

Divine Wisdom

365

Volume

One

*‘But give me only my
Daily Bread’
(Proverbs 30:8b)*

Divine Wisdom 365 is a study book designed to provide guidance and direction in everyday life, every moment we live. It is a book of encouragement and refreshment. Divine Wisdom comes from the Bible, which is the Word of God. God's Wisdom is the foundation for living. The prophet Jeremiah said, *"God made the earth by His power; He founded the world by His **wisdom** and stretched out the heavens by His understanding"* (Jeremiah 10:12).

Divine Wisdom 365 is a practical collection of messages on many different subjects of the Christian life: From the means of eternal salvation, to understanding your purpose in life; how to live the Christian life; how to have the love, joy, peace, patience and kindness that are promised as *"fruit of the Spirit"* (Galatians 5:22). Jesus Christ taught His disciples the need for daily bread, *"Give us today our daily bread"* (Matthew 6:11). When Christ faced-off against satan, His strength came from His very words, *"Man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4:4).

May this study book provide spiritual food and nourishment to convert your faith into spiritual muscle; to give you hope in times of despair; to give you confidence and courage in the face of problems and adversity.

"Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the Words of My mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you." (Proverbs 4:5-6)

- Scriptures are quoted from various translations of the Bible, including the New International Version of the Bible, 1978; New American Standard Bible, 1977; NASB and NKJV.
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Divine Wisdom 365

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Compiled by

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Our prayer, as together, we continue to learn the Word of God:

“As the rain and the snow come down from Heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is My Word that goes out from My mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11)

Grace and Appreciation

The principles taught in this study book are lessons learned from our Pastors, R B Thieme Jr., and his son, R B Thieme III, Berachah Church, Houston, Texas, USA. For their faithful teaching of the Word of God, we have immense gratitude. We have come to know the importance of learning, understanding, and applying God's Divine Wisdom to our lives, every **day**, 365 days, every year. God's Word endures forever (Isaiah 40:8)

As missionaries, we are assisted by the gracious administrative work of Operation Grace World Missions (www.ogwm.org). OGWM was incorporated in Houston in 1975 for the purpose of spreading the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world.

God gave us a ministry. He works His Plan through many people who are with us on this incredible journey. Some, we do not even know. But through all of their encouragement and prayers, we are equipped and strengthened for the mission set out before us. The values received from all of our "like-minded" friends and supporters are written into these pages. Faithful friends are a rich blessing. God has provided such blessing, especially through our friend Terry Wilson and his family from Dallas, Texas. Terry has contributed insight, understanding and refreshment through many of the messages contained in this study book.

We owe everything to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who redeemed us from the Slave Market of Sin. Because of His sacrifice of paying the penalty for our sins on the Cross, and through our belief in His Name, He gave us the gift of eternal life through His resurrection and ascension to Heaven. God the Holy Spirit gave us a gift to serve others, preach the Gospel, and teach the Word of God. We hope that ***Divine Wisdom 365*** will help each and every one who reads this study book, to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). This study book offers a daily message to provide hope, joy, and comfort from the Word of God, the mind of Jesus Christ.

Tom and Cheryl Molinar, with Terry Wilson

American Missionaries

South Africa, 2021

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Preface

*For the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.
He holds victory in store for the upright, He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless,
for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones.
Then you will understand what is right and just and fair — every good path.
For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
Discretion will protect you, and understanding will guard you.
(Proverbs 2:6-11)*

Before you begin reading ***Divine Wisdom 365***, and as you continue reading this study guide every day, you need to allow God the Holy Spirit to teach you. He will guide you as you read God's Word. He will help you to understand the Bible and grow daily in *the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (2 Peter 3:18).

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, God has given you the solution to recovering from everything that hinders your spiritual growth, and sins that so easily entangle.

*If we confess our sins to God, He is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

You will then be in fellowship with God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to study, understand, and apply all that you learn from the Bible. Jesus Christ said, *"The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you"* (John 14:26).

If you have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, the issue is not naming your sins, or trying to change your life, or attempting to do things to please God for salvation. The issue is faith alone in Christ alone. Christ did all the work for our salvation; we simply have to believe in Him and His work on the Cross.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.
For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,
but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned,
but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed
in the name of God's One and Only Son.
(John 3:16-18)*

*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son
will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.
(John 3:36)*

Introduction

The Bible is “food for the soul,” from God. Food for the body is a necessity for life, which satisfies and fulfils our physical needs in strength and vitality. Likewise, food from God’s Word is a necessity for the spiritual life, which provides strength and vitality for the soul.

As our body needs food every day to live and grow strong, so it is with our soul. Our soul also needs spiritual food every day. The wisdom and promises from the Word of God **strengthens our faith, builds our confidence**, and develops **trust** in our Almighty God. Jesus Christ, when faced with hunger, thirst and temptation said, “***It is written*** (in God’s Word), “*Man does not live on bread alone, but on every Word that comes from the mouth of God*” (Matthew 4:4). When Jesus Christ was teaching His disciples how to pray, He emphasised the need for the daily intake of the Word, when He said, “*Give us today our **daily** bread*” (Matthew 6:11).

Our **daily** bread is the Word of God. It is listening, reading, studying the Word of God every day of our lives. God always provides the bread, just as He provided manna for Israel during the 40 years in the desert. If you have a Bible, it is proof that what God promises, He always provides. Our Bible has survived over 4,000 years persecution, attacks and attempts to erase it from history. Nations and kings have been removed, ancient temples and churches lie in ruins, yet, “*the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever*” (Isaiah 40:8).

Divine Wisdom 365 is a study book to help and encourage you, as a supplement to your daily study of God’s Word. **It is designed to be read side-by-side with your Bible.** It is important that you look up every Scripture verse listed. Its purpose is to satisfy a hunger you might have to learn more about God and understand how to live the Christian life. The Bible is not only milk for a young, newly-born Christian, but it is solid food for your soul to grow and become strong in faith and in knowledge of His Word (1 Peter 2:2 & Hebrews 5:13-14).

This “**Volume One**” study book, has only **91 days**, but more days will be included in the following volumes. It is designed with categorical messages to be read and studied every day. The messages range from simple to complex, from basic to advanced. The messages are written to help you understand Biblical topics such as: Salvation, Security, Faith, Fear, Sin, Love, Death, Knowing God, and many others. Each message contains many verses. You are encouraged to look up the verses, read them, understand how that verse applies to the message you have read, and how it can be applied to your own life and circumstances. Once you have read the message completely, and can honestly say that you understand the message, then put a check mark in the box in the upper right corner of the page.



This will help you to remember what you have read, and what to read next.

God knew that His children would face life with difficulties, challenges and temptations. But God did not abandon us as orphans in an alien world. He never leaves us nor forsakes us! (John 14:18 & Hebrews 13:5). He lives and abides within us (1John 4:16; John 6:37-40).



Day 1: Sunday *Salvation & God's Grace*

“A small boy asked the preacher, 'Sir, What can I do to be saved?' The preacher replied, 'Son, you're too late.' 'What!' exclaimed the boy, 'too late to be saved?' 'No,' said the preacher, 'too late to do anything. You see, son, Jesus Christ already did it all, two thousand years ago.’ (The Christian Chapel Bulletin, 1/92).

In Grace, our Heavenly Father made salvation as simple as possible! He saves us by Grace, by simply **believing** in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is God and part of the Trinity. He is the Son of God, who died and paid the full price to remove us from the condemnation God places on sin. Christ did everything for us on the Cross, by taking our sins onto Himself. He paid the price for our salvation so we are no longer condemned to hell. Neither do we need to continue to live in the Slave Market of Sin. Christ set us free!

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His uniquely born Son, that whoever **believes** in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever **believes** in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God, Jesus Christ” (John 3:16-18). “Whoever **believes** in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son, will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him” (John 3:36).*

There is only **one** way! The **only** way to God is by belief and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Under no other Name can we be saved (Acts 4:12). God’s gift of salvation was fully completed by Christ on the Cross. All we have to do is **believe** in Him! (Acts 16:31). And we will have everlasting life (John 20:31).

We are **not** saved by the Mosaic Law or by man’s works or man’s rules, but by **faith alone in Christ alone!** (Philippians 3:9). Ephesians 2:8-9 states, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.”* We did nothing to gain our salvation. Therefore, we can do nothing to lose our salvation!

However, man attempts to consistently introduce his own self-righteous works, such as going to church, giving up certain things, giving money to the church, and even requiring baptism, as a **means** of salvation. All of these are good, but they pertain to Christian living, **after** salvation. The Pharisees also had their own rules and regulations in Christ’s time. Christ called them a brood of vipers (Matthew 12:34). Therefore, we must choose to believe God’s word and not believe man’s words. As stated in so many passages, God says, believe in My Son, for He is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). The word *Belief* is used 150 times in the Bible. Here are just a few more to the ones already stated above, do look them up: John 11:25-26; Acts 15:11; John 9:35; John 6:29; John 17:20-21; etc.

So keep reading, and more will be explained and made clear to you, in the following pages.

Memory verse: *“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)*



Day 2: Monday [Am I Saved?](#)

Today, ask yourself a few questions: “***Am I saved?***”, “***How can I be sure that I am saved?***”; “***What must I do to keep my salvation?***” These questions are asked by many. Let’s examine each from the light of the Word of God. The Bible states in Acts 16:31, “*Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.*” Even Jesus Christ Himself promised in John 3:36, “*Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him.*”

“Am I saved?” “OK,” you say, “That’s simple enough, but what exactly does it mean?” It means that the moment you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and understand that He went to the Cross as your substitute and paid the penalty for your sins (past, present, and future), you are saved. At that very moment, you become a child of God, forever (John 1:12). Just as you were born physically into your earthly family, so also when you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are “born again” spiritually into the family of God. If you believe in Jesus Christ, then you can answer the first question, “Yes, I know that I am saved!”

“How can I be sure that I am saved?” The next question is even simpler than the first. When God promises ***anything***, His promises are absolutely true and binding, and they will never change. As Jesus Christ was walking with Martha to the grave of her brother, Lazarus, He said, “*I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes In Me will live even though he dies*” (John 11:25). Even more convincing is what Christ said to his followers in John 10:28, “*I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one can snatch them out of My hand.*” With these two promises, you can be sure that you are saved, you are a child of God, and no one can remove you from His loving hands. Here are more promises that God does not lie or change His Mind: Psalm 110:4; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Numbers 23:19; and Titus 1:2

“What must I do to keep my salvation?” This question is often asked by believers in many churches around the world. They live in fear, thinking that they can commit some terrible act or sin that will cause God to turn away from them and condemn them to hell. The Bible does not teach this! Jesus Christ promised His disciples in John 6:47, that whoever believes in Him has everlasting life and will live with God forever, even after physical death. The simple answer to the question is there is ***nothing*** you need to do to keep your salvation. You were saved by God’s grace, and God gave you the gift of eternal life. Grace means that you did nothing to earn or deserve His salvation. Likewise, there is nothing that you can do to lose the gift of salvation that God gave to you (Ephesians 2:8-9). The only issue you must be aware of and correct, is sin after salvation (see ***Pre & Post Salvation Sins***, page 21, and ***Recovery from Sin***, page 22). Basically, it means we will all sin until the time of our death. But by simply confessing it to God, He forgives and restores us back to fellowship (1John 1:9). But we will never, ever **lose** our salvation as a child of God!!

Memory verse: “*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (Romans 8:38-39)



Day 3: Tuesday *The Miracle of Salvation*

Many long to see a true, genuine, real-time miracle from the hand of God. Have you ever seen one? Have you ever experienced a miracle that you could say, “It came from God?” Well, in the time it will take to read this brief message, you will be able to see, and hopefully understand that a true miracle happens in your life the moment you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, several miracles happen at that moment.

1. You become a child of the living God! (John 1:12-13). You become a member of His family for all eternity.
2. You are given eternal life and will live with Him forever (John 11:25).
3. God gives you the Holy Spirit. He lives within you, to teach, to guide, and to help you grow to spiritual maturity (Romans 8:11; 1Corinthians 3:16 & 6:19; John 14:15-17). And when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, He becomes your Counsellor and Comforter in times of trouble and adversity (John 14:26).
4. The Holy Spirit gives you spiritual gifts to be used for the benefit of the Body of Christ (not to glorify yourself). (1Corinthians 12 and Romans 12:6).
5. You receive His Righteousness (John 1:12-13; Romans 4:2 & 22-24). God the Father loves His righteousness, which is in you – the righteousness of His Son, who lives in all of His children (Romans 8:10; 2Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 2:20; 1John 2:24.)
6. You become a Royal Priest (1Peter 2:9). Now you can enter boldly into the throne room of God, the very Holy of Holies, without any priest or man to go between you and God (Hebrews 4:16).
7. As His child, you will receive an inheritance from God (1Peter 1:4-5); everything that belongs to Christ will belong to you as His child.

There were many occasions in the Bible when people only wanted to see miracles. Christ could have healed everyone around Him. He could have removed hunger and poverty from the world with just one word. **So why didn't He?** Because, when Christ did perform a miracle, it was to identify Himself as God and to declare Himself as the Messiah. (John 4:48 and 6:26-40). The miracle of salvation is unseen by men, real to the believer, and performed only by God Himself. Only God can save mankind from the penalty of sin and eternal condemnation.

Memory verse: Following the miracle of feeding the 5,000, Jesus Christ told them, “*I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty.*”
(John 6:35)



Day 4: Wednesday..... *Eternal Security*

When you were born into the family of your earthly parents, you received their DNA, which is your family identity, found in every cell of your body. This absolutely stamps you as your parent's child forever. You can never stop being their child. No matter how hard you may try to remove yourself from your family, it cannot be done. Likewise, at salvation, you are born again into God's family and God imputes His righteousness to you. This is **His** divine DNA. You can never lose His righteousness. You are eternally His child forever!

From the point of salvation forward, God cannot let go of the believer even if the believer is a total failure in the Christian life. Eternal security is based on the unchangeable essence of God (see ***Divine Essence - Immutability***, page 71). What God gives He can never take back. Once eternal life is given, it cannot be revoked. Once you have eternal life, you cannot lose it, nor can anyone remove you from God's all-powerful grip (Romans 8:38-39).

In John 10:28, the security we receive from possessing this eternal life, given to us at salvation, is expressed as being held in the hand of God. He holds us firmly in an eternal relationship, and He will never let go of us. His hand cannot and will not let us go (Hebrews 13:5b; Deuteronomy 31:6b). Nothing nor any person, including self, can snatch us out of His Hand! (John 10:28-30; and strongly stated in Romans 8:38-39). These passages show us that just as there is **nothing** man can do to bring about our salvation, there is absolutely **nothing** that man can do to lose our salvation.

God does not lie (Titus 1:2), nor can He change His Mind (Psalm 110:4, Malachi 3:6, James 1:17). God's absolute truth guarantees His faithfulness in our salvation. He cannot cancel the salvation of any believer, no matter how sinful that believer may be (Jude 24). Numbers 23:19, states this very clearly, *"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfil?"*

Another verse to remember is, 1John 5:10, *"Anyone who believes in the Son of God, has His testimony in His heart. Anyone who does not believe God, has made Him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony, God has given about His Son."*

1John 5:11-13 clearly states that God has given us eternal life through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. When God gives a gift, He will never take that gift away. We must believe Him, for if we have doubts about our salvation, we will not have the ability to grow further in our spiritual life and glorify God, which is our purpose here on earth.

Memory verses: *"God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" (Hebrews 13:5b)*

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6)



Day 5: Thursday *God Holds the Pencil*

This day was unlike any other day. It was dark, hopeless and frightening. People were dying. This is a true story of a young American Captain during World War II, in Germany. The Captain was about to lead his infantry company into combat against a ruthless German enemy. He knew that there would be casualties. Men would die.

On the day before the battle, the battalion commander, a Colonel, asked to see one of his company commanders, a young Captain. When the Captain reported to the Colonel, the Colonel could clearly see that the Captain was uneasy, not scared or cowardly, but concerned about the upcoming battle. He was a good Captain, a good leader, and his men had great respect for him. He was a Christian, and so was the Colonel. Unexpectedly, the Colonel asked the Captain to sit down. "Are you OK?" the Colonel asked. "Yes, sir!" the Captain replied. But the Colonel could see that the Captain was troubled, and he could hear a slight uneasiness in his voice.

The Colonel picked up a pencil and held it in front of the Captain. He put one finger on top of the pencil and put the tip down on his desk. Then he asked the Captain, "If I remove my finger from the top of this pencil, what will happen to the pencil?" The Captain, somewhat unsure where the Colonel was going with this question, said, "Sir, the pencil will fall." Then the Colonel let go of the pencil and it fell over. Then the Colonel picked up the pencil, and once again put one finger on top of the pencil with the tip on his desk. Then looking at the Captain, He asked again, "If I remove my finger from the pencil, what will happen to the pencil?" The Captain, beginning to wonder if the Colonel was losing his mind, said, "Sir, the pencil will fall." "Now," the Colonel said, "observe this." The Colonel took his other hand, wrapped his hand around the pencil, and then removed his finger. The Colonel then asked the Captain, "What happened to the pencil?" Smiling, the young Captain said, quite naturally, "Sir, the pencil stands. It will not fall over as long as you are holding it." The Colonel then looked right at the Captain and said, "Captain, that is exactly what God does with you. He holds you in His hand, and nothing can remove you from His hand! Now, tomorrow as we go into battle, just remember how God will always protect and guard you. You are God's child, you are in His hands, and there is nothing that will ever separate you from His love, His care, and His protection."

A year or so later, after a major battle, the Colonel, who had since been promoted to General, was driving down a battle-scarred road. His vehicle drove past a column of soldiers being led by that Captain who was now a Colonel. The Colonel recognised the General, and shouted, "General! God still holds the pencil!"

So it is with you. When you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ: *"I give unto them eternal life and no one shall snatch them out of My hand"* (John 10:28 & Romans 8:38-39).

[Note: The story was told to the author by Pastor R B Thieme, Jr. It records an event in the life of Lt. General William K. Harrison, Jr. Any errors in the story are attributed solely to the author.]



Day 6: Friday..... *Miracle: Feeding the 5,000*

Most of us, when we hear of the miracle of feeding the 5,000, with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish, we think, *“How wonderful! Feeding the hungry! I would love to see that miracle happen again today!”* But Jesus Christ performed that particular miracle for a reason. The people should have recognised that Jesus Christ was God, believed that He was the promised Messiah, who offered them spiritual food of eternal salvation, and that they would never go hungry again.

