

CROSSTRAINING

discipleship series 2022

Seasons of Blessing & Development - Session 1

Introduction - Orienting to God's Nature

It's a RELATIONSHIP! As we abide (stay, be still, and remain, consciously indwelling & being partakers of Christ within), we become sensitive to His heart, we know Him and what He is all about.

A right RELATIONSHIP is a simple turning and yielding of our hearts throughout the day. Remaining joyful, thankful, and seeing all of life through the eyes of God's goodness. Basking in His love, living every day under His smile. A much-loved child learning to become a confident, more mature son/daughter.

A right relationship is key to moving forward in our kingdom life. Therefore, the Lord does not have to speak all the time about everything. His will is relational. We abide, and in so doing, become sensitive to His heart and learn to maneuver life because we don't have to ask – we already know what He would say!

The nature of God is our most compelling adventure. His heart is a land worthy of exploration!

Everything the Father does is relational first. Every application of His will and purpose is to make us in His Image. We are learning how to grow up into all things in Christ.

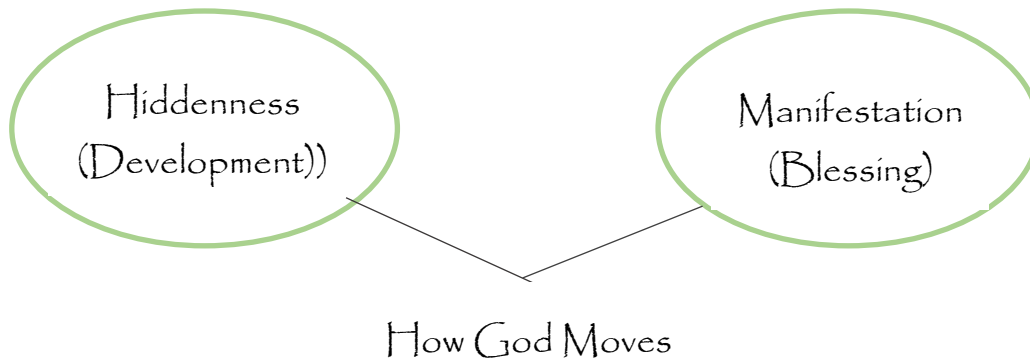
Old Covenant, New Covenant

Old Covenant	New Covenant
God's people (Israel) went to the priests to inquire of the Lord or could inquire in God's temple in an act of worship and prayer, or ask the prophets	All this activity ended with the coming of Christ. Jesus came to do away with the old covenant to make a new covenant (Heb 10:9) The old covenant dies in Christ (Rom. 10:4) and we are sanctified once and for all (Heb. 10:10)
	Jesus is a <u>Prophet, Priest, & King</u> within Himself. He is the one authorized to stand before God (Acts 2:33). His people know His voice (Jn. 10:4) and can hear Him speak (10:27)

	<p>Now we have the indwelling Spirit of God who speaks to us and through us. Speaking on behalf of God is now a distinct possibility for everyone in Christ. It does not make us prophets but simply people who can hear His voice and be a blessing & encouragement to others.</p>
<p>In OT we see a concentration of the prophetic gift in a few people.</p>	<p>We no longer require a go-between to enable us to discern the intent and purposes of God. He can and will use others to speak to us, but he will also speak face to face with His children. Guidance is now a by-product of a right relationship with God. We now see a distribution of prophetic gifts to multitudes rather than a few.</p>

Hiddenness & Manifestation

A key part of God's nature is that He moves in 2 ways:



He looks to be active sometimes but still working when we don't sense Him. When we embrace this truth, we are free to ebb & flow spiritually with what God is doing!

There are times when God reveals Himself to us and times when He hides. He has reasons for doing both.

Times of manifestation look like:

- When God is speaking clearly and consistently.
- We sense God's closeness; His blessing seems to be greatly upon us.
- We are gaining new and deeper insight into the Word.
- Our relationships are empowering and joyful.
- We access Him emotionally; we feel His peace and joy in us, his love overwhelms us
- We feel gratitude & praise as a tangible expression of our response to His Presence.

