

Stepping into the Supernatural Study guide

Introduction

These study guide notes are designed to help you consider the key points that the questions are trying to draw out. There is absolutely no substitute for studying the word, listening to the Holy Spirit and allowing him to teach you through these scriptures. However, if this teaching is new to you these thoughts may well help you to understand what the teaching is trying to communicate.

We hope you find them revelatory, empowering and very practical for your life as well.

Episode 1 – Who we are in Christ

The essence of this teaching is to understand that something remarkable has happened to us at salvation. Christ has come to live within us. This has changed our nature, identity and destiny. We are more than just humans, we carry the very nature of God within us which opens up a radically new identity and purpose in our lives.

Question 1

We all become children of God in exactly the same way. We receive Christ as our Lord and Saviour through faith. We are saved by faith alone and that faith allows God himself to dwell within us and change us on the inside. This is the Start of Everything.

Question 2

- a. It is a radical and extraordinary reality that our very nature has been changed and transformed because the divine has come to live within us. The Orthodox church calls this 'theosis' which means that our very nature has been changed by the indwelling God within us. We truly are no longer the same people we were before we were born again. Look at the scriptures in John 1 and John 3, and you will see the same thought that we are 'born of God', or the other translation, we are 'born from above'.
- b. As children of God our new nature is like him. The imagery of children in the natural is mirrored in the spiritual because God's DNA is in us and therefore we can become like him. This new nature supersedes our old nature and enables us to conform to the image of Christ who is the Ultimate Son of God.
- c. The Key words from 1 Peter 1: 23 are 'imperishable' 'living' and 'enduring'. Encourage people to consider how this impacts us both in the now and in eternity.

Question 3

The aim of question three is to get people to personalise, consider and reflect on where our old mind-sets have resisted this extraordinary revelation and reduced or diminished being a Christian to our patterns of behaviour or moral standards, or doctrinal understanding. If you are leading a discussion encourage people to be personal and not theoretical. If you are studying alone, take time to reflect on what these things mean to you.

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Question 4

The response to question four is multi-faceted. You can take time thinking and reflecting on the life of Jesus, look at who He is, what He does, how He operates and what happens in Him and through Him. Consider the fact that these things are available to us too now that we are born again of God. This will challenge mind-sets that are used to saying 'I can't do this' or 'I can't do that'. It may sound humble, but in fact it is unbelief and pride when we think thoughts that are not in line with scripture. This teaching blows apart little boxes that we put ourselves in and opens up a whole new level of reality, power and authority in our lives. Satan loves the 'I can't' language, especially when it has theological veneer to it. But the scriptures promise us extraordinary measures of divine influence through us and in us
See John 14: 12-14.

Question 5

I hope this is self-explanatory. The aim is to reflect on our own mind-sets, often taught in church over the years that negates the truth of who we are in Christ.

Questions 6, 7, and 8

These should be self-explanatory.

Episode 2 – Two Realms

The unseen spiritual realm impacts the natural realm on a daily basis. The spiritual realm is permanently all around us, we are immersed in it. In the spiritual realm there are forces of good (angels) and forces of evil (Satan and the demons). It is essential to become aware of these realities, to understand them scripturally and to begin to discern their activity so that we might play our part in the great battle that is raging on the planet. Knowing that we are on the winning side and that God is with us and for us is foundational so that we are able to live in this realm of warfare with peace and security.

Question 1

Hopefully this is self-explanatory but the aim of it is to awaken people's imaginations to consider that the natural things speak of the supernatural. Just as Jesus described the Holy Spirit as being like a wind (we don't know where He comes from or where He is going) so this interaction between the natural and supernatural realm is seen in creation itself.

Question 2

In the spiritual realm there are unseen forces at work. This is the realm where Satan and his demons, and God, the trinity and the angels are active in profoundly shaping and influencing life on the planet. Study the scriptures and work from them to answer the three questions:

- What are they like?
- What is their purpose?
- How do they act

You will notice from the scriptures that angels and demons are sentient, intelligent beings with wills of their own, power to act, the ability to talk and communicate, to plan and to scheme and to direct the affairs of both individuals, corporate groups (synagogues) and nations.