As much as we would like to read that these 5,000 people fell down upon their knees and thanked God for His grace and everlasting love, we do not read that! Instead, John 6:14-16, states, *“After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, ‘Surely this is the prophet who is come into the world.’ And, Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make Him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by Himself.”* They wrongly thought that Jesus was only a prophet, like Moses. They wanted to seize Him by force and make Him their king as a political leader and miracle worker.

These people were Jews who knew the Old Testament writings. They read how the great prophet Moses rescued Israel from slavery in Egypt and provided manna and quail in the desert. But it was not Moses who performed the miracle. Moses prayed to the Lord, and God performed the miracle (Exodus 16:4-8). When Christ fed the 5,000, He did not pray to God. He is God! He performed the miracle as God Almighty.

Unfortunately, they did not understand the purpose of the miracle. Sadly, they did not believe that Jesus Christ was God. They wanted a political king, not a spiritual king. They made a decision about Christ based on their physical needs, not as God, their Saviour and Messiah!

When Jesus Christ left them, they searched high and low for Him, working as hard as they could to find Him. When they finally found Jesus Christ on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, they were arrogant, rude, and disrespectful to Him. They questioned Him, *“Rabbi, when did you get here?”* They called Him Rabbi, meaning “teacher.” They only wanted more miracles, requiring more proof of who He said He was. *“So they asked Him, ‘What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe You? What will You do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert.’”* (These quotes are a summary of John 6:25-31). They then asked Him, *“What must we do to do the works God requires?”* (John 6:28).

Jesus Christ answered with the absolute truth, *“The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent”* (John 6:29). And yet, having seen all that they had seen, and having heard the words spoken by the Lord Himself, they continued in their unbelief! This is extreme unbelief, “hardened hearts.” Here is a clear demonstration of the power of negative volition.

May we not be so blind that we cannot see the truth; or so deaf to not hear and believe the words that our Lord Himself spoke to those lost people. They were frantically searching, but never finding the Truth. Jesus Christ declared to them, *“I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty”* (John 6:35).



Day 7: Saturday *God's Grace*

The word “Grace” conjures up beautiful images of elegance, style, kindness, etc. But what does it really mean? Grace is also defined as a gift; undeserved and unearned. The Bible defines it perfectly, from God’s view point: *And God is able to make all Grace abound to you. For the purpose that you will always have all sufficiency in everything, that you may have an abundance for every good deed! (2Corinthians 9:9).*

Think of grace this way. If God could have sent His only Son to take on our punishment and condemnation, while we were still sinners, then how much more would He do for us now that we are His children? God’s grace abounds no matter where or to whom. As His children, we have boundless access to His grace. Our **belief** in His Son is our only salvation. For we are saved by grace, not anything we have done. (Ephesians 2:8-9). That is grace!!

Just as we put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, which is eternally secure (see ***Eternal Security***, page 9), so we must put our faith in Him that He will take care of us, no matter what. After all, look at the flowers and the birds and the grass of the fields, He feeds them all and looks after them (Luke 12:24-31). Would He not do more for His child?

Yes, there are Christians out there that are poor, without jobs, who live in shanty towns. But when anyone of them believes in their Saviour, Jesus Christ, and has the faith that their God will protect and provide for them, their life is superior, for they have joy and peace in their souls; something the world could never know. They have the confidence that their God, the Father and Creator of this universe, will supply all of their needs, as stated in Philippians 4:19, “*And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*”

Wealth and material goods are not all of what Christ meant. Rather, more importantly, it is a life with peace of soul (John 14:27 and 16:33); of contentment in the midst of adversity (Philippians 4:11-13 and 2Corinthians 12:9-10); of sharing the happiness of God, knowing we are His children, and that He will work all things for our good (Romans 8:16 & 28); with the knowledge of having the power of the Holy Spirit within us to overcome all things: “*And His incomparably great Power for us who believe, that power is like the working of His mighty strength (Ephesians 1:19).* Also, Ephesians 1:17-20; Acts 1:8; and Romans 8:14-16.

This is Grace, freely given and undeserved! Given to us with no conditions!

Memory verses: “*Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall (in death) to the ground apart from the will of your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore (do not fear); you are of more value than many sparrows.*” (Matthew 10:29-31)

“*And He said to His disciples, For this reason, I say to you, Do not worry about your life as to what you will eat nor for your body, what you will put on.*” (Luke 12:22)

“*Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.*” (Luke 12:27)



Day 8: Sunday..... *God's Love & Grace*

She was hated. She was despised. She was an outcast. Why? Because she was a prostitute. They wanted to rid her from society so she could not corrupt their children. As in ancient times, stoning was a form of capital punishment, and prostitutes were stoned to death. This practice is still observed in some Middle Eastern countries today.

As the religious leaders surrounded her, ready to stone her, Jesus Christ was in their midst. He knew what they were thinking. So, He simply bent down and started writing in the sand. When He stood up, He said, *"He who is without sin among you, may cast the first stone"* (John 8:7b). We may not know exactly what He wrote, but what He wrote convicted them of their judgemental thinking. The leaders slowly dropped their stones, and one by one, walked away.

This passage is recorded in John 8:1-11. *"When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, 'Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?' She said, 'No one, Lord.' And Jesus said to her, 'Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more'"* (John 8:11).

This historical event was recorded to tell us how careful we must be in "judging" others. All sins, whether "small" or "big" in man's eyes, are repulsive to God and keep believers from having fellowship with Him. These include all mental and verbal sins, including half-lies, worry, guilt, fear, doubt, judging, gossiping and maligning - sins of the tongue, as well as the sins of the prostitute, are all repulsive to God. But **all** of which have been paid for by God's love in sending His Son, Jesus Christ to the Cross, to take on our condemnation (1John 2:2).

This beautiful story of God's Grace and Love shows us that sins do not keep us from God, because there is no sin for which Christ did not die! *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

His love is beyond measure and beyond our own understanding. We simply must have the faith and belief in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to be able to enjoy the wonderful and rich life He has provided for us. This does not mean "rich" as in material goods, but rich as only the riches of God's Grace can provide. It involves peace of soul and contentment in the harshest of adversities (Philippians 4: 6-7; Isaiah 26:3; Isaiah 43:2). It involves happiness and confidence in the knowledge that He does care for His children and will protect us in the most serious times of national unrest, corruption and criminality, and personal adversity (Psalm.3:6; Isaiah 41:10). Can we believe in His abundant promises? Can we trust Him that He will never leave us nor forsake us? (Hebrews 13:5b). Can we have the faith in Him to know that there is nothing that happens to us without His knowledge; that there are no "accidents" with God? His omniscience knows all! (Matthew 10:29-31 and Psalm 33:13-15).

God wants us to fulfil His Plan for our lives (Ecclesiastes 3:12-14 and 5:18; John 16:24-27).

Memory verse: *"You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever."* (Psalm 16:11)



Day 9: Monday *God Provides*

The twelve disciples were with the Lord Jesus Christ for about 3 years. They travelled back and forth between Jerusalem and Galilee a few times, a distance of about 126 km, each way, on foot! During their travels they had witnessed numerous times how the Lord provided for the many needs of people. Sometimes the people would ask Him, but the Lord always knew their needs even before they were asked.

When the disciple's faith was weak, and they thought they were drowning, they needed reassurance of God's great power. The Lord Jesus Christ awoke, and spoke three words to the wind and to the sea, ***"Peace, Be Still!"*** (Mark 4:39). The wind immediately stopped blowing, and the sea calmed. Another time, a Roman Centurion asked the Lord to heal his servant who was paralysed and suffering (Matthew 8:5-6). The Lord spoke, and the servant was immediately healed (Matthew 8:13). On another occasion, Jesus Christ fed 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish (Matthew 14:19). He also fed 4,000 people with seven loaves and a few small fish (Matthew 15:36). God always provides!

The disciples were amazed when they saw the Lord performing miracles. The miracles were easy for Jesus Christ to perform, because He is God. But the Lord did not want His disciples, or any of us to become dependent on or expect miracles when we needed something from Him. Jesus Christ sent His disciples on their first missionary journey to preach the Gospel to Israel. The Lord told His disciples not to take any money with them, not an extra tunic or sandals or a walking stick, not even any food! (Matthew 10:9). The reason for this was that they would trust in God alone for all their provisions, and thereby, increase their faith in all of His promises. *"That your faith should not rest on the wisdom (or provisions) of men, but on the Power of God."* (1Corinthians 2:5).

Jesus Christ was teaching His disciples and Christians in the future that God would provide all of their needs. God with His almighty power, would work through people, circumstances, situations, and even His miracles to provide for the needs of His children. He told His disciples there would be some towns and villages that would welcome them, and through their gracious hospitality, God would provide for them. Christians must open their eyes, see how God provides. Look for it. Expect it. It will be there. It's God's promise. (John 16:24).

God is perfect. He has a perfect plan for you. And He will provide everything you need to accomplish His Plan and purpose in your life. *"And God is able to make all Grace abound to you, for the purpose that you will always have all sufficiency in everything, that you may have an abundance for every good deed!"* (2Corinthians 9:8)

Memory verses: *"And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:19)

*"I have been young, and am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken,
nor His descendants begging bread."* (Psalm 37:25)



Day 10: Tuesday..... **Logistical Grace**

Logistical Grace, is a phenomenal grace provision, which the Father gives to each believer. It includes His divine plan for the believer to function within each believer's personal destiny. This includes His divine support, divine provision and blessing for the fulfilment of God's Will, purpose and plan for each believer's life. We have that guarantee!! The biblical definition is found in 2Corinthians 9:8, *"And God is able to make all Grace abound to you. For the purpose that you will always have all sufficiency in everything, that you may have an abundance for every good deed."*

"Every good deed," refers to what we do within the Plan of God, to fulfil what He has for us, for our life here on earth. This means that we must first and foremost, be in fellowship with the Father through the filling of the Holy Spirit. Only then are we equipped for every aspect of our spiritual life, to live, to grow, to glorify God. God provides the life-support. We are on life-support; God's life-support. Ever asked why and how you have survived life's various illness and accidents and near-death experiences. This is the reason: Grace!

Logistical Grace is based on the personal love of God directed toward every believer. Each of us gets exactly what we need for our life and our mission. Hence, never get our eyes on other people, for each child of God has a different mission, a different destiny (purpose), while living on earth. Each of us will have a fortune waiting for us in eternity (Revelation 22:12; 2Corinthians 5:9-10)). So, what we have on earth, be it wealth or poverty, does not matter, it is simply how we live our life on earth, pleasing to the Lord (Colossians 1:10). This is a great motive for us to grow spiritually in grace and knowledge of God.

God does not promise that He will give every believer wealth, over and above what we need. God does not guarantee "health, wealth and success," as some churches teach. In Logistical Grace, some receive less, and some receive more. Some live in reduced circumstances, others live in wealth and prosperity. But living in poverty does not mean that God has forgotten or abandoned us as His children. We will always receive exactly enough for what we need to live and carry out God's Plan. *"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work"* (2Corinthians 9:8).

There are times when Logistical Grace seems minimal for a very good reason. It may be minimal in order for us to concentrate on the spiritual growth side of our life, or, as a means to direct us in a path designed specifically for us. There are times when the Father allows us to go through poverty and reduced means, so we have no other means than to look to Him for help and assistance. Therefore, in our "weakness" we are made strong in God's power. As Paul stated in 2Corinthians 12:9, *"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."*

Memory verse: *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing."* (John 15:5)



Day 11: Wednesday..... [More Grace](#)

Circumstances of life have varying effects on each individual. Sometimes, it is the most tragic situations that bring out the very best: Becoming the Lord's witness; demonstrating victory over adversity; and glorifying Him in ways that could never have been achieved.

Annie Johnson Flint is just such a person. Born on Christmas Eve in Vineland, New Jersey, USA, she lost her mother following the birth of her baby sister. Her father, struck with an incurable disease, died within two years of her mother's death, all before Annie reached the age of six. Annie and her sister were adopted by the Flints, through the gentle persuasion of a friend, "Aunt Susie." The Flints were strong Christians and brought up the girls with love and solid Christian principles. Annie accepted Christ at the tender age of eight, confirming the words of our Lord, "*You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to little children*" (Luke 10:21).

Annie grew spiritually, developed a love for poetry and aspired to be a composer and concert pianist. She graduated from high school and went on to pursue a career as an elementary school teacher. In her second year of teaching, she became afflicted with arthritis while trying to care for her ailing, adopted parents. Shortly thereafter, tragedy struck again when her adopted mother and father died within a few months of each other. Annie's arthritis grew steadily worse to the point that she was unable to walk. She visited doctors only to receive the verdict that she would become a helpless invalid.

Later in life, she was unable to open her hands and could no longer write, but she continued to compose many of her poems on a typewriter, *using her knuckles!* From this grief-stricken life, one marked by great suffering and loss, was born the hymn:

"He Giveth More Grace."

The words of this hymn are on the following page. Annie's biography and entire poetical works have been documented by Rowland V. Bingham, which can be found on line, and from which excerpts of the above were taken.



A similar *bitter-sweet* story is found in the Legend of the Thornbird.



It is a mysterious bird who sings, just once in its life, the sweetest song ever to be heard. In fierce pursuit of the thorn tree, the Thornbird leaves its nest and does not rest until it has fulfilled its final quest. Silent in its entire *life* until the final hour, its voice begins to float through the air, and the whole world stops to listen to the music from the tree. Its melody, more lovely than the Nightingale, more melodious than the Lark, the very first song it sings comes flowing from the heart, before dying among the thorns. That story may be legend, but Thornbirds do exist and reside in South America.

The words to "He Giveth More Grace," follows in the next page.



Day 12: Thursday..... *He Giveth More Grace*



He Giveth More Grace

*Words composed by **Annie Johnson Flint**, 1866–1932*

& sung by our Texas Songbird, Glay Marie Posch

He giveth more grace, when the burdens grow greater;
He sendeth more strength when the labours increase;
To added affliction, He addeth His mercy;
To multiplied trials, He multiplies peace.
When we have exhausted our store of endurance;
When our strength has failed and our day is half done;
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources;
Our Father's giving has only begun!
His love hath no limits;
His grace has no measure;
His power knows no boundaries known unto man.
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth;
He Giveth Again!!



Day 13: Friday *Tale of Two Brothers - 1*

Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11): There was a father who had two sons. The youngest felt he had to leave home to *find himself*. He wanted to travel the world and see what other things life had to offer, apart from the environment in his father's house. So, he went to his father and asked for his share of his inheritance. The father gave it to him, even though he knew his son would probably misuse it anyway, as most young people would do.

The son took off from home and went to the *Big City*, where life was colourful, exciting, and he had the freedom to do whatever he wanted, away from his father's eyes. Of course, to keep up with his new found friends and lifestyle he quickly used up his inheritance. And not seeking suitable employment to support his wrongful living, he ended up poor and destitute. Needless to say, his disloyal friends became bored and abandoned him. These were the choices he made.

The results of his bad choices, left him with no employment, no new clothes, and he was starving. The only job he was able to find was feeding pigs. Keep in mind that for Jews, pigs were believed to be "unclean." He slept with the pigs and ate their food. That's when he realised that even the servants in his father's house slept and ate better than he did. So, he decided to put aside his pride. He came to his senses and decided to go back to his father, even though in shame, willing to be one of his father's servants. But on his return home, the father was not only waiting for him, but watching out for him. The father ran and hugged his son and kissed him; told his servants to bring out the best **robe** for his son; put a **ring** on his finger; and **sandals** on his feet. Then he killed the **fatted calf**, to celebrate his return, saying, "*For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found*" (Luke 15:24).

The Biblical story of the Prodigal Son is well known. Christ told this parable, which represented Himself and His sons, His children, believers in Christ. And here are the principles we learn from it:

- The father's love represents the faithfulness and unfailing love of God the Father.
- The youngest son represents a child of God, a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- As a wayward son he was still and always would be his father's son, just as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has the eternal security of being a child of God forever.
- When the prodigal son left home and went to a distant country, he broke fellowship with his father. As believers, when we sin and live in carnality, we break fellowship with God the Father, but we can recover through simply acknowledging our sins to God, (1John 1:9), just as the son regretted his sinful life and went back to his father.
- The son realised his errors, confessed his sin to his father, and was welcomed home. So it is with believers who confess their sins to God the Father, they are restored to fellowship with Him, as promised in 1John 1:9. (See David's cry in Psalm 51:1-4).
- The son made bad choices which resulted in his own self-induced misery. "*The choices we make determine the life we live.*" (Pastor R B Thieme, Jr).

The story continues.....keep reading the following two pages.....



Day 14: Saturday *Tale of Two Brothers - 2*

Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11): When the younger brother departed from home, the older brother remained behind. Both brothers are children of their father and that can never be changed. Both sons had sin natures, like ourselves, but their sin natures are revealed in different ways. And yet, their father loved them both the same just as our Heavenly Father loves us unconditionally.

The younger son has gone to a distant country; this represents carnality, a believer out of fellowship (away from home), and far from the spiritual life. Bad decisions limit our future options. The life that the son was meant to live, can only begin again when he returns to his proper place in the family. But his first step is to recognise his need to return, the need for restoration. So, it is for the believer. We have to evaluate and judge our lives, look at our failures, and return *home* by naming our sins to our Heavenly Father. (1Corinthians 11:31).

So, what must this son (a believer out of fellowship), do? He must first recognise his sins; evaluate his life; admit them to God; and only then can he return to fellowship with his Father. That is all that is needed, clearly stated in 1 John 1:9 and Nehemiah 1:6 (see ***Recovery from Sin***, page 22). Some Christians are confused, because they cannot believe God forgives sins so easily. They simply do not understand God's abounding grace and His unfailing love!

The prodigal son feels he needs to do more. He wants to show remorse. He wants to become one of his father's servants and perform menial tasks to gain his father's approval. However, the father barely hears his son. Rather, the father embraces and kisses his son, welcoming him back and gives commands to his servants to honour his son with items that demonstrate his love:

- The **Robe**, demonstrated the father's love by covering the filth of his son's sins. The believer's carnality does not remove him from being a member of the family of God.
- The **Ring**, a signet ring, was a mark of identification and ownership, which gave the son full and complete ownership into the inheritance of the family. Believers are restored to the inheritance of the spiritual life which restores the believer to full ownership of the riches of God's grace.
- The **Sandals**, represented that the son could once again walk with his father. He was not a servant with bare feet. Believers in restored fellowship keep in step with the Spirit and walk by means of His power (Galatians 5:16 and 25).
- The **Fatted Calf**, demonstrated a celebration of restored fellowship of the son to his father. There is great joy, when any believer is restored to fellowship with God the Father, and even the angels rejoice (Luke 15:10 and 24).

