mentality of the pastors”... “The people will move about and serve themselves as in a self-service restaurant buffet, with the music they prefer, the preacher of their choice from anywhere in the world”<sup>4</sup>.*

We have not transformed our meetings into opportunities to function as the Body of Christ, with collective ministry, where all function with their gifts, well aware that “we are church” instead of “let’s go to church” nor “let’s watch the church”. The church in diáspora mode, will gather in *ecclesia* mode if, and only if, the meetings are experiences where the presence of God is truly in the midst of the community, with signs and wonders and various miracles and manifestations of the Spirit<sup>5</sup> and where that occurs with collective ministry, in which all have the opportunity to be protagonists and not spectators. Then the people will not want to miss being part of that double live experience: the moving of the Spirit in the meeting, and where that occurs in their own life. Otherwise, in the best of circumstances, the people will continue to watch our show from their homes, and probably, they will see others as well.

**Strategy #16:** *Prepare with your pastors suggestions for meetings with a dynamic that is not centralized in the platform, and in which the people participate.*

**Strategy #17:** *Minister to your pastors so that they experience a renewal of the Holy Spirit in their lives that enables them to conduct a time of renewal in their congregations, so that the presence of the Lord might be evident in every meeting.*

#### **4. Toward a church of disciples instead of simply members.**

Some of the problems we face today (lack of strong sense of belonging to a congregation; constant migration of members from one congregation to another; lack of faithfulness in tithes and offerings; lack of commitment in attendance and service; indifference and departure of brothers; etc), are the result of a church model, in which discipleship hardly exists.

The over emphasis on numeric growth of the church, in detriment to growth in quality, has provoked the awareness in many congregations that they were large but not strong. We are facing an opportunity to return to the beginning. The virtual situation is allowing many more to experience possibilities of formation. A combination of both modalities can be the great opportunity to return to the biblical paradigm, which is that of making disciples.

**Strategy #18:** *If our network of pastors does not have a plan for discipleship, explore among the many possibilities that exist, and choose one you can share with your pastors and make it one of your priorities to disciple your members.*

#### **5. Toward a leadership that is plural and multi-generational**

<sup>4</sup> Ídem.

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews 2.4.

The leadership of a “pastor-orchestra” is increasingly being replaced by an orchestra of pastors. The concentration in one physical site favors the unbiblical model of singular leadership. The model of church as community in the diáspora, renders insufficient the ministry of only one person.

Many pastors were already exhausted prior to the pandemic. And stress from the change of reality found them without strength, deepening their exhaustion. The reason is that those who fulfill responsibly their ministry are often overburdened with work. Today there is a new cultural emphasis on care and wellbeing. For the majority this involves a return to self-centeredness. Nevertheless, this may be a healthy emphasis. Let us take advantage of the change of reality to develop a more biblical leadership based on teamwork.

This is not just a question of moving from singular to plural, but also to a multi-generational leadership. In Argentina we are seeing a generational change among pastors, thanks to the pandemic. More than 250 pastors have died. And the majority left their congregations without a pastor, because there was only one pastor and he had no one to succeed him. The biblical model is not one of replacement, but of shared ministry. The older pastors must reproduce themselves in other pastors, and raise up especially younger ones, which are the ones that understand the world in which we live. Besides assuring ministerial continuity, those youth will be a fountain of spiritual renewal for the church, with new enthusiasm, a renewed passion, new strength. It is not youth instead of the older ones, but rather the older folk joined with the youth. For that reason it is indispensable that the pastors who already have much experience in leading, learn now to jointly lead and be led by others. The older ones focused on “what” and “why”. That is, to take care that always in the church the eternal gospel is preached, for the glory of God and the extension of his kingdom. Meanwhile, we should leave with the youthful element the “how”, suggesting new ways to shepherd people, that our mission be relevant and pertinent for the current time.

**Strategy #19:** *Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you which one of your pastors you need to train to accompany you in a shared apostolic ministry.*

**Strategy #20:** *Challenge your pastors with the Word of God to raise up new pastors in each congregation. Help them to do so with scheduled concrete goals.*

## **6. Toward a leadership that is more flexible and healthy.**

Vaters rightly says that this is a time for the pastors to change their rhythm. They responded to the new situation at an impressive speed. But they cannot continue all the time at that same speed without suffering consequences.

I like to say that it is time to move beyond the Jamaican rhythm to a Kenyan rhythm. The Jamaicans and the Kenyans are the fastest athletes on the planet. But the first are specialists in 100 meters, and the Africans are the best with the marathon. The ministry is not a race of 100 meters, but a marathon. The rhythm of a marathon is slower. Not only is the ministry long, but this process of the pandemic is also slower. And we need a leadership that doesn't just respond to emergencies, but that leads the processes of change. The retreats that I propose to you with your pastors is for your leaders to become more reflexive and that they stay on the front line of the changes and not just to run when the occasion arises.

The rhythm also has to do with a healthier leadership: pastors that take care of their health. Our generation was not trained to be careful about our nourishment, or physical

exercise, regular medical checkups, the necessary physical rest. We will have to change first, but also teach our pastors to do so. Many pastors, that didn't take care of their health, with excessive weight, sedentary life, became victims of the virus. Teaching them to take time for a rest is not sinful, but rather a biblical command.

**Strategy #21:** *Encourage your pastors to organize their agenda leaving space for family time, and time to do what they enjoy, even though it is not ministry.*

**Strategy #22:** *Take along to an encounter with your pastors a physician to talk to them about the importance of diet, exercise, rest, healthcare and checkups.*

### **7. Toward a leadership that inspires and liberates rather than a leadership that controls.**

The church that is community that takes their mission forward in the dispersion has a heightened lever of liberty. Leadership that seeks to control everything will seem very limited or too stressful. In Genesis 1.1-2 we read that God had created the heavens and the earth but the earth was in a chaotic state: *disordered and empty*. It is in that chaos that the Holy Spirit moves and the creation acquires form and content. The moment of maximum creativity is in the union of chaos and order. Businesses today have a new form of organization which they call "chaordic". The order is the result of having the same vision and the same objectives, but each one is reached freely, in its own way. They say it is the most productive business organization.

The chaos of the new reality requires of us a "new-old" way of leading in the church: a ministry that is *chaordic*. Where the pastors align the people to carry out a common vision and objective, while leaving room for liberty so that each one in the diáspora handles it with creativity, in his own style. This type of conduction produces considerable insecurity to those accustomed to control, so that nothing is done in the church without our authorization. But it is the most productive way of corporate mission that we can handle in the new time. A leadership is forthcoming that is much less vertical. But the essence of Christian leadership is to inspire and liberate more than to control.

**Strategy #23:** *Plan an encounter of ministration with your pastors so that the Father's love might be perfected in them and will do away with all fear and control.*

### **8. Toward a leadership that lives and advances in unity**

The pandemic created cracks that tend to separate the pastors in the cities. The politization of the crisis, the sanitary measures, the closing (sometimes partial) of the temples, the catastrophic eschatologies, the surging of individualistic leaderships that took advantage of the delays in the formal structures of unity, occupying positions of power, were some of the reasons that generated more division. On the other hand, these cities where the Pastoral Counsels, the Ministerial Fraternities, were functioning well, were a great help, providing accompaniment, orientation and strengthening. And these were the background for the appearance of some projects of common mission.

It was clearly shown that ministry that acts alone is one of the worst evils. And that all of us need close relationships, that are healthy, friendly with our peers. It is essential to teach our pastors to have close friends, find other pastors with whom they can share and in whom they can trust. And the same is true for the fulfillment of the mission in our nations. We live in a broken world. There is a new dimension in the mission of the church: the

reconstruction of ruins. And the unity of the church in mission is necessary to respond to such a challenge.

**Strategy #24:** *Create a Fraternity or Counsel of Pastors in your city if there is none.*

**Strategy #25:** *Ask your pastors if they have close friends and challenge them to have them. Encourage them to take part in groups of pastors in their city or create them..*

**Strategy #26:** *If you have an apostolic ministry of unity in your city, plan a retreat with the pastors and analyze the state of unity in your city, and move it forward.*

### **9. Toward a leadership with its own identity.**

Someone has said that to be a pastor means that we all have to do the same thing. But that is against our nature, and contrary to the work of the Holy Spirit who gives us different charismas. The desire for success led many pastors to imitate the most successful pastors, losing their own identity and without being successful in the imitation. The virtual situation made all this evident. Because people will always choose the original rather than the copy. The worst thing has been that those pastors annulled the potential that God gave them to present a singular vision to their congregation, and align the believers with that vision. When we understand the concept of the church of the city and that each congregation is only a portion of the pie and not the whole thing, not only do we stop doing things that another congregation does better, but we understand something even more important, and it is that each congregation also has their own DNA, a unique task to perform, that no other congregation of the city can do. And God will put the people in that congregation that share that DNA.

