

GATE School of Ministry [DC] Bible Study Notes

Reach | Resource | Reform

Module : The Primacy of the Word of God**Session 7** : The Voice Within The Voice**Focus** : God Speaks Through Your Spiritual Father**Key Points to Review from Previous Sessions Relevant for this Session:**

- ❖ Faith, the very substantive nature of God, is developed through accurate HEARING of the Word of God.
- ❖ Faith is matured within you through repetitive exposure to an authentic apostolic fathering grace, by which you are constantly washed with the proceeding Word of God.
- ❖ Honour and esteem for spiritual fathering as reflected in an accurate estimation of his/her worth and Divine representation on one hand, and an appreciation/understanding for the fact that his/her words are actually God's Words on the other hand, is vital for development of faith and obedience.
- ❖ The ultimate objective of every son of God is to model the Nature of the Heavenly Father to men.

GOD'S WORD IN THE VOICE OF YOUR SPIRITUAL FATHER

God is Spirit, full of GRACE. 'Spirit' has no physical form nor constitution – it is invisible and cannot be seen with the natural eye. Spirit is like wind – breathe – or air set in motion. Grace is the anatomical make-up of God as Spirit. God, who is Spirit, does not have a physical mouth. He uses men on the earth through whom He may speak His Word. [Refer to my manual on GRACE for a more comprehensive treatment]

Rom. 10:14-15A

- 14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have **not heard**? And how will they **hear without a preacher**?
- 15a How will they **preach unless they are sent**

The 'Grace of God' is couched or contained in the Words that He speaks. Grace is imparted to men via the Word of God spoken to them. When men obey this Word, grace is activated in their lives. Spiritual fathering takes place primarily through the release of the Word of God from a spiritual father to a spiritual son. No man of his own has the capacity to adequately spiritually father someone else. It is only through the grace of the Heavenly Father present within an earthly spiritual father that true spiritual fathering takes place. This grace is expressed through the medium of the Word of God from the father to the son. Thus it is the 'voice' of the Heavenly Father expressed in and through the voice of an earthly spiritual father that truly fathers you. When your spiritual father speaks, one has to discern God's voice within his voice, i.e. discern "the voice within the voice".

Recall that the Thessalonians received the Word that Paul brought to them as the Word of God, not the word of man:

1 Thess 2:13

For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe

John TURNED to see the 'the voice'.

Rev. 1:10-13

- 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and **I heard** behind **me a loud voice** like the sound of a trumpet,
- 11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."
- 12 And **I turned to see** the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw **seven golden lampstands;**
- 13 and in the middle of the lampstands one like a **son of man**, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His breast with a golden girdle.

Note here that John hears a voice behind him. He then turns to SEE the voice (not hear the voice). When he turns he sees seven golden lampstands, which is a symbolic representation of perfected doctrine. 'Lampstands' is a picture of apostolic doctrine. In the centre of all of this, he sees one like the 'son of man', i.e. the voice he heard, which he now turns to see came from man (son of man). Your earthly spiritual father is a man, pregnant with perfected apostolic doctrine, who when he speaks into your life, it is like a prophetic activation (as indicated by the phrase 'sound of a trumpet'). You cannot ignore this 'voice'. It is 'loud' and has the effect of transitioning you into the fullness of your purpose and destiny.

God communicates to the entire church through the spiritual FATHER over that church as is clearly evidenced in the pattern reflected in the verses above. God's word and voice to you is locked up within your spiritual father.

When a spiritual father speaks to you, he speaks representatively of the Spirit of the Heavenly Father.

Matt. 10:20 "For it is not you who speak, but it is the **SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER** who speaks in you.

Sam 23:2 "The **Spirit of the LORD spoke by me**, And His word was on my tongue

Malachi 2:7 "For the **lips of a priest** should preserve knowledge, and **men should seek instruction from his mouth;** for **he is the messenger** of the LORD of hosts.