Memory verse: *"In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."* (Luke 15:10)



Day 15: Sunday..... [Tale of Two Brothers - 3](#)

Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11): Most of us may be very familiar with the story of the younger brother. But now, the parable turns away from the prodigal to the elder brother. He too has a sin nature; but a sin nature with a different trend to his brother. Although this was not obvious until his brother, the prodigal returned. Now we get to see the other side of the sin nature. Christ continues with the parable demonstrating to us the different sin natures we possess. It is clearly revealed in this parable:

Luke 15:25-27, "Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has returned,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

*Luke 15:28-32, "The older brother **became angry and refused to go in**. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been serving you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"*

The elder brother was not only jealous, he became angry. He is now the one who is out of fellowship (not going into the “house”). He did not appreciate the grace shown by his father. He had done everything right in his own sight: lived at home; not squandered his father’s money; not lived a “sinful” life in his own eyes. And yet, what is jealousy and anger? Both are sins. He was also resentful; he sees the money as being extended to someone who, in his mind, does not deserve it. This is being selfish. He could not recognise his own sin, and would rather **judge** the sins of his younger brother. This is legalism and self-righteousness. Legalism means putting morality above grace, believing that one’s **moral good works**, are pleasing to God. But 1Corinthians 3:13-15 states that a believer’s works, not produced in the power of the Holy Spirit, will be burned up, though the believer himself will still be saved.

The legalist rejects grace. Although he remained the son of his father, and remained home, the elder brother’s legalistic self-righteousness, disassociated him from the family. This type of person, constantly sits in judgement of others. He compares his “good and moral life” with the “sinful life” of others. This is pure arrogance. This believer is just as carnal in God’s eyes and is out of fellowship with God, as was his younger brother.

We should always evaluate ourselves based on the principles found in the Word of God. The Word of God is perfect and is always absolute Truth. So, when we look at ourselves through the mirror of the Word of God; when we judge our own selves, we should recognise who we are in God’s eyes, and how much we need His grace.

Memory verse: *“Bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.” (Colossians 3:13-14)*



Day 16: Monday *Pre and Post Salvation Sins*

Forgiveness is a wonderful act that brings peace and a restored fellowship between two people. Forgiveness also brings peace and fellowship between God and man. When a person believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, at that very moment, instantaneously, he or she becomes a new person, “*a new creature*” (2Corinthians 5:17). The old life, and any sins that person might have committed, are forgiven, and he begins to live a new life, just as though he were “*born again*” (John 3:3 and 7). The Bible states that, “*the old has gone, the new has come,*” and God was reconciling the world to Himself (2Corinthians 5:17-19). Reconciliation means bringing peace between God and man, through faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. [Every 16th December, since 1995, South Africa celebrates a “Day of Reconciliation,” meaning, “*fostering of unity and reconciliation across the country.*” Forgetting the past and moving forward].

As a “new person,” through faith in Christ, God the Holy Spirit enters you into the family of God where you have a permanent, eternal relationship with God that can never be broken (John 10:28). As a child of God, He holds you in His hand forever; and there is nothing that can separate you from His Love (Romans 8:38-39).

As a new, “born-again” believer, any sins committed before salvation are forgiven (1Peter 3:18). However, even as a child of God, the Bible recognises that temptation to sin is always lurking in our lives. It is part of our sin nature that we acquired from Adam when he sinned (Romans 5:12-21). Only Jesus Christ, as complete perfection was totally free of sin. But when we sin, we fail. The Apostle John stated in 1 John 1:8, “*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*” God desires that we stop sinning and the more we grow in His Word, the more we will obey Him, trust Him, and hopefully sin less and less (Galatians 6:16-17). God recognised that we would need help to recover from sin, even after salvation. So, He gave us a grace way to recover fellowship with Him (1Corinthians 10:13; 1John 1:9).

Sins committed before salvation are forgiven the very moment we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Any sins committed after salvation are forgiven the moment we name them to God the Father. If we fail to name a particular sin to God, or die before we were able to confess it to God, don’t worry, we are still a child of God, and He will welcome us into Heaven with open arms! (Luke 15:31) Sin in the life of the believer does not cancel our eternal salvation (see ***Eternal Security***, page 9). Neither does naming our sins to God for forgiveness give us a licence to continue in sin. Rather, it gives us a license to grow spiritually.

We learn from the Parable of the Prodigal Son, clearly told in the ***The Tale of Two Brothers***, (pages 18-20), that the wayward son thought he was no longer “*worthy to be called his father’s son, and he wanted to work as a hired servant,*” in order to be forgiven ((Luke 15:19). But none of that was true! The son simply admitted his sins to his father, and he was immediately forgiven and welcomed home. It was the same thing that King David said when he failed, “*I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and You (God) forgave the guilt of my sin*” (Psalm 32:5).

Memory verse: “*If we confess (name) our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” (1John 1:9)



Day 17: Tuesday [Recovery from Sin](#)

At salvation, we instantly become a child of God, and we are given so many gifts to help us live the spiritual life and glorify God. One of the greatest gifts our Father gave us, was the ability to recover from sin, regain the filling of the Holy Spirit, and restore our fellowship with Him. Many leaders in the Bible acknowledged sin as an ever-present enemy.

- **Solomon: Ecclesiastes 7:20:** *“Indeed, there is not a righteous man (a believer) on earth who continually does good and who never sins.”*
- **Paul: Romans 7:18:** *“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.”*
- **David: Psalm 51:5:** *“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”*
- **Isaiah: 48:8b:** *“Well do I know how treacherous you are; you were called a rebel from birth.”*

The work of Christ on the Cross forgave us all our pre-salvation sins. His substitutional sacrifice on the Cross also paid the penalty for sins that we commit after salvation. For this reason, we can now simply name or confess any sins we commit after salvation. All of our post-salvation sins are forgiven by using 1John 1:9; also supported in Nehemiah 1:6 and 1Corinthians 11:31. **Note:** The Epistles of John were written to believers, not to unbelievers, calling them *“children of God,”* having, *“fellowship with the Father and Jesus Christ”* (1John 1:3).

Using 1John 1:9, brings us back into restoration and fellowship with Christ, through the filling of the Holy Spirit. Without the filling of the Holy Spirit, our prayers will not be heard (see page 61); nor could we understand the Scriptures; or understand and love God; or grow spiritually and live the spiritual life. We are here to glorify Him. But we must know *HOW*. The Scriptures tell us the truth about how; not some rules and regulations made by man.

Unfortunately, man may twist the Scriptures out of context to suit his own arguments. This is called, “proof-texting.” Therefore, it is critical for any teacher of the Word to have the educational background of the **original** languages, to understand the **context** in which it was written, and to understand the **history, culture and idioms** of that time, which was over 2,000 years ago. Even in this 21st Century, idioms differ from just one country to another. For example: The word **Repent** by many Western cultures means to “feel sorry.” In Zulu, **phenduka**, means to “Turn around; change direction.” However, in the original Greek, from which the New Testament was written, the word is **Metanoeo**. This simply means, “Change of mind; to think differently; a reversal of a decision.”

“Repentance” is mentioned 21 times in Matthew, Mark & Luke. These three Gospels were written in the early Church, before Jerusalem was destroyed and Israel was scattered in 70 AD. Israel was being warned, just as in the Old Testament, to repent their ways or they were going to be destroyed (Ezekiel.18:30-32; Jeremiah.3:12-14; Jeremiah.8:6; Jer.18:8; Jer.26:3; Deuteronomy.30:1-2). Now the Gospel of John uses no references to *Repentance*, only **Belief** and **Faith**. This is due to the fact that the Gospel of John was written in 90AD, after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD – the damage was already done. Today, we simply have to confess or name our sins to God and we are back into fellowship with Him.



Day 18: Wednesday [Unconfessed Sin](#)

A question that is on the minds of many believers: “What if I die without having confessed a particular sin? Or what if I commit a sin and immediately die without confessing that sin to God? Will I go to Heaven, or will I go to Hell?”

The short answer: Sin in the life of the believer does not cancel eternal security. You will go to Heaven, because of your belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, who paid the penalty for ALL of your sins, and for the sins of the entire world. Neither is sin an issue for the unbeliever at the Last Judgement. It is only **belief** in the Lord Jesus Christ that gives us salvation (John 3:18).

As believers we all fail. As an example, Peter failed many times even denying Jesus Christ three times. Yet, his denial did not keep him from becoming an Apostle and writing, “*He, Himself bore our sins in His body on the Cross, so that we might die to sin, and live to righteousness, for by His wounds you were healed*” (1Peter 2:4). The Apostle John also answers the question, “*He (Jesus Christ) is the one who turns aside God’s wrath, taking away our sins, and not only ours but also the sins of the whole world*” (1John 2:2). Unconfessed sin does not keep a believer out of Heaven. Only **unbelief** in the Lord Jesus Christ will keep a person out of Heaven (John 3:18).

“Ok,” you say. “But, if Jesus Christ paid for all of my sins, why must I still confess them? What if I forget? What if I miss one?” The reason that believers still need to confess their sins to God is to be forgiven and have **fellowship** with Him, **not to be saved**. There is a big difference between Salvation from the condemnation of sin, and forgiveness of sin after salvation. Salvation rescues a person from the judgement of eternal condemnation and establishes an eternal relationship with God. Only God can provide eternal salvation. Forgiveness by God, for believers, restores fellowship that is broken when we sin (Psalm 66:18). But the eternal relationship with God is never broken. (***Eternal Security***, page 9).

Think of it this way: When you were born, you became the child of your parents forever. Nothing can change that relationship. But you may still fail and disappoint your mother or your father from time to time. Then that special bond of family fellowship is broken. But if you admit you are wrong, they embrace you and forgive you. This is exactly what happened to the Prodigal Son which was a parable taught by Jesus Christ in Luke 15:11-32. If you have never read that short parable, you should read it (also see, ***Tale of 2 Brothers*** pages 18-20).

God loves you as His child. He holds you in His hand and nothing can ever separate you from your Heavenly Father’s love (Deuteronomy 33:27). God always knows that His children will be faced with sin and temptation. Sometimes we fail. We can fail by living in perpetual fear and not trusting God; or doubting God’s Word; or carrying around guilt for something done in the past; for lying, gossiping, judging, and all other sins. But God gave us a simple promise that if we admit our sins to Him, He is always faithful to forgive us and cleanse us, so that we can continue to enjoy the fellowship of being in God’s family.

Memory verse: “*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins [to God], He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*” (1John 1:8-9)



Day 19: Thursday [The Solution to Sin](#)

Sin is anything contrary to the Will of God. Sin is falling short of God's perfection (Romans 3:23b). In eternity past, God knew every sin which every person in the human race would commit. His perfect righteousness had to condemn our sins, so all mankind is now born condemned, separated from God. However, God's love did not leave us in that condemned state. Instead, God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to take our place, to be judged on the Cross for every sin in human history. He was our substitute (John 3:16; Romans 5:8). As a result, sin is not an issue for salvation. The issue is the acceptance or rejection of God's grace gift of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:18 and 36; Ephesian 2:8-9). That is why it is so important to understand that salvation only comes by **belief** that Jesus Christ **is** God; that He is the Son of God; and that He paid for ALL sins on the Cross. He died so we may live. He rose again and He lives, so we can live with Him (John 14:19b). We have the only living God!

Christ's sacrifice on the Cross was complete. He was judged for the sins of the world, and the penalty was spiritual death, which is separation from God the Father (Romans 6:23). In His death, Christ even paid for the blasphemous sins of the Pharisees who had crucified our Lord. But their sins still had to be forgiven. Christ prayed to the Father, "*Forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing*" (John 23:34). John heard this and he wrote that even their sins would be forgiven immediately if they would simply believe that the Person they crucified, was actually the Messiah, the True and Only Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. They would be born again, and their old life of sins would be forgiven. They would become "new creatures" through Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Likewise, at the moment a person believes in Jesus Christ as Saviour, God forgives their *pre-salvation sins*. But once saved, a person does not automatically stop sinning (1 John 1:8 and 10). God in His grace provided a simple solution for sins we commit after we are saved. 1 John 1:9 gives us the solution. We name or acknowledge our sins to God the Father and He forgives us, plus any sins that we may have forgotten, and sins we may not have known were sins. He is "*faithful to forgive*" meaning, He always does the same thing no matter how many times we have committed that sin and no matter what our motivation is in naming the sin. He freely provides the solution, and it is undeserved. That is His grace! (Romans 5:15).

When we sin, our sins generally fall into three general categories: Mental attitude sins include sins like arrogance or pride, hatred, anger, bitterness, fear, guilt, self-pity, jealousy, self-righteousness, etc. Verbal sins include gossip, maligning, judging, slander, lying, etc. And overt sins including criminal activity, violence, breaking the law, sexual sins, drug abuse, drunkenness, suicide, and murder.

Proverbs 6:16-19 tells us that there are some sins to which God takes a harsher view. Read that passage. It may surprise you what is on that list, and what is not. Regardless, for every believer, the solution to **all** sin is naming them to God the Father. This is important because only by doing that can the believer regain the filling of God the Holy Spirit (the power for the spiritual life), be restored to fellowship with God, and resume growth in the spiritual life.



Day 20: Friday [Greater Love - 1](#)

Love! Everybody loves to love. Everybody thinks they know what love is. Everybody has their own interpretation of love. So, what **is** this thing called love? How do we love? How could God have loved a world full of sinners?

Let's take the sentence: *I Love You*

"I" is the subject (yourself); "You" is the object (another person); and "Love" is the verb.

Generally, when we love another person, it is because that person has some good, loveable qualities. That love is "**personal**" and **conditional** - based on who and what that other person is like. So how then could God love the world (mankind), when it was full of sinners and evil people? How could God say, "I love you?"

God did say, "I love you," and He meant it. For, God *IS* Love! God did love the world, because He loves from His own integrity. It does not depend on us, degenerate sinners. This is called **impersonal** or **unconditional**, or "**greater**" love (John 15:12-13). It is not dependent on the object (mankind), but on the subject (God), and His absolute perfect Love.

We may also refer this type of love, as "Virtue Love," which is a far 'Greater Love.' The Apostle Paul clearly defined love in 1Corinthians 13, as follows:

1Corinthians 13: 4-8a:

Virtue love is patient; virtue love is kind and is not jealous;

Virtue love does not brag and is not arrogant.

Virtue love does not behave dishonorably, is not preoccupied with self,

Is not provoked to anger, does not take into account a wrong suffered.

Virtue love does not delight in unrighteousness [evil], but rejoices with the TRUTH.

Virtue love bears all things patiently,

Believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Virtue Love never fails!

The Apostle John knew what that love is, and stated it in 1John 4:7-12

1John 4: 7-12:

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

No-one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Let us look at this subject a bit more in detail on the following page.



Day 21: Saturday.....[Greater Love - 2](#)

So, what is this “Greater Love” or “Unconditional Impersonal Love?” It is **the** important characteristic that a believer in the Christian life, should have. It is the only way we can have **great** relationships in life. It is an unconditional type love, which makes no demands or expectations on the object of our love. It makes personal love deeper, richer and fuller, and even bearable when in conflict or disagreement with the other person.

In personal love relationships, we are vulnerable as a person; vulnerable to hurt, vulnerable to agony, to disappointment, and even hatred. But with impersonal love, which comes from honour in our own soul, it can be strength in times of weakness; peace in times of unrest; a relaxed attitude in conflict. And our love for God becomes stronger as our personal love for Him grows.

As Paul stated, he was content with weaknesses, insults, and persecutions, etc. *“Therefore, I am well content (relaxed) with weakness, insults, distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties for the sake of Jesus Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong! (2Corinthians 12:10).* You see, there are numerous ways we can become discouraged and distracted by people. But God’s Word gives us the solutions for any test we may face. We simply have to learn and apply God’s solutions to our life. That takes time! We have the option of having and living a relaxed, peaceful, contented life daily, moment-by-moment. It does not depend on how you are treated, or what is going on around you. That is strength. A strength that is dependent on the power of the Holy Spirit, the filling of the Holy Spirit (see ***Recovery from Sin***, page 22), and the application of God’s Word and His promises to our lives.

This can be your life: Adversity and conflict in relationships are inescapable. But with impersonal love, a greater love, conflict need not become inflamed to the point of lasting injury, or constant fighting, no matter how deep the conflict goes. With virtue love in your soul, personal circumstances do not get out of hand; they do not cross over certain limits into uncontrollable anger or become vicious in vengeance. Such believers know how to act when conflict arises. They know how to put a lid on it; how to stop it before it gets out of hand. When we can control our words and actions under any circumstance or conflict, then what an advantage we have over others.

Remember this: We are constantly treated with compassion from the Lord, and we deserve none of it! Just so, we are to apply God’s charitable policy of undeserved, unconditional love towards others. If we can respond with a relaxed, gracious manner, they may respond likewise. God sees and knows the motivation of our hearts. Don’t disappoint Him!

Now, this does not prevent a good talk and discussion, but without anger, without emotion, without exploding reactions. Communication Yes! Retaliation No!

Memory verse: *“He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.”*
(Proverbs 13:3)



Day 22: Sunday *Divine Guidance - Knowing God's Will*

How does one know God's Will? Where to go; how to think; and what to do? These are all decisions we are compelled to make on a daily basis. The *course* of our lives is determined by knowing and obeying God's Will, His plan and His guidance. That is our destiny! (Ephesians 1:11; Ephesians 5:15-17; Jeremiah 17:10).

Some of us lost our parents when we were very young. So how do we know whom to trust on this *Road of Life*? The paths of life can be confusing at best and distressing at worst. Life is all about choices. Even Christ, who was God (deity) & man (humanity) in one person, had to make choices. *"For I do not seek My own, but the will of Him (God the Father) who sent me."* (John 5:30b). *"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."* (John 6:38).

Christ is demonstrating His own subordination to God the Father. So, if Jesus Christ Himself seeks the Will of the Father, should not we also? God's Will for His children is clearly defined in His Word, which reflect His thoughts and His Will.

There are three types of the Will of God, which we need to learn and understand.

1. His Directive Will: The desire of God is that we advance spiritually, which is the only way to glorify Him. Every command found in the Bible, is part of God's directive Will. Three mandates of His Directive Will are:

- ***Be Filled*** with the Holy Spirit; stay in fellowship with Him (John 1:9; Ephesians 5:18).
- ***Know*** the Will of God by studying His Word (2Timothy 3:16-17).
- ***Grow*** in the grace and knowledge of God (2Peter 3:18).