**Strategy #27:** *Help your pastors to discover their unique ministerial fingerprint and to focus on that.*

### **10. Toward a church with a defined ethos.**

It may be that clearly defining the congregational ethos is most important today. What is the soul, the DNA, the identity of your congregation? Culture is what we are. What we do may vary, but not what we are. The pastors should define very carefully the specific *ethos* and teach it always. In times of migration of the believers, changing their congregation, this is fundamental. The person who knows the identity of his church and is in agreement with the vision, develops a sense of belonging and is unlikely to change to another, even when the “show” of the other one is better.

**Strategy #28:** *Ask your pastors: When do you mention the name of your congregation, the people with whom you associate? Why do the people in your congregation feel the pride of belonging to that community? What gives them the feeling of being involved? How do they identify themselves? What is it that binds them to that congregation?*

**Strategy #29:** *Engage your pastors in an exercise to define the culture of your congregation with a foundation in the Word of God.*

**Strategy #30:** *Allow for practical ways to emerge in which those cultural values will be expressed in your congregations so as to promote them and reinforce them among the people.*

**Conclusion:**

A church that has developed like a machine to produce events, might find itself in a delicate situation now. A church that revolves around a professional clergy, or a dominant personality, will face difficulties. A church where the institutional aspect controls the rest and is stronger than the focus on community, will have problems. A church whose worship revolves around a model where 99% of the people are spectators, and 1% are protagonists at the front, faces a serious problem. A church in which what is done face-to-face is identical to what is seen virtually, will find it difficult to sustain the program.

If the complex of Community and Institution are properly related, where there is a significant work of the Holy Spirit, where there are networks of relationships and mission, and with a harmonious movement of union with *ecclesia* and mission in the *diáspora*, then we are in a marvelous situation of advance and growth for the church.

This a time to strengthen the community culture. When as part of that *ethos*, persons take preeminence over activities and programs and this is expressed in networks of relationships and mission, pastoring and serving people in their vast needs, the church will experience an exponential growth and a level of impact in the city like never before.

When as part of that corporate culture, the community is promoted rather than individualism, it will be a wonderful time for the church. Because what the people need the most is the community aspect.

When as part of that DNA of the church, there is liberty for every believer to be a protagonist, when this *chaordic* movement of the Spirit characterizes the mission, this will be a time of multiplication in the church. When we have an *ethos* that celebrates that charismatic undercurrent, with the risks implied for our institutional schemes, then this moment will be one of extraordinary richness. For when the institutional dimension is most limited, the temple is closed or semi-closed, where the clergy are not so exposed and visible, then that community dimension acquires a great richness if the people have that liberty, that chaotic order. For the church is a charismatic community, that is to say, *chaordic*.

If the culture of generosity and of solidarity becomes part of our *ethos*, with the strong emphasis on networks of relationships and mission, then the church as community will be dynamic. When in the soul of the church it is more blessed to give than to receive, then the people will be part of the community, not only to see how much better than can live; for now they will ask how to become part of this mission of Jesus in this world: how to heal a fractured world, how to rebuild a nation in ruins.

I believe there is coming a church more faithful to the Word and more synchronized with the Holy Spirit, with a strong passion and need for community, which gathers as *ecclesia*, not out of custom, but because they recognize that it is essential to experience sharing together with the rest, in a real and concrete way, and not behind the curtains, and with a mission fully developed by each one of the disciples.

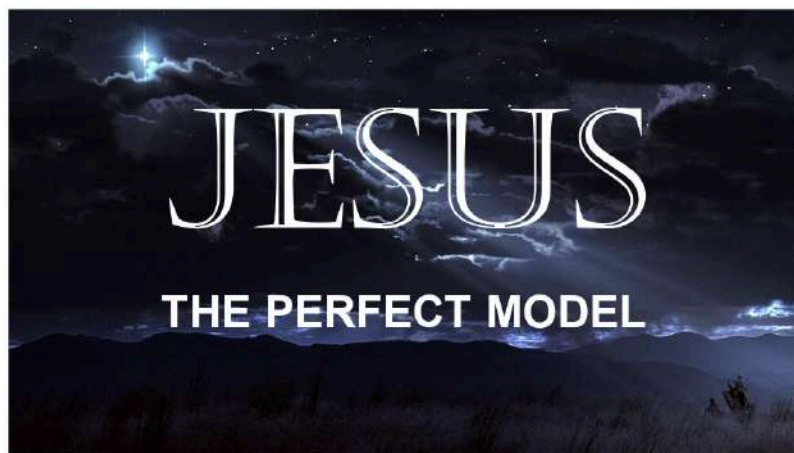
God is not calling us to survive in difficult times, but to be a church that advances, transforming the reality of a broken world. Apostles and prophets are called to seek God to be able to guide the pastors to what I believe will be a glorious season for the church. For the church that responds to the needs of the people will bring more and more glory to the name of Jesus Christ. May it be so.

Vinci Pessoal

Introduction:

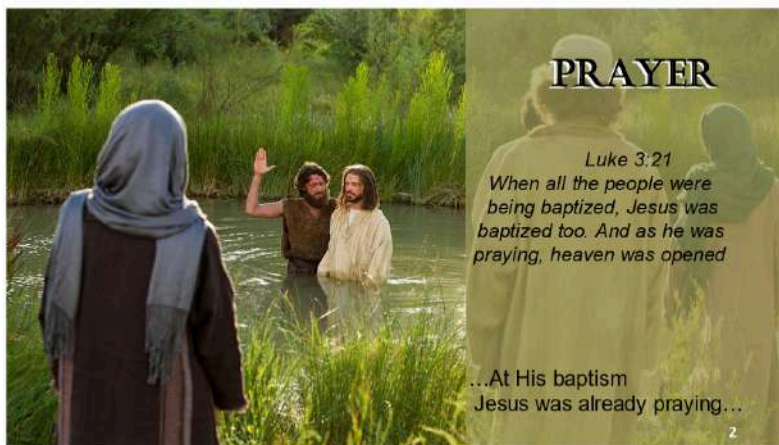
I thank God and declare my dependence on Him and fear of the Lord! I would like to honour the various teachers who taught me the way of the Lord; and today some of them will receive from my life; therefore, I humble myself to receive the Word that comes from the Lord. God is already using my close friend and companion Carlos Mraida to speak about the church, about the body of Christ working in this new reality; and I would like to talk about JESUS CHRIST AS THE PERFECT MODEL.

JESUS THE PERFECT MODEL



At all times I want to look to Jesus as our example to build the church; His example to make disciples !!!