Question 3

Consider the influence of our scientific and humanistic culture that has shaped the minds of the west to dismiss and deny the reality of spiritual beings.

Question 4

Read 2 Kings chapter 6. This passage reveals very powerfully that in the spiritual realm there are forces that are for the kingdom of God and forces that are against the kingdom of God. Elijah sees both sides and has absolute confidence in the victory and authority of the angels that are for him and with him. Use this as a launch pad to consider our own personal stories of the influences in our lives that have shaped us to see and perceive the spiritual realm or resist and deny the spiritual realm.

Question 5 – The windscreen Illustration

Each of the scriptures reveals the impacts of the spiritual realm on the natural realm. I have also included two intersecting circles. One represents the natural and one represents the supernatural. So much of our lives is lived in the interplay of both these realms. Consider the scriptures and see how these two realms are interacting.

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What questions do we need to ask? – this begins to open up thinking so that we begin to ask the Holy Spirit what's actually going on here. Questions such as why am I sick, why does the atmosphere around me feel so oppressed, why is this argument happening? In this way we begin to allow the Holy Spirit to show us what is really taking place in the unseen.

Question 6

A chance to study the five references to the heavenly realms in Ephesians. Study each scripture and note what it says.

The spiritual realm around the earth reveals the presence and power of Satan and his minions. It is because of the presence of the power of darkness that there is warfare and biblically this is the root cause of the destruction on the planet

In the midst of all of this we pray for God's kingdom to come which means God's uninterrupted rule and reign. This is a warfare prayer because one rule begins to battle against another rule. The rule of God battles against the rule of the enemy. Thank God that we are all on the winning side!

Question 7

We stay aware but not anxious through finding our confidence, security and identity in the goodness, protection, and love of God who is greater than all the powers of evil put together. Key Scriptures on this would be Psalms 91: 1-2 and 1 John 4:4. It is by standing on his word and leaving his word that gives us confidence that we are under his power and authority and therefore protected. It is from that safe position of knowing who we are in God that we are able to open our eyes and look at what is going on around us, so that we are not dull and asleep but alert and awake.

Episode 3 – Rich in Christ

God has made each one of us rich beyond our wildest dreams in the things of God. Only once we understand that we carry the riches of God within us will we be able to use them and live as the sons and daughters of God that bring change, life and healing to the world around us.

Question 1

- a. Jesus became poor (bankrupt) in a number of ways and this links to the scripture in Philippians 2 where it says He became nothing/emptied himself. Jesus gave up all knowledge, all power, all glory and embraced powerlessness, dependence and weakness. Jesus said that He could do nothing by himself (See John 5: v 19). His poverty is most fully expressed on the cross where He enters into death and sin in order to lead us into the riches of God.
- b. This richness is a gift from God that we simply do not deserve and cannot earn, therefore it is the Grace of God working in Jesus Christ, to generously confer this on us because of his own goodness, kindness, generosity, and love.
- c. Humility is believing what God says to be true. Any thought that we have that out of line with God's word is by the very definition prideful and distorted. To believe that we are poor and to only live out of Poverty is to deny the riches of God's grace within us. We will often feel and experience our own poverty and weakness but that is in order that we would be able to rely on the richness and goodness of God within us and see it work in power. See 2 Corinthians 12:9.
- d. An opportunity to reflect personally on thought patterns in our life that resist us believing that we are rich in God. E.g. for some church goers, they have been taught that they are poor and so they find comfort in this because it evades the challenging responsibility of having heavenly riches. Once when we begin to believe that we are rich in God then it means that we are responsible for activation and using our riches...

Question 2

- a. Self-explanatory question.
- b. Self-explanatory question.

The two scriptures open up our thinking on our 'glorious inheritance' in Christ. The literal interpretation of this is the riches of the inheritance of glory in the saints. This means that the glory of God (which is the expression of his very own nature and being) is now within and that God's glory carries fullness of Christ within us. This is a truth that lifts us to a remarkable position, wealth and identity in God.