2. His Permissive Will: This is when God **allows** man to make decisions and allows certain things to happen, even though they are not His desire. At creation, God gave mankind free will to choose for or against Him (ex: Adam & Eve in the Garden). God will never *force us* to love Him or obey Him. Hence, God recognises the free will of every person, even if it is contrary to His plan. When the believer decides against the Will of God, God will discipline us to bring us back into His Plan. We face the consequences of choices we make in life. *"The choices we make determine the life we will live!"* (R B Thieme, Jr)

3. His Overruling Will: Jesus Christ Controls History! God does allow man's bad decisions but the outcomes are controlled by God, exactly what His plan demands.

Example: Israel as a nation will survive as a nation, despite all their faults & failures; and despite all attempts to destroy them, from Pharaoh and Haman (of Esther's time), down to our current history, such as with Hitler and the Palestinians (Numbers 24).

Memory verse: *"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's Will is, His good, pleasing and perfect will."* (Romans 12:2)



Day 23: Monday *Divine Guidance - Living God's Will*

“Today,” you say, “I am going to learn what God wants me to think; where He wants me to go; and what He wants me to do.” So, for the next 15 minutes, put all of your troubles aside, use 1John 1:9 to be in fellowship with God, and learn from God’s Word.

The day before, we learned about His directive, overruling and permissive Will. Now we learn more: Where does God want me to go; what does He want me to think; what does He want me to do; and how does He want me to operate within His plan? (Proverbs 3:5-8).

- **Geographical Will:** Where does God wish me go; where does He want me to be?

Before we can know the Will of God, we must be in fellowship with Him. First, we must judge and evaluate ourselves (1Corinthians 11:31). Then we must acknowledge any sins to Him, and we must do it on a regular basis (1John 1:9). Only then can the Holy Spirit make God’s Will known to us. Whatever we ask in prayer, we must make sure to ask, “If it be Your Will.” Even Christ desired the Father’s Will over His own, as recorded in Mark 14:36 and Luke 22:42. Moses also said that he did not wish to go where God did not want him to go (Deuteronomy 1:33; Exodus 33:15). God has given us His Word to teach us how we may learn His Will and walk in the way our Father desires us to walk (Psalm 119:105). In addition, God uses circumstances to direct our paths. He will open the right door at the right time, in His perfect timing. We simply have to keep studying His Word; keep trusting in His plan for our lives; and be patient.

- **View point Will:** What does God want me to think?

The Bible is the mind of Christ, with which we have been commanded to think (Philippians 2:5; 1Corinthians 2:16; Colossians 3:2). We are to renovate our thinking, as stated in Romans 12:2. We come to know what God wants us to think by gaining wisdom and understanding from His Word (Proverbs 3:13). By His Word, we become wise (Ecclesiastes 10:2; James 1:5; Ephesians 5:15-17). When we think with the mind of Christ, we think with divine view point, which are God’s standards. Whereas, human view-point which is opposed to divine view point, is the thinking and standards of this world. Therefore, we are required to “renew” our minds (Ephesians 4:23-24).

- **Operational Will:** What does God want me to do?

The Father has made it very clear what He wants us to do: Study His Word; grow in grace; and obey Him in all things. (2Timothy 2:15; 2Peter 3:18; James 4:7-8). This is the only way we fully come to know God and His Will, and serve as witnesses for Him and ambassadors for Christ (2Corinthians 5:20; John 8:31). We are here on earth in order to glorify Him in all things (Romans 4:20b; 1Peter 4:10-11).

Memory verse: *“Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.”*
(Ephesians 5:17)



Day 24: Tuesday *Divine Guidance – How it Works*

Knowing God's Will for our lives is very similar to knowing how to build a house, fix a child's toy, cook a meal, sew a dress, etc. It requires knowledge of how to do these different activities in life. Someone more experienced and trained has to either teach you, or you study and learn how to do it yourself (this is usually harder and takes longer). It is no different in the spiritual life. We have been given instruction on how and when to know God is guiding our lives. This knowledge does not cost us one cent. It is free. It is God's Word!

We do not come to full knowledge overnight. Just like a child in school is educated daily, and with each year he or she comes to know more and more. It is one brick built upon another brick, on which a house is built. This is true of any knowledge we gain in life. Here is how we come to know the mechanics of God's Will, His divine guidance for each of our lives:

- Guidance through the Filling of the Holy Spirit. He is our mentor and teaches us His Word (Romans 8:11; Psalm 32:8). Guidance does not work without the filling of the Holy Spirit that is the power for the spiritual life.
- Guidance through God's Word. We are commanded to study God's Word as His mandate provides guidance in living the Christian life (2Timothy 2:15; Psalm 119:105 and 133; Psalm 32:8).
- Guidance through Prayer. Ask for guidance and be prepared for an answer, because you will get one. Doors may open, but they may also shut. It takes faith and trust, but above all, it takes patience. Patience is waiting on God's perfect timing. (Jeremiah 33:3; Psalm 91:15; Psalm 25:4-5).
- Guidance through life's circumstances. There are no accidents or coincidences in God's Plan. God uses events to direct our paths (Ecclesiastes 7:14; Psalm 118:23-24).
- Guidance thru comparison of events. Problematic circumstances caused Abraham and Lot to make a decision on where to go (Genesis 13:5-18). In addition, Moses and Aaron made a decision, based on conflicting reports from Joshua and Caleb, which differed from the other ten spies (Numbers chapters 13 and 14).
- Guidance thru recalling Scripture (Proverbs 3:1-2; Proverbs 1:8). The Holy Spirit helps us to remember scripture when it is most needed. But we must first have those promises in our souls for the Holy Spirit to bring to our remembrance ((John 14:26).

Look back at all the traumatic events in your life. See where you were and where you are today and how those events changed your life. You do not want to go where God does not desire of you (Exodus 33:15; Exodus 14:13-15).

"If the Word of God does not say it is, or the Holy Spirit does not verify it, and the circumstances don't provide for it, it is not God's Will!" (Rick Hughes, Evangelist)

Memory verse: *(The Lord your God) went ahead of you on your journey, in fire by night and in a cloud by day, to search out places for you to camp and to show you the way you should go. (Deuteronomy 1:33)*



Day 25: Wednesday *Divine Guidance - Examples of God's Will*

Examples of His Permissive Will: God turns cursing into blessing!

- **Satan:** God permitted Satan and 1/3 of the angels to disobey Him. As a result of their disobedience, they will be cast into the eternal lake of fire (Matthew 25:41 and 46).
- **Adam & Eve:** God permitted Adam and Eve to disobey Him, and they became the condemnation for the entire human race (Genesis 3:23-24). But now we who believe, can be God's witness to His grace and salvation (Romans 5:17-19).
- **Joseph:** God permitted Joseph to be sold into slavery and undergo testing to learn and advance in his walk with God (Genesis chapters 37 to 50). And we can learn likewise.
- **Haman:** God permitted Haman to put a curse on the Jews, so God could demonstrate His deliverance of His people. (The Book of Esther is an accurate historical account).
- **Christ:** God permitted Judas to do what he did in betraying the Lord Jesus Christ, because it was His plan for Christ to go to the Cross. God allowed man to persecute and crucify Christ instead of calling down angels to rescue Him. Now the world could have eternal life thru simply believing in Christ (Acts 16:31).

Examples of God's Overruling Will: Jesus Christ Controls History!

- **Israel:** They will survive as a nation, despite all its faults and failures, unlike other nations; i.e., the Egyptians, Romans, Assyrians, Babylonians, Chaldeans, etc. (Numbers 24).
- **Moses:** Pharaoh decreed all Israelite male infants to be killed, but Moses was saved by Pharaoh's daughter and raised as an Egyptian prince (Exodus 1:15 – 2:1-10).
- **Children of Israel:** God's Overruling Will delivered Israel at the Passover, from slavery in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, etc.
- **Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego:** God overruled Nebuchadnezzar's command to destroy them (Daniel chapters 1 to 3).
- **Jonah:** God had a large fish swallow Jonah and take him to Nineveh, against Jonah's wishes (Jonah 1).
- **Christ:** The Jews tried to kill Christ on many occasions, but until it was God's time, God overruled their attempts (John 7:1; John 10:31 & 39; John 11:53-57; Luke 4:28-30).
- **Paul & Silas:** God caused a violent earthquake to open the doors of the prison and break off all their chains (Acts 16:22-26).
- **Genesis 50:20a,** is the overruling Will of God applied. What man means for evil, God means for good.

19th Century examples: David Livingstone, a Scottish missionary, planned to go to China, but England and China were in the midst of Opium Wars, compelling him to go to Africa instead.

Adoniram Judson, an American missionary, started out for India, but they would not let him off the ship because of improper papers; so he ended up in Buddhist Burma.



Day 26: Thursday *God's Timing - 1*

As humans, we are always anxious for events to happen immediately. When we face a closed door, such as being terminated from our job; or a congregation no longer desiring its pastor; or a holiday not falling into place; or one whose plans to marry, walks away, etc., we anxiously await the “next step” to occur. But God’s Timing, means a Divine sequence of events that occurs in the life of any believer in order to fulfil His purpose in our lives to glorify Him! God has set a time for everything that happens in our life. His Timing and Plan are inextricably inseparable. This takes patience on our part! *“There is an appointed time for everything! And there is a time for every event under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 3:1-18).*

As we grow spiritually, as we come to know and love our Lord, we can relax in the knowledge that He has a perfect time and place for everything; especially for each of His children. We cannot execute the Plan of God unless, we acknowledge that God has a right time for everything; therefore, we need to relax and trust God. That is called “Faith Rest,” – resting on His Promises. There is no peace when we are out pushing our own agenda on our own schedule. In fact, it causes great frustration, distress, sleepless nights, and stress of soul.

We need to be flexible. Directions change as we move along in life. In His timing, directions may go in an opposite way from what we intended, sometimes radically, sometimes slowly. But as we grow to spiritual maturity, we will come to realise that there are a series of moments that open and close doors in our life, those that move us forward in His Plan. As we mature, we will be able to recognise these subtle twists and turns in the path of our life.

So, how does God open and close doors? God presents to us a circumstance or an event that requires a thought process and a decision. We must **think** and act from the knowledge of God’s Word, and the strength of our spiritual life. That’s when we make good decisions and recognise the open or closed doors, and know how to process it all. However, if we make a mistake, He will redirect us by opening another door and closing the one behind us. But never forget, God’s perfect plan goes on, with or without us, (see ***Divine Guidance*** pages 27-30) Either way, in His perfect timing He will turn a page in our lives, but then we must keep moving. It may be a direction we don’t want to go; so what? We keep moving. His Plan continues with direction in Life. We may have a partner at just the right time; we may have a job offer at the very moment of need; or we may undergo adversity or a distasteful situation to jolt us into realising His timing, not ours; His Will, not ours!

The maturing believer considers every day alike as a gracious **gift** from God. Each day we live on earth is a day from His Grace to us. And every day has a special meaning as stated in Lamentations 3:22-23, *“Through the Lord’s mercies, we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; **Great is Your Faithfulness!!**”*

Memory verse: *“This is the Day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.”*
(Psalm 118:24)



Day 27: Friday.....*God's Timing - 2*

As we have noted, God has appointed circumstances, and for each circumstance, a specific time for it to happen, stated in Ecclesiastes chapter 3, where it lists all of the topics:

In verse 2: *A time to give birth and a time to die*; demonstrates the boundaries of human life. God has ordained a time when we will be born and when we will die. People often complain about the time and circumstances in which they were born. They blame their own bad decisions on circumstances. Complaining and blaming reveals a lack of understanding and being out of sync with God's plan. Forget the past and never question it. God's perfect plan moves forward, in His timing. No matter how bad our past might have been, believing in Christ and growing to maturity, changes past cursing to current blessing.

In verse 4: *A time to weep and a time to laugh. A time to mourn and a time to dance*, it means to weep or mourn for some adversity which we are experiencing. Grieving for those departed is normal. But God does not intend for us to be in perpetual grieving and certainly not living in pity. It is debilitating. We must move on to other matters of life. We have only so many days on earth. Don't spend that time in sorrow. God has a greater plan for you.

Patience, is an absolute must, when it comes to God's Timing. We have to trust God's timing. He knows *what* is best for us and *when* it is best for us. Anything given to us sooner than we are prepared for it, or not having the capacity for it, will ruin even a blessing. We need to have a relaxed attitude as we trust God's perfect timing in all matters of our life. We have God's Word, which tells us how to live the spiritual life, how we are to consider even death, so that we should be able to enjoy everything in life, not in fear, but in faith.

Verse 4b:- ...*A time to laugh...and a time to dance*. David danced out of pure joy; unbridled enjoyment (2Samuel 6:12-16). Sometimes we forget there is still a time to laugh and dance as long as we are alive. It's a reflection of sharing the joys of the Lord; living each day in *His plan and purpose*. As it clearly states, there is a *TIME*, for everything! But we can only be in harmony with God's time, through the knowledge of His Word and our personal spiritual growth. It is only through understanding and trusting in God's time, can we begin to recognise when a door closes and another opens.

Then there is a time to earn our living; a time to pursue an occupation. We never retire from life! We may retire from a job, but we will never retire from God's plan for us. We simply move into the next phase of God's service, all within God's timing. We are still Ambassadors for Christ, and thus, witness for Him in all aspects of life.

Memory verse: *"When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other."* (Ecclesiastes 7:14)

There are no ***accidents*** in God's plan!



Day 28: Saturday **Knowledge & Making Good Choices**

From the time of our birth, our minds are fed with knowledge. There is knowledge that is true and knowledge that is false. In this message we will discuss knowledge that is true. True knowledge is applying God's view-point in making good choices in life, such as marriage between one man and one woman, family life, responsibilities to our nation, responsibilities to our work, etc. In order for knowledge to be beneficial we must choose to believe that knowledge and use it in making good daily decisions.

This is especially true in the spiritual life. God is the source of absolute truth. We have to choose to study and learn the Word of God: His divine essence (character); how God interacts with us; why He does what He does in the ways that He does; and above all, how we are to live the spiritual life our Father has laid out for us. *"How blessed is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding"* (Proverbs 3:13). (Romans 11:33 and Colossians 3:16).

We are commanded to "study & grow" (2Timothy 2:15; 2Peter 3:18). But studying takes self-discipline and persistence, and that means regular, consistent study. *"Whoever loves disciplined instruction, loves knowledge. But he who hates correction, is stupid"* (Proverbs 12:1).

Even Christ in His humanity grew in knowledge and wisdom. *"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men"* (Luke 2:52). *"And the Child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him"* (Luke 2:40).

Now, as children of Almighty God, who is Sovereign and Creator of all, He has given us numerous resources in order that we learn and grow, both spiritually and temporarily. Two of the resources He has given us include, His Word, the very mind of Christ! (1Corinthians 2:16; Hebrews 4:12), and the absolute power of the Holy Spirit, within us (John 14:23; Galatians 2:20; 1John 4:4).

Knowledge of the Word of God and using the power of the Holy Spirit, requires making good choices. ***"The choices we make in life, determine the life we live and lead!!"*** (Pastor, R B Thieme, Jr.) Good choices open up opportunities, whereas bad choices limit possibilities. We make choices daily; from the time we wake up to the time we go to sleep. Are we able to fall asleep with a relaxed mind, knowing we made good choices during that day? Or are we stressed out, unable to have a peaceful sleep?

Life is a system of learning and making choices every day. However, we have divine resources to help us at our very fingertips. If we ignore them and do not use them, there is no benefit. We simply have to choose to know and apply them. *"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him"* (James 1:5). Application of this knowledge brings stability, encouragement, and a relaxed attitude in life.

Memory verse: *"For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding."*
(Proverbs 2:6)



Day 29: Sunday..... ***Not Limiting God***

God has several characteristics or essence, as depicted in the pages on the ***Divine Essence of God*** (pages 64-75). But some who may not know the full essence of God, will try to limit God in their own understanding. There are numerous circumstances whereby people attempt to limit God, but in reality, they are only displaying their own lack of knowledge, their own weaknesses and failings. For God has clearly stated in Isaiah 55:8, “*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord.*”

- **People try to limit God because they say He cannot reach all people with the Gospel, since they live in remote places.** God is Omniscient (all knowing), He is also Omnipotent (all-powerful), and He is Omnipresent (everywhere). He knows about the heathen, everywhere. He will send the Gospel to them, as he did with Jonah, via a “*Big Fish*” (Jonah); as with Phillip and the Ethiopian (Acts 8:26-40). God is also Love, John 3:16. But He also knows that there are some people as in Sodom and Gomorrah, who lack any interest to know God. So, He allows man to follow his own heart (Psalm 81:12-14). **But...** “*He is not willing that **any** should perish but for all to come to repentance.*” (2Peter 3:9)
- **People limit God by saying their problems are greater than God’s solutions.** God has given us not only His Son to provide us with salvation, but also His Word, the Bible, with over 700 promises and solutions for every problem we may face (Hebrews 4:12; 2Timothy 3:16-17). He also gave us the Holy Spirit at salvation, to give us the **power** to live our lives on earth. (Ephesians 3:20; Romans 8:11). Nothing is impossible with God!
- **People limit God by saying that the catastrophes of nature are greater than God.** God created the world, which includes nature (Genesis 1:1). Colossians 1:16, “*For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him.*” Therefore, He has complete control over nature (Luke 8:2b and John 2:1-11). But we also live in the devil’s world, and nature will never be perfect on earth. However, God can take the worst of circumstances, as with Christ’s death on the Cross, and turn it into the greatest blessing, like salvation for all (John 3:16), giving us eternal life (Romans 8:28). Paraphrasing Genesis 20:50, it means that whatever Satan or man causes and desires for evil, God can and will use it for good. But God can and will also use nature to discipline people when they reject Him (Hosea 4:6 and Jeremiah 15:6).
- **People limit God by depending on politicians to deliver a nation,** instead of God. God is the one who appoints rulers and kings (Daniel 2:21). Read Psalm 33:16-22. Therefore, we should never put our trust in man (Jeremiah 17:5; 1Corinthians 2:5)

People manipulate events or misapply God’s Word to create their own false interpretation of the truth. Limiting God is a feeble, subjective, futile, finite (limited), human effort! “*Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools*” (Romans 1:22). They do not know the full essence of God! For as stated in Psalm 19:1 and Psalm 8:1, “*Even the heavens declare His glory.*”

Memory verse: “*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!* (Romans 11:33



Day 30: Monday *Personal Destiny*

Do you ever ask the question: What is my destiny in this world? Where am I going? What am I doing? How do I acquire a destiny? Destiny, simply means having a purpose in life. For a believer in Christ, it does not mean fate or fortune. Our destiny does not depend on people or circumstances. Our destiny begins and ends with the Lord Jesus Christ, and His Plan for our lives. As His children, God has a very specific destiny, a specific plan, for each one of us. So, what exactly does that mean?

