

Anointing/Discernment

The Other Kind of Discernment

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1Jn 2:20 “But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things”.

1Jn 2:27 “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him”.

A Distinction With a Difference

I may be criticized for the teaching which I am about to give you, but if that is the case, so let it be, because I cannot shun to declare unto you *“the whole counsel of God”* (Acts 20: 27). God hold every teacher accountable for their teachings, and we must build on the foundation of the Apostles with: “Gold, silver and precious stones” and not with *“wood, hay or stubble”* (1Cor. 3: 12). May God deliver me from teaching errors, and may he deliver you from thinking errors.

Here is the truth, and I am setting it forth as a distinction with a difference. Spiritual “discernment“, and the gift of “Discerning of Spirits” (1Cor. 12: 10), are two separate and distinct things. If you confuse them you will also confuse other traits with gifts. Now please listen carefully, as this is a very important lesson. Many people confuse “traits” which Spirit Indwelled people have, with the “supernatural gifts” of the Holy Spirit. “Traits” can be associated with natural “talents and abilities” such as “playing the piano, or guitar”, but these are never to be confused with the “supernatural gifts”. There is so much confusion on this that I am going to have to spend a few minutes straightening out your thinking.

Let me say it a little differently. Let’s say you have a wonderful ability to write. You can choose words carefully and powerfully, and through your written words you can impact and change peoples lives. That is a wonderful trait to have. An ability which you faithfully use in God’s service. But listen carefully. I’m gonna scream right now. I’m screaming in what I am writing, because I do have this ability. Listen while I scream. **WRITING IS NOT A SUPERNATURAL GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!** Let me scream a little more, only this time I will scream louder as well. **PLAYING THE PIANO, LEADING WORSHIP, PAINTING PICTURES** (i.e. Michelangelo “Sistine Chapel” et. al.), **SERVING ON A COMMITTEE, TEACHING SUNDAY SCHOOL, BEING AN EXAMPLE, PLAYING GUITAR OR DRUMS, SINGING, BEING A DEACON, BEING A COUNSELLOR, BEING A MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER, BEING AN HISTORIAN, BEING AN INTELLUCTUAL GIANT, BEING A THEOLOGIAN, BEING A PRAYER WARRIOR, BALANCING A BANK BOOK, BEING A SAVVY**

INVESTOR, BEING A FATHER OR MOTHER, RAISING CHILDREN, BEING ABLE TO DO AN OUTSTANDING JOB AT WORK, INSPIRING OTHERS, BEING KIND, LOVING PEOPLE, READING YOUR BIBLE, FEEDING THE HUNGRY, CLOTHING THE NAKED, SHELTERING THE HOMELESS, RESCUING STREET URCHINS, HANDING A BUMB A QUARTER, PASSING OUT TRACTS, WITNESSING FOR CHRIST, MAKING ANNOUNCEMENTS IN CHURCH, BEING ON A BOARD, BEING IN A BAND, PAINTING THE LAST SUPPER, GETTING GOOSBUMPS AND TEARS IN CHURCH.....***NONE OF THESE THINGS ARE SUPERNATURAL GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!***

You deceive yourself, and think way too highly of yourself, if you confuse natural, or learned abilities, with the supernatural Gifts of God. There may be some sense in which they are “gifts” with a small {g} (James 1: 17; Eccl. 3: 13). But they are common ordinary gifts of God’s goodness and grace, such as he bestows upon all men. They are not the “Supernatural Gifts” of the Holy Spirit ordained by God for the edification of the Body of Christ, and such as are only bestowed upon specially selected vessels. “Many are called, but few are chosen”(Matt. 22: 14). Of Paul, who was supernaturally gifted as few others, it was said...“*for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel*” (Acts 9: 15). Many scholars believe that Paul was unique in his supernatural gifts, and that he was perhaps the only man ever to have “all of the gifts”. I don’t think we can find any direct reference to this, but we can certainly find many passages describing the various gifts as they freely operated in him.