The Galatian believers received Paul, their spiritual father, as 'Christ' himself (Gal. 4:14). His aim was to form Christ in them (Gal 4:19). For this to be accomplished, they had to see him, not in his fleshly dimension, but view him as Christ coming to them.

Gal. 4:12-20

- 12 I beg of you, brethren, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong;
- 13 but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time;
- 14 and that which was **a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but YOU RECEIVED ME as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself.**
- 15 Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness **that, if possible, you** would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.
- 16 So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?
- 17 They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them.
- 18 But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you.
- 19 **My children**, with whom I am again in labor until **Christ is formed in you**—
- 20 but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Note: Verse 19 contains the ultimate goal of spiritual fathering, i.e. '**that Christ may be formed in you**'.

The word for '**received**' here (Gal 4:14) is '**dechomia**' and means 'to accept an offer deliberately and readily; to take to oneself what is presented or brought by another; to receive, admit with the mind and heart, i.e., by implication to approve, embrace, follow'. Thus, the Galatians, in their heart and mind, wholeheartedly approved and thus embraced Paul in his representation of Christ, bringing the grace of 'father' to them.

In fact, the Galatians received Paul as **an angel of God** - even as though CHRIST HIMSELF were coming to them (Gal.4:14). Paul was the representation of Christ to them. When they saw Paul, they looked past his humanity, frailty and human deficiency, and saw CHRIST HIMSELF standing in him. The highest proof of love and submission to your spiritual father must be tested on whether or not you receive, respond and relate to him as you would to Christ Himself. Paul said 'Follow me as I follow Christ' - i.e. he is saying, "If you follow me, you will be following Christ". And note the extent of their obedience to his words because of this: v. 15 - "you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me".

In time, the Galatian church drifted away from Paul's teachings and embraced Jewish legalistic practices. For this, Paul, in the book of Galatians, cautions and chastises them. As part of the premise of his correction, he affirms how they received him initially as receiving Christ himself. His reference to them

as 'children' in verse 19 highlights his fatherhood over them. This calls us to value our spiritual fathers over us as representations of Christ.

The appeal of Paul made to the Galatians is given force or impetus by the cemented condition of his fatherhood over them. Thus, as a father over them he could speak in strong terms to them, (e.g. "I am perplexed (hesitation, doubtful) about you – v.20).

He could say something similar to the Corinthians:

1 Cor.4:14-15

14 I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children.

15 For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

When correction and admonishment comes from your spiritual father, see the Spirit of the FATHER present in them:

Matthew 10 :20

“For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

SEE YOUR SPIRITUAL FATHER AS AN ‘ANGEL’ – A MESSENGER FROM GOD SENT TO YOU

Note the Galatians referred to and received Paul as an angel. But this does not necessarily mean they regarded him as a celestial heavenly being. The Greek word translated in English as ‘angel’ denotes ‘**he who brings a message from God**’.

Angel = angelos = A messenger, one who is sent in order to announce, teach, perform, or explore anything

In the book of Revelation, the ‘angels’ of the seven churches are a reference to the spiritual fathers or leaders of those congregations - the delegates or messengers of God to those churches. Note here that God will speak corporately to the entire church through the designated ‘messenger’ or angel that He has placed over that church of His representative .

Rev. 2:1 “To the **angel of the church in Ephesus** write:

Rev. 2:8 “And to the **angel of the church in Smyrna** write:

Rev. 2:12 “And to the **angel of the church in Pergamum** write:

Rev. 2:18 “And to the **angel of the church in Thyatira** write:

Rev. 3:1 “To the **angel of the church in Sardis** write:

Rev. 3:7 “And to the **angel of the church in Philadelphia** write

Rev. 3:14 “To the **angel of the church in Laodicea** write:

Moses was positioned as an angel over Israel (Israel is a picture of the church in the wilderness – See Acts 7:38).

