

# The Journey

## Principles and Patterns

Before we get started on our journey, there are several concepts that will be repeated throughout *The Journey* that will be important to understand in order to put the pieces of the map together. The two dominant concepts that we re-visit often are “principle” and “pattern”. First, we need to have a common understanding of the term “principle”: **A foundational truth that never changes – upon which all other truths are built and interpreted.**

It is necessary to firmly establish this understanding, or we have no foundation from which to build. If there is no absolute truth, then the foundation is not stable. One of the most common errors that separate denominations within the Body of Christ today is the mistake of making something a principle that is NOT a principle, or conversely, NOT making something a principle that IS a principle. And one of the most common errors that separate people from Christ is the same thing. Although we will clarify and define this concept even further as we study, here are a few basic guidelines for recognizing a principle:

1. Is it consistent with the full nature and character of God?
2. Can it be applied in every instance or is it only meant for a specific circumstance?
3. Is it found in Scripture, or is it extra-Biblical? (Cultural)
4. Is it restated or supported elsewhere in Scripture? If so, how many times (frequency)?
5. Is it conditional? Does it need to be qualified?
6. Is it seemingly contradicted anywhere else in Scripture?  
(The appearance of contradiction will often lead to an understanding of balance on the topic.)
7. Is the language intended as literal or prophetic/symbolic?
8. Does His Spirit bear witness with my spirit that it is true (discernment)?  
This presupposes that you have been trained and disciplined in the difference between discerning in the spirit (spiritual discernment) vs. personal bias or perception gained through mere human wisdom, intellect, emotion, or experience.

God’s principles are similar to His laws. Even if we don’t know or understand His principles, we still reap the consequences if we break them. You may not believe in the law of gravity, but that (false) belief will not protect you if you think you can fly by jumping off a roof. The law (principle) always wins. But what about grace, you may ask. Jesus said that He did not come to abolish the law, but rather to fulfill it (**Matthew 5:17**). What does it mean that Jesus is “the same yesterday, today and forever” (**Hebrews 13:8**) if the Word in the Old Covenant is antithetical to the Word of

the New Covenant? Understanding the mystery of the fulfillment is the answer to that question.

The first and most basic principle is that God **IS** life and separation from Him will ALWAYS result in death. It doesn't matter if you don't approve of, or like this principle. Like God, it just **IS**. All pain, hurt, wounding, sadness, loss, destruction, evil and death are a result of being separated or cut off from the source of life – God. If this is the first and most basic principle, wouldn't it be a good idea to discover how to be (or stay) connected to that source? Good News!! There's a manual for that - the Word of God.

The second concept that we will build upon is the continual layering of patterns that begin in Genesis and conclude in Revelation. From beginning to end, or as Jesus put it, from the Alpha to the Omega, the patterns confirm, over and over again, the unmistakable blueprint and Master plan for the redemption of humanity and the restoration of that original sacred relationship. Once these patterns are seen, they are impossible to “unsee” and it becomes apparent that there are far too many and too frequent to be a coincidence. Instead, the strata of repeated patterns form an undeniable, divine picture that is simultaneously omnisciently complex as well as simple and obvious enough for a child to understand. The Lord went to such incredible lengths to make His invisible attributes and plan of eternity clear to us, that it is honestly amazing that we have managed to create so many different opinions and versions of “truth”.

Knowing this “life” and “truth” is much more than memorizing or studying the Bible. It is much more than following a list of rules. It is much more than emotional or even spiritual experiences. Every religion has a defined set of beliefs, an emphasis on certain practices to be followed and perhaps even emotional or “spiritual” experiences within the boundaries of those tenets. But what sets Christianity apart from all other religions is the core principle that Jesus claims the authority and power to transform a person (body, soul, and spirit) from death to life and then backed up that claim by rising from the dead! He said He came to give us life, life in all its fulness (**John 10:10**).

In **John 4:23-24**, Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, “But an hour is coming and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshippers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” Notice that this verse says *MUST*. It is not optional to separate the two. Spirit (breath or life) and truth are like the two handlebars of a bicycle that must be kept in balance at all times, or you venture off the narrow road and end up in a ditch! Each defines the other. Jesus said that you could know the truth and that truth would set you free (from death) (**John 8:32**). Truth is not mere knowledge or facts. Truth is a person – Jesus. And the *knowing* that is so powerful that it can overcome death, is the restoration of relationship with that person.

As amazing and profound as understanding principle and pattern are, the intellectual knowledge alone is not the key to that life-giving power. But if you are truly seeking to worship the Father in spirit and truth, they can most certainly smooth out the road for you on that journey. The apostle Paul said that the law was our tutor to lead us to Christ so that we could have that relationship restored by faith, and then when we have that faith, we are no longer under the tutor (**Galatians 3:24-25**). Unfortunately, much of the Christian community have interpreted that verse to mean that we no longer have any use for the law (principles and patterns); but it is that very law that is fulfilled by Christ. How can you accurately comprehend the fulfillment if you don't know what's

being fulfilled? Each bear witness of the other. It's like saying once you have your diploma or degree, you have no use for your books, teachers, or professors. Though you may no longer sit under them in the classroom, what they imparted to you became the foundation that you take out into the world to accomplish what you have been trained to do.

My hope is that this discipleship manual will be a tool to help you make a strong and solid transition between the old and new covenants that will become that foundation that you can take out into the world and accomplish what you have been trained to do. The patterns and principles (spirit and truth) are the foundation that the house (of God) is built upon. If the foundation is faulty, the security of the house is in question. In Exodus 25:40, after the Lord instructed the children of Israel to build Him a sanctuary that He could dwell in and live among them, He told Moses to be certain that all of it was built according to pattern which was shown to him on the mountain. If we are living in the spiritual fulfillment of that sanctuary, we still need to be certain that it is built according to the same pattern.