I said all that because I want to emphasize that there is a general gift to all believers of “spiritual discernment”. It comes as a natural consequence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It must never be confused with the supernatural gift of “Discerning of spirits” which allows selected, chosen and gifted ones to peer into the spiritual dimension, and to openly behold angels, demons, God and the Devil working. This cannot be learned or taught. Only very few people have ever had this gift. It is actually quite a rare gift. This is a miraculous gift, and it is not natural. It differs vastly from mere “discernment” between good and evil, and right from wrong, and truth from error. All Christians have this ordinary kind of “discernment”. It is synonymous with “light, truth, spiritual illumination, walking in the light, inner direction, guidance from the Holy Spirit” but it is not like “discerning of spirits” at all. This is a distinction with a real and important difference.

John the Baptist had the gift of “Discerning of spirits”. And that explains why he was the only one who could see the Spirit of God descending upon Jesus. Nobody else present at the baptism of Christ had this gift. “*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, **and he saw** the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him*” (Matt. 3: 16). This also explains why at the exact moment that

John saw Jesus coming, he looked directly into Jesus' heart and saw His shining holiness and true identity, and said with no hesitation at all: "*Behold the lamb of God*" (Jn. 1: 29). "*I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?*" (Matt. 3: 14). Looking at Christ through the gift of "discerning of spirits" he immediately saw who Christ was in the spirit realm. He identified Him, for the benefit of everyone who could not see this way. And he instantly recognized Christ's holiness and acknowledged his own sinfulness. He could see that Christ had no sin, because he had this supernatural gift of "discerning of spirits".

It could be said that Peter simply illustrates the gift of Divine Revelation when He correctly sees and identifies who Christ really is in Matthew 16: 15-17. Technically this is not wrong. But I happen to see this a little differently. The way that I see it, Peter was operating in the gift of "discerning of spirits" and that's why "*Jesus said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven*" (Matt. 16: 17). The revelation of, and identification of, Jesus Christ in this manner, was clearly a direct gift from the Father. Now some will say, that because it came from the Father it did not come from the Holy Spirit, and therefore it is not one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Technically this might seem correct, but theologically it is incorrect, because at the point in question, the Holy Spirit had not yet been given to the Apostles, or to anyone else for that matter. except John the Baptist. So all gifts came directly from God. In this case the Father is the member of the Godhead doing the gifting, but the gift is the same whether it is given by the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit.

Discernment for all Believers

Discernment is something that all Christians have, though not all in the same degree. I will prove this in the section where we will explain it with the Biblical term "the anointing". But right now before I prove that this is true of all believers, and why? I would like to make a few interesting and important observations pertinent to this Christian trait, relating to this and all the rest of the ordinary common grace gifts (small {g}) that believers possess by virtue of simply being believers.

1). **Traits are often called "abilities"**. I have the ability to scream when I write. I just demonstrated it to you, but I do not have the ability to play the guitar. Why? Because I never learned how to play the guitar. My wife has the ability to decorate cakes. It's a trait she loves. But I don't have it. Why? Because I never learned it. Abilities can also be lost. I'm certain of this, because when I went for 20 years without playing the organ, I lost the ability, and when I played it sounded horrible. I had to regain my proficiency because I had lost it. Discernment is just such an ability. All Christians have it. It is an innate ability. Some have more of it than others. It something like "common sense".

2) **Traits are learned behaviors.** They are skills which are developed over time. The supernatural gifts, on the other hand, come all at once. You wake up one morning, and bang...you speak in tongues, or bang...you heal someone, or bang...you can see spirits etc. This is why I am against people trying to teach other people how to speak in tongues. Tongues is not a learned behavior. If it can be learned, it is definitely not supernatural or miraculous. Don't be so proud of yourself that you will presume to "Teach" what only the Holy Spirit "Gives". That is blasphemy. Don't ever do it.