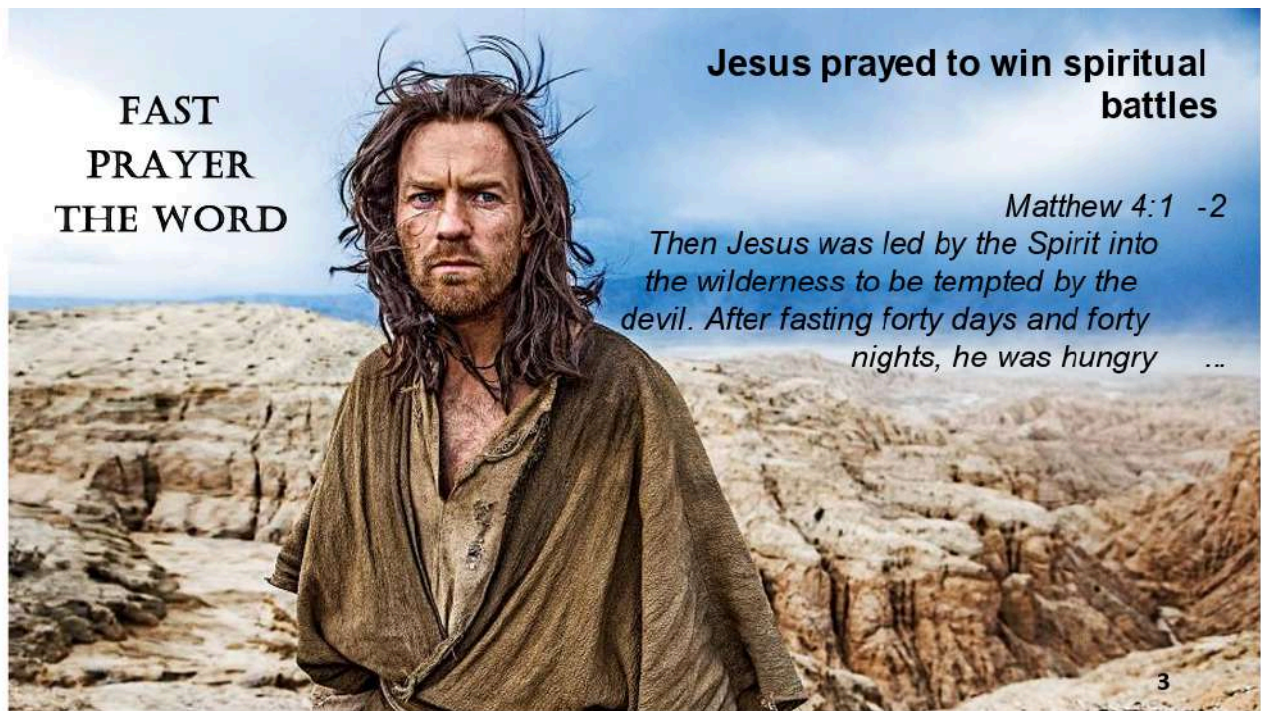
Jesus marks: PRAYER



Luke 3:21 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened At baptism He was already praying ... A prayer mark! It all starts with prayer! I remembered my three baptisms:

- The first one, I was a baby and I didn't understand anything
- The second one, it was in a traditional group, but it was the beginning of everything
- The third one, it was in a lively group, a new time, I cried a lot, PRAY, I repented of my sins Jesus was baptised together with the people (HUMBLE), He was already under the influ-ence of the Holy Spirit.

**Jesus prayed to win spiritual battles**

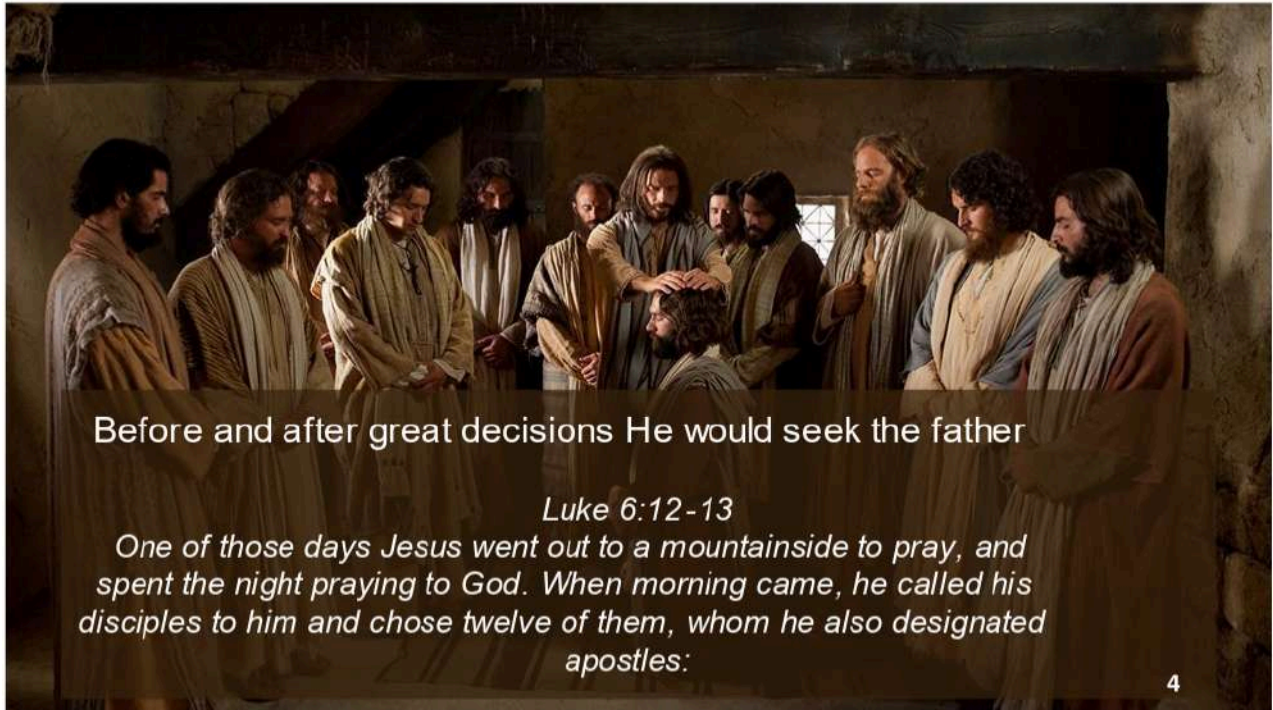


**Jesus knew that a spiritual battle was beginning!**

Matt. 4:1-11 Jesus prayed to win spiritual battles So he separated himself for 40 days and 40 nights - FASTING - PRAYER - WORD (In this text from Matthew, Jesus is quoting the word in the book of Deuteronomy) He sought intimacy with God! That is why he quoted the Word to the enemy; and it was the fruit of prayer. Jesus CHRIST is not a surname.He is anointed by God - Consecrated. I believe that God wants to remind us how we started: PRAYER, WORD, FASTING, SACRIFICES, HUMBLENESS. Jesus Christ; God's anointed by the power of prayer! He lived a life of prayer at all times, and knew the need to know the Father's will. Before and after great decisions Jesus sought the Father; and He knew fellowship with His father was the best time of the day. Being filled with God's power was always better than working in His own strength; that is why He

needed to talk to the Father. If you study the Word, you will see that his whole ministry was like that. Let's take a quick look:

### In choosing the 12 disciples:



Luke 6: 12-13 “One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, **and spent the night praying to God.** When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them,…”

Mark 1:35. **Very early in the morning, while it was still dark,** Jesus got up, left the house and **went off to a solitary place, where he prayed”.**

Why doesn't the church grow?

Why are people not formed?

Why don't we have the manifestation of gifts?

Jesus spent the night praying. He got up early in the morning and went to a deserted place and prayed. This is our greatest need. **The first secret, the first revelation is to PRAY, PRAY, PRAY; to feed on the Word and respond with the Word.**

**Before and after the healings, he spent hours in prayer (in the latter case he rose in the middle of the night, and God healed through Him):**

Before and after healings, He spent hours praying

*Luke 5:15-16*

*Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.*



5

Luke 5:15-16. “Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. **But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.**”

Everything he does has the cover of prayer, and in this case he sought a lonely place.

Sometimes we get caught up in facts, in evidences, in miracles. But what moved all of this was prayer. He was and He is the MODEL OF PRAYER because He intercedes for us.

**He prayed that the disciples would receive the revelation of His identity:**

He prayed that the disciples would have the revelation of HIS

*Luke 9:18-20*

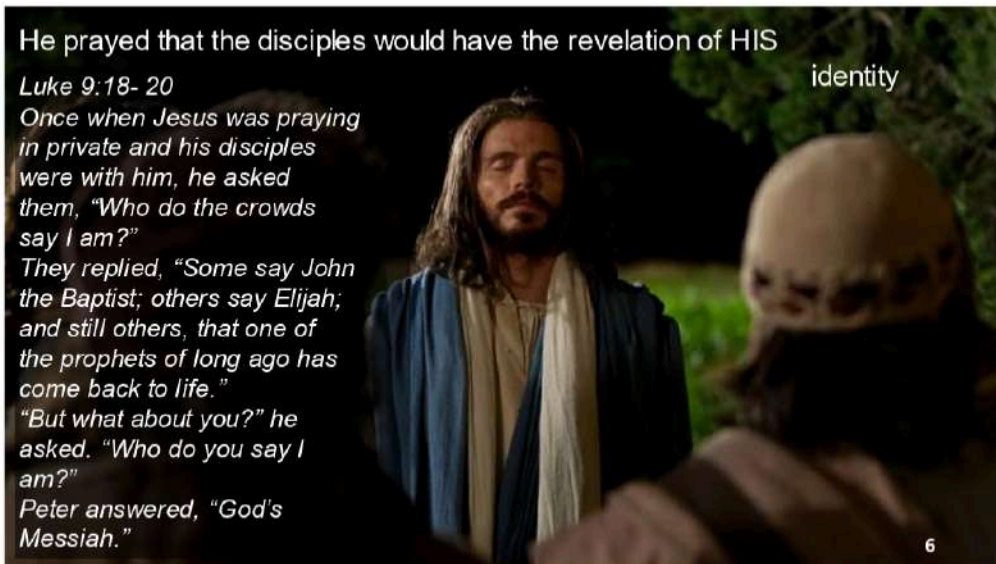
*Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”*

