

# Incarnational Restoration

Gospel Foundation Of Faith: Shelf 1 — Volume 10

This course is actually an introduction to the Term 2 courses. The theme of this course, and the theme of the Term 2 courses, reflects the instructions of Paul in Philip-  
pians 2:5: “**Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.**” All of us at the *International Bible School* are seeking to fulfill what Paul instructed in the text of Philip-  
pians 2:5-9. Your teacher, Dr. Dickson, has designed this course around the theme of the disciples’ becoming liv-  
ing portrayals of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since courses 4 & 5 focused on the incarnation of the Son of God, and His instructions that are communicated to us through the Bible, it is important that we begin with the transformation of our thinking and lives into the life of the Son of God who humiliated Himself to the cross for us.

Living the gospel of the incarnation is simply carrying on with His incarnational submission. As the Son of God began “officially” to live out His incarnation, first at the age of twelve in discussions with religious leaders in the Jerusalem temple, He continued to live out the remainder of His coming in the flesh until that flesh was nailed to a cross. His life was all gospel (good news) events in the sense that His destiny became the example that we should live as He lived for us. This living involves life-changing transformation, which often leads to great suffering (See Rm 6:3-6; 12:1,2).

The Term 2 courses take us into the motivation of His incarnational gospel adventure. As we live this gospel, there is a surprising discovery made when we take on the “mind” of Christ. When we discover the gospel, our lives are driven—empowered—by His living for us. This is the exciting discovery that empowers our living, and thus, the building of our hope that the best is yet to be. Therefore, come along with us as we discover together the adventure of living the incarnational life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

One this incarnational journey, we must be patient with ourselves and others, for transformation into incarnational living is a lifetime struggle. The life of John Mark is a good example. Mark grew up among the privileged in the big city of Jerusalem. His life as a young man was evidently sugar-coated as the son of an economically advantaged family. We assume this from the possibility that Jesus and the apostles, with other disciples, met in the house of Mark's mother in Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, in his youthful zeal, and possibly by the encouragement of his cousin, Barnabas, young Mark tagged along on Paul's first mission journey (Cl



4:10). However, after passing through his cousin Barnabas' homeland of Cyprus, the glamor of the trip lasted only until Mark was faced with the daunting task of scaling the mountains of Pamphylia in southern Asia. At that time,

Mark's attitude changed. He was possibly too far from the comforts of his Jerusalem home, or the going just became too rough for the inexperienced young city boy. It may also have been that the excitement of the journey had

When Rough Times  
Keep Coming,  
The Tough  
Keep Going.

now turned into agony. Whatever the reason, it was at the foot of the mountains that the adventure of the journey went south, which was also the direction that Mark turned in order to go back to Jerusalem.

About three years later, it was again time for Paul to launch out on his second mission journey. However, when putting together a team of incarnationals, he concluded that John Mark was still incarnationally immature. He was immature for the type of journey in missions that the transformed Paul could accomplish (At 15:36-37). Nevertheless, Barnabas was patient with his cousin, and subsequently took Mark back to the familiar territory of Cyprus (At 15:39). We must at least give Mark credit for being tenacious in his desire

to do what he knew he should do.

What is significant to notice in the transformation of Mark is embedded in Paul's eventual request for him during Paul's imprisonment many years later. He wrote to Timothy, *"Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is profitable to me for the ministry"* (2 Tm 4:11).



"Profitable"

The last mention we have in church history of the formerly spoiled Jerusalem boy is when he was with the imprisoned apostle Paul in a Roman prison (Cl 4:10). Mark had spiritually transformed into being able

to venture far beyond the mountains of Pamphylia. He had spiritually grown to the point of having the strong heart that was needed to be with the imprisoned Paul in a Roman prison. At the time he was with

It Takes A  
Lifetime To  
Grow Into Being  
A Spiritually Strong  
Christian.

Paul in Rome, Mark's incarnational transformation had reached the level that **he was now profitable for world evangelism.**

In the years that followed the disappointment at the foot of the mountains of Pamphylia, Mark spiritually grew into profitability. It took time for him to grow into the dedicated life that would be profitable for ministry. But he eventually made it there. Therefore, we must be patient with ourselves and others as we too struggle to grow into incarnational living.

What is significant about Mark is that he did not turn back from the challenge to grow into behavior that emulated his Savior. He would not allow himself to have a faith that was void of living a sacrificial life to preach the gospel. In fact, Mark came to the conclusion, that as his mentor, Paul, he could not simply preach the gospel only with words that communicated gospel truths. He had to live that which he preached concerning the incarnational Savior.