Firstly, we must understand that we (you and I), are all created for a purpose. The main purpose is to glorify God in our lives. We glorify Him by growing to spiritual maturity; just as a child must grow to be an adult to know what he or she wants out of life. As His child, we come to know Who God is, and hopefully come to understand what *HE* wants for our own life. It is critical that we, as His children, come to know what God wants for us.

Our destiny is closely tied in with God's Will and plan for our lives, explained in more detail (see ***Divine Guidance***, pages 27-30). Every believer needs to ask these questions of himself: Why am I here? What does God want of me? Where does God want me to be? What does He want me to do? How does God want me to think? For, as you think so you are! (Proverbs 23:7). As you think, so you act. We can only get these answers through the study of His Word and our own personal spiritual growth (Romans 12:2).

The Plan of God for our life confirms our individual, personal destiny. From the moment we believe in Jesus Christ, we have a destiny; it is our divine inheritance. Faith assures the believer His place in the Plan of God; his confidence in the Lord. God always considers each believer as His child. We will know that we are never out of His mind or out of His unfailing love and care (Psalm 139). He perfected a destiny for us in eternity past. He always cares for us (1Peter 5:7). Our destiny never changes, we simply have to know it, and we simply have to believe it. God does not adjust to us; we adjust to Him.

When we believe this and understand that God has a special destiny for us, and we seek it diligently, our spiritual growth advances as our faith and confidence in our Lord strengthens. But our faith is developed by the Word of God in our soul. The more we know His Word, know all that He accomplished for us, the more we come to love the Lord, our Saviour. The more we love the Lord, the more we come to know His plan for our life. That is our destiny! (John 12:26). To ***know*** Him is to love Him. To ***love*** Him is to know Him.

As stated in Ephesians 3:17, we must be "rooted and grounded in love." And as verse 18 states: "*So that you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, length, depth, and height*" (measurements of the spiritual life). These four metaphors - *breadth, length, depth, and height* – explain and develop the believer's awareness and comprehension of God's plan and His purpose. Within these dimensions we become spiritually mature and every corner of the believer's soul is filled with grace, faith, peace, and the Word of God. That is how we gain our own personal destiny!

Memory verse: "*For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* (Jeremiah 29:11)



Day 31: Tuesday..... *The Power of One*

Many times, we become disheartened when we look around us and see the degeneracy of our nation. We see the anarchy and riots on the streets. We see the lack of even basic provisions, like water, sanitation, service and security. We see the pastors of churches not teaching the Word of God, but rather, getting into more personal issues like requesting money, judging congregants, preaching on sin, sin, sin, and not on God's Grace. Therefore, they distort the true Gospel, which is simply **believing** in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and His work on the Cross for our salvation; fundamental to the Christian life.

So, what should we focus on, if the above gets us distressed and discouraged? The Word of God in our souls provides the power for one person to affect the lives of many.

Our Heavenly Father has given us all the solutions, to any and all the problems we may face, whether it be personal, circumstantial, or national. And the basic answer is this: It is what we have in our soul. Do we have the promises of God resident in our hearts and mind? Do we believe His promises? Are they real to us? Can we apply His promises to our problems?

Here are some examples of real historical people, who faced incredible challenges, but because of what they had in their soul, faced those challenges with courage and determination, because they had the knowledge that it was God who controlled their lives **and** their circumstances. And here is something to seriously consider: These were individuals, just **one** person, who was able to save an entire nation! Each one listed below (and there are others), who stood firm in the knowledge and confidence of their God. One single man or woman can deliver a nation and the believers in it!

- Esther - One queen in Persia; her courage saved her nation (Book of Esther)
- Daniel - One prophet in Babylon would not compromise his standards (Book of Daniel)
- Elijah - One prophet for the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the nation was saved for a while as a result of Elijah's persistent teaching (mentioned in many Books of Scripture)
- Ezra - One priest in Persia, commissioned by the king for specific service (Book of Ezra)
- Hezekiah - One king in Judah, was used by God to rescue Jerusalem from the Assyrians, and there was a spiritual revival in the nation (2Chronicles 31:20; 2Kings; Isaiah 36)
- Nehemiah - One Cup Bearer, rebuilt the Wall of Jerusalem (Book of Nehemiah)
- One Samaritan woman, though despised, her witness saved her village (John 4:4-26)
- One man - Joseph of Arimathea, witnessed to the world, down through the ages, when he volunteered to bury the body of Christ in his personal family tomb (Mark 15:43, 46)
- Paul - One Apostle, who went through more adversity than most, yet, wrote the most profound Books of the Bible, we still use today (2Corinthians 11:23-31).

It only takes **ONE** person, with wisdom from the Word of God, to make a difference. It could be to oneself, one's family, one's relatives, one's village, or even one's nation. But that person must have the **wisdom** of God in his or her soul!

Memory verse: *"But there was found in it a poor wise man and he delivered the city by his wisdom. Yet no one remembered that poor man. So I said, 'Wisdom is better than strength.'" (Ecclesiastes 9:15-16)*



Day 32: Wednesday *The Royal Priesthood*

As part of the Royal Family of God, we are also made Priests (1Peter 2:5 and 9; Revelation 1:5; Revelation 5:10). Therefore, we have no further need to go to any man or any priest to confess our sins (Hebrews 7:11). Christ is now our Mediator and our **only** High Priest.

Those who say we must confess our sins to a man or priest are not biblically correct. Some will even say one can lose his salvation if he does not confess his sins before he dies; or that one must feel “truly sorry,” for his sins. Christ never said any of these things. The thief on the Cross did not confess his sins for salvation (Luke 23:42); neither could the “lost sheep” or the “lost coin,” confess or even speak (Luke 15:1-10).

We may ask a person for forgiveness, only if we have hurt that person personally and he may be aware of what we have done. Remember this: Man can forgive wrongs done against him. And we are to forgive those who “sin” (do wrong) against us. (Matthew 18:21-35). We can forgive one another, but **only God can forgive sin!** In other words, we can forgive the wrongs committed against us, but we cannot forgive them of their sins. Sin is anything against the Will of God (Hebrews 9:22 and Mark 2:1-11 - specifically vs.7).

In ancient Israel, only the Levitical High Priest could offer sacrifices for the sins of the people. The people would confess their sins to the High Priest, who would then offer the appropriate sacrifice for that sin. But those priests themselves could never take away sin or absolve any man of his sins, only Christ could (Hebrews 10:11-12). Not even through the sacrificing of the blood of goats and calves (Hebrews 9:12). The Law of Moses appointed men as high priests, but they were still men and “weak” as stated in Hebrews 7:28.

Local priests are no longer necessary in the Church Age. **Christ did it all!** He is our High Priest! Christ was the **ultimate sacrifice**; the purest Lamb of God, which took away the sins of the world (John 1:29 and 36). By offering Himself up as the purest **Lamb of God**, it was His one offering, once and for all (Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:26 and 28), Christ forgave all sin (Hebrews 10:18). Thus, He saves all who believe and come to Him (Hebrew 10:14 and 17; Titus 2:14). As our High Priest and Heavenly Father, we can approach Him directly.

The Holy Spirit indwells the Body of believers to create a Temple for the Indwelling of Christ (1Corinthians 3:16). This happens instantaneously at salvation, a function at regeneration (spiritual rebirth). The believer is cleansed to make us fit for the Divine residence of Jesus Christ Himself, and the Trinity (1John 3:2). Each person of the Trinity indwells the body of every Church Age believer.

- *Indwelling of God the Father is found in John 14:23; Ephesians 4:6; 2John 9.*
- *Indwelling of God the Son is found in John 14:20; John 17:22-23; Romans 8:10; 2Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:27; 1John 2:24.*
- *Indwelling of the Holy Spirit is found in Romans 8:11; 1Corinthians 3:16; 2Corinthians 6:16.*

Memory verse: *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God the Father? You are not your own! For you have been bought with a price, therefore, glorify God in your body. (1Corinthians 6:19-20)*



Day 33: Thursday *Royal Family Honour Code*

As a believer, having put our faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are children of the King of kings (Galatians 3:26; 1John 3:1-2; 1 John 5:1). As a child of a King, we are royalty. And as a child of *The* King of kings, we now belong to God's Royal Family, for all eternity. We are now members of a spiritual aristocracy.

As with all royalty on earth, we are mandated to live by a specific code. A code lays out what each member of that particular royal family, can and cannot do to honour their king; to conduct themselves in a "royal manner"; maintaining certain and specific behaviour patterns as set out by their royal code. A child born into a royal family represents his family and royalty. So, it is imperative that the child understands and follows that royal code, in every way possible. Tutors are hired to specifically train the children in their royal family codes.

Therefore, we as God's children, God has given us a Royal Family Honour Code (the Bible), by which we live our lives on earth. He has also given us a "Tutor" to teach us, the Holy Spirit: *John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.* As the Apostle Peter also stated in 1Peter 1:14-16 and 1Peter 2:9, we are not only Royal children we are also Royal Priests, we are called "holy," who can enter into the presence of God, directly, without going through any other man or priest (see ***Royal Priesthood***, page 39).

But back to the Royal Family Honour Code. It can be summed up with one statement: Only a right thing done in a right way is right. *Noblesse Oblige* (French), which means, nobility has obligations. As joint-heirs with Jesus Christ we are members of a spiritual aristocracy who live by a code; a code of ethics; a code of honour. This code for the Royal Family, requires not just morality but also requires integrity that the rest of the world does not have. That is Christian Integrity, Honour Code integrity. We follow this honour code; it's our means and way of living, but only attainable through the study of God's Word, and the enabling power of God the Holy Spirit in our lives.

As believers, we need to study, understand and believe what God desires of us, as we advance to spiritual maturity. As we do, then more and more do we orient to and understand God's absolute eternal essence. We are then rightly motivated to live and obey His honour code, through our renovated thinking (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:20-24; Proverbs 4:20-27).

As His children and royal heirs, we are His ambassadors; we represent Him in every way no matter what lifestyles we live on earth. 2Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20 - Paul speaking as a prisoner was still an ambassador for Christ. The members of the Royal Family who live by this code, fulfil the noble obligation to represent Jesus Christ before all mankind and even angels, both fallen and elect (1Corinthians 11:10b; Hebrews 12:1). (1Corinthians 6:12-20).

A pivot of mature believers breaks no laws, sponsors no violence, crime or revolution, confiscates no one's property and does not intrude on human privacy. But, turns the world upside down through the invisible force of Bible doctrine and the function of the Royal Family Honour Code (quote from Pastor R B Thieme Jr.).

Memory verse: *"He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out." (Proverbs 10:9)*



Day 34: Friday *Christian Parenting - 1*

When you see your children applying and using the Word of God in their everyday lives, just as in **3 John 4**, it brings great joy to your soul. But to have this joy with your children, takes work, hard work. Parenting is hard work, but it is richly rewarding.

If you are a parent today, ask yourself this. What is God's plan for me as a parent? What does God expect of me as a parent? **Psalms 127:3** says, "*Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.*" If God has blessed you with children, take your responsibility seriously. It requires your full focus and attention every day until your children leave your home to establish a home of their own.

Parental training falls into three general categories:

Firstly, evangelize your children. God expects you to tell your children the good news about Jesus Christ. In fact, it is something that you must discuss daily until you know for a fact that they are saved. Teach them salvation verses like John 3:16, 18, 36; Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 5:8; John 14:6, etc. Repeat over and over and over again that salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone, until you know for a fact that they understand how one is saved, and that they *are* saved.

Secondly, once you know they are saved, teach them God's Word **daily**. It must be daily. You know Jesus Christ himself emphasized this point when he said in Matthew 4:4, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*" Just as your children's bodies need *daily* physical sustenance, so their souls even more so need *daily* spiritual sustenance. Teaching them daily will instill in them a love for the Word. Lay a foundation of Bible truths and doctrines early in their life. Make sure they understand the difference between their permanent relationship with God in His family (John 10:28), and their temporary fellowship with God depending on whether they have unnamed sins in their life and how they must correct it, through 1 John 1:9. Teaching them right from wrong, even in temporal matters, instills in them a strong conscience, so they can recognize when even their friends try to get them to do things that they know are not right or good.

It is imperative that you have a set time every day for Bible class with your children. However, Deuteronomy 6:6-9 tells us that as parents we must speak the truths of God's Word throughout the day - when your children wake up, as they go through their daily activities, and when you tuck them into bed every night. Proverbs 22:6 says, "*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it.*" When you train your child in God's Word, you set the child apart for future use by the Lord in His plan. And you will be honoured by the Lord for your work.

Thirdly, provide children with tools for success in life and we will discuss that in our next lesson.

Memory verse: "*I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.*"
(3 John 4)



Day 35: Saturday *Christian Parenting - 2*

Yesterday we saw that Christian parents have a responsibility before the Lord to ensure their children hear the Gospel and have every opportunity to be saved, and they have a responsibility to teach them the Word of God daily. In the next two lessons, we are going to look at the tools for success that parents must give to their children.

The Bible says in Colossians 3:20 and Ephesians 6:1 that children are to “*obey their parents.*” But obedience does not come naturally. In fact, since children have a sin nature from birth guarantees just the opposite is true. They will be naturally inclined to disobedience and so children must be taught to obey. Only through obedience will your children be able to fulfill the parallel mandate to “*honor their father and their mother,*” found in Ephesians 6:2-3; Matthew 15:4; and Exodus 20:12. If your children do not obey you, they will not respect you. And if they do not respect you, they will never develop true love for you.

You must teach your children obedience to your authority as their parents. Parental authority means your “no” means no. There must be consequences to disregarding and disobeying your authority. When your children disobey, they must be corrected with discipline in love *never anger* (Ephesians 4:29). Words of anger are destructive to their souls (Ephesians 6:4). They must be instructed in obedience. Notice that the Bible puts no conditions on that. It does not say obey if you agree. Or obey if you like what your parents are asking you to do. Or obey only when you want to. Children must obey every time, unconditionally. Obedience develops respect for all authority which is critical in life.

Why obedience? Authority is ordained by God (Romans 13:1). If your children reject authority, they are opposing God and “*they receive condemnation on themselves*” (Romans 13:2). God provided parents and He intends for the child to be under the parent’s authority. Authority creates boundaries for the children for their own protection.

Obedience develops humility. As human beings with sin natures, we have a tendency, for arrogance. We have a natural inclination to be self-centered. We start out in life thinking about ourselves, our needs, what we want. Children must be taught to put others first. This principle must be developed. Humility makes us teachable. Arrogant children think they know it all and do not listen nor learn. Without humility, we never really come to appreciate God’s grace fully. Humility helps us to orient to God’s grace (1Peter 5:5b and 6). If we do not discipline our children when they disobey, we are not expressing love and even worse, we are harming their souls for life. Proverbs 13:24 says, “*Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.*” Just as our Lord disciplines us when we get out of line (Proverbs 3:12; Hebrews 12:6), so we must discipline our children. If we do not teach obedience, we handicap our child for life; in other words, we hinder them from making good decisions in life, especially when they face adversities, growing up.

Memory verse: “*The rod and a rebuke give wisdom, but a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*” (Proverbs 29:15)



Day 36: Sunday..... *Christian Parenting - 3*

In the previous two lessons, we saw that Christian parents have a responsibility to present the Gospel and to teach our children the Word of God **daily**. We also looked at the importance of teaching our children to obey and respect authority so that they develop humility and come to have an appreciation for God's grace. Today we are going to look at the importance of disciplining our children when they get out of line, especially when they disobey, when they are disrespectful, and when they lie.

Discipline, as punishment or correction, is training when it is administered in love. In fact, discipline is an expression of love. Proverbs 13:24 states, *"He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently."* Without discipline the child will not know humility or obedience to authority. Use the discipline as a teaching moment. Explain in detail why their actions or words were wrong and use it as an opportunity to teach principles they need for life. And make sure they understand. Use repetition. It is a great way to make sure you instill these principles into their young souls. When wisdom is taught in the discipline of your children, then you provide the greatest gift other than the Gospel and Bible teaching.

Children are by nature self-centered, inherently self-absorbed. Humility is the opposite of arrogance, but we are not naturally humble. Humility is a developed attitude, an attitude that must be instilled in children. Without humility, your children will not be oriented to authority. They will resist authority wherever it is found—in parents, schoolteachers, coaches, police officers, and what's worse, they will reject the authority of the Word of God. If you allow your children to get away with disobedience and disrespect, you are allowing arrogance to be embedded in their soul and handicapping them for life (Hebrews 12:7b and 8).

Discipline is important but don't discipline for everything. For example, you should punish for lying, disrespect, and disobedience, but you do not necessarily need to punish for fighting with a sibling. Remember your children are not perfect. If you discipline for every wrong they do, you will discourage your children. However, a comment on correcting lying: Do not allow your children to lie. And never lie to your children. Lying destroys trust.

Lastly, be sure to teach grace and demonstrate grace. God shows great grace toward us every day (Lamentations 3:20-25), so let your children see your grace toward them. On occasions, when your children have done something that warrants discipline, walk them through what they did and why it is wrong, but tell them that even though they deserve to be punished, you are going to grace them out this time and give them only a pardon. Explain that it is grace. Then compare it to all of us who are deserving of punishment for our sin and yet God in His grace provided His Son so that we escape the punishment. It is a great way to reinforce salvation, and also teach them about grace – God's grace.

Memory verse: *"For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons."*
(Hebrews 12:7b and 8)



Day 37: Monday *The Soul*

Every person is born with a body and a soul. The body is visible; the soul is invisible. Our body is visible to all. It is physical. The soul, no one can see. It has no form. Yet the soul is the real you. The soul is who you really are. The body can be killed, and it will die, but no one can touch the soul. The soul lives on forever (Matthew 10:28).

The Bible tells us in Genesis 3:26-27, that God created man in His own image. Just as God is immaterial (spirit), so our souls are immaterial. Mankind, created in the image of God, consists of four characteristics. These four characteristics form the essence of the soul. Let's look at each one individually. (Paraphrased from the *Plan of God*, 2003, R B Thieme Jr).