Question 3

Self-explanatory.

Question 4

This question points to the truth that we need to believe and own these realities with in us. If we do not know and understand what we carry in God then the riches will be left largely unused. We have responsibility to activate by faith the things that God has given us. In the Old Testament God says 'my people die for lack of knowledge', Hosea

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4:6. The same is tragically true in our day, people do not understand the fullness of what God has given them.

Question 5

Knowing that you are a child of God is foundational because this gives us a place of security, rest and confidence from which we can begin to live adventurously without fear of punishment or rejection. Living out a kingdom life that carries a genuine supernatural flavour is all based on relationship and identity in God.

Question 6

- a. God calls us 'holy' because His holy nature is now within us. This is part of the inheritance of Christ in us. Holiness is more than forgiveness. Forgiveness is removing of guilt from past sin, but holiness is the nature of God within us that burns brightly and imparts holiness to the whole of our being.
- b. We have been made holy because the Holy Spirit, who is 100% holy, now lives within us and our new nature at its core is completely holy.
- c. Knowing that we are holy enables us to access God's presence on a permanent basis without fear of condemnation or rejection. It brings us deep security despite our many failures, weaknesses and sin patterns that our acceptance in God is not because of our behaviour but because of our identity and new nature.

Question 7

The primary way God speaks is through the scriptures. However, God also speaks to humans through images, thoughts, and an intuitive sense of knowing that is released to us through the Holy Spirit. These scriptures reveal different ways God speaks and it is critical that we understand the simplicity of these things. Scripture reveals many ways God speaks and perhaps it is better to call it God 'communicating' with us as He communicates through

- i. images planted in our imagination
- ii. thoughts planted in our mind
- iii. the intuitive sense of knowing that is the ongoing experience of many believers.

These three ways account for the vast majority of times God speaks to us. There are many good books on the market such as Jack Deere surprised by the voice of God, the voice of God: How to hear and speak words from God by Cindy Jacobs.

Question 8

Asking God questions is a repeated principle in scripture. Moses does it, Zechariah does it, David does it (see 2 Samuel 5:17-25) Mary the mother of Jesus does it, Jesus does it and Paul does it. We are in good company when we ask God questions and listen for his answers. What questions could you ask of God today that are relevant for your life?

Question 9

Living by faith is an active partnership with God in which we hear His voice, believe His word, stand in that word praying it onto reality until the spirit opens our hearts and forms the truth of it within us. This life of faith grows our spiritual muscles and then enables us to extend his rule and dominion in our lives by faith and through obedience.

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Episode 4 – Living with Authority

Understanding authority is critical to living a kingdom life. Adam and Eve gave away their authority but Christ has restored it to His Church. This authority has too often been centred on professional Christians, priests, clergy, or apostles, but is in fact given to the whole body of Christ as part of our inheritance as His children. Understanding this is essential and learning to train our senses to operate spiritually is critical to this process.

Question 1

Points from Genesis 1-3

- God creates by the Spirit and through His word, therefore everything that is created carries his nature within it.
- Adam and Eve are created uniquely as the image of God. They are both natural (made of clay) and spiritual (they have life within them because of the breath of God) .
- The trees in the Garden have supernatural relevance.
- Adam and Eve walk with God in the cool of the day and carry his Life and his Glory in an uninhibited relationship that is perfect and untainted.
- Yet Satan is in the garden as the crafty serpent and therefore there is even spiritual warfare before the fall because Adam and Eve are called to resist Satan and protect the garden – see Genesis 2 verse 15 (to take care of Eden also means to protect or guard it).

Question 2

Satan has become the god of this world because Adam and Eve handed the authority that God had given them over to him by coming into agreement with him through sin. Satan only has as much power as humans give him. Because of the way he has deceived the whole world, we have given him extraordinary amounts of power so he is free to influence, direct, and order the affairs of world systems and cultures to oppose God and to oppose God's people. It is worth noting that God is still sovereign and over it all but He has allowed man to determine what happens on the earth just as He allowed Adam and Eve to determine what happened in the garden. There are very real consequences to that. Those consequences are still being felt on the planet today.