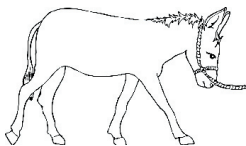
A faith that is not growing us into following incarnation-ally the Son of God who sacrificed heaven for us, is a dead faith that is not worth having.

1. Who turned back from a mission trip because the journey became too tough for him to endure?  
(A) Barnabas, (B) John, (C) Mark, (D) Luke
2. **T or F:** Times of great trial should be opportunities to measure our willingness to walk in the steps of Jesus.
3. Who eventually grew in character to the point of being profitable to Paul when he was in prison in Rome?  
(A) Mark, (B) Barnabas, (C) Peter, (D) Luke
4. **T or F:** Upon his decision to be a disciple of Jesus as a young person, Mark immediately transformed his life as an incarnational disciple.

## A. Transformed Into Slavery

In the incarnation, Jesus did not hold up in heaven with “faith only.” He did not continue to reside in the form of God in a heavenly environment when there was a mission that had to be accomplished. He thus acted on Himself and launched out of heaven and into the form of man. In comparison to His existence with God in the form of God, incarnation meant that He had to personally make the decision to sacrifice existence as God in spirit in order to come into a body that could be crucified (Ph 2:6).

Jesus subsequently sacrificed the privileged existence as God in order to be made as a man. He thus



God Rode On A Donkey  
Into Jerusalem

took the form of a slave by “*being made in the likeness of men*” (Ph 2:7). Though we cannot follow Jesus completely on His gospel journey from spirit to flesh, in some metaphorical manner,

however, we must find a way that we can emulate a transformation from arrogance, to humility; from pomp to servanthood; and from glamour to His glory. We must never be guilty of reversing the order.

It was not only in the likeness of humanity that the Son of God came, but He also came to make Himself a slave to the needs of others. The Greek word in the context of John 13:16 is ***doulos***, the word for slave. A slave gives up his right to choose for himself when he allows the needs of others to make choices for him. There is no such thing as living an incarnational self-willed life. **Incarnational living**

A Christian  
Is Inherently  
A Slave  
To Others.

**is inherently slave oriented.** And so as the Son of God loved us in order to become a slave on our behalf, we, too, love others in order to be their slaves (1 Jn 4:19,21).

5. **T or F:** When one becomes a disciple of Jesus, he or she immediately becomes a servant to the needs of others.

## B. In Search Of Dirty Feet

Those who would live as incarnational slaves must follow Jesus in washing dirty feet. The incarnational life-style is not for those who thirst after popularity or prosperity. Slaves do not crave to be self-centered people who broadcast themselves around the world as someone who thinks himself to be somewhat. Worldly living and selfish ambition are not the spirit of the slave of Jesus who would live incarnationally. On the contrary, the incarnational slave finds a towel and looks for dirty feet to wash (See Jn 13:1-20).



After Jesus washed all the disciples' feet, He said to all of them, *“Truly, Truly, I say to you, a bondservant [slave] is not greater than his lord”* (Jn 13:16). And since we ourselves call Him Lord, then we must find more than the dirty feet of twelve men to wash. We must look for dirty feet throughout our lives. If we think of ourselves too good to wash dirty feet, then we are not disciples of the One who initially created the dirty feet that the Creator washed on that evening in Jerusalem over two thousand years ago

**Inherent in living incarnationally is the attitude and work of a slave to serve others.**

6. **T or F:** It is difficult for some people to accept the responsibility of living incarnationally because they cannot see themselves as the servants of others.
7. Who stayed with the apostle Paul on his mission journey even though the journey because challenging?  
(A) Barnabas, (B) John, (C) Mark, (D) Luke
8. When Paul was in prison in Rome, who had become profitable to him in the ministry?  
(A) Barnabas, (B) John, (C) Mark, (D) Luke

## C. From Chief Seats To Footstools

In essence or nature as God, the Son made Himself into the flesh of man in order to wash dirty “spiritual” feet (Ph 2:8). Those who would seek to be disciples of Jesus, therefore, must do likewise. Few who are in high places are called to these matters because they find it difficult to follow Jesus as a slave to the needs of others. If someone loves *“the best places at feasts and the chief seats in the synagogues,”* then he seeks to live contrary to an incarnational Savior who would place Himself on a cross (See Mt 23:6). If one is a lover of money, he

Those Who Love  
High Places  
Usually Do Not  
Seek Low Places.



