

Being a Spiritually Minded Christian
Part Twenty-Four
Being in One Accord
Knowing Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life through Fellowship

- *As believers we have a choice: We can be naturally minded, carnally minded, or spiritually minded.*
- *As Christians we can have a natural mind which sees and evaluates life only from this temporal earthly perspective.*
- *The natural mind neither acknowledges the existence of a spiritual realm, nor does it recognize the value or the activities of the spiritual realm. “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14).*
- *As Christians we can have a carnal mind which sees and evaluates life from a purely selfish perspective seeking to satisfy the fleeting lusts of the flesh. “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.” (Romans 8:7).*
- *An important difference between the natural mind and the carnal mind is that a carnally minded person always seeks instant gratification regardless of the consequences or the cost. In contrast, a naturally minded man may be well disciplined and make sacrifices for longer term benefits and goals, as long as those benefits are realized in this life.*
- *A carnally minded man will experience the negative consequences and losses of his choices fairly quickly, accompanied by regrets, sorrow, and shame. However, soon his carnal mind begins to override anything that would oppose satisfying his lusts. The carnal mind keeps the person trapped in an endless cycle of failure, lust, impulsive choices, and painful consequences.*
- *Some carnally minded people fail to connect their sinful choices with the negative consequences they experience. Because they fail to connect the dots, they see no reason to change. However, no one escapes the consequences of their actions.*
- *The carnal mind is always impulsive. Esau exemplifies a man who operated from the carnal point of view, “lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.” (Hebrews 12:16). Esau failed to anticipate the possible consequences of his behaviour before he acted.*

- *Esau was a carnally minded person who lived his entire life without ever trying to curb his lusts. His carnal choices resulted in permanent loss and sorrow as his father was not able to give his son the inheritance that he should have received. “For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.” (Hebrews 12:17). Esau recognized the foolishness of his actions only when he saw the consequences.*
- *As opposed to the carnally minded man, a naturally minded man may accomplish many things in this life from an earthly perspective. It may only be at the end of his life or in eternity that he will realize the great loss he incurred by failing to be spiritually minded.*
- *As Christians we can have a spiritual mind which is to have the mind of Christ and see and evaluate circumstances and events from God’s perspective, which is both heavenly and eternal. This will help us to make choices and sacrifices which will culminate in a life that is truly fulfilling and fruitful both in this life and in eternity.*
- *As Christians there may be times when we operate in a carnal mindset, other times with a natural mindset, and other times with a spiritual mindset. However, to truly make progress and overcome the obstacles in life and be fruitful, we need to be consistent. We need to learn to constantly live our lives from a spiritually minded perspective.*
- *The mindset that can best summarize the temporal perspective of both the carnal and natural mind is: “Everyone knows they are going to die but most people don't believe it.” The spiritually minded person is aware of the brevity of life and makes choices from an eternal perspective so their life will have a positive eternal impact. The spiritually minded person produces fruit that will remain for eternity.*
- *Often Christians struggle with living a victorious life because they ask the wrong questions.*
- *The naturally minded Christian asks, “What can’t I do?” because he loves rules, laws, and rituals.*
- *The carnally minded Christian asks, “Why can't I do it?” because his motivation is to satisfy his own lusts and find excuses for his bad choices.*
- *The spiritually minded Christian asks, “What do You want me to do?” because his primary motive is to please God even above himself, and to live a life that brings glory to Christ.*

- *One important way to develop into spiritually minded Christians is through fellowship as we build one another up through our faith in Christ.*
- *In the Book of Acts the Greek word for “with one accord” is used seven times in reference to Christian fellowship. It speaks about gathering together “in mutual consent, with one mind, in togetherness” referring to a beautiful unity and harmony, like a great orchestra where each instrument plays their unique part but together they blend to form a symphony.*
- *In the Book of Acts, the church came together seven times “with one accord,” and in the Gospel of John, Jesus made seven statements about being the great “I am.” It appears that these seven “with one accord’s” found in Acts and the seven “I am’s” in John correlate in the same order.*
- *Each of the seven “I am’s” in the Gospel of John reveals a different aspect of who Jesus is in our relationship with Him. Each of these “with one accords” reveals how through fellowship we can know Jesus in this special way which can help us to develop into spiritually minded Christians.*
- *The sixth time Jesus said, “I Am” is found in John 14:6 when Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth and the life.”*