Exo 23:20-22

- 20 "Behold, I am going to **send an angel before you** to **guard you along the way and to bring you into** the **place which I have prepared**.
- 21 "Be on your guard before him and **OBEY HIS VOICE** do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since **My name is in him**.
- 22 "But if you truly **OBEY HIS VOICE** and **DO ALL THAT I SAY**, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

Note verse 21 : '**My name is in him**' : Recall that 'name' alludes both to nature and function. Spiritual fathers reflect the nature and character of God to their spiritual sons. Also, they understand the purpose or function of God for humankind in a general sense, and specifically the role that they and their spiritual sons play in the execution of God's will.

Note in verse 20, the dual role of the angel/spiritual father in respect to this:

- 1) He 'guards you along the way'
- 2) He brings you into the place God prepares for you

Note also in verse 22, how God equates His voice ("Do all that I say") with the voice of the spiritual father ("Obey his voice"). Human spiritual fathers can accurately represent the voice of the Heavenly Father to their spiritual sons. Obedience to this voice, of necessity, requires that spiritual sons regard their spiritual fathers' not after their humanity, but accentuate the representation of Christ within their spiritual fathers. The spirit of anti-Christ will consistently fight this truth, and so result in widespread disobedience to the 'voice of God'.

Reception of Christ qualifies you to be a son of God in a legal sense of belonging to Him and His kingdom. This process starts at your initial acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour.

John 1:12 But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the **right to become children of God**, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God

In order to grow in maturity as a son of God, there needs to be constant of reception Christ through the reception of His Word, which is delivered through an authentic spiritual father.

John 13:20 Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who receives whomever I send receives Me**; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

The churches in the province of Galatia received Paul, their spiritual father, as Christ Himself.

Gal. 4:14b but you **received me** as an angel of God, **as Christ Jesus Himself**

RELEVANT SPIRITUAL FATHERING

To whom you relate to as a spiritual father is not a matter of political expediency. This decision must be influenced by the Spirit. Just as He, the Spirit, witnesses with our spirit that we are sons of God, so too, there will be a witness in your spirit as to whom to relate to in terms of apostolic fathering. Fathering taking place through the release of GRACE via an accurate and relevant WORD OF GOD. This Word 'guards' you along the way and 'brings you into the place' which God has 'prepared' for you.

Spiritual fathering is really focused upon the development of each person into a mature SON OF GOD through the progressive formation of Christ within – through the release of grace via the 'now' or 'present' Word of the Lord.

Your spiritual father must be current with the present demand and proceeding Word of the Lord – or at least be connected to an apostolic fathering source that is. This is vital because if you are fathered by someone who is not au fait with the current speaking or emphasis of God through His word, you could find yourself, your mindset, activities, etc., obsolete and irrelevant.

Rom 10:15 How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!"

Beautiful = horaïos = belonging to the right hour or season (timely), that is, (by implication) flourishing (beauteous [figuratively]): - beautiful.

The Greek term 'horaïos' is associated with one of the Greek terms for time, viz. 'kairos', which means 'an opportune time in which certain constituted events determined by God must take place'. So 'haraïos' bears reference to that which is 'timely' or a relevant functionality that is reflective of God's emphasis within a certain time period.

Those bearing good news through the preaching of the Word of the Lord must have beautiful feet. As the definition of the Greek word 'horaïos' above indicates, this word carries three ideas:

- a. The word 'beautiful' denotes 'flourishing' – hence – 'productive'. It bears fruit in the lives of the hearers in tandem with the expectation of God for that season.
- b. The word is a timely and relevant word – a current word.
- c. This word that brings momentum and forward movement (implied by 'feet') to the purposes of God.

The person does not father you – but the grace through the Word of God in him does. You will know whose voice shifts you into your purposes. You will know the voice that guides you along into the fullness of Christ in your life and transitions you into a place of relevancy and effectiveness in the purposes of God.

