



THE HOLY LIGHT ACADEMY



STEPPING STONES ALONG THE PATH



Gospel Interiorization A Complimentary Practice to the Bible Study

There is a very useful method called *Interiorization*, which can be adopted in conjunction with the New Testament Study Program, as discussed in Lesson VII in **Developing a Relationship with Jesus Christ**. If used independently from this, you can choose at random any portion from the Bible, New or Old Testaments, and apply this technique, whether as a distant observer, or playing the role of certain key figures in the Scriptures, very much like being an actor in a movie. You can speculate or see what it was like being Job, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, St. Paul, or even Jesus Christ, or any person you prefer, to get an inside intuitive feeling as to the person’s character and conflicts in his life, beyond what the bare words of the Bible say. You develop a more refined intimacy with the Bible this way, and the particular individuals who lived in these ancient ages. However, you can be a removed observer as well, watching the general progress and interaction of certain characters.

It is when you actually get inside of the person you have chosen that you learn to understand him better, witnessing his reactions, feelings, struggles, etc. For instance, when you become Peter, who denied Jesus thrice, you can see the emotional anguish he experienced when he realized what he had done. Then you can see the forgiveness and healing process he underwent when Jesus confronted him after his Resurrection. You can acquire an inside look into such individuals throughout the scriptures. The ultimate Interiorization would be that of Jesus Christ himself, that is, as if you were him; however, we suggest that you do not try this until you are experienced as an observer of Jesus first and also in using this method many times. Unifying yourself with the Master Jesus through Interiorization is not to be taken lightly in such a process, but should be taken seriously.

In the course of **Developing a Relationship with Jesus Christ**, where you will find the New Testament Study Program, using the method of Gospel Interiorization will prove beneficial. Each time you read a chapter for the day from the Gospels, whenever such an episode seems relevant for applying Interiorization, then by all means use this technique. In other words, if you are doing this study program, you do not have to use this all the time, but whenever appropriate. The fact is, it will help in acquiring further intuitive insight in various cases, especially when focusing on certain individuals, or just as an anonymous disciple that is as close to Jesus as the other disciples. Being a random disciple is just another form of being a distant observer of everything happening around you in the Gospels, hence, being at the forefront of everything that is occurring around the Master Jesus. In this way you can observe various events in his life, such as his Baptism by John the Baptist, where you are one of the many people at the River Jordan witnessing this spectacular event; or seeing Jesus teach the multitudes, or watching the Transfiguration, or his Crucifixion, or Resurrection, etc. As a distant observer, you could watch Jesus during the forty days in the

wilderness where he was tempted three times, or when he prayed alone at the Mount of Olives, in order to intuit a feeling of what he felt or experienced in such times. After enough practice at a distance, you can put yourself in his shoes and experience what he experienced in this advanced form of interiorization.

As you try this method many times, you will begin getting a genuine feeling as to how it really works, and also as to its insightful benefits. It is the continual practice of such techniques that will lead you into gaining worthy advantages from them, and especially into truly mastering them, and growing by them. When you begin seeing real insights and revelations through this medium, then you will see the benefit.

When you choose a certain event in the life of the Master Jesus, you must see it visually, much like you do when you read a fascinating novel, hence you are in a sense going back in time, placing yourself during the time of Jesus, capturing these wondrous times of his life and teachings. As we said, you can project into this era as an anonymous disciple at times, or if a significant passage lends to a particular disciple, such as Thomas placing his hands into the side of Jesus right after his Resurrection, then do this at that session, taking on the role of Thomas.

When you see through the eyes of a disciple, witnessing the Master's words and actions firsthand, you are interiorizing these events into an experience on a mental and spiritual level, perhaps similar to that of the dream level. So you are interiorizing his life into yours, letting his life become a part of yours, hence placing imprints of his words and actions into your own mind and nature, as if to guide you along his Sacred Path. When you enact events that occurred in Jesus's Life, it can transfer the essence of these over to your present life, as guidelines of how to act and live now. Hence, you are planting positive seeds of righteousness into your subconsciousness. For this reason this technique is not to be confused with daydreaming or fantasizing, which are often fruitless, and are distractions when you should be focusing your mind on the task at hand, instead of getting stuck in your outer mind. Your mind becomes detached from your body in this way, and the focus of necessary concentration is being compromised.

However, the task of Interiorization is to be accomplished with determined concentration, while you relax your body and mind in a state of meditation. When you focus on the life of Jesus, you are learning to acquire a feeling for his divine personality and character while he walked the Earth. As a disciple you learn to tune into Jesus's compassion for others, his love for those close to him, his selflessness, his purity, his certainty and integrity, his genuine ability to forgive and not judge, and his unfathomable unity with his Father, whom he leads us to. As a mere disciple, you begin to intuitively sense and feel these qualities in him, as you spend time with him and become intimate with him.

Likewise, if you feel so inspired, you can move on to the crowd Acts of the Apostles with this technique.

Here is a step-by-step way to proceed with the Gospel Interiorization:

Step 1. Sit in a comfortable chair with a light on. Read slow and carefully the particular chapter or passage you have chosen. Read it from beginning to end, like an episode from an ongoing drama, the saga of the life of Jesus.

Step 2. Now close your eyes, take several slow deep breaths. Reading the passage may have already begun forming images in your mind, so your mind is already preparing.

Step 3. Now organize your mind and these images, and start at the beginning of the event

related in the passage. See the first scene as clearly as you can, the people, the scenery, the noises and talking. See Jesus or the others speaking what they said in the passage. If you need to, refer back to the passage, so keep your Bible close. Go from one scene to the next, and let the whole drama be as it would when you read an exciting fiction story, or as if you were seeing a movie in your mind. You do this naturally when you read a fictional piece, seeing the characters portray what you are reading. So use this same method in this Interiorization. If you need to read the spoken words of Jesus or others in the passage, by all means open your eyes and read slowly these lines as the drama unfolds. But continue to see and hear as much as you can. This technique will become easier as you use it often. Also, be open to the feelings and emotions of all the people involved, whether they are disciples, those being touched or healed by Jesus, or persecutors, or other characters, or what you may feel from Jesus himself. You are more closely identifying with the characters in this drama in this way. And this process will bring the Gospels to you in a clear, crisp way that you had not noticed before when reading the Bible in the past. These scriptures will become a Living Bible to you now. As you read the Bible normally, after using this enough times, you may find this process kick in automatically, and therefore a new dimension of Bible reading will open up to you. You will see, hear, feel, and experience elements in the scriptures more tangibly and more clearly than before. If you have already been doing this form to some degree already, without thinking about it, that is good. Now, do this with more awareness and concentration.

Step 4. Once you finish the process, simply relax and let go to see if any further insights will come to you, before too quickly getting up out of your chair, for your meditative mode has made you receptive and you can still be open to further impressions that you might want to jot down in your spiritual notebook.

Group Bible Interiorization

This method of Interiorization works excellent in a group setting, such as a Bible class. You will want to have a group moderator. He or she should read the chosen passage first. Then as the others close their eyes, the moderator speaks in his own words like telling a story, describing the scenery, the people, the smells, the sounds, etc. When the characters speak, the moderator can read from the passage at this point, with inflection and feeling. As he tells the story, the others in the class will be seeing the images and impressions. At the end of the session, they can relate to their own version, what they saw or felt, or any insights they received. This process can be very revealing and will go beyond the two-dimensional words in the Bible itself. It will make the stories in the scriptures come alive.

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