Not For Disciples!

too will find incarnational living difficult (See Lk 16:14). In fact, the incarnate Son of God said, *“Whoever of you who does not forsake all that he has, cannot be My disciple”* (Lk 14:33). **Jesus gave up all of heaven in order to leave an example that we, too, must give up something for Him.**

Those who seek to sit on chief seats on earth among the disciples have disqualified themselves from being seated with Jesus in heaven.

9. **T or F:** When one becomes a Christian, he or she must remember that he or she need not give up anything in order to be a disciple of Jesus.
10. **T or F:** When one becomes a Christian one's standard of living comes down as he or she shares with the needs of others.

Incarnational living calls for death to our old life of living for ourselves and consuming upon our own lusts. The Son of God *“humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”* (Ph 2:8). When Jesus said, *“And whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple,”* the disciples soon realized that incarnational living after their Master meant a cross

of death (See Lk 14:27). It is as the incarnational life-style of Paul: *“I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you that I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily”* (1 Co 15:31). And, Paul continued, *“I have been crucified with Christ. And it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me”* (Gl 2:30). If one would live the incarnational sacrifice of Jesus, then he puts his signature on his own death certificate to have died with the incarnate Son of God on the cross of Calvary (Rm 6:3).

The Incarnational  
Life Is A Daily  
Struggle.

**11. T or F:** When one becomes a disciple of Jesus, he or she must, as Jesus, learn to be transformed into a life of sacrificial living for the sake of others and the preaching of the gospel.

### D. The Glorious End

There is a glorious end to the incarnate life-style. We will in some way be in this life as Jesus now is. The Spirit explained, *“Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name that is above every name”* (Ph 2:9). It was upon the foundation of this truth of the risen and reigning incarnate Son of God that Paul inscribed the following words in reference to all those who would live the mind of their King:

*For if by one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more they who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness [through the gospel of Jesus] will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ* (Rm 5:17).

What a glorious statement! And just in case we missed the point in this statement to the Roman disciples, Paul reminded the evangelist Timothy with the same thought: *“For if we died with Him [in baptism], we will also live with Him. If we suffer [bearing our cross], we will also reign with Him [in this life]”* (2 Tm 2:11,12). This reigning is not in the future. It is present as Jesus now reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15).



It Is Coming!



Because He is reigning now in heaven, we are reigning through Him on earth (Rm 5:17).

**Those who live incarnationally with King Jesus, now sit and reign with Him who reigns from heaven.**

- 12. T or F:** Because the Son of God humbled Himself to our spiritual needs, He has been highly exalted to the right hand of God.
- 13. T or F:** If one humbles himself as Jesus, then in this life he or she will reign over all emotional and physical trials.

## E. The Victorious Life

Living the incarnational life is a victorious life in Christ. The faith about which John wrote (Jn 20:30,31), leads to victorious living in this life. *“This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith”* (1 Jn 5:4). The incarnational life is victorious because we take the incarnational journey with the Son of God who was formerly with and as God, but then on His own initiative, made the choice to become as the flesh of man in order to be our slave and wash our dirty “spiritual” feet.

We too must make a voluntary decision to live in gratitude of the gospel of Jesus. Since the Son of God came for us, we must go for others. Since He died for us, we too must bear a cross in order to take the gospel into all the world. This is the nature of living incarnationally for the benefit of others in order that they find their way into eternal life through the gospel of the atoning sacrifice of the cross.

When we speak of discipleship, therefore, we are not talking about some title of being Christian. We are talking about living a sacrificial life in response to the Son of God who gave Himself for us. Discipleship is our behavior of life wherein we express our thanksgiving to the Son of God for all that He has done for us, and will do for us when He comes again (See 2 Co 4:15).

- 14. T or F:** The victorious life in Christ is that the individual disciple of Christ will always prosper materially in the things of this world.
- 15. T or F:** Discipleship of Jesus is living a life of thanksgiving for all that the Son of God did in order to save us from our sins.
- 16. T or F:** As Jesus gave up heaven in order to humble Himself in the flesh of man, as His disciple, we must likewise be willing to give up something in order to service the needs of others.



## CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean that Jesus lived incarnationally?
2. Why must we be patient with ourselves as we spiritually grow into an incarnational lifestyle?
3. Why and how did Mark become profitable to Paul?
4. What are the benefits of suffering for Christ?
5. What is significant about Jesus riding into the city of Jerusalem on a donkey?
6. What was Jesus teaching when He washed the feet of the disciples?
7. Why are there no “chief seats” for those who live incarnationally?
8. How does one reign with Jesus in this life?
9. What will Jesus eventually do for those who have humbled themselves to the needs of others?
10. How would we define the victorious life by living incarnationally?



## ABBREVIATIONS

### OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

### NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pf**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**

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