DO NOT FOCUS ON JACOB'S FLAWS; ALLOW ISRAEL IN HIM TO SPEAK TO AND FATHER YOU

Gen. 49:1,2

- 1 Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come.
- 2 **"Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; And listen to Israel your father.**

Note in verse 1, JACOB summonses, but in verse 2, ISRAEL speaks. The term 'Jacob' highlights the fact that he was a 'supplanter and deceiver'. The term 'Israel' highlights his transformed spiritual nature as one 'who has power with God'. His sons had to see beyond his historic carnal nature to behold the divine resource he represented as a spiritual father. The same applies to us. Spiritual fathers may have many flaws – they are not perfect, yet they possess a divine grace resource, which if acknowledged and accessed, will release the pure and unadulterated speaking of God necessary to reveal and direct the destiny of their spiritual sons.

The GRACE of God within spiritual fathers must be PERCEIVED/RECOGNISED and accessed. Sight of this grace eclipses natural weakness in them and so we do not abort the reception of God's grace given to them for us.

Gal. 2:9a and recognizing the grace that had been given to me.

Gal. 4:14 and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself

HOLDING FAST TO THE WORDS OF GOD RELEASED THROUGH YOUR SPIRITUAL FATHER

It is critically important that one consistently and repetitively exposes oneself to the Word of the Lord as released through authentic apostolic spiritual fathers, who are connected to a relevant proceeding Word of God.

Note the instructions of Paul (spiritual father) to Timothy (spiritual son):

2 Tim 1:13 Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. (NASB)

2 Tim. 1:13 Hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (KJV)

Standard/Pattern = hupotupōsis = A *sketch* (figuratively) for imitation - form, pattern.
an outline, sketch, brief and summary exposition
an example, pattern

Timothy is to retain or hold fast to the outline or sketch of sound doctrine that he has received from Paul, his spiritual father.

'Sound' = hugiainō = to be *uncorrupt* ; 'free from the mixture of error'

Retain/Hold = echō = to hold to oneself; to have possession of the mind; to have, i.e. own, possess; to adhere or cling to; to be closely joined to a person or a thing

Similarly, the content of Timothy's teachings was nothing more than that which was communicated to him by his spiritual father. The content of Timothy's speaking was relative to everything pertaining to the ways of his spiritual father, Paul. He did not speak beyond this. Paul's life example was the basis for Timothy's own speaking. This became the operative framework within which Timothy spoke and functioned. Sons have the same doctrine as their fathers.

1 Cor. 4:17 : For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is **my beloved and faithful child** in the Lord, and he will **remind you of my ways** which are in Christ, just as **I teach everywhere in every church**.

Note Paul's instructions to Timothy in the following verses:

1 Timothy 1:1-3(KJV)

- 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus our hope;
- 2 unto **Timothy, my true child in faith**: Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.
- 3 As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not **to teach a different doctrine**,

1 Tim.4:11: **These things** command and **teach**. (KJV)

2 Tim. 2:1-2 : You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. **The things which you have heard from me** in the presence of many witnesses, **entrust these to faithful men** who will be able to **teach others also**.

The things that Timothy was to teach to 'faithful men' was to be the same things that Paul taught him. He could not teach anything else. His doctrine was determined by that which he heard from Paul. Spiritual sons receive and then transmit to others the things they have learned from their spiritual fathers, who are accurately following Christ and the principles of the Word.

2 Tim. 3:10-16

- 10 Now you **followed my teaching**, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance,
 11 persecutions, *and* sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium *and* at Lystra; what
 persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!
 12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
 13 But **evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse**, deceiving and being deceived.
 14 You, however, **continue in the things you have learned** and become **convinced** of, **knowing from
 whom you have learned them**,
 15 and that from childhood you have known the **sacred writings which are able to give you the
 wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus**.
 16 **All Scripture** is inspired by God and profitable for **teaching, for reproof, for correction, for
 training in righteousness**;

Within the context of growing evil, of worsening of the state of mankind and increasing power of deception, a spiritual son (Timothy) is called upon to 'CONTINUE' in the 'TEACHING' he had received from his spiritual father (Paul). In verses 10 to 16, Paul cites reasons for Timothy's continuance in the things he had learned and had been convinced of:

1. Evil men are proceeding from bad to worse in a culture of mounting deception (v.13).
2. He has 'LEARNED' and become 'CONVINCED' of certain teachings (v.14).
3. The person from whom he learnt these things is highly credible and is his father in the Lord.
4. He has witnessed the teachings modelled before him in the life of his teacher (v.10 and 11).
5. What he has learned is in keeping with the general sacredness of Scripture which he has known from his childhood – and this knowledge leads to wisdom to access salvation. (v.15).
6. The entirety of Scripture is INSPIRED - 'God-breathed' (v.16).
7. Continuance in the doctrine/scripture that he has heard has immediate powerful benefits, viz.
 they are profitable for :
 - (a) teaching,
 - (b) reproof,
 - (c) correction,
 - (d) training in righteousness (v.16).

1 Cor 11:1 Be **imitators of me**, just as I also am of Christ.

1 Cor. 11:2 Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and **hold firmly to the traditions**, just **as I delivered them to you**.

2 Thess. 2:15 So then, brethren, **stand firm and hold to the traditions** which **you were taught**, whether **by word of mouth or by letter from us**.

2 Thess. 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you **keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life** and **not according to the tradition which you received from us**.

Paul was thankful for the fact that the Romans became OBEDIENT to that specific form of teaching that HE, Paul, delivered to them. We, too, must remain faithful to the form or pattern of doctrine which we receive from **valid** spiritual fathers, who speak present truth in the spirit of the Scriptures, as they hear the Father speak.

Rom 6:17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became **OBEDIENT from the heart to THAT FORM OF TEACHING** to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

John 12:49 "For **I did not speak on My own initiative**, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as **to what to say and what to speak**.

ABIDE IN THE 'HOUSE' AND LET THE WORD HAVE PLACE OR PROGRESSION IN YOU : John 8:28-59

John 8:28-31

- 28 So Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.
- 29 "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."
- 30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.
- 31 So Jesus was saying **to those Jews who had believed Him**, "**If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;**

V31. : Continuance in the Word of God is what validates you as a disciple of Christ; to continue means to 'remain or abide' – implying a state of permanency. To continue in the Word is to obey the Word.

John 8:32 "**and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.**"

V32. : Knowledge of the truth brings freedom from sin, which is a departure from the exact ways of God. The order of things is this: (a) Continue in the Word; (b) Know the Truth; (c) The Truth sets you free. Freedom from sin comes from knowing the truth because one has 'continued' therein. Continuing in the Word implies obedience. Hence obedience of the truth reveals the fact that only then does one have true knowledge of the truth that sets one free.

John 8:33-36

- 33 They answered Him, "**We are Abraham's descendants** and have never yet **been enslaved** to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free?'"
- 34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.
- 35 "The **slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever**.
- 36 "So if the **Son makes you free**, you will be **free indeed**.

V.34-36: Submitting and yielding to sin makes you its slave – it becomes your master. You need freedom from this. Jesus proceeds to describe this as an enslaved condition indicative of one who is a slave - a slave to sin.

In contrast to this, He sets forth the position of a SON, implying that the son is not subject to mastery of sin over his life, but in sonship there is freedom from sin. How does all this result? The simple answer is '**abiding in the house 'forever'**'. The slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son does. 'House' implies a household of faith under spiritual fathering oversight, wherein grace is dispensed through the release of the Word of God. Abiding in the house – implies consistently positioning oneself to the hearing of the Word of the Lord through your spiritual father, and consciously planning a deliberate obedient action. The 'slave' leaves the house prematurely (might not be physically- could be internally) and is continually beset by an inability to overcome sin.

