

# Biblical Reflections on Christian Discipleship

*The Prayer Saint Francis of Assisi before the Crucifix*

Most High, glorious God,  
enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me  
true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity,  
sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out  
Your holy and true command. Amen.

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## Genesis 3: 1-15 – Surprised by Sin

**9** The LORD God then called to the man and asked him: **Where are you?** **10** He answered, “I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid.” **11** Then God asked: **Who told you that** you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat?

## 1 John 4: 1-6 – Discerning the Spirits

Beloved, do not trust every spirit but test the spirits to see whether they belong to God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. **2 This is how you can know the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ come in the flesh belongs to God,** **3** and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus does not belong to God. This is the spirit of the antichrist that, as you heard, is to come, but in fact is already in the world.

What are spirits and how do we test them?

- Jesus Christ come in the flesh
  - acknowledge
  - procedures
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## John 2: 1-11 – Reading the Signs

**1** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. **2** Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. **3** When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” **4** [And] Jesus said to her, “Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.” **5** His mother said to the servers, “Do whatever he tells you.” **6** Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. **7** Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.” So they filled them to the brim. **8** Then he told them, “Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.” So they took it. **9** And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servers who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom **10** and said to him, “Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now.” **11** Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

There are four levels of meanings in the Scriptures: (i) literal, (ii) allegorical, (iii) moral, (iv) anagogical. *Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria, moralis quid agas, quo tendas, anagogia* [The letter teaches deeds, the allegory what you believe, the moral what you do, anagogy that toward which you are oriented.]

**Matthew 26: 26-29**

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."<sup>27</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you;<sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.<sup>29</sup> I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

**Mark 14: 22-25**

And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body."<sup>23</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.<sup>24</sup> And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.<sup>25</sup> Truly, I say to you, I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

**Luke 22: 15-20**

And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer;<sup>16</sup> for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."<sup>17</sup> And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves;<sup>18</sup> for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."<sup>19</sup> And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."<sup>20</sup> And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

**Luke 24: 13-35**

Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, **14** and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. **15** And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, **16** but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. **17** He asked them, "What are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped, looking downcast. **18** One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?" **19** And he replied to them, "What sort of things?" They said to him, "The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, **20** how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. **21** But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. **22** Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning **23** and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. **24** Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see." **25** And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! **26** Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" **27** Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. **28** As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. **29** But they urged him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. **30** And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. **31** With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. **32** Then they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning [within us] while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" **33** So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them **34** who were saying, "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" **35** Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.