Question 3

- a. Adam and Eve handed their dominion over to Satan at the fall and they fell under his influence and therefore had to leave the garden.
- b. Our authority has been restored to us now that we are in Christ and we now carry the authority of Christ because we are seated with him in heavenly realms. Therefore, Satan is under our feet.
- c. We see Jesus revealing the true authority of man on earth. Therefore, study the scriptures to see what that look like.

Question 4

- a. It is critical to believe that Jesus does what He does as a man and not only as God. He is not just our Hero, but he is also our Model. He invites us to do the same things as He does because He lives within us and it is therefore possible as He works through us.

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- b. The normal standards of our fallen world become acceptable to us because we are so used to them. We get used to sadness, sorrow, sickness, death, decay, diminishment and much more. When Jesus walks on the planet, He does not accept the status quo but through the presence and power of God changes the situation around him to reflect what it looks like when the kingdom comes on the earth. We also need to have to our eyes open so we can see things from God's perspective and learn to change around us, where before we simply accepted the way things were.

Question 5, 6, 7 & 7

Self-explanatory question. A chance to reflect on what it might mean in your own personal life.

Question 9

We need to get practical and realistic about changes that need to take place in our lives if we are going to consistently partner with the Holy Spirit to do the things that God has called us to do. Training our senses requires an understanding that firstly this is something that is possible and we need to do. It also requires us to do it with other people. It is hard to do this on your own, and it requires a consistent focus and daily reminders to help change habit patterns. There is no one set way to do this and each person has to consider what it means for them.

Question 10

We may well become aware that things aren't right around us. The next step is very important that we don't make a natural judgement of what is going on or what to do about it. When we sense things are not right we need to turn our hearts to the Lord and ask Him what is going on so that He gives us His perspective, His understanding so that we know what we are to do in that situation. In this way we consistently live dependent on the leading and the understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Question 11

Jesus prays with authority to still the storm. This is an important passage for us today.

- a. Jesus is at rest because He knows He is protected and covered by God. His Father.
- b. Out of that sense of rest He discerns what is wrong and uses His authority to still the storm which has been raised up by the enemy to oppose and destroy Jesus' disciples (to the Jewish hearer, Jesus stilling the storm is not so much a nature miracle as a revelation of His authority over the destructive powers of darkness symbolised through the tumultuous power of the sea. He is fulfilling old testament scriptures. See Psalm 107:29/Psalm 65: 7). On the other hand, the disciples are too influenced by the atmosphere of fear and a natural mindset and therefore cannot hear and discern the mind of God. They rely on natural ways to resolve their problem and miss the opportunity to exercise their authority. It is a learning curve for them and Jesus does not condemn them because he loves them. This scripture is incredibly relevant to all our lives if we are seeking to learn to do the things that Jesus did and exercise the authority that He has given us to use. This authority is always to bring life, to resist the enemy and to bring the peace and shalom of God.

Episode 5 – Activating Authority

Jesus desires to build a church that is thoroughly supernatural in its identity and ministry. Exploring His words in Matthew 16 we get an insight into both his vision and the way that He has equipped the church to fulfil that vision. This study aims to open us this teaching and begin to understand how to make it real in our lives today.

Question 1

- a. The people give a thoroughly supernatural response to Jesus' question because the way Jesus ministers could only be understood through a thoroughly supernatural perspective because of the dynamic presence and power of God that was released through Him.
- b. Messiah (Hebrew) and Christos (Greek) both mean 'anointed one' and for a synopsis of what Jesus was anointed to do, go to Luke 4: 16-21 and Acts 10: 38.
- c. God reveals the nature of Jesus to Peter and it is on the basis of this revelation that the DNA of the church is established. If we try and build a church that does not reveal the true nature of Christ through us, then it is by very definition a religious structure that does not bring life in fulness.