Learned Behaviors are not Gifts!

I'm gonna give you a negative example here, only because it illustrates how all traits, even bad ones, are learned behaviors. I have counseled many homosexuals, in my 30+ year ministry, and almost without exception, they have all tried to buffalo me with the same spurious drivel that they are buffaloes with themselves. They all have said: "I can't help it if I was born a homosexual!" I am telling you the truth that I have heard this over and over again during the course of my ministry. They actually believe that they were "born homosexual". Of course, this is just a mindless parroting of the popular social mantra of the day. This is what the world teaches, and not what the word of God says. God made them male and female (Gen. 1: 27; 5: 2). It never says God made them homosexual, and it never implies that either. The world teaches that homosexuality is a miscreation of God, a genetic mistake, or a DNA mix up. But the Bible knows none of this stuff.

Homosexual sins are classified as "abomination" in the Bible, and they were punishable with death in the Old Testament (Lev. 20: 13). That would have never been the case if God created people as homosexuals. He would never punish people for being the way that He made them! That is a ridiculous and sinful notion. It is blasphemy to say that. First of all, God has never made a mistake, and second He would never have someone stoned for "being a certain way" but only for "acting a certain way", or "doing a certain deed". When God punishes sin, he does so not just because we inherited it from Adam, or through genetics, but because we actually commit sin, really and personally. It is the commission of sin that makes it punishable. We execute murderers, not because they have a genetic problem, and were somehow born a certain way. We execute murderers because they have murdered somebody. The commission of sin is what God always punishes. He never punishes where there is no sinful deed committed. There are no examples of this in the Bible.

Since this is the case, homosexuality has to be explained some other way. So if it is not biological, then it must be psychological. Indeed this is the exact way that Romans One describes the sinful degenerating acts. Men do them because of mental problems stemming from a refusal to keep the knowledge of God in their brains (Rom. 1: 19, cf vs. 28). This is clearly learned behavior, as well as sinful behavior. They did not "like to retain God in their thoughts" (v. 28), because

if they did, they would not commit such sins. So, the homosexual, has learned how to get rid of God in his thinking, and has learned how to abandon regular, and normal, God ordained morals, in favor of “every man doing that which is right in his own eyes” (Jdgs. 17: 6; 21: 5). That’s how homosexual behavior is learned.

All abilities and traits are similarly learned. We learn to do things based on psychology not physiology. Teaching is a psychological skill, and learning is a psychological process. With these skills we can learn and develop any positive or negative ability, trait or skill. The whole affair is really quite wonderful and is part of the blessings of God upon mankind. The old time Theologians referred to this as “common grace”. But sadly there has arisen a backlash against this very old doctrine, and there are many who no longer believe that God blesses and shows unmerited favors to all men, the lost included. Such exclusivism in our understanding of God’s Love and Mercy, is sinful and should be renounced. God showers good gifts, and moral gifts on the whole world, and He is not obligated to do it at all. His “common grace” results in mankind’s common good.

3). Worldly traits and abilities can be transformed, but that still does not make them supernatural. I used to be in a rock band before I became a Christian. The moment I got saved, I started learning how to use my talents to play Christian music and not worldly music. God put this desire in my heart. I’ve seen it happen hundreds of times. A guitar player gets saved, and all of a sudden he is trying to learn Christian songs, because he has a new God to please and worship, and God has put a new song in his heart. These wonderful transformations in the use of talents, whereby they are sanctified for the Masters use, are indeed special. But such transformations are not Miraculous Gifts.

We have to be careful when we say to somebody “Joe, God has given you a special gift”, when what he is really doing is using skills he learned in the world, but has now dedicated them to the Lord. People in the world have the exact same “gifts” and most of the time, they are better at them than the Christian who is trying to adapt to new spiritual surroundings. I don’t think Christianized Rock music is as good (technically speaking) as the real Rock that the world offers. I find that church rock bands are at least 10 years behind the world in the state of development of their musical forms. Most Christianized art is inferior to the worlds art, and most of the people doing it learned everything they know when they were in the world, not as some sort of special Christian gift. I think we need to be honest here.