John 14:1–11 (NKJV)

¹“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

²In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

⁵Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

⁷“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

¹¹Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

John 14:1(NKJV)

¹“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

- *As Jesus prepared to reveal Himself as “the Way, the Truth and the Life” He began by exhorting and entreating His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled.”*
- *The Greek word for “troubled” means “to be disturbed, to cause acute emotional or mental distress, turbulence or fear.”*
- *When Jesus said, “Let not your heart be troubled” He was entreating each of His disciples individually. He didn’t use the plural “let not your hearts be troubled.” He employed the singular “let not your heart be troubled.” He was addressing each disciple personally and individually. Jesus was concerned for the wellbeing of His disciples not only as a group but as individuals who were all loved by Him. We can easily imagine Jesus looking at each one of them personally as He spoke those words.*
- *Passover was meant to be a time of great celebration for the Jews as they recalled how God delivered them from the bondage of Egypt through His great power and miracles. However, on this particular Passover eve the hearts of His disciples were filled with dread and turmoil.*
- *There are at least three reasons why the disciples could have been distressed as they concluded their dinner on the day leading up to Passover.*
- *First, in the days leading up to Passover, as they were journeying to Jerusalem, Jesus revealed that He would be betrayed and put to death. “Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.”” (Luke 18:31–33).*
- *Second, Jesus had just revealed to them that one of the twelve was a traitor. “When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”” (John 13:21). Unsure who this betrayer was, they each asked, “Lord, is it I?” (Matthew 26:22).*
- *Third, Jesus had just prophesied that Peter, the boldest of His disciples and the apparent leader, would deny Him three times before the sun rose. “Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.” Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.” (John 13:37-38).*

- *Jesus not only entreated His disciples not to be troubled by the events they would soon face but He provided the answer as to how they could be free from the fear and turmoil gripping their hearts. They needed to become spiritually minded and the only way they could accomplish this was to put their faith in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ, “you believe in God, believe also in Me.”*

²In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

- *Jesus continued to instruct them how to become spiritually minded. He directed their minds toward Heaven and how wonderful it will be in eternity. “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.”*
- *The people of this world will do anything to distract themselves from thinking about growing old and dying. However, the Apostle Paul encourages us to look forward to eternity. “Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.” (2 Corinthians 4:16).*
- *Jesus also gave His disciples another key to becoming spiritually minded. He directed their attention to the fact that not only is He going to prepare a place for us but He is returning for us. Jesus is coming back! “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”*
- *We can get caught up in the earthly circumstances of life and even the smallest disappointments, the most insignificant losses, and the briefest pain can overwhelm us—if we forget that our final destination is being with Jesus in Heaven forever. Apostle Paul was spiritually minded and even when confronted by times of great suffering he had joy and hope. “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18).*

⁴And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

⁵Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

- *Jesus told His disciples that they already knew where He was going and that they knew the way. Thomas unabashedly responded by saying that he didn’t know where Jesus was going, so how could he possibly know the way.*
- *The disciples were expecting Jesus to establish His kingdom on earth immediately. If Jesus had, all mankind would have been condemned to Hell because we all have sinned and rebelled against God. God’s plan for Jesus to*

willingly go to the cross was not only the best plan but the only plan that would allow mankind to experience salvation.