*They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”*

*“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”*

*Peter answered, “God’s Messiah.”*

identity



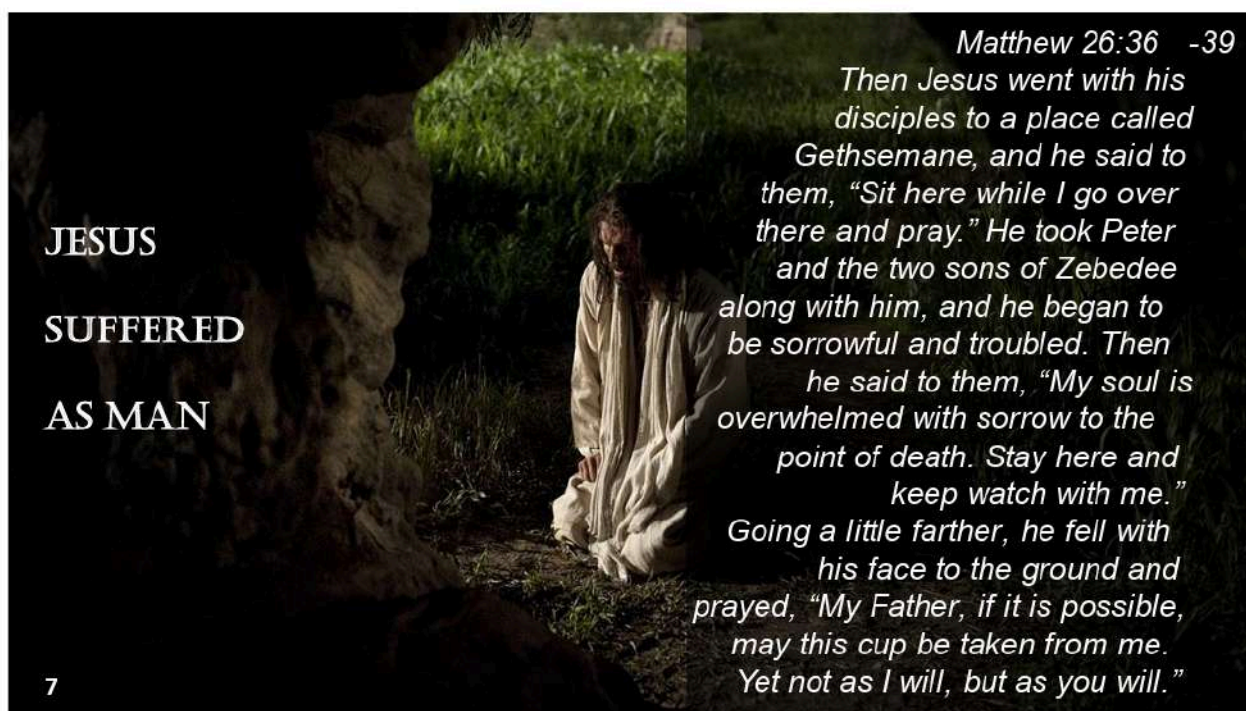
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Luke 9:18-20 "Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life." But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "God's Messiah."

Matt. 17: 1-8 Such a tremendous experience on the so-called Mount of Transfiguration; that Peter, was with James and John and they asked if they could live there.

Anyway, time does not allow us to give you any more examples; but the truth is that in every ministry of Jesus **the reality of prayer is latent in every word(scriptures)**; and conversions came mainly as a result of **PRAYERS**; and not just preaching.

Jesus had this need - **WHAT ABOUT US?** We create mechanisms, activities, courses, etc., but we don't pray like Jesus did.



Matt. 26: 36-39 Jesus **suffered as a man; suffered as a man; he had started his ministry by praying; ended by praying and calling the disciples to pray.**

**He was saddened, anguished, his soul was very sad; he summoned the disciples to watch with him; asked the Father to take this cup from him, ...**

Matt. 26: 40-41 He found the disciples asleep, and admonished them.

Matt. 26: 42-43 The disciples are sleeping again; and in verse 44 he goes to pray.

JESUS was sweating drops of blood! Shall we fall asleep like the disciples did?

**NO BUT WE'LL DIVE INTO PRAYER.**

I Sa. 1:13 ANNA seemed drunk when she prayed asking God for a son

Heb. 7:25 The Word says that He always lives to intercede for us! In the Old or the New Testament, since the beginning of everything; we are marked by many experiences with prayer.

Act. 9:11 **Paul, at the beginning of his encounter with God, was already praying: Ananias, who already had fellowship with God and was praying, entered the house that Paul was in, laid hands on him and prayed.**

We could spend hours and days talking about how God at all times did the work through prayers!

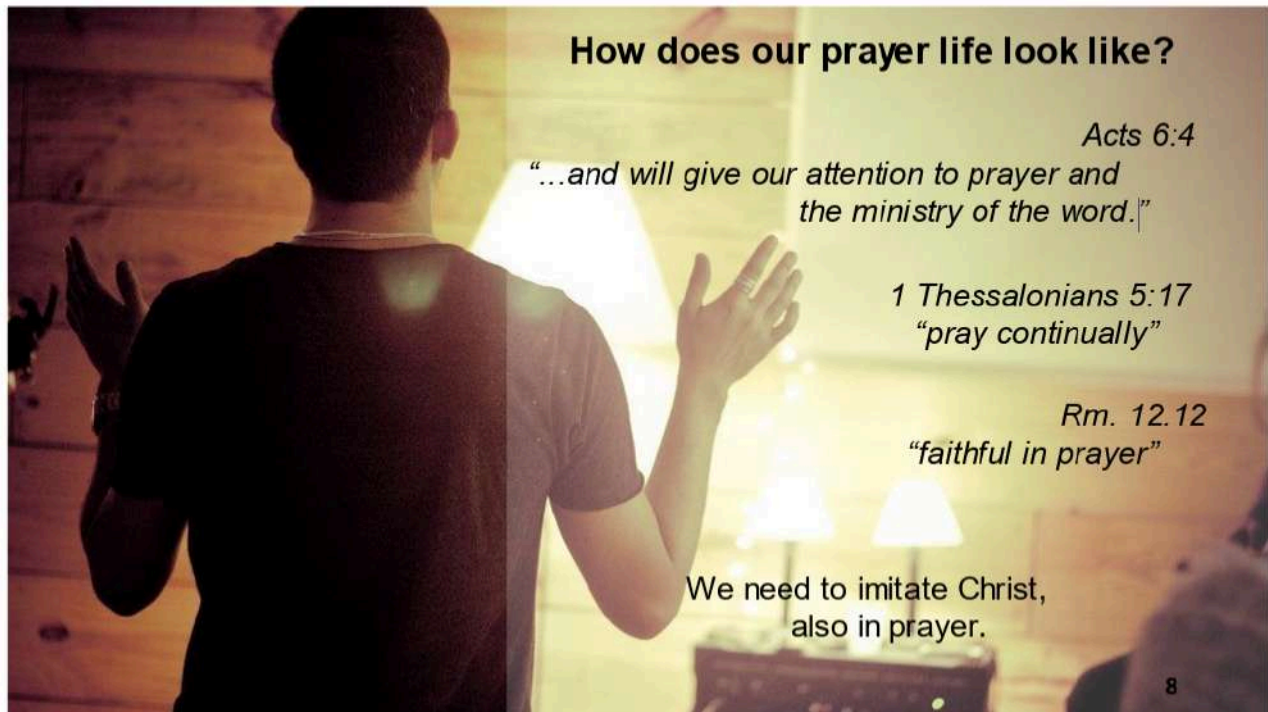
**It is our first call! Spend time with him; to know him, to cry with Him, to pour ourselves out in prayer.**

We will get nowhere without prayer.

The first "SECRET" is prayer!

The first revelation is to PRAY, PRAY, PRAY !!!

**How is our prayer life?**



The church life will only change when my prayer life changes! We have no strength in ourselves; we can say that we have tried everything ... Acts 6:4 In those days there were many tasks that tried to divert the apostles from the main task (PRAYER) God spoke to me a lot when I saw that the order is this: "and as for us, we will consecrate ourselves to prayer" and to the ministry of the Word. We live in a time of many preachings, ministry on the internet, and there are many people who feed on listening, listening and listening, and nothing changes; but we have to convert these times into times of prayer ...