- **Self-consciousness:** "I am." When we are born, we are not aware of our existence. But as we grow, we come to recognize our name and respond when someone calls. As we grow, when we look into a mirror we associate our name with our face, and will eventually become aware of ourselves and recognize our face in that mirror.
- **Mentality:** "I think." The mentality of a newborn baby is not developed. He is unable to speak or think. Vocabulary must be learned; words must be put together. All thinking must be accompanied with words. Without words, we cannot think. So, our vocabulary greatly determines our ability to think, and think logically and eventually, intelligently.
- **Volition:** "I choose." Volition, is the decision-maker of the soul, from where we make choices. A baby's volition is completely controlled by his environment. Since he has no vocabulary, a baby cannot say, "I'm hungry." All he can do is open his mouth and cry. When someone forgets to feed him or change his diaper, a baby's volition becomes a cry for attention. But this is not a fully developed volition. Volition is best described as, the choices you make, determine the life you live.
- **Conscience:** "I should." A baby is born without teeth, but they grow as the baby grows. Likewise, a baby's conscience, must be developed to know right from wrong. This gradually develops through training, from parents, teachers, pastors, and others. Just as the baby eventually acquires teeth, he will eventually develop his conscience. The conscience is always at battle with the sin nature (see *Old Sin Nature*, pages 95-96).

That is the soul. The soul describes the real person, who we are. Proverbs 23:7a, states, "*As a person thinks (in his soul), so he is.*" We are what our thoughts make us. We can look at someone and tell them we love them and how much they mean to us, but at the same time harbor jealousy, hatred or anger toward that person. This is hypocrisy.

God gave us a mentality so we can think with His Word. As believers we are designed to think with the mind of Christ (1Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 4:8). Emotion, on the other hand, which is not part of the soul but in the body, is based on "feelings" and can prevent us from thinking rationally and logically. Emotionalism can make us irrational when it rules our lives. 2Corinthians 6:12 speaks of believers being limited by their emotions. Emotion is not part of the image of God in which we were created. However, emotion, when properly expressed, can give us the appreciation for all that His grace and love have provided for us.

Memory verse: "*Let this thinking be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 2:5)



Day 38: Tuesday.....*Gold, Silver & Precious Stones*

1Corinthians 3:12-15, states that we should build our houses with “gold, silver and precious stones.” *“If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.”*

This passage refers to believers, who need to build their spiritual lives using gold, silver and precious stones. This is Christian service and production, accomplished through the filling of God the Holy Spirit. Believers are to build their houses (souls), on the foundation which is Jesus Christ.

So, let us briefly examine what each of these metaphors represent:

The House: Our soul or heart (our personal, individual essence or character).

The Foundation: The Lord Jesus Christ. At the point of salvation, Jesus Christ became our spiritual foundation on which we build our house and continuously maintain our Temple in our soul (1Corinthians 3:11 and 16).

The Precious Stones: They are works accomplished through the filling of the Holy Spirit. He provides us with the resources of faith, wisdom, virtue love, and grace, so we can be God's witness, glorifying and honouring God, using our spiritual gifts given to us at salvation, for the benefit of the Body of Christ and the glory of God (1Chronicles 22:10-16 and 19). These are virtues and “precious stones” with which we build our own Temple in our soul.

Wood, Hay and Straw: The works of man, doing good under his own power; using his spiritual gifts for his own vain-glory and self-interest; or enforcing man-made rules and regulations outside of the Word of God. This also includes false and outward piety and zeal; human philosophy; radical religions; prosperity gospels; rituals; superstitions; anything that takes over the absolute Truth of God's Word. (Colossians 2:8; Galatians 4:9-10).

The Day: The Day when Jesus Christ will evaluate His children, the Church, and present eternal rewards to those who produced divine good during their life on earth (1Corinthians 3:12-15; 2Corinthians 5:10; Revelations 22:12).

The Fire: The fire of testing, which will burn up the works of man, but the works of the Holy Spirit, will remain. Hence, we are tested by fire (1Corinthians 3:13; 1Peter 1:7). We are also tested by fire to strengthen our faith and advance our spiritual growth (James 1:2-8; 1Peter 1:6-7; Isaiah 48:10; Zechariah 13:9).

This is a direct command for believers to produce worthwhile treasures in their Christian life, which are rewardable in heaven. For every act of Christian service is like a “brick” in the building up of the Church. And the accumulation of knowledge of Bible doctrine learned and applied to one's life, is as a “building brick” to the spiritual building of the soul. This is not a building made with human hands, but a spiritual “temple” built in the soul. (Acts 7:48; 1Corinthians 3:16; Acts 17:24).

Read and Memorise: *Matthew 7: 24-27 and Luke 6: 46-49*



Day 39: Wednesday..... *Humility in Leadership*

Leadership is a learned skill. No one is born with it. It can be learned and developed. First and foremost, it requires humility. So, what exactly is humility? Humility is an attitude. It is the attitude of the Christian who sees God's grace in everything. The Lord Jesus Christ exemplified grace and humility throughout His life on earth. Christ submitted to His Father's authority, was obedient to go to the cross, and was exalted to the highest (Philippians 2:5-8). The Apostle Paul attributed his humility to the grace of God, "*But by the grace of God I am what I am*" (1Corinthians 15:10). Because Peter failed many times, he learned the important link between grace and humility, "*God opposes the proud but He gives grace to the humble*" (1Peter 5:5).

Humility is authority orientation: this means respecting all authority. It makes us realize there is something greater than self and makes us teachable. Respecting authority, especially God's Word, is the primary authority to which we must obey. This teaches us how we should orient to all authority, including government, law-enforcement, teachers, coaches, bosses, and parents. As James 4:10 states, "*Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will promote you!*"

Humility is the ability to evaluate oneself through the mirror of God's Word. It is being able to recognize and acknowledge weaknesses and seeks to improve them. Only then can we grow to be true spiritual leaders. Acknowledging our mistakes and weaknesses strengthens our character (2Corinthians 12:9-10). The Word of God penetrates the soul and the spirit and judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12). 11

Humility means improving knowledge and skills; constantly learning. A good, humble leader respects authority wherever it is found and follows the Word of God as his guide. A bad leader disrespects authority and will even run down the boss to subordinates. Humility puts others first. It is not focused on self. Humility is not to think less of yourself but to think of yourself less (Romans 12:3). A good leader puts the interests of subordinates above his own interests. "*Loyalty down motivates loyalty up*" (R B Thieme, Jr).

Humility springs from orientation to authority and an attitude of graciousness. With humility, you think in terms of grace and project a gracious attitude. A gracious, compassionate attitude prevents the anger that comes with friction in relationships. A good leader acknowledges faults and extends a gracious attitude toward subordinates. Moses was a great example of this. When the nation of Israel faced the Egyptians at the Red Sea and when there was no water in the desert, who did they blame, who did they get angry with? Moses. And yet, Moses remained relaxed and even spoke on their behalf to God. When the Lord wanted to destroy the people for their stubbornness and their unbelief, Moses would ask the Lord to spare them. It is no wonder that Numbers 12:3 states, "*Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any person who was on the face of the earth.*" Humility brings wisdom. Proverbs 11:2. Moses had great wisdom.

Memory verse: "*You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time.*"
(1 Peter 5:5 and 6)



Day 40: Thursday..... *Christian Giving*

Giving is a wonderful gift, especially when it comes with a grace attitude. Christian giving should always be in an attitude of grace. Everything we receive from God is given to us freely and in grace; totally undeserved. Therefore, we should also freely give just as He gave us (Luke 12:48b). This means giving without attached conditions and wrong motives: No boasting; not desiring the recognition from God; not desiring admiration from others. These are all wrong motives and God will not honour such actions. The story of the Widow's mite is a perfect example of how to give (Mark 12:41-43). It is not about how much one gives, but it is in the attitude of giving. it is all about one's motive!

God's greatest gift given to us was His Son, His "only Beloved Son," with no expectations from us, except to believe in His Son. Then at salvation God gives us many more gifts, which is covered in detail (see *Miracle of Salvation*, page 45). Giving is a legitimate function of the believer in worship, both inside the local church, supporting the local pastor, and outside, as with hospitality and charity (2Corinthians 8:7; 2Corinthians 9:8-13). The responsibility of a local church, which includes the believers who attend, is supporting their local pastor, as he spreads the Gospel and teaches the Word of God. They then share in his ministry (Philippians 1:5; Philippians 4:14-16; 1Corinthians 16:1-2; 2Corinthians 8:2 and 5; 2Corinthians 9:7). This type of grace-giving is a "fragrant aroma" to God (Philippians 4:18).

Motivation should be the major purpose in giving, not the amount of money given. Giving must express an attitude toward the Lord before it can express an attitude toward others. The believer must decide from his own soul to whom he should give and from his own financial situation how much he should give. God provides and will use one believer to help another. But above all, God enjoys the mental attitude which accompanies giving. Having an attitude of grace is the basis for grace giving, and God loves grace-oriented giving (Proverbs 11:25). But never give if it places a hardship on your family (1Timothy 5:8). Don't give because someone compels you or places guilt on you. Don't give emotionally or impulsively; and don't give to draw attention to yourself. Remember, God loves the grace-oriented giver, the one with a true motivation for giving.

A communicator of the Gospel or the Word of God needs to understand the Biblical mandates about money: how to ask; when to borrow; when to give; but never to beg or put pressure on people to give. Never make an issue of money (Proverbs 22:7; Ecclesiastes 5:5; Luke 16:11; Deuteronomy 15:6). If God wants that person in the ministry, God in His matchless grace will provide the funds for it (2Corinthians. 9:10). God will always provide what is needed. Psalms 50:10 tells us that "*He owns the cattle on a thousand hills* (probably Nguni)." God graciously provides extra finances for grace-givers to give of their own free will (2Corinthians 9:9-13). Leave the financial support to the Lord. Trust Him for it. We must never put our trust in man (Jeremiah 17:5-8). "*That your faith should not rest on the wisdom (or provisions) of men, but on the Power of God.*" (1Corinthians 2:5).

Memory verses: "*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves the well-motivated giver.*" (2Corinthians 9:7)



Day 41: Friday *Tithing and Christian Giving*

Tithing is one of the most misunderstood concepts in the Bible today. It was not spiritual giving in the Old Testament. It is not a part of the spiritual life. Tithing was an income tax requirement under the laws of establishment delineated in the Mosaic Law for the citizens of Israel only. In fact, there were three different income taxes or tithes for Israel (listed in the next paragraph). Believers and unbelievers alike were charged the same amount of tax. As a tax it was not about spiritual giving. Spiritual giving in the Old Testament is presented under the word "offerings." Offerings were given by believers only.

Firstly, there was a 10% tithe for all Jewish citizens, both believers and unbelievers, for the support of the Levites for their presentation of God's Word (Numbers 18:21 and 24). Secondly, there was a 10% tithe for all Jewish citizens to support the cost of the Lord's sacrifices (Deuteronomy 14:22-24). Neither of these are pertinent today. However, the Mosaic Law had another income tax that could have application today. Every third year, Israel was required to bring out all the tithe of their produce in that year, to be brought into town, so that the Levites, aliens, orphans and widows could come and eat and be satisfied. (Deuteronomy 14:28-29). This was charity and not socialism.

Today, the collection of income taxes to support the function of government, the military, the police, the firefighters, etc., is legitimate. During His earthly ministry, Jesus Christ emphasized the responsibility of the believer to pay taxes in Mark 12:17a, when He said, *"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesars."*

In the time of apostasy in Israel, both believers and unbelievers failed to pay their taxes; and believers were not fulfilling their spiritual obligations in giving, as well. *"Will a person defraud God, yet you have been robbing Me. Yet you say, How have we robbed You?" In tithes (income taxes), and offerings (spiritual giving). To the entire nation you are cursed with a curse, for you are defrauding Me. Bring your entire tithe to the treasury, so that there may be food in My house,' says the Lord of the Armies. 'See if I will not open for you the windows of heaven (prosperity) and pour out blessings for you until there is not room enough'" (Malachi 3:8-10).*

A pastor who creates his own rules and regulations that are not Biblical, is known as a Legalist. Likewise, greedy and legalistic pastors today, pressure believers to pay a "tithe" or percentage of their income as a form of giving to the church, but that is false. Tithing has nothing to do with spiritual giving. 2Corinthians 9:7 states, *"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion (as with mandatory tithing or income taxes), for God loves the well-motivated giver."* As noted in the previous day's study, the example of the "Widows mite," says it all in Mark 12:41-43, when Christ Himself stated it clearly, *"Calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, 'Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.'"*

Memory verse: *"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 6:1)



Day 42: Saturday [Anxiety & Solutions - 1](#)

Anxiety and Adversity, we all face on a regular basis. Some greater than others. So let's see what the Word of God has to say about them: *Proverbs 12:25 **Anxiety** in a man's heart weighs it down (causes depression), But a good **word** makes it glad (encouragement).*

This verse has two significant words: One is **anxiety** and the other is a good **word**, which is the **solution** to the anxiety. But let's look at anxiety first: Anxiety is caused by external circumstances, or through people, or even yourself. When outward problems cannot be alleviated, then the only answer for the believer is found within the Word of God. Practically speaking, what does that mean? How do we counter and get rid of anxiety? As believers in Jesus Christ, we do not like to admit when we are afraid or anxious or show any weakness. Nor do we like to fail. But when we let anxiousness and fear dominate our life and our thinking, and it becomes a lifetime of frequent anxiety and fear. Then we **are** failing! How? By allowing the problem to dominate our thinking, we have our eyes on the problem and not on the solution. Like Peter, who looked down at the raging waves and not on his Lord, he started sinking. Likewise, when we get our eyes on the problem; when we start to have self-pity, this is arrogance and the Holy Spirit cannot help us, nor can He guide us.

Our Heavenly Father has given us the solutions: His Word, His Promises; the Holy Spirit. But we have to be filled with the Spirit to be in fellowship with God (1John 1:9). Then we must have His promises in our soul and in our memory to remember them when needed. Then we must have His Word, our "Bread of Life," which we must study on a **daily** basis (Matthew 6:11). So, here are just some of God's promises, **memorise and utilize them:** 1Peter 5:7; Romans 8:31; 1John 4:4; John 16:33; Philippians 4:13; Psalm 56:3; Romans 10:17. Everything that happens in our lives, happens for a reason. There is nothing that happens by accident, as clearly stated in, Ecclesiastes 7:14, *"When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other."*

Many reasons exist for the adversities and sufferings in our lives. This is covered in **Why Suffering** (see page 50). But we must also remember what is stated in Romans 8:28: *"He works ALL things together for good to those who **love** God."* Note, it is only for those who **love** God! But to love God we have to **know** God. We cannot love someone without knowing that person. In every aspect of our life, God is working, no matter what the circumstances. We have to know and understand the reasons. Instead of asking the Father to take away the circumstance or person in our life that is causing us anxiety or fear, rather ask Him to make the **reason** clearly understood. Only when we can see and acknowledge the reason for our circumstance, can we begin to correct it. But first, we must acknowledge and name any sin of doubt or anxiety to God, as is stated in 1John 1:9 *"If we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteous."*

"If you are constantly stressed out with problems, you are not recognizing the Grace of God!"
"The darker the outlook, the more difficult the adversity, the greater the problem, the more He is glorified when we keep trusting Him." (Faith Rest Life, 2015, Pastor R B Thieme, Jr).



Day 43: Sunday.....[*Anxiety & Solutions - 2*](#)

As we studied the previous day in Proverbs 12:25, on the subject of Anxiety & Solutions, we will now consider further, the ***Solutions***, “*But a good word makes it glad*” (Proverbs 12:25b).

In that second line is contained two very important words: “Good Word.”

What is this Good Word? The *Good Word* happens to be the entire content of the Bible – God’s Word, the thinking of Christ (Romans 11:33; James 1:5; 1Corinthians 2:16), which we are commanded to have, stated in 2Timothy 2:15, and 2Peter 3:18. A believer who does not live in anxiety, can encourage other believers who are living in anxiety and fear, by presenting Divine solutions so they could have peace and comfort within their souls.

When the promises of God (the *Good Word*) take precedence over the circumstances of life, then fears subside and peace of soul follows. Here are just a few reasons:

- We can counter anxiety and fear (as outlined in these pages on ***Anxiety & Solutions***).
- We can grow our faith in Him (Romans 10:17; 1John 5:4; 1Corinthians 2:5).
- We can have strength in times of need (Philippians 4:13; Psalm 56:3).
- We can come to know God more and realise His power over all the earth (Ephesians 1:17-23; 1Chronicles 29:11-12; Exodus 15:11; Psalm 8:1; Psalm 66:5).
- And therefore, understand His love for us so that we can love Him more (Romans 11:33; John 15:9-14; Psalm 119:76; Ephesians 3:19).
- We can discover our destiny – God’s Plan for life (see ***Divine Guidance***, pages 27-30).
- We can walk as wise men, making the best of our time on earth (Ephesians 5:15-17)
- We can have peace and happiness in our souls (John 15:11 and John 16:33)
- We can have trust in God and not Man (Jeremiah 17:5 & 7; Proverbs 3:5-6; 1Cor. 2:5)
- We can have the hope and confidence of eternal life (Romans 8:38-39; John 10:28)

Now do you see what *A Good Word* means? When we have the Good Word in our soul, we can then pass it on to those who are in anxiety or fear, or whatever situation that afflicts them. We can pass it on, person to person. One believer may remind another anxious, distressed, fearful believer of the truth within God’s Word. This takes on a personal meaning. That person provides something pertinent to fearful situations being encountered. The Word of God in one believer’s soul can see the solution that maybe the other person cannot see. When we are objective and looking from the outside, we should be able to see the solution for that distressed person. That *good word* provides comfort through the substance and promises of God’s Truth. There is nothing more comforting than doctrine in the soul, which is a comfort and a solution to any problem. The hearer has then received *A Good Word*!

Memory verse: “*And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, **for power is perfected in weakness**. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.” (2Corinthians 12:9-10)*

(Most people hide their weaknesses; yet, Paul boasts in his weaknesses)



Sunday 44: Monday.....[Adversity & Job](#)

We all face adversity and even disasters at some point in our life. There is much suffering on earth and the reasons are stated in more detail on page 50, “**Why Suffering.**” Generally, adversity and problems will cause stress in our life. But remember this, adversity is inevitable, but stress is optional. Stress can cause many ailments, including death, if not checked. So how does one stop adversity from becoming stress? Let us look at a believer who faced perhaps the greatest disaster and adversity in his life; his name was Job.

Job knew God intimately. He was a mature believer who had divine view point in his soul, which he applied to all circumstances. Job was also a very successful businessman. He had a large family, large house on a large piece of property, with numerous servants, vast numbers of livestock, and many other areas of wealth.

When God pointed out Job to Satan, stating that Job was the most blameless man on earth who feared God, Satan countered God by saying that the only reason Job was such a man, was because God had blessed Job with great wealth. So, God gave Satan His approval to test Job in any way he wished, with the exception of taking his life.