- *What the carnally minded person thinks is best for them is often the very worst. When confronted with trials or adverse circumstances the naturally minded person will question God's goodness or faithfulness as they seek to follow Jesus. The spiritually minded person will be confident that God knows what is best.*
- *Jesus taught that He would return to the Father in preparation for His eventual return to establish His everlasting kingdom which would include all those who had put their faith in Him. "You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I." (John 14:28).*
- *The first part of the answer to Thomas' response to "Lord, we do not know where You are going" was that Jesus was returning to the Father. The second part of the answer to Thomas' question "and how we can we know the way?" was through the cross. Jesus had already told them multiple times that the way He was going to the Father was through His suffering and death on the cross followed by His glorious resurrection and His ascension back to the right hand of the Father.*
- *How can we go to be where Jesus is? We get to Heaven by following the same path that Jesus chose. Jesus went to the cross and we go through the cross. We get to Heaven through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and glorious resurrection, because Jesus chose the eternal perspective. "For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection." (Romans 6:5).*
- *Jesus spent 3 ½ years teaching His disciples and preparing them for what He was about to suffer but they failed to grasp the true meaning of His words.*
- *Thomas represented a naturally minded person who understands and interprets life only through the natural realm. Thomas was skeptical at the reports of Jesus' resurrection from the other disciples and responded in an almost irreverent tone. "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." (John 20:25b). Thomas rejected the supernatural reality of God's power and ways, saying, "I will not believe."*
- *While Thomas represents a naturally minded person, Peter represents a carnally minded person who tended to act very impulsively with little thought for the consequences of his words and actions. One minute he declared he was ready to die for Jesus and a few hours later he cowered before a servant girl denying with an oath that he had ever met Jesus.*

- *The wonderful news is that after encountering the resurrected Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, all His disciples were able to develop into spiritual minded followers of Jesus.*
- *Becoming spiritually minded is both a journey and a process and the revelation of Jesus is the path to becoming a spiritually minded Christian. “Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”” (Verse 6). The only way to come to God the Father is through Jesus the Son.*
- *by making another statement that startled and challenged His disciples’ way of thinking about God. “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” (Verse 7).*
- *To grasp the immensity of Jesus’ statement from a Jewish understanding of God that “from now on you know Him and have seen Him,” all one must do is turn to the Mosaic Law. “But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.”” (Exodus 33:20).*
- *To the Jewish leaders at the time of Jesus, God was Holy, unapproachable and unknowable. The Jewish leaders developed their theology based on the fact that for the past four hundred years, from the end of Malachi to the beginning of Matthew, God had remained silent. God had not spoken through any prophet, yet He had a faithful remnant as we see with Simon and Anna who welcomed their prayed for Messiah, and Zacharias, and Elizabeth, among many others.*
- *When Thomas pleaded his ignorance of where Jesus was going and the way He was going, Jesus pointed to Himself as the way to know all these things by saying, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*
- *When Jesus said, “No one comes to the Father except through Me,” He wasn’t just speaking about salvation but also about knowing the Father and having a correct understanding and view of God. Many times Christians have a distorted view of God because they have failed to get to know Jesus in an intimate way.*
- *When Jesus said He was the Way, the Truth and the Life, He was indicating the three ways Jesus reveals the Father to us.*
- *Jesus as the Way speaks about knowing God through our experience with Him as we learn to walk with Him day by day and to know His heart, His faithfulness, and trust the perfection of His ways.*

- *Many people ask, “What is God like?” Jesus came to reveal the very nature of God in human form so we can fully relate to Him not just as our Creator but as our Father and our Friend. “Father, you are the One who is good. The world does not know you, but I know you, and these people know you sent me. I showed them what you are like, and I will show them again. Then they will have the same love that you have for me, and I will live in them.” (John 17:25–26, NCV).*
- *As we walk with Jesus we get to know God more and more and our love for Him grows deeper and more profound.*
- *The sweetness of our fellowship with God deepens even during times of pain and suffering as we turn to Him for comfort and strength as we experience His love, gentleness, and patience. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3–4).*

⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

- *Philip asked Jesus to simply show the Father to them and they would be satisfied. Jesus responded by telling him that He is the Way and that for the last 3 ½ years that Jesus walked among them and all that they experienced in their times with Him was a revelation of the Father. “The Son reflects the glory of God and shows exactly what God is like.” (Hebrews 1:3a, NCV).*
- *Jesus as the Truth speaks about knowing God as we study Jesus in the Bible. We can know God by the words Jesus spoke and the truths He taught. “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.” (Verse 10).*
- *The very purpose of the Scriptures is to point to Jesus and to know Him. As we study God’s Word Jesus is revealed as the Truth. “You carefully study the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. They do in fact tell about me.” (John 5:39, NCV).*
- *If a person studies the Bible but rejects the revelation of Jesus Christ then their pursuit of knowledge will not result in life, but legalism, dead rituals, and man-made religion devoid of life. Although the Jewish religious leaders studied the Scriptures, they chose not to come to Jesus and they never found life and never*

- came to the truth because Jesus is the Truth, “but you refuse to come to me to have that life.” (John 5:40, NCV).*
- *Jesus as the Life speaks about knowing God through the workings and the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the miraculous. “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.” (Verse 11).*
 - *The Holy Spirit never points to Himself but always to Jesus. “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.” (John 16:13–14). Jesus in turn reveals the Father. “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father.” (John 16:25).*
 - *The purpose of the work of the Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and revelations from the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus. When one fails to realize that Jesus is the Life then Christians can be distracted by signs, wonders, and miracles. Instead of receiving a greater revelation of Jesus which will in turn reveal a greater revelation of the Father they become distracted and can even fall into error. We must stay Christ centered.*
 - *Overwhelmed by the revelation he received, Apostle John became distracted and almost worshipped the angel. “Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ ” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.” And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”” (Revelation 19:9–10).*
 - *Just as John was about to worship the angel, he was told, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!”*
 - *The purpose of prophecy is to reveal Jesus. “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”*
 - *The New Covenant does not just allow us to know about God but to know Him personally and intimately. “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD.” (Jeremiah 31:33-34a).*

- *Eternal life is more than just to live a commonplace life, but to know God personally. “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3).*
- *“God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” (1 John 5:11-12). Jesus as the Life refers to our life on earth in the Kingdom of God and our unbroken transition into life in Heaven—forever! Our last exhalation on earth will be followed by our first inhalation of celestial air in Heaven.*
- *The sixth time the Greek word “with one accord” is used in regard to the church is found in the Book of Acts, Chapter 8 when Philip preached the Gospel in Samaria.*

Acts 8:5–12 (NKJV)

⁵Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

⁶And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

⁷For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.

⁸And there was great joy in that city.

⁹But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,

¹⁰to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, “This man is the great power of God.”

¹¹And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.

¹²But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

- *Philip came to Samaria to preach the Gospel and the people responded by coming together “with one accord” and “heeded the things spoken by Philip.” There was no division or distraction but an openness of heart and unity as they sought as a community to understand the truth. As they came together with one accord it created an atmosphere of faith where they encouraged one another in the truth of the message.*
- *What was the message that Philip was preaching? He wasn’t preaching healing. He wasn’t preaching miracles. He “preached Christ to them.” Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life and this is what the people needed to know.*
- *As Philip preached Jesus, Jesus was revealed as the Way, the Truth and the Life, through Philip’s godly example. The teaching of the Word and the miracles that followed confirmed the Gospel message.*

- ***The result was that many of the people turned away from their sins and the deception of witchcraft and put their faith in Christ. “But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.”***
- ***When unbelievers come to a church they are not interested in rituals or man-made traditions. They want to know three things: Is there a God? Can I know Him? Can He change my life?***
- ***When we come to know Jesus as the Way, the Truth and the Life a great peace fills our hearts and our lives. “All your children shall be taught by the LORD, And great shall be the peace of your children.” (Isaiah 54:13).***