### **The problem is not to start praying; but keep praying, persevere**

Rm. 12:12 Says: "In persevering prayer" and we have many examples as in Luk.18:1-8 Jesus said about the duty to pray always and never to falter (The judge and the widow)

Isa 62: 6-7 and Habakkuk Chapters 1, 2, 3 tells us much about prayer, and leads us to understand that we are like guards in a watchtower; that day and night watch, and cry out for the church, ...

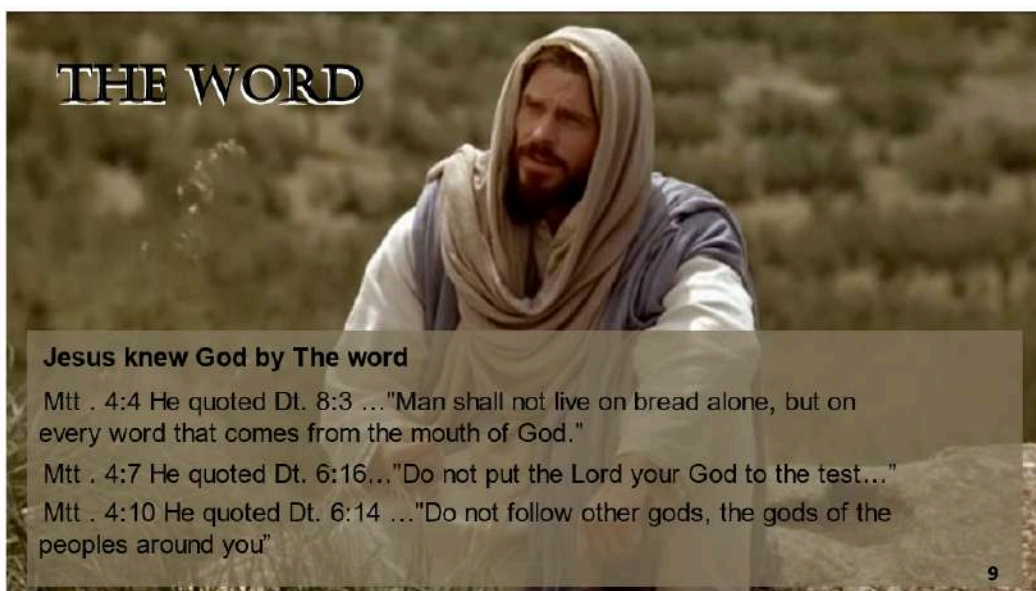
I Th.5:17 "Pray continually"

A good example of this is George Müller who spent 3 hours a day in prayer (5 to 8 am. In his biography, is mentioned that he said 3 thousand prayers), and all were answered. We feel frustrated because we are unable to pray 30min or we spend days without spending quality time in prayer; but God is not talking about repeating George Müller; he wants us to have our own experience.

**"Pray without ceasing" it is compared to breathing/ We will not stop breathing to pray; but we will always pray; while we are breathing...**

If Jesus showed this mark of prayer, being the Son of God; we received this message from the Lord; to imitate him.

### **The second mark: The WORD**



Matt. 4: 1-11 Jesus makes it clear how he spent his time with the Word; because when He was tempted , and tried by the enemy, He responds with the Word.

All of Jesus' answers and quotes were based on the Word of the Lord.

Matt. 4:4 He quoted De . 8.3 ... “you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD”.

Matt. 4:7 He quoted Deu. 6.16... “Do not put the LORD your God to the test”

Matt. 4:10 He quoted De . 6.14 ... “do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you ” Jesus knew God by His word! He heard everything from the Father!

How many things have we done; but we lack “Word, foundation, biblical support, founded on God. Many live a life on the margins of The Word, but Jesus always wanted to hear from the Father. Love the Word, be transformed by the Word, obey the Word, live the Word. What a delight is the WORD!

**We already understand that we cannot live without the WORD!**

**The third: THE HOLY SPIRIT**



Gen. 1:2 From the beginning the Spirit of God hovered / moved over the waters  
 Gen. 1.26 “Let us make mankind in our image, according to our (His) likeness”

The three were already there (Father, son and the Holy Spirit)

There is no way to do the Work if it is not with the Holy Spirit! How many times we lack dependence on the Holy Spirit (listening to the Holy Spirit)

Luke 3:22 “...and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a

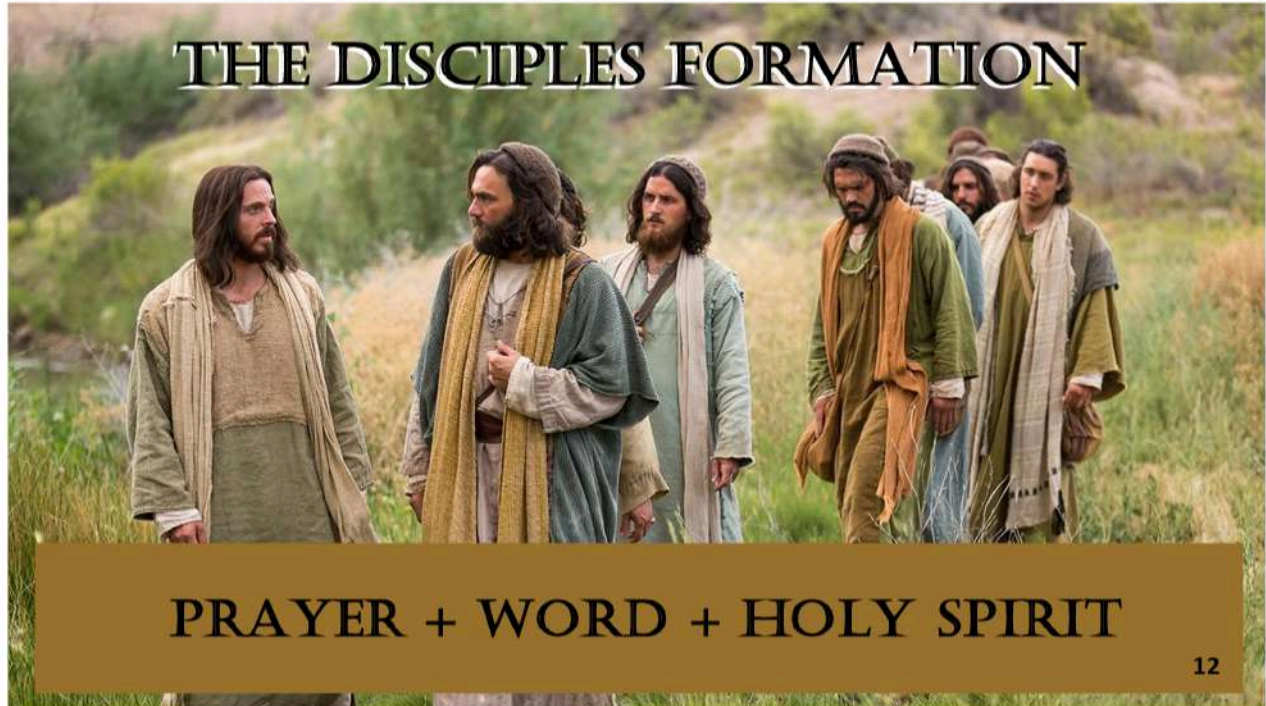
voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” Since His baptism, in the beginning, in the first battle, He was taken to the desert by the Holy Spirit to be tempted.

Luke 4:14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside.