Question 2

The primary purpose of the church in this statement is to overcome the gates of Hell/Hades. This again is a supernatural reality and a supernatural purpose for the church of Jesus Christ. The authority of God operating through us destroys the authority of the evil one and the Kingdom of life has greater power than the kingdom of death. At the end of the day the church of Jesus Christ is to bear fruit that is supernatural, powerful and effective in robbing the enemy of his rule, authority and dominion in people lives.

Question 3

- a. The church is on the offense in this image rather than the defence. The church is moving forward to overcome and destroy the gates of the enemy and this reveals that we are to be involved in offensive spiritual warfare on the front foot.
- b. The gates represent the authority and the power of the enemy to resist. Gates in middle eastern countries were only shut by those with authority and the gates were physically powerful to resist the enemy.
- c. This is relevant because in our day, Satan has authority in people lives and holds people bound behind the gates under his influence. We are called to be freedom fighters seeking to bring freedom, release healing to those who are trapped by the enemy.

Question 4

We are not just loaned the keys, of the kingdom, nor are they kept in God's hands alone. The keys are given to us because he is delegating authority to us and the responsibility to actually use that authority. This influences our understanding of our authority and responsibility because we are entrusted with this level of influence. We are therefore called to use it and exercise it. This understanding challenges a mind-set that believes God does whatever he wills and we observe him at work. It implies that we have an active part in bringing about the will of God.

Question 5

- a. The Greek word translates 'to bind' is 'Deo' is. It means to forbid, to stop, to prohibit and to disallow. We do this by discerning what God wants us to resist. We do this through authoritative prayer (remember episode 4, effectively Jesus is binding the storm and binding sickness by taking authority over it and disallowing it).
- b. Loosing is allowing, releasing and empowering. It operates in the same way as binding, except this is the creative power that is released through us to bring about the will of God. For an analogy, study the story of Lazarus coming back from the dead. In that story Jesus says 'unbind the grave clothes', which literally means 'loose him from the grave clothes'. This is an image of releasing someone from that which bound them.
- c. We do the loosing and we do the binding. It is our authority and our responsibility to activate God's authority on the earth.
- d. The grammar implies that we are under authority and are therefore only meant to loose and bind that which has already been agreed by heaven. We don't just do it on our own by our own wisdom but we do it because we have heard the voice of the Lord and are doing his binding.
- e. The word 'whatever' is a very wide-ranging word and includes our authority to deal with anything that opposes the will of God.
- f. This question is designed that you might look at the scriptures through the lens of Jesus exercising His authority. Consider what he stood against, what he stood for, what he prohibited and what he released so that it would act as an encouragement so that you might do the same in your life.

Question 6

The analogy of the Battle of Britain and the warfare in the skies illustrates the need to first of all do warfare in prayer in order to then walk out change and transformation on the ground. In the west we prioritise natural therapy and strategies at the expense of revelation and authoritative prayer.

Question 7,8 & 9

Self-explanatory

Episode 6 – Practical Steps

In this episode we focus on 5 key biblical foundations for personal growth as we are being changed into the likeness of Christ. Personal transformation is essential to life in the supernatural realm and enables us to live authentic and faith filled lives. Without our own breakthrough, we will not see breakthrough around us. Without our own personal transformation, we will not see transformation around us.

Question 1

- a. The Greek word 'Topos', translated foothold, means a place of influence or a defined area. In Revelation 12 we find Satan losing his Topos in heaven and he now seeks topos (an area to which he has legal rights) on the earth.
- b. The enemy has legal rights in our life where we are in agreement with mind-sets, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour that are in agreement with his lies and temptations.
- c. The Topos of anger in someone's life will lead them to be quick to blame, quick to criticise, quick to judge, quick to be angry and to swear (overt anger) possibly even cold, withdrawn, and punishing (covert/passive anger). The natural Human emotion of Anger is energised by the spiritual force of evil and therefore the expression of anger in our lives can be a mixture of the natural and the supernatural.