I learned to play the organ in the world, and just because I have Christianized it, and sanctified it to the Lord, does not make it any less of a worldly gift. It too is part of the “common grace” of God. He gives these sorts of things for the mutual enjoyment and well being of men, all men, lost and saved. They are no different just because we carry them to church with us. God can use them for His honor and Glory, because they have been sanctified by our calling and salvation. But

they are still general gifts of “common grace”. Sometimes we should not carry them to church with us. Oftentimes these sorts of natural talents are corrupted by going to church. Michelangelo, for instance, tried to bring his talent to church, and the church forced him, to cover the human form, and to pollute his natural ability to paint beautiful nudes, and instead, he had to force himself to paint beautiful drapery in place of what he really wanted to paint as an artist. What’s up with that? The church has been censoring art for thousands of years, and of course that is totally naïve and sinful. I know a rock musician, who seemed to me to be ten times better when he was playing in night clubs, than he is when he’s trying to play for the Lord. He feels restricted in the use of his talent. I really have strong feelings about the validity of bringing our worldly gifts to church. The church does not appreciate them, but only wants to change them to suit a supposed higher ideal, or a spiritual agenda of some sort. It seems quite bogus to me. If something is beautiful, or of artistic value, that beauty and value exists outside of the censorship of churches, it exists because God gave these ordinary gifts to ordinary people.

This brings up the whole concept of bringing worldly rhythms, melodies, harmonies, syncopations, lighting effects, and loud pounding music to church in the first place. 25 years ago this stuff was uniformly condemned. Now the Old Fashioned Hymns of the faith have been thrown out with the disappearance of the hymnbooks. And the presence of Big Screens and Rock bands in the churches has taken over the role that pianos and organs used to fill. Rock has been Christianized. But is it right for the church to have abandoned the old, in favor of the young? Don’t the old people deserve just as much consideration as the saved punk rockers? I think all this stuff needs to be reconsidered. Just because everybody’s doing it does not make it right. I also think that it’s wrong to tell the old the old people: “To hell with you! We are gonna have rock music, and we don’t give a damn about what you think! You don’t really count. All the big churches do it, and it makes churches grow. And if you don’t like it, you can go start your own church”. That whole attitude is aberrant and wrong, And even though we may not be actually mouthing these exact words, we are effectively saying this by our actions. Churches having this attitude, are also usually churches who think that rock music is some kind of special gift of God. There is real need for repentance here. Church is about everyone, not just the old, and not just the young. If our music forms isolate any from the means of Grace that is terribly wrong. Don’t misunderstand me. I do see value in contemporary Christian music. In fact, I like to worship God with a beat. But there are situations and churches where the contemporary music is sinful and does not worship God, but celebrates mans rhythm and talents. These things should be exposed and condemned.

Sometimes I think, instead of just bringing the world into church, we need to be concentrating on bringing the church into the world. We’ve somehow terribly lost our focus, and God is not pleased when that happens, no matter what the worship leader may tell us. He wants people who worship “in Spirit and in Truth”.

And this might just mean that we leave the worldly gifts home, and bring the Spirit and the Truth to church, not a Stratocaster and a set of Bongos! God seeks such, to worship Him (Jn. 4: 23-24).