All Job’s adversities happened in one day. Many of his servants were massacred and his herds were killed. Then his camels were stolen and more of his servants were killed. Then while the family was dining, a storm knocked down the house and killed his entire family. The only thing left for Job was his wife; but when Job lost his health, she told him to curse God and die. Naturally, this caused Job great grief. This would be a major test of how much of God’s Word did Job have; how strong was his spiritual life; and how deep was his love for God?

But even in his devastation and grief, Job’s spiritual life carried him thru his tears. Job never wavered in his trust of God. He made a most fantastic statement, especially for one going through such severe adversity: “*Naked I came from my mother’s womb, naked I shall return. The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away. **Blessed be the Name of the Lord.***” (Job.1:21). He affirms his faith in 27:1-6. He came into this world with nothing and would leave with nothing.

So, when we face adversity, do we blame God? Do we blame people and circumstances? Or do we accept them as part of God’s plan for our life? Do we look at the solution – God’s Word and His promises? Or do we focus on the problem? When we focus on the problem, we cause great distress to ourselves, mentally, emotionally, and physically. But when we focus on the solution, the Divine solution, we can get through the most adverse of storms.

Another man who faced insurmountable adversities, yet, became the greatest man of our time apart from Jesus Christ, was the Apostle Paul. 2Corinthians 11:23-30, tells us all that Paul endured; tremendous distractions, and yet, he never wavered in his spiritual advance.

How we handle adverse situations, is a good indicator of the strength of our spiritual life, how spiritually mature we are, and what our level of relationship truly is with God.

Memory verse: “*We know that all things work together for good to those who **love** God and are called according to His Purpose (our destiny).*” (Romans 8:28)



Day 45: Tuesday *Why Suffering*

There is much pain and suffering on this earth. The question arises, “Why is there such suffering?” Do you realise that God’s grace and love can only be demonstrated to His children in very specific ways here on earth, through pain and suffering? And that is because there is no pain and suffering in heaven. In addition, when you depend and trust on the Lord through suffering, you glorify Him in this world. That is the mission of a believer on earth!

“It is in the quiet crucible of your personal, private sufferings that your noblest dreams are born and God's greatest gifts are given in compensation for what you've been through.” (Quote from Whintley Phipps, who sings the hymn, “It is Well with My Soul,” by Horatio Spafford.)

There are **Four** basic reasons for suffering and adversity in this life:

1. **Testing:** This is one way He teaches us so our faith could grow stronger, purified as like silver (James 1:2-6; Psalm 119: 71-76; 1Peter 1:6-7; Isaiah 48:10; Zechariah 13:9).
Moses was removed from the Pharaoh’s palace to take him away from all his earthly greatness. He had to go through the desert, so he could be brought back to the palace to proclaim God’s Will for Israel, and lead the people to the Promised Land.
2. **Blessing:** To be an encouragement and comfort to others who may be going through similar or other adverse circumstances (2Corinthians 1:3-4 and 7; Hebrews 2:18; 1Peter 2:19; Psalm 73:26; Isaiah 40:29-31; 2Corinthians. 4:8-9 and 11).
3. **Discipline & Correction:** Like any earthly father, our Heavenly Father must discipline and correct His children. But God always corrects His children in love (Exodus 34:7; Hebrews 10:30b-31; Hebrews 12:4; Proverbs 3:12). His correction is how He ***teaches*** us.
4. **Self-Induced Suffering – Examples of:**
Abraham: Abraham, listening to his wife, Sarah, slept with Hagar, creating the entire Arab race - the inherent enemy of the Jew, and later the promoters of Islam (Genesis 16).
David: David created his own misery in all of his sins that continued on for years to come. 2 Samuel chapters 11-20, tell the full story of David and all his bad decisions. Then in Psalm 51:1-5, describes David’s repentance. Through it all, we are now the recipients of some of the greatest psalms written. Adversity can be to our blessing (Psalm 119:71).
Judas: Judas betrayed Christ for 30 pieces of silver; then in misery, he went out and hanged himself (Matthew 27:1-10).

“We create our own misery by the bad decisions we make. The decisions we make in life, determine the life we will lead. The darker the outlook, the more difficult the adversity, the greater the problem, the more He is glorified when we keep trusting Him. If you are constantly stressed out with problems, you are not recognizing the Grace of God! (Pastor R B Thieme, Jr.)

Memory verse: *“When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other.”* (Ecclesiastes 7:14). **Nothing happens to us by accident!**



Day 46: Wednesday ***People Testing***

People! Some of the most problematic tests come from people. From people we love, people we despise, people who help, people who hurt, and a hundred other types of people that come into our lives on a daily basis. How do we respond, or how do we react to each person or situation? With today's unrest and dissatisfaction, hostilities are widespread; almost like an epidemic. And unfortunately, the people closest to us, like family, friends, neighbours or co-workers, can be the greatest tests in life. None are exempt. So, we had better be prepared, or we will fail the test and fail in our spiritual growth.

King David was a man who faced numerous trials and tests from his own family, far more than most others, apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, he survived to become a great and successful king of a nation that was God's own chosen nation – Israel. So how do we overcome people-testing? There is a solution to every problem. Every problem has a solution. So how do we find solutions to any of our problems?

- We must have the Word of God embedded in our soul. This means knowing and having the promises and principles of God, firmly rooted in our souls, so we can remember them when needed. (Psalm 50:15; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Romans 10:13).
- It means knowing and understanding the attributes (or Essence) of God, and how each characteristic relates to us and our every situation (see pages 64-75).
- It means trusting in God our Father. When He promises, He always delivers.
- We do not let people control our lives, our happiness, our peace. As children of God, we should only have the Holy Spirit control our lives (Romans 8:9, read verses 5-13).
- Ignore the devil and his minions who use people to influence and discourage us, and to distract us from our reason we live, which is our mission and goal, to glorify God.

People testing can be annoying, irritating, discouraging, and can completely upset and even ruin our lives, but only **IF** we let it. Our Father has given us numerous solutions to counter such problems: His Word, His Promises, the Holy Spirit, so that we can trust in His promises. Let **Him** handle the problem, and He will, so that we relax and have peace of mind, knowing that Someone far greater and far more capable than we, is in charge of the matter. After all, God is not only our Heavenly Father, He is also the Lord of Hosts (Exodus 15:11; Psalm 59:5a); He is over military armies and kingdoms of the world, our Commander in Chief. (Psalm 99:1-3; Isaiah 37:16; Revelation 19:15), also 1Chronicles 29:11-12.

So, take heart. Do not be discouraged (2Chronicles 20:15; Isaiah 40:31; Joshua 1:9; 2Corinthians 4:8-9; Philippians 4:4-6). And above all, read Romans 8:31-39. Rather rejoice in hope; be patient in tribulation; be constant in prayer (Romans 12:12). And keep your eyes on eternity. People-tests are temporary, while eternity is forever.

Memory verse: *“Behold, all those who are angered at you will be shamed and dishonored; Those who contend with you will be as nothing, and will perish. (vs.12). You will seek those who quarrel with you, but will not find them, those who war with you will be as nothing, and non-existent. (vs.13). For I am the Lord your God, who upholds your right hand, Who says to you, ‘Do not fear, I will help you.’”*
(Isaiah 41:11-13)



Day 47: Thursday *Death – Fear or Free*

Death is a subject most people do not wish to think about, let alone talk about. Why? Because they do not have the answers. And when one does not have answers, then fear of the unknown is what surrounds them. It is just like fear of the dark night, or a deep lake, or an unknown country, or an unknown culture or race of people. If we do not know or cannot see what is out there, if we do not understand the “strange” ways of another culture or people, we try and avoid them. Therefore, death is a great *unknown* to many.

Yet, as a child of the Almighty God, the Lord Jesus Christ, we not only have the greatest inheritance, but the most extraordinary life we could ever imagine. Death is not to be feared. At death, we simply pass from this life on earth to eternity with our Lord and Saviour. *“The moment we take our last breath on earth, we take our first in heaven.”* (Author Unknown). When Jesus Christ rose from the dead, He had a resurrection body that lives forever. As His children, we too will have that same resurrection body and live with Him in Heaven forever. (See passages on ***The Resurrection***, page 86).

There are numerous promises given to us by our Lord. We simply have to believe them and accept them. Look up the passages listed below. They will give you hope, confidence, comfort, and strength in the face of death. However, the unbeliever fears death the most. He has no hope in his future. But as believers we do have that “Blessed Hope” (Titus 2:13).

May these passages on death, give you hope and take the fear of death away.

- *“Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where O death is your victory? Where O death where is your sting? But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (1Corinthians 15:54, 55 and 57).
- *“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the **confidence** we have in approaching God”* (1John 5:13-14a).
- *“But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has **destroyed death** and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”* (2Timothy 1:10).
- *If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. 9 For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that He might be the Lord of both the dead and the living* (Romans 14:8-9).

These additional verses will also give you and others, **hope and confidence** in death: 2Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21 and 3:20; Matthew 10:28; John 11:25; Revelation 21:4

The Bible uses the metaphor of sleep, to refer to physical death (Psalm 13:3; Job; Daniel 12:2; 1Kings 11:43).

“When we fall asleep in the arms of the Lord, it is with the assurance that we will awake to a new morning that never ends. To a realisation of eternal life!”

“Fear of death will not prevent death, but can prevent living!” (Quotes from Pastor R B Thieme III)

Memory verse: *“I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live (eternally) even if he dies (physically).”* (John 11:25)



Day 48: Friday Overcoming Fear

Fear is something that grabs us all, at some point in our life. But what we cannot do is to let that fear perpetuate in our life. We can either look at that fear and see it for what it is, and get over it. Or, we can let it spread, let it take over our life. When that happens, then that fear becomes a sin. Fear also has harmful powers. In fact, the more we surrender to fear, the more we perpetuate fear in our life, and the more we live in fear. We have put the promises of God aside and let fear take over. That is when the perpetuation of fear becomes sin. Then fear actually prevents us from living the Christian life. When this happens, the greater becomes our failure to learn and apply the Word of God. Fear obstructs problem-solving and stops us from thinking and applying Bible doctrine. When fear stops one from functioning, it is called cowardice. That prevents us from living the spiritual life. 2Timothy 1:7 states, *“For God has not given us a lifestyle of fear, but of power and doctrine and sound mind.”*

So how do we overcome fear? To overcome fear and to have the courage under pressure, we have to concentrate on a promise of God and think what that promise means to us in our situation. We have to think about the underlying reason or explanation for that promise. What does the promise mean? What is the reason that promise is true? How does one know that God will fulfil His promise? Many promises are given throughout this study guide. Search for them; learn them; apply them, for that is the only way we will gain spiritual maturity. For example, David said in Psalm 56:3, *“What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.”* David could then think about God’s **omnipotence** and know that no problem was too great for the **power** of God to protect him. He could think of God’s **omniscience** and **love** and know that since God already **knew all** about his situation, God in love would provide and take care of the problem, whether it was a person or a circumstance (Isaiah 30:18; Luke 18:7).

When it comes to one’s own fears, we must trust the promises and underlying principles of God, and then trust the conclusion that we make in our own soul. Paul said in Romans 8:31, *“What then shall we say to these things (what things: problems, difficulties, adversities)? If God is for us, who is against us?”* Who can be against you? Is there any person greater than God? John 4:4b states, **“Greater is He that is in you than he who is in the world.”** If God provides logistical grace (supply & support), and He does, then how can we not relax and depend upon Him to fulfill His promise. If it is God’s promise, He will do it. Count on it. Trust it. And then relax. All we have to do is rely on it, have faith in it, and trust in God’s promises. That is “resting” on His Promises; having faith, without any doubt, for he who doubts is like a wave on the ocean, tossed by the wind (James 1:6).

We keep advancing in the spiritual life through our daily intake of the Word of God. We will then be able to trust Him more and more and more. Trusting in Him will become a way of life. And what a great way to live! That is exactly what God has designed for His children.

Memory verse: *“For God has not given us a lifestyle of fear, but of power and doctrine and sound mind.” (Psalm 56:3)*



Day 49: Saturday *The Disciples in the Storm - 1*

At the end of a very long day in the life of Christ, Jesus said to His disciples, “Let’s go over to the other side.” And so, they all loaded into a boat and headed to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. It was a beautiful calm night for sailing, and they were all looking for a little rest and quiet from the crowds. Shortly after departing, Jesus fell asleep from pure exhaustion, and then a fierce gale wind and great storm descended upon them. Waves started breaking over the boat and the boat began to take on water. It was floundering and they were in danger of sinking. Immediately, the disciples filled by fear went into a panic. The entire story is found in Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, and Luke 8:22-35.

The disciples know that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Since they started following Jesus Christ, He has been teaching them God’s Word. They have witnessed His divine omnipotence in healing the leper, the Centurion’s servant, and Peter’s mother-in-law (Matthew 8:1-17). He had demonstrated His power over the demonic (Matthew 8:28). And He had already shown them His power over nature when He turned water into wine in an instant (John 2:1-11). Yet, the disciplines in terrible, debilitating fear wake up our Lord with these words, “*Save us, Lord*” (Matthew 8:25). “*Do you not care that we are perishing?*” (Mark 4:38). Fear caused undue worry because they had forgotten who it was asleep in the bottom of that boat.

The disciples should have known that Jesus Christ is God and that as God, His human body may have been asleep in the bottom of the boat, but His deity never sleeps. They should have known that Jesus Christ as the God-man was both the One who created the universe but also holds it together by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:2-3). With three simple words from Christ, “*Peace, be still,*” the sea immediately became calm (Mark 4:39).

We too have problems, troubles, and adversities that come upon us quickly. Satan intends for those circumstances to throw us off balance in the spiritual life, to distract or discourage us, but God allows it for our benefit. They are a part of His perfect plan for us. And He always provides deliverance either from the adversity or helps us get through the adversity. The adversity is a test of our faith, of our trust in Him. May it never be said of us as it was to the disciples, “*Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?*” (Matthew 8:26).

God has given us promises in the Bible. Know them, claim them, so we never need to let fear take over our lives. We need never be controlled by worry and anxiety. Hold onto one of His promises like, 2Peter 5:7, Psalm 56:3, Philippians 4:19, Exodus 14:13, Psalm 91:1-2. Remember that God has known eternally all about every situation we face in life (Proverbs 15:3; Acts 15:8), and there is no problem too great for His power (Luke 1:37). We are His children. He is with us. He will take care of us (Hebrews 13:5). We just need to relax with the confident expectation that God in His timing will deliver us.

Memory verse: *Fear thou not for I am with you. Do not look around anxiously for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will uphold you with the righteousness of my right hand! (Isaiah 41:10)*



Day 50: Sunday..... *The Disciples in the Storm – 2*

In our last lesson, we saw the disciples on a boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee in a seemingly devastating storm. They were gripped with fear and utter panic while the Lord slept soundly in the bottom of the boat. They woke Him with the words, “*Save us, Lord*” (Matthew 8:25). “*Do you not care that we are perishing*” (Mark 4:38). The disciples at that moment were not thinking. Fear, which is an irrational, emotional sin, had totally taken over their souls. Jesus Christ the Messiah, who had a mission yet to be fulfilled, was in the boat with them, and He had a plan and purpose for their lives that was far from completed. The God of the universe was with them in that boat, yet their eyes were on the storm and not on Him (Hebrews 12:2).

After the Lord calmed the seas and then rebuked them for their little faith, the disciples said, “*What then is this, that He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey Him?*” (Luke 8:25b). In the storm, the disciples were reinforced with the knowledge of who and what Christ is, the Son of God, creator of the universe. It was the best time for them to learn quickly. And so, it is with us. God allows adverse circumstances so that we can have accelerated spiritual growth. Adversity is for our benefit. It teaches us to put our trust in the Lord. It builds our trust in the Lord. That is what adversity does in life. But it can only do that if we are filled with Holy Spirit, the power for the spiritual life. God’s Word and His promises are critical for and in our thinking, for our own spiritual growth (James 1:2-8; Hebrews 11:1 and 6).

Storms in our lives are designed to prepare us for the plan that God has for us. Never forget that God uses circumstances to direct our path. What looks terrible to us is exactly where God wants us to be (Proverbs 19:21; and 20:24). There are no accidents in the plan of God.

Every time we apply a promise to adversity, it gives us further confidence in God’s deliverance rather than confidence in self (Proverbs 3:5-7). Confidence in self is misplaced. The world tells us that, if we have confidence in self, we can overcome anything. That is a Satanic lie (Proverbs 16:9). Even Christ called Satan a liar (John 8:44). Our confidence is always to be in the Lord. Psalm 46:1 states, “*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*” When our confidence is in the promises of God and when we apply those promises to our life, then our confidence in the Lord builds and we are able to handle any adversity. It does not become stress in our soul.

Adversity is inevitable; stress is optional. Stress is a choice we make. The storms of life will always be with us. When we have our eyes on the Lord and apply His Word to the situation, then circumstances do not matter (2Corinthians 12:9-10; Philippians 4:12). We can relax with the confident expectation that God in His timing will deliver us (2Samuel 22:2; Psalm 23:4; 50:15; 107:19-21; Isaiah 54:17; Isa. 59:1; Lamentations 3:19-26; 2Timothy 4:18).

Memory verse: “*Do not fear! Stand still and watch the deliverance of the Lord, which He will perform for you today.*” (Exodus 14:13)



Day 51: Monday *The Disciples in the Storm - 3*

We have seen the disciples terrified and full of fear in the storm, while Jesus Christ, the God of the universe, who had total control over nature, was with them asleep in the bottom of the boat. After calming the sea with His words, “*Peace, be still,*” Jesus Christ rebuked the disciples in Matthew 8:26 when He said, “*Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?*” So, it raises the question, why were these men so fearful? They had seen the power of Jesus Christ in performing many miracles. They knew He is God. So why the fear? Why are we so fearful?

We all encounter situations in which we have that initial surge of fear. It is part of the human response in dangerous and risky situations, especially those that come upon us suddenly. Fear knocks on the door of all our souls at some point in our lives. It is inevitable. But it does not need to become the paralyzing, perpetual sin of fear. Fear is a powerful emotional sin, and as such, it is irrational and debilitating. It prevents us from thinking. It makes us cowards.

The sin of fear is progressive in the sense that the longer it lingers in our soul, the more and more things we fear. Over time, it controls more, and more, and more of our life. As we surrender to more fears, it gains greater control over us. We accumulate fears, one after the other, until we become afraid of life itself. We become consumed with cowardice. But that is no way to live.