Question 2

- a. A moment of honesty, vulnerability and self-awareness is needed here.
- b. Self-explanatory

The 5R's

Recognise

- a.
 - i. David clearly wants to be free of the influence of his sin and he is very aware that there may well be areas within him that he is not aware of and therefore, this is a prayer to God to reveal it so that he might be free.
 - ii. There is clear confidence in God's goodness, kindness and willingness to help him get free. He is not cringing in fear of God but willing to let God into his very inner being to help him walk into holiness.
 - iii. A moment of personal reflection on the word to apply it to your own life.
 - iv. It is one thing being dragged into the light, it is another thing to want to walk into the light with an intentional heart of asking God to show you whatever you need to see. This cooperates with God's desire to reveal our sin to us so that we are able to overcome it and walk free from it.

Repentance

- a. Consider your own thoughts and memories around the word 'repentance' and any negative connotations it has for you.
- b. It is a wonderful thing to realise that God's kindness leads us to repentance because it then brings life. The conviction of sin and the awareness of sin is part of the mercy of God towards his children.
- c. Self-explanatory

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- d. Breaking agreement with lies is essential in order to lay hold of the truth. It is the first step once you have seen the lies and attitudes and behaviour patterns that form the stronghold (see 2 Corinthians 10). Breaking the agreement tears up the rights that Satan had to influence you in this area. Remember Satan is a legalist and he knows his rights.
- e. His legal hold is therefore broken. Where he has no authority in an area, he then has no right to stay and his hold is broken and his grip is released.

Rebuke

- a. Because we are seated with Christ in heavenly places, because we are identified with Christ and He with us, we therefore have the same authority as Jesus does to deal with the enemy. To rebuke means to 'press down' and we see Jesus both rebuking and resisting Satan in His ministry. We have the same authority in our day as well. We rebuke the spirit that lies behind the anger, the fear, the rejection, or whatever the pattern of sin is, and the energising power of the enemy is therefore disabled.
- b. The God of Peace. We are actively involved in the process of crushing Satan under our feet. This is very similar to Ephesians chapter 6 where we are strong in God's mighty strength but we still have to engage in the war for ourselves and come out of the battle with the enemy under our heel (you may find it a very helpful step that when you rebuke the spirit behind whatever it is that you are struggling with, you stamp your foot as a prophetic action of crushing Satan under your heel).
- c. Philippians 2: 12-13. This verse reveals that the deep profound work is initiated and carried on in our lives by God himself as He works out his god purposes in us. Our response is to partner with God with what he is doing in us. There is real work to be done to allow the salvation of God to manifest itself through us fully. However, it is not up to us to make this happen. God is at work and we partner with him and are carried along by his grace and strength at work within us

Realigning

- a. Realigning is the re-orientation of our thinking, our choices, our hearts towards the truth and towards living out the truth in our lives.
- b. It is crucial that we align ourselves to God's word in order to choose life and walk into life. We have an active role to play in this. Sometimes it is very hard to know how to realign because we are so used to the old truths, the old ways and the old patterns. Realigning takes thought, prayer and very often conversation and discussion with wise Christians to know what the truth looks like.
- c. Personal application

Replacing

- a. Replacing established truth into our lives. Realigning is the decision and choice to re-orientate but replacing is the active, ongoing lifestyle that fulfils the realigning. Replacing requires studying the word, prayerful meditations on the word requires Holy imagery to renew our imaginations, and it requires Godly choices to strengthen our wills. It also requires emotional honesty with God – that we are being authentic and not trying to present to God our best sides. In this process there is a renewal of the whole of the internal life as we give ourselves to the process of transformation and change.

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- b. It is so important because unless we replace the old weeds with seeds of truth, the weeds will regrow and the garden will not change.
- c. Truth is so critical because it has liberating power within it. Truth has to come deep into our thoughts, our minds, our hearts and our choices, so that we lay hold of the truth and do not let it go, even in the testing times
- d. We internalise truth through reading the word, meditation on the word, praying the word, declaring the word allowed (see Joshua 1: 8) and living out the word in action
- e. There is opposition to us seeing the full fruit and harvest of the word in our lives. Concerns, anxieties, worries, cares, distractions of this world draw out attention away from the Word and we end up filling our thoughts attentions on natural things, which bring very little change.