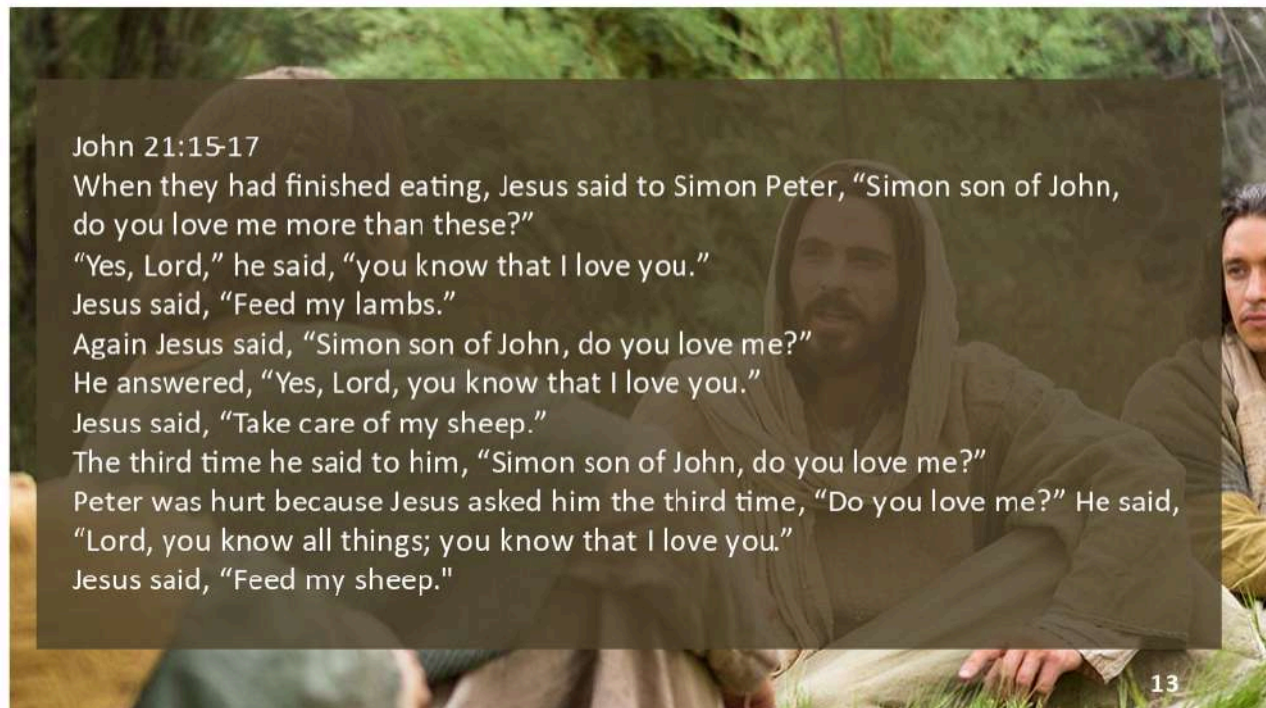
His mission begins in the power of the Holy Spirit.



Luke 4:18-19 The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” The text begins by saying that the Holy Spirit is upon me, ... Dear ones, looking to Jesus as a perfect model; we must follow these truths faithfully; or we will have problems. We will be limited, cold, empty, inconsistent, vulnerable, disappointed, sad, sick, unfit, underused, fearful, uncharacterised, and so many other situations that do not express Jesus. It will always depend on these three truths (Prayer, The Word, and the Holy Spirit) Prayer because Jesus depended on the Father and sought to speak to Him, The Word because He faced the enemy with the Word, and the Holy Spirit, because He was guided by Him at all times.

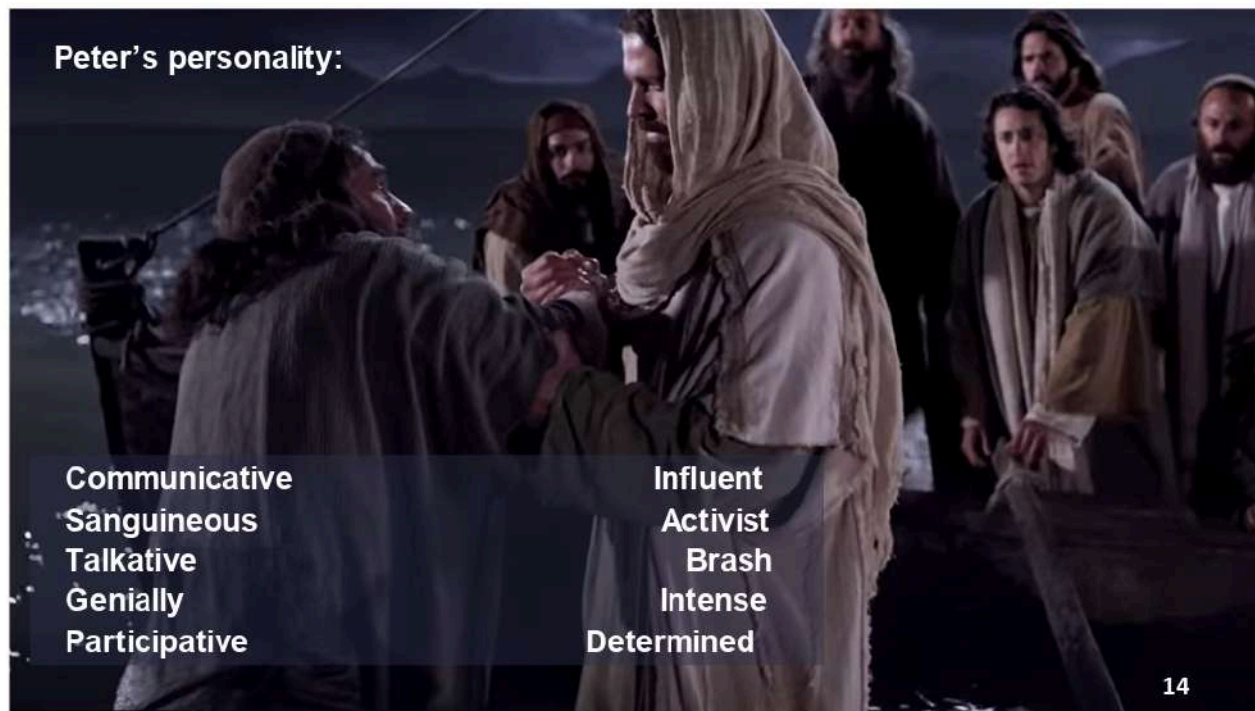
**The fourth: The formation of the disciples**

Let's take a man who exemplifies all the work of making disciples through Jesus:

**PETER:**

Full of life, participative, he was influential, activist, full on, impulsive, gives 100%. He is brash, intense, selfless, determined...

**How was his first encounter with Jesus?**

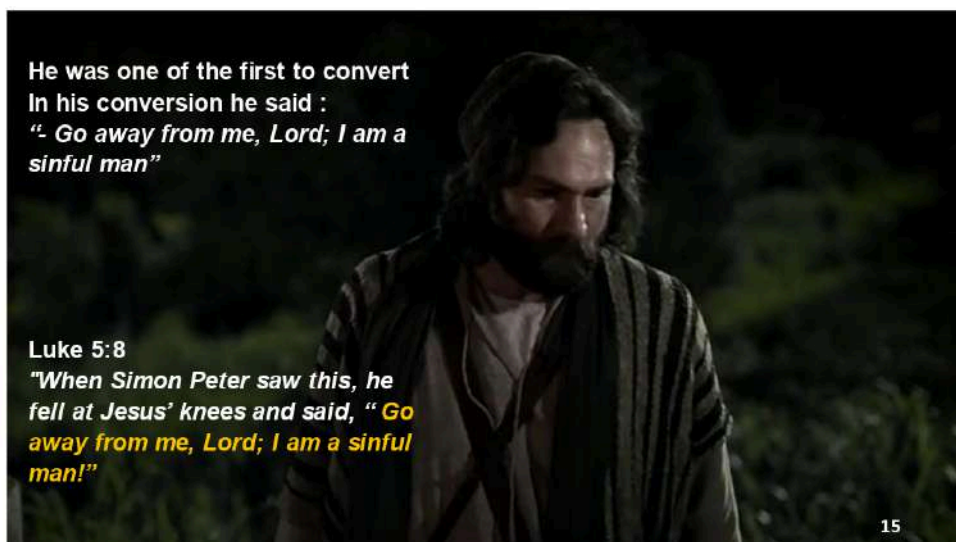


When we have a first encounter with Jesus, we are overcome by a divine conviction ...