The Anointing

The word “unction” in 1Jn.2: 20, and the word “anointing” in verse 27 are the same word in the Greek. The word “Christ” literally means “The Anointed”. “Anti-Christ” (mentioned in verse 22) means “the un-anointed, or the falsely anointed”. I think these terms are very significant because the idea of a Divine anointing of Prophets, Priests and Kings goes way back into the ancient history of Old Testament. Falsely anointed, or unanointed people were never authorized to do God’s work. This concept has been adapted and carried forward to our modern concept of “ordination”. The unordained are supposedly unauthorized to do God’s work, that’s because they have not been set apart, and sanctified by the act of “ordaining”. In the Old Testament the Prophets, Priests and Kings were set apart and sanctified to the Lords work by the act of “anointing”

“Anointing” is mentioned in Exodus 28: 41; and 40: 15, as well as 1Sam. 10: 1; and 16: 13. “Ointing”, or rubbing something into the forehead, was accomplished with “ointment”. This is the origin of our modern word. “Ointment” was originally “the holy oil” used for consecrating Prophets Priests and Kings. But in our day it has come to mean simple topical analgesics, and therapeutic rubs. This is an example of how things which have a spiritual origin originally , are corrupted and secularized thus robbing us of their true meaning.

Cosmetic Anointing. There are secular as well as religious anointing in the Bible. It was customary to use ointment sweetened with perfumes for cosmetic or toiletry purposes in ancient times. The woman anointed Jesus’ feet (Lk. 7: 38). This ordinary type of anointing was considered to be a part of bathing (Ruth 3: 3), “oil maketh his face to shine” (Ps. 104: 15), shows a cosmetic use for anointing oil. Not anointing oneself was a sign of fasting or mourning (2Sam 14: 2; Matt. 6: 17).

Medicinal Anointing. The value of ointment was recognized in a medicinal sense as well. The herbs and spices which it contained had a cleansing, astringent, and emollient effect upon wounds. Hence it was used to effectuate healing. Look up James 5: 14 and compare Mark 6: 13; Lk. 10: 34.

Anointing the Dead. The Jews appropriated some of the techniques of the ancient Egyptians for preparing and mummification of bodies. This is why Lazarus and Jesus were wrapped. Jesus refers to this in Matt. 26: 12 and Mark 14: 3-8. There are also references to it in Lk. 23: 56; Jn. 12: 3-8 and Jn. 19: 40.

Holy Anointing. The most important use of anointing was its religious use in the anointing of Prophets, Priests and Kings. This act was symbolic of being consecrated to God, as illustrated in Gen. 28: 18; Gen. 35: 14 and Ex. 29: 7, 21; 1Sam. 10: 1; 1Sam. 16: 13; 2Sam. 1: 21; 1Kings. 1: 39; 2Kings 9: 1-3 and Ps. 89: 20. The idea seems to have been that the oil thus used was emblematic of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit as qualifying them for the discharge of the duties of their office. Christ is “The Lords Anointed”, and all the Old Testament religious anointings prefigured Him, as types and shadows.

Believers Anointed. Believers constitute God’s new “kings” and His new “priests“. Christians, in the New Testament, are described as “kings and priests,” Rev. 1:6; 5:10, and as a “royal priesthood” 1Pe. 2:5, 9; and hence they are represented as “anointed,” or as endowed with those graces of the Spirit, of which anointing was the emblem. This is very important. Every believer has been anointed to the Lord and by the Lord. This is accomplished by the Holy Spirit’s presence in us. When we have received the Holy Spirit, at the new birth, we have also received “the anointing”. Look up and compare the following passages: Ps. 23: 5; Ps. 92: 10; 2Cor. 1: 21-22.

This teaching of “the anointing” of every believer has been much misunderstood and abused in our day. The “costals and matics” (my terms for the Pentecostals and Charismatics), have falsely taught that “the anointing” only comes upon certain super-spiritual believers, or upon specially anointed preachers, or as some kind of subsequent work of the Spirit following regeneration at a later date, and in doing this they have robbed the average Christian of a doctrine which empowers him and separates him to God. “The anointing” is synonymous with “the baptism of the Holy Spirit” (1Cor. 12: 13; Acts 1: 5; Jn. 3: 5; Lk. 3: 16; Matt. 3: 11; Rom. 8: 8-11; Eph. 4: 5; 5: 26; Tit. 3: 4-6). Don’t allow anyone to rob you of this doctrine, because to do so will render you in the dangerous position that you will be without spiritual discernment.