John 8: 37-47

- 37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because **My word has no place in you.**
- 38 "I speak the things which I have seen with *My Father*; therefore you also do the things which you heard from *your father*."
- 39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus *said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, **do the deeds** of Abraham.
- 40 "But as it is, you are **seeking to kill Me**, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; **this Abraham did not do.**
- 41 "You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God."
- 42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you **would love Me**, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.
- 43 "Why do you not **understand what I am saying?** *It is* because you **cannot hear My word.**
- 44 "You are of *your father* the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.
- 45 "But because **I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.**
- 46 "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?
- 47 "He **who is of God hears the words of God**; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

V.37ff: The claim to be Abraham's seed should be validated by doing the deeds of Abraham, which included acceptance of Jesus and His Words. Their claim of sonship to Abraham is void by their rejection of the Word of Truth brought through Jesus. Jesus further asserts that they are not of God and that God cannot be their father, and hence their inability to hear His word. Failure to hear His Word then will not allow the Word to have place nor progression within them. This goes deeper than His refutation of the fact that they are Abraham's seed. Now, they are not even

God's seed. Provide evidence that you are truly of the Lord by your acceptance of the one that brings you the WORD of TRUTH - respond favourably to this person and heed the Word, and thus express the fact that God is your Father.

John 8:37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

In the original Greek, the phrase, "my word has no place in you", literally reads as follows: **"my word finds no progress in you"**.

Place = choreo = to *pass, enter, to hold, admit*, to make room, give place, yield, to go forward, advance, proceed, succeed, to have space or room for receiving or holding something

Jesus laments the fact that although His hearers could be traced back naturally to Abraham as his descendants, yet their behaviour is far removed from that reality. They seek to kill Him – and this intended action is not in keeping with their claim to be Abraham's seed. Jesus appraises their erroneous, unacceptable and wicked intention of planning to kill HIM as the natural consequence of an important fact, viz. the Word of God had no place in them, or rather, the Word that He, Jesus, released had no abiding place within them. As indicated above, the Greek Word translated 'place' implies that the Word had no entry in them; no admittance within them. They could not 'hold' the Word.

All this was fundamentally a result of the fact that they could not accurately understand the identity of Christ as God's Son and as a result they gave the Word which He spoke no priority nor place in their lives. There was no room in their hearts for the Word of God because there was not a true appraisal and reception of the one who spoke the Word to them.

More importantly, as the literal rendering of "my word has NO PLACE in you" suggests, the Word of God had no **progress or movement within them**.

Many things crowd out the Word of God from our lives. Indeed, there are many things that crowd out the Word of God from our hearts. We need to esteem the Word highly – and give it proper accord and value in our lives. More importantly, we need to let the Word have its proper work in us.

Allowing His Word to have its proper place and progression within us will ensure that we do not develop mind-sets and behaviours that are antagonistic to God and His purposes. The people sought to kill Jesus. We too could 'kill' God's messengers and message if we are not careful.

Hold on to that form of teaching you received from true spiritual fathers. Walk in it. Obey and embody it. Let that Word have 'place' and 'progression' within you. Allow it to develop the nature of Christ fully within you. Teach this same pattern or form of doctrine to others, both by your lifestyle/behaviour as well as by the instruction of your mouth.

Heb 13:7 Remember those who led you, who **SPOKE THE WORD OF GOD TO YOU**; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

Treasure the VOICE of the Lord to you.

[Read Psalm 119:11; Psalm 37:31; Psalm 40:8; Luke 2:19, 51]

QUESTIONS AND ISSUES FOR PERSONAL REVIEW AND GROUP DISCUSSION

1. One of the fundamental ways in which God's Word comes to you is via the voice of a man, mainly one's spiritual father in the Lord. Validate this statement with Scriptural support.
2. Discuss the seriousness of having a relevant spiritual father who communicates to you a current, proceeding and relevant Word, and not something archaic or obsolete.
3. One must adhere to the pattern/standard/form/template/outline/sketch of sound doctrine delivered to you by your spiritual father in the Lord. What do you understand by this, and what are some implications of this?
4. John 8 contains principles by which true sonship is attested or validated. What are some of these principles?

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