- Rejoicing, thanksgiving, praise, worship, and adoration are physical indications that our emotions are fully engaged in blessing the Lord. His manifest Presence is both physical and emotional. We experience God freely.
- Manifestation takes place in our reality – I can see how He is working

But for every season of manifestation (blessing), there is a season of hiddenness (development), where God seems to move away from us.

Times of hiddenness look like:

- God seems to move away from us.
- When we are asking God to speak, and we seem to hear nothing.
- When our lives are confusing, fraught with chaos, or covered with deadening apathy.
- Hiddenness takes place in God's reality – a place of higher development than what I am allowed to know
- It draws us into a new place in the Spirit.
- God is teaching us to walk by faith and not our feelings (what does His Word teach us?) – when I don't see Him working, I know He is. That changes our attitude & decisions & behaviors.
- He withdraws from our emotions, and we must trust then that He is with us
- Shock & awe is absent -He is still with us but simply wanting to draw us closer into Himself
- Connects us with God's wisdom

Do you feel like you are in a season of evident blessing (manifestation) or a season of development (hiddenness) in your spiritual life, or just life in general?

In the life of GraceRiver Church can you look historically and see times when God was hiding/developing us as a community of people? Can you point to seasons of manifestation (blessing)?

It is important to recognize these "seasons" because they help orient us to God. If we are aware of what is happening, we can lean into the season and reap the greatest transformations.

What about our emotions?

Enjoy our emotions in the Father but not be dependent on them as a way of life. St. John of the Cross in "Dark Night of the Soul" – God is weaning us off feeling so we trust!

Regardless of our emotions in hiddenness we develop an ongoing walk with God by the power of His Holy Spirit. Practicing faith is a discipline and hiddenness is God's way of establishing that discipline in our life. Once established, it prevents the enemy from invading our life & touching us, because regardless of our emotions, we know how to



find the Presence of God. We have constant assurance of His presence and commitment.

Wisdom in Hiddenness

God's wisdom is the revelation of who God is & the internal recognition of how He likes to work in our lives. Faith depends on one thing – our understanding of the nature of God.

Faith in the nature of God is what keeps us moving even when situations are against us. Because we know that God is faithful. "I know You, Lord, You're here somewhere. I'm just going to wait until You come or wait until You speak. I know you're doing something. I haven't figured out what it is yet, but I'm just going to WAIT because I KNOW YOU."

Job - Textbook example of hiddenness and manifestation.

"Where then does wisdom come from? And where is the place of understanding? Thus, it is hidden from the eyes of all living and concealed from the birds of the sky." Job 28:20-21

Real wisdom is hidden from us until God reveals it. He often chooses to do that in the training ground of development. He teaches us the wisdom of how to walk with Him, how to know Him, how to understand Him and how to live a life of reverent fear.

David - *"Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom,"* Psalm 51:6 – he understood hiddenness and wisdom go together.

Paul – *"Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory."* 1 Cor. 2:6-7

In times of manifestation, we cannot hear deep truth. If we do hear God speak while we are enjoying a season of His blessing, we often don't understand what He is saying. Times of manifestation are about experiencing God. They are about moving in a flow of body ministry – participating in the peace, joy, and life of God.

Hiddenness is one of the most exciting disciplines that we can learn in the realm of the Spirit. When we learn how to access it and live in it, suddenly everything makes sense forever. All the things which come against us only enable us to go deeper into God, because we have learned the discipline of living in His Presence.



Understanding hiddenness and manifestation will train us in how to determine the *windows of the soul* – those moments when we perceive what is happening in the spiritual realm.

Sometimes we become so weary of struggling through the Christian life because we don't know how to replenish ourselves in the Spirit in the Throne Room. The discipline of hiddenness will enable us to recover, restore our souls, renew our minds, and refresh our spirits. (art of bouncing back). We defeat the devil by ignoring him, retreating into our spirit and just doing business with God. Living in the place God wants us to be, no matter what the enemy throws at us – this will only make us stronger.

We will come out of the hidden place – but will come out with greater revelation than we had when we entered it. It is the key to the place of power and significance in the Spirit.

"Prophetic Wisdom" – Graham Cooke