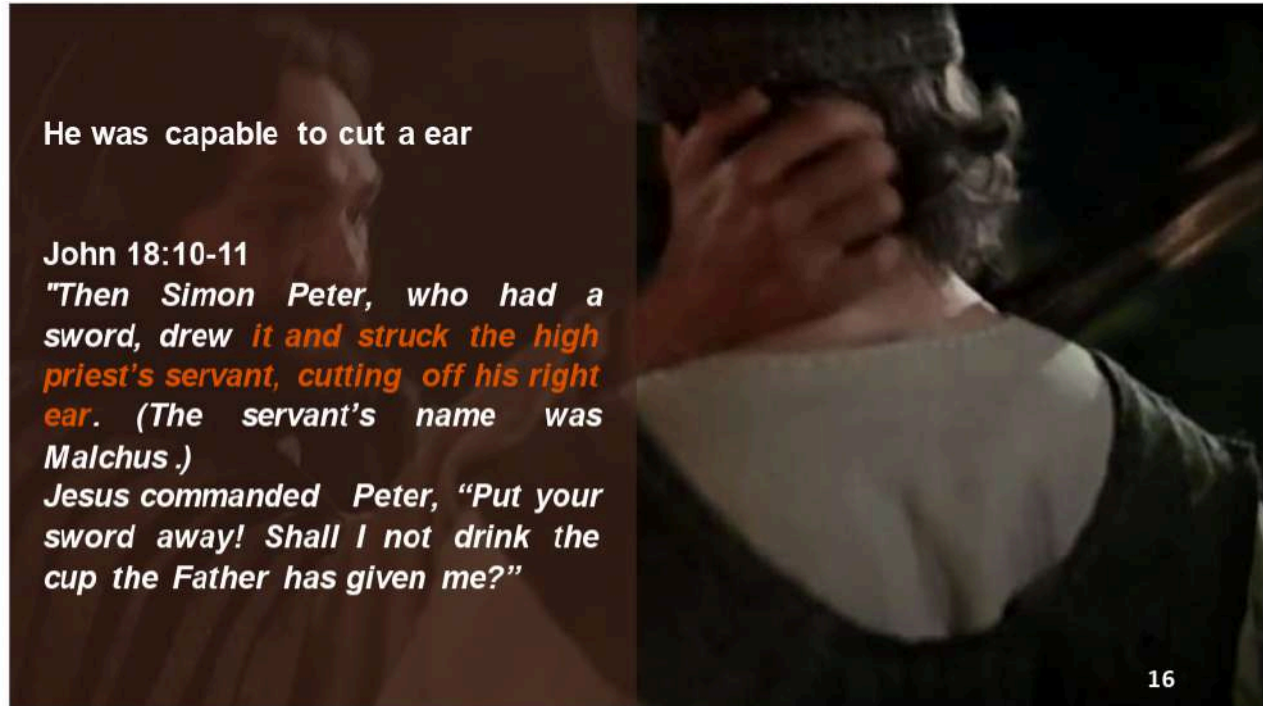
- A fear
- A desperation
- Humility
- Brokenness

**Whoever meets Jesus recognises his brokenness.**

Peter was close to Jesus along with James and John, who were partners in the fishing company (the three of them)



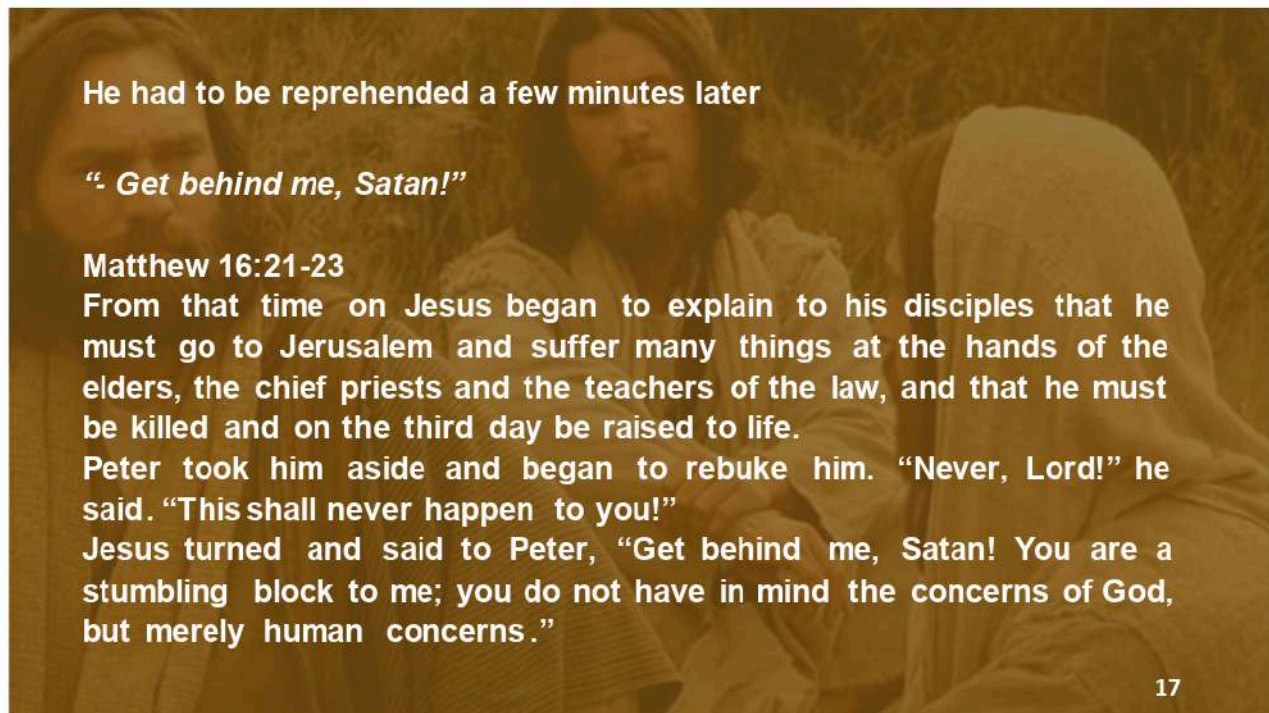
PETER WAS IMPULSIVE, EMOTIONAL, INCONSISTENT... BUT IT WAS JESUS' TASK TO MAKE HIM A DISCIPLE. JESUS DEMONSTRATES PRAYER, POWER, COMPASSION, PATIENCE WITH PETER. HE WAS AN EXAMPLE OF SELF CONTROL, FULLNESS OF GOD, AND SO MANY OTHER REVELATIONS FOR WHO WAS FOLLOWING HIM.



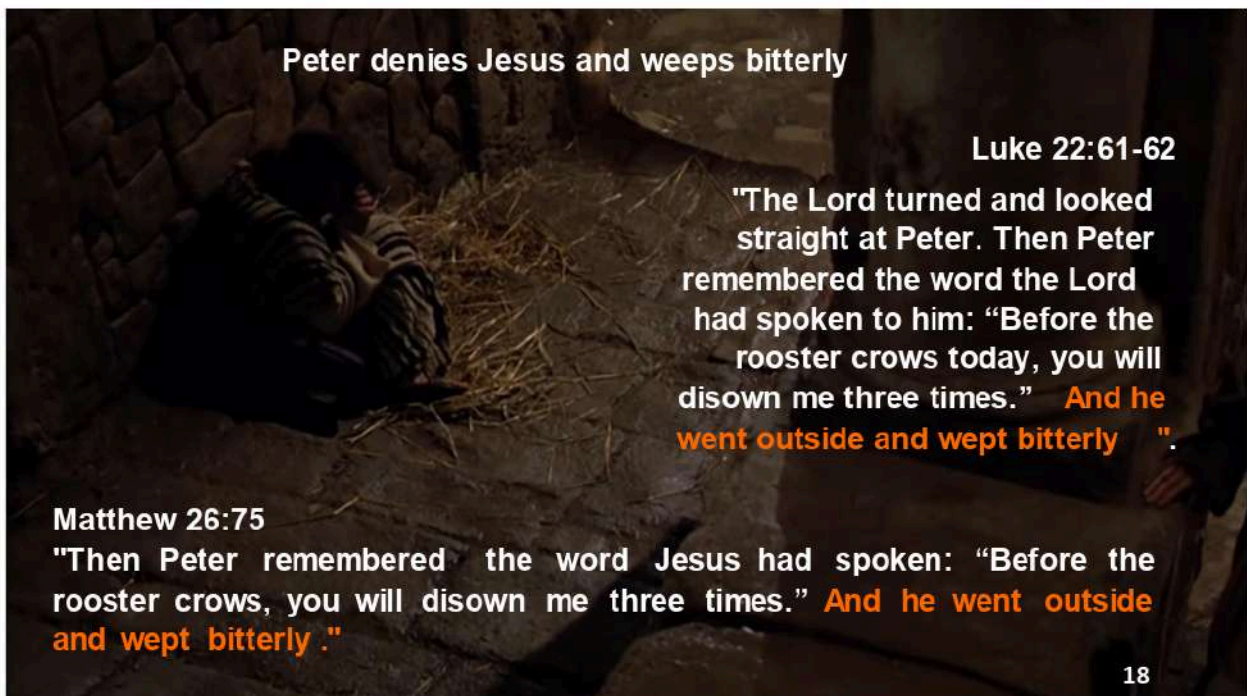
At the same time that Peter says: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God, he also says "Never Lord, this will not happen to yo"..