The Anointing and Discernment. I see the doctrine of the anointing and the doctrine of discernment as interrelated and interconnected. This is why I have titled this study as Anointing/Discernment. These things are synonymous, and you cannot understand the one without the other. I derive this concept from our text in 1Jn. 2: 27. Let’s look at what it says: *“But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him”*. This is consistent with what John said in verses 20-21. *“But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth”*. While the physical act of anointing is not in itself anything that conveys spiritual knowledge; according to John, if you have the Holy Spirit, you have the anointing which does convey spiritual knowledge. So, Holy Spirit baptism, or the anointing, being instantly and

permanently indwelt by the Spirit at the new birth, goes way beyond the concept of just being consecrated to service. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is God's special means of imparting spiritual discernment (knowledge of good and evil, truth or error). *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come"*. The coming of the Holy Spirit is explicitly stated to be in order to *"guide you into all truth"*. We must be careful never to rob believers of this important illuminative function of the Holy Spirit. It is one of His most important functions in the lives of every believer. *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"* (Jn. 14: 26),

Consider the important passage in 1Cor. 2: 10-16 in this regard. *"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ"*. Notice especially these words in verse 14 *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"*. This impartation of knowledge of good and evil, truth and error, is here called spiritual discernment (spiritually discerned). This does not just belong to only certain super spiritual believers. It belongs to every Christian. How important this is.

Knowing the Unknowing

The anointing conveys the knowledge of God to the minds and hearts of every believer. *"The things of the Spirit of God. for they are foolishness unto him: NEITHER CAN HE KNOW THEM"*(1Cor. 2: 14). The things of the Spirit of God are the things of unknowing. We cannot know them by natural means. *"They are spiritually discerned"*. So believers have a source of knowledge or discernment which comes direct from the Holy Spirit.

Most Baptist and Presbyterians are afraid of this doctrine, because it implies that there is still a sense in which direct revelation is occurring from God. Verse 10 clearly says: *"God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit"*. That should settle the matter, especially if you study the word "revealed" because it is APOKALUPTO, and it means divinely revealed truth. They are afraid of this doctrine because they cannot

seem to conceive of any form of Divine revelation that is not equal with the scripture in infallibility and authority. But just because they cannot comprehend how God could still be revealing the truth about the truth, does not make them right in this false conception. Of course God reveals Himself directly to believers today. If He didn't we would all be in the darkness of a lost condition. God reveals Himself, personally, directly and savingly in regeneration. But He continues to reveal Himself personally, directly and sanctifying throughout our Christian lives. The mechanism for this is called "faith" and it is always a faculty higher than reason. It imparts direct knowledge, experientially to the believers mind, and it is called spiritual discernment. This is one of the clearest functions of the Holy Spirit in the Bible.

One of the great principles of the New Covenant is that God promises "*I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts*" (Heb. 8: 10). He fulfills this promise through the direct revelation of the Holy Spirit. This is more than simply illuminating the pages of the Bible. Illumination, while real and operative, is not what God is talking about when he says that "*Ye have no need that any man teacheth you*" they are "*Things which the Holy Ghost teacheth*". Teaching is not the same as illuminating. Teaching is a form of direct revelation, or the direct impartation of spiritual knowledge by spiritual means. To deny this is to deny one of the believers greatest tools in sanctification and life. I'm glad that the Holy Spirit teaches me, through lots of different means, but always directly and efficaciously. I can always trust His teaching. He cannot lie to me. He will not deceive me. If we have the anointing, we also have the discernment which comes with it. This trait of discernment applies to every believer and not just to a few who are specially gifted. God has left no believers in the dark. He has given the Holy Spirit to teach all of them. Faith believes this, understands it, and accepts it. It changes our lives continuously. Every day, the anointing is teaching us, guiding us and enriching our lives.