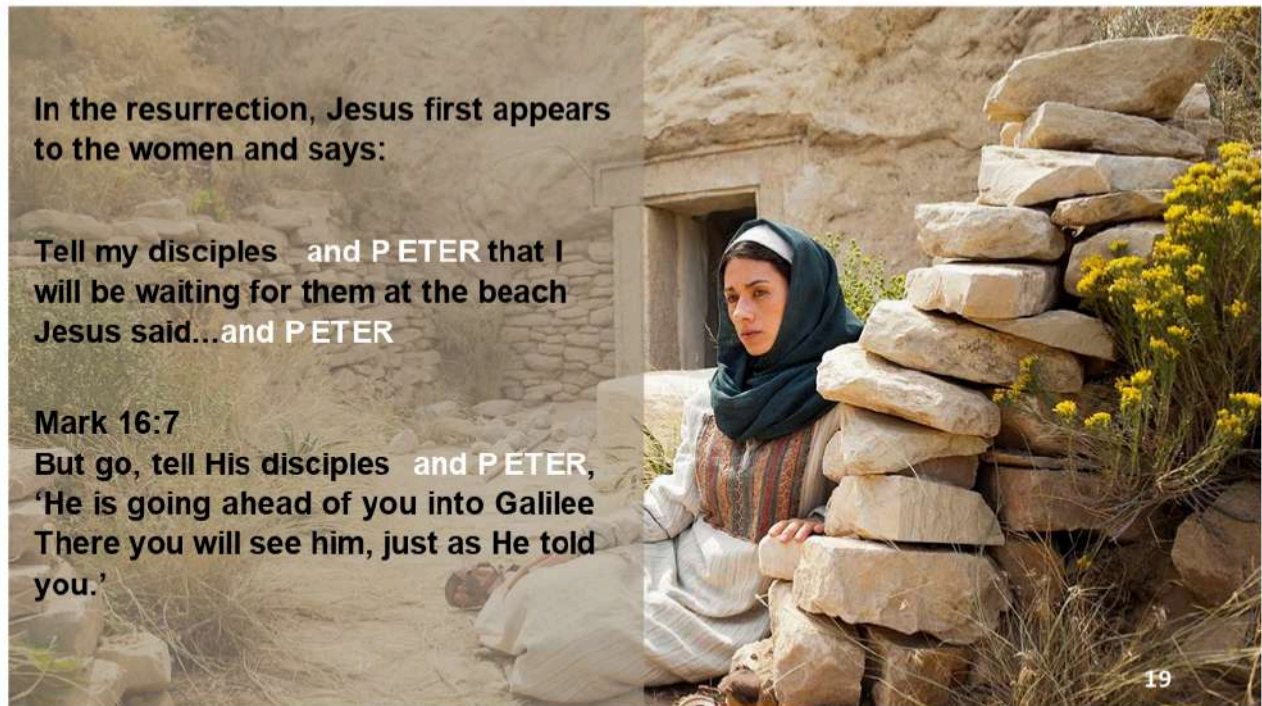
Peter still needs real experience and keeps on speaking impulsively.

After Peter reprehends Jesus, He says to him: "Get away from me, Satan; you are a stumbling block to me, because you do not consider the things of God; but those of men.



Jesus ministers to Peter's heart with prayer, with the Word, with the Holy Spirit directing and giving discernment.





**In the resurrection, Jesus first appears to the women and says:**

**Tell my disciples and PETER that I will be waiting for them at the beach  
Jesus said...and PETER**

**Mark 16:7**

**But go, tell His disciples and PETER,  
'He is going ahead of you into Galilee  
There you will see him, just as He told  
you.'**

Peter had denied Jesus, and was disappointed in himself. He had cried intensely, He was in agony Jesus uses a "scalpel" to heal Peter's heart (Jesus' discipleship); it has no impositions, rules, obligations, but it reveals love to a person; and calls this "sic" Peter by name. We have to go back to the first text; which is the text of the real conversion of Peter. The text shows that the Christian life is a journey, until God is formed in us fully.

**NOW COMES THE CONVERSATION THAT WILL BE CONVERSION:**

John 21:15-18

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things ; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.”

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**Jesus asked three times:**

**Do You love Me?**

**He had to be healed from the memory of denial (3 times he denied), by the miracle of conversion (3 times Jesus asked)**

**Do you love me?**

We have to study to see the 3 types of love

**Eros:** The flesh love, “ selfish”, sex al, fire of the flesh, of a man and a woman. Love that KILLS / PASSION, and passion kills.

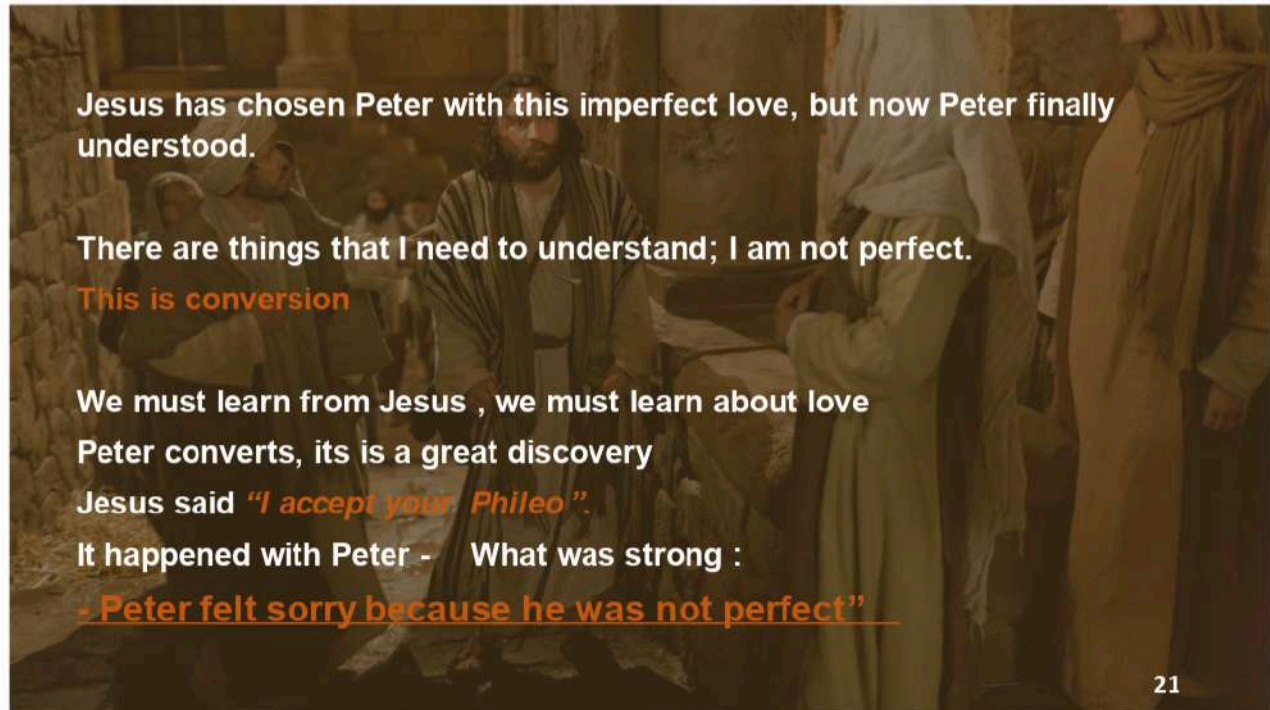
**Phileo:** Brotherly love, sympathy, affinity, love that expresses LIKE, perennial love

**Ágape:** Love that DIES FOR, respects, is selfless , is outpoured, unconditional, consistent love.

“Yo now all things and yo now that **Phileo** you”

**"THEN THE REVELATION HAS COME"**

Peter was converted, transformed, and began his tremendous ministry in Acts The work is done by the Lord; and it was at this moment that Peter felt limited, weak, impaired. All the time Jesus says:



Start to cry now, to outpour, with authenticity, truth and honesty, and say:

- Lord, you know who I am, but I ask for Your grace, I cannot do anything in my strength
- Lord, I am no longer deluded about myself. Peter changes in such a way that he remains faithful to Jesus until the end. He didn't feel worthy to be crucified like Jesus, but he asks Nero to be crucified upside down.

**JESUS IS THE PERFECT MODEL THAT TRANSFORMS MAN**

*Vinci Pessoal*