God did not design us to live in fear. In fact, 2Timothy 1:7 tells us that God did not give us a lifestyle of fear, but of power and sound mind that results from using God’s Word in our soul. Psalm 91:5, 6, 10, 11 speaks of the protection and deliverance of the Lord. “*You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling* (we have no need to fear Covid); *For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.*” God’s protection is always there for us. We are His children. The question is do we trust His word? Do we trust Him? The writer of Psalm 91 had that trust. He said in verse 2, “*He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.*”

Jesus Christ as God knew that the storm on the Sea of Galilee was coming before it struck. He allowed it for the disciples’ benefit, for their spiritual growth. The same is true for us; for our spiritual growth and faith in the Lord. We face fearful circumstances so that we can learn to trust the Lord in the adversity. He is omniscient so He already knows all about it (Psalm 139:1-4; Hebrews 4:13). He is omnipotent so there is no difficulty that is too great for Him (Luke 1:37). He can and will take care of us. He promises to *never leave us, nor forsake us* in Hebrews 13:5b. Jesus Christ is omnipresent (Proverbs 15:3) and He indwells us (Colossians 1:27); He is with us through every storm in life.

So, the next time we get hit with a sudden problem or adversity, remember the Lord Jesus Christ is always in our boat. When our boat is sinking, don’t look down at the problem, the high waves and the sinking boat. Rather, look up at the Lord, confident in the solution, at the Word of God, His promises. And then relax and enjoy it. He will deliver. Trust Him.

Memory verse: “*What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.*” (Psalm 56:3)



Day 52: Tuesday *The Red Sea Incident*

When the Children of Israel left the slavery of Egypt under Moses' leadership, the Lord in the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night led them to an encampment next to the Red Sea (Exodus 13:21, 22). I am sure when they arrived, they must have thought what a beautiful place for rest and relaxation after so many years of harsh labor under conditions of slavery to the king of Egypt. But their peaceful time was soon interrupted by an angry, vengeful Pharaoh who regretted his decision to set the people free. As the entire Egyptian cavalry closed in to recapture them, the Jews panicked and complained to Moses for everything that was going wrong. Moses however, remained relaxed in the midst of the pressure from the ensuing Egyptians and from the angry mob of people blaming him for everything. Then God in His grace parted the Red Sea so the Children of Israel could cross. While at the same time, the cloud by day, created darkness for the Egyptians so that their pursuit was temporarily halted. When the Jews were all across, God lifted the cloud and the Egyptians went after them. Then God released the walls, drowning Pharaoh and his army. (Exodus 14:1-29).

God has many lessons for us to learn from this story. First, let's look at the contrast between the attitude of the Jews and the attitude of Moses. The people of Israel had their eyes on Pharaoh and his advancing army. They realized that they were in a totally helpless and hopeless situation. They had no way to fight the Egyptian Army. And with their backs to the Red Sea, there was no way of escape. They had their eyes on the problem.

Moses, on the other hand, had his eyes on the solution. Moses knew that omniscient God knew that Pharaoh would change his mind and come after them even before they left Egypt and so he had already devised a way of escape. Had God not delivered them from Egypt to perish at the hands of Pharaoh? Moses knew the power of God would protect His people.

While the people of Israel were filled with worry, anxiety, and fear, Moses had both courage and confidence. Moses believed the promises of God and that God would take them to the promise land. Thus, Moses said in Exodus 14:13-14, "*Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.*" Moses trusted God.

We all face problems, difficulties, and adversities. But as children in Christ, we are children of God. He promises to protect us (Isaiah 41:10). In fact, think of a promise like 1Peter 5:7, "*Cast all your cares on Him (God) for He cares for you.*" Why is that promise true? God cares because He has an unfailing love for us (Lamentations 3:21-25). As omniscient God, He knew all about our problem long before it occurred and has already provided a grace solution (Psalm 33:13-15; Psalm 139:1-4; Psalm 147:4-5; Jeremiah 29:11). As almighty God, no problem is too great for Him (Luke 1:37). Also, He promises to provide for our every need (Philippians 4:19). When we consider all that, we can have a relaxed attitude and enjoy life.

Memory verse: "*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 3:16-17)



Day 53: Wednesday *The Exodus Generation - No Water*

Not long after the parting of the waters of the Red Sea, God led the children of Israel to a place in the desert where there was no water for the people to drink. Even though they had already witnessed the Lord's deliverance from Egypt and His deliverance at the Red Sea from the army of Pharaoh, they immediately fell apart and started complaining against Moses saying, *"Why is it that you have brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"* They were so self-centered that they even questioned whether God was still with them. They said, *"Is the Lord among us, or not?"* But God in His grace told Moses to take his staff and strike the rock. When he did, out came water for the people to drink. (You can read the entire story in Exodus 17:1-7)

Fear and worry are emotional sins that blind our thinking so that we no longer see clearly God's plan and purpose for our life. Fear in the soul of these Jewish believers focused their attention on the problem of no water rather than the solution, that of a loving God who knows their situation and who can and will provide for them. Fear prevented them from remembering God's grace provision and His deliverance ever since they left Egypt. Notice that they accuse Moses of bringing them out from Egypt, to kill them and their children and their livestock?" That is totally absurd. In the first place, it wasn't Moses who brought them out of Egypt. God did. God delivered them. God is the one who performed the miracles of the ten plagues that caused Pharaoh to release them.

God led the children of Israel to this place in the desert where there was no water for a reason. It was part of His perfect plan for them and for their benefit. He wanted the children of Israel to come to depend totally and solely on Him. So, in actuality, they were complaining against God, not Moses.

We all face adversities, problems, and adverse circumstances which make us totally helpless. That is when God's grace and loving care become most apparent to us. When our own abilities and our own solutions cannot carry us, when we reach the end of our own resources, that is when we can truly see and appreciate His grace and His deliverance in our lives. (2Corinthians 12:9)

There are hundreds of promises in the Bible, and each one is a clear-cut, iron-clad statement from our all-knowing, all-mighty, loving Heavenly Father, who treats each of us personally. God allows difficulties to see if we will trust Him, to see if we will grab a hold of one His promises and claim it as our very own. For example: *"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High abides in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to my Lord, you are my refuge and fortress, my God in whom I trust!! (Psalm 91:1-2).* Also read, Psalm 91:4 and 11: and Psalm 28:7. David knew all about trusting in God, for his life was strewn with evil people attempting to kill him.

When adversity next strikes, think about one of these promises and think about why it is true. God is perfect so His plan for us has to be perfect. Then relax and wait for His deliverance. He will either deliver us from it or He will deliver us through it. Count on it.

Memory verse: *"What time I am afraid, I will trust in You." (Psalm 56:3)*



Day 54: Thursday [Why Pray](#)

People ask, “Why pray?” If God reads our minds, and knows our thoughts before we know them ourselves, then why pray? The primary purpose of prayer is to communicate with God, so that God can display His greatness and glory to His children, those who believe in Christ, the Son of God (John 1:12-13). Then as His children, we may “*come boldly into His presence*” (Hebrews 4:16), and ask anything of Him. “*Whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, that **the Father may be glorified** in the Son. If you ask me anything in My name, I will do*” (John 14:13-14). “*Call upon Me and I will show you great and mighty things which you have not discovered*” (Jeremiah 33:3).

We pray because God desires His children to talk to Him, to communicate with Him, directly. We pray to have fellowship with Him. We pray to express and demonstrate our love and gratitude and praise for Him; to ask for our own needs; to petition Him for the needs of others; to open our hearts to Him (see, ***How to Pray***, page 60). It is important to follow correct procedure in praying. Jesus Christ said, “*Ask and you shall receive,*” (Matthew 7:7), but it is important to understand that any request we make, must be made in accordance with His Will, “*This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything **according to his will**, he hears us.*” (1John 5:14).

Prayer is a powerful tool that God has given the believer to use while living the Christian life. James 5:16b states, “*The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*” 2Corinthians 10:4 adds, “*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*”

Before we can even come before the presence of God, there are two critical requirements we must obey: First, we must ensure we are filled with God the Holy Spirit; cleansed from all sin. All we have to do is simply acknowledge our sins to Him and He will cleanse us from all sins – known and unknown. (1John 1:9). Secondly, we must have faith to believe that He hears us and will answer (Matthew 21:22). God will only answer according to His Will and purpose for our lives (see ***Divine Guidance***, pages 27-30). He may not give us what we want but everything we need to fulfil His plan.

We are commanded to make a habit of prayer. “*Pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s Will for you in Christ Jesus*” (1Thessalonians 5:17-18). Other verses you should also read: Colossians 3:17 and 4:2; Philippians 4:6; Psalm 107:28; Hebrew 4:16; John 15:7.

This is Paul’s prayer for us: “*I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope (confidence) to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength*” (Ephesians 1:17-19).

Memory verse: “*And pray **in** the Spirit (filled with the Holy Spirit) on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.*”
(Ephesians 6:18)



Day 55: Friday [How to Pray](#)

Many believers love to pray. Prayer *is* for believers only. For only God's children can approach the Throne of God and call Him, "Heavenly Father." But God has given us very specific rules, protocols for us to follow in prayer. Most importantly, we must ensure that we have no unconfessed sin in our lives. We do this by using a promise that God will always forgive us if we simply name our sins to Him (1 John 1:9). Then we may approach the Throne of Grace through the power of prayer to have fellowship with Him. Jesus Christ, Himself, taught His disciples how to pray correctly, with the right motivation, in the right way.

- **Prayer should be directed to God the Father.** *"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him, **to** God the Father"* (Colossians 3:17). When the disciples asked the Lord, how to pray, He said, *"This, is how you should pray: **Our Father** in heaven, hallowed be your name"* (Matthew 6:9-13). (Ephesians 4:13).
- **Pray in the name of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.** *"Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the **name** of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Ephesians 5:20). Also see, John 14:13; and John 15:16b.
- **Pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.** But never pray *to* the Holy Spirit. *"And pray **in** the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests"* (Ephesians 6:18a). Also see Romans 8:26.

Three types of prayers:

- **Thanksgiving!** Thank the Father for who He is – Almighty God, Sovereign, our Heavenly Father. And show appreciation for His blessings and provisions. *"In everything give thanks, for this is God's Will for you in Christ Jesus"* (1Thessalonians 5:18).
- **Intercession for others.** Pray for communicators and teachers of God's Word, including pastors, evangelists, and missionaries. Also include the sick and ailing, nations and governments, law enforcement, municipalities, national crises, military, etc. See Ephesians 6:18b; 1Timothy 2:1-2; Colossians 4:2-3; 2Thessalonians 3:1. God has also commanded us to pray for our enemies: *"But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you"* (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:28).
- **Petition for self.** Pray for one's own needs and have the faith that He will provide! *"Give us today our daily bread. ..."* (Matthew 6:11, 25 - 34). *"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need"* (Hebrews 4:16). But we must always remember to pray, *"according to His will,"* as is stated in 1John 5:14, *"This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything **according to His will**, he hears us.*

However, Christ corrects those who use prayer incorrectly. In Matthew 6:5, Christ said, *"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites."* Never use prayer as a means of drawing attention to self. Christ then taught a correct way to pray, as stated in Matthew 6:6.

(See also, Matthew 6:1-8, and The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-13).



Day 56: Saturday [Why Prayer is Not Answered](#)

Often when we pray, we expect God to answer us positively. So why is it that sometimes we do not get an answer, or if the answer comes, it is not quite what we wanted? Here are some reasons why prayer is not answered.

1. **Sin (iniquity):** *"If I had sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened"* (Psalm 66:18). We are commanded not to **grieve** the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:31). And not to **quench** the Holy Spirit (1Thessalonians 5:19). For it is only through naming our sins to Him that we regain the filling of the Holy Spirit, we are restored to fellowship with God and resume living the spiritual life.
2. **Not Filled with the Holy Spirit:** *"And pray **in** the Holy Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests"* (Ephesians 6:18a). We are commanded to "judge ourselves" (1Corinthians 11:31), and to "confess/acknowledge our sins to Him" (1John 1:9). Only God can forgive His children from their sins.
3. **Lack of Faith:** We must have faith! (Matthew 21:22). *"Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours"* (Mark 11:24). *"Your faith should not rest on the wisdom (or provisions) of men, but on the power of God"* (1Corinthians 2:5). Read the entire passages of James 1:6-8; Matthew 6:30; Matthew 8:26; Matthew 16:8.
4. **Domestic Problems:** Problems between husbands and wives (1Peter 3:7).
5. **Arrogance:** *"There they cry out, but He does not answer because of the pride of evil people. God certainly will not listen to an empty cry, nor will the Almighty regard it"* (Job 35:12-13).
6. **Lack of compassion:** *"One who shuts his ear to the outcry to the poor will also call out himself, and not be answered"* (Proverbs 21:13). He is totally self-centred without a thought for others in need.
7. **Lack of Obedience:** He does not answer when we disobey, but according to 1John 3:22, *"We receive from him anything we ask, because we **obey** his commands and do what pleases Him"* (1John 3:22).
8. **Request is not God's Will:** If we make a request outside of the Will of God, God will not answer. (1John 5:14-15).
9. **Wrong Motivation:** If our motivation is for profit, for recognition, for power, for status, or for any other self-centred purpose, then our prayer is not answered. (James 4:3). *"But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men"* (Matthew 23:5a). Always evaluate your motivation.
10. **Failure to accomplish God's purpose:** *"Three times I (Paul) pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me'"* (2Corinthians 12:8-9).

And sometimes, the Father simply desires us to wait; to have **patience!** James 1:4

Memory verse: *"Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."* (Hebrews 4:16)



Day 57: Sunday.....[Prayer for a Nation](#)

Heavenly Father, our Great God in Heaven and on Earth, we recognize that prayer is a power beyond what any human being can comprehend. No power on Earth can equal it, and we have witnessed that power in the example that South Africa demonstrated to the world, in 1994, manifested through the lives of its believers.

We recognize, Father, that You have a plan for every believer in Jesus Christ. First and foremost, that plan is for believers to grow spiritually so as to ensure the continued existence of any nation, whether South Africa, or any other nation of this world. So that because of the faithfulness of spiritually growing believers, You might honour and preserve that nation. This is our request, Father, that we as believers follow this simple prayer to personal and national blessing.

Father, thank You for this nation, even though it has gone through very difficult times in its history. Thank you for the insight You gave to certain leaders to govern this nation, for the divisions of power so that the nation's destiny does not reside in the hands of just one person, a tyrant or dictator. Therefore, Father, we pray for those in authority who will lead us, not dictate to us. We lift up those leaders who would make laws that conform to Your Justice and to the principles of freedom and divine establishment. Give the leaders wisdom to make decisions that would strengthen and prosper this nation, not for the good of mere ideologies or parties or individuals, but for the benefit of the nation and its people.

Father, we humbly request this prayer would be on the lips of every believer in the years to come, that You guide the elected officials and the leader of this nation, in the way You would have them go; that You would surround its president and elected officials, with wise counsel, men and women of integrity who place the good of the nation above their self-centred, arrogant motives. That Your agenda, not politics or personal power, be the driving force behind their decisions. Give them wisdom, discernment, understanding, knowledge, integrity, and humility, that this nation may know stability at home and be an example to the world abroad.

May we never forget, Father, the dangers of putting our trust in man, even in men of great power with good intentions. May each believer in Christ continue to direct our minds, thoughts and especially our confidence, toward You and Your Word. May Your Word be the central, absolute focus in our daily lives, as we seek your Will alone.

We pray, Father, that You would raise up strong voices in this nation, such as men who believe in Your Word, and like the "one" man who saved a nation (Ecclesiastes 9:15-16; see **Power of One**, page 36), who would encourage and rally believers to follow the course laid out in Your Word, to reach the voices in pulpits across the nation, who will speak the Truth of the Word of God. As believers, Father, let us remember and continue to honour You in the years to come. It is this nation's salvation, just as You are our Salvation.

We ask this in the name of our Lord and Saviour who is Jesus Christ. Amen.

[This prayer from our Pastor R B Thieme III, was edited to be within a South African context]



Day 58: Monday *The Trinity*

God consists of three persons. We call this the Trinity. The Bible names the three persons of the Trinity, as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). The three persons, each with their own personalities, are one God in that they all have the same divine nature or characteristics (John 10:30). In fact, they are co-equal in essence, meaning each member of the Trinity has sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omniscience (all-knowing), omnipresent (God is everywhere), omnipotent (all-powerful), immutability (unchanging), veracity (absolute truth), and unlimited wisdom. God is one in essence, but three in persons.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have coexisted eternally; they have known each other eternally (John 17:5, 24). Each possesses perfect righteousness and each has a love for the other. God the Father loves the Son and the Holy Spirit; and the Son loves the Father and the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit loves the Father and the Son.

Understanding this gives us a greater appreciation for our salvation. When God the Father judged Jesus Christ on the Cross, He and God the Holy Spirit both turned away from Christ. That is why in Matthew 27:46, Jesus Christ cried out, “*My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?*” When Jesus Christ died spiritually as our substitute, He was totally separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit, with whom He had coexisted for all eternity. That is why when an unbeliever says, “just believing is too easy,” he is ignoring what the death of Christ on the Cross meant to God the Father. His uniquely born Son, the one with whom He had an eternal relationship and loved so dearly for all eternity, the Justice of the Father had to judge Him for all man’s sins (John 3:16; 1John 2:2). God the Father cannot accept the rejection of His grace gift of His Son. That is why the unbeliever is destined for the eternal lake of fire.

Each person of the Trinity has a specific role, a different purpose to accomplish for the grace benefit of mankind. (Isaiah 48:16).

- God the Father is the author and designer of the divine plan for mankind. He decreed the plan of human history (Psalm 148:6).
- God the Son reveals that plan (John 1:18; 6:46). He created the universe (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:2). He executed the Father’s plan of salvation for mankind (John 8:29; Hebrews 10:9). Christ volunteered to become true humanity, to become God and man in one person, and to go to the Cross to pay for the sins of all mankind.
- God the Holy Spirit provides the power for living the Christian life and fulfilling that plan of God (Luke 4:14; John 3:34; Acts 10:38; John 14:26).

All that God has made known about Himself can be understood by us (Romans 1:19-21) and it is revealed in His Word through the ministry of God the Holy Spirit (1Corinthians 2:10-12). Specific details on ***Divine Essence***, are listed on the following pages.

Memory verse: “*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and remind you of all that I have said to you.*” (John 14:26)



Day 59: Tuesday.....[Divine Essence Diagram](#)

THE DIVINE ESSENCE OF GOD

THE CHARACTER OF GOD

1. Wisdom	God is Wisdom God's Wisdom is His Word & practical knowledge for life. Gen. 1:3, 26; Gen. 50:20; Deut. 4:39; Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:11
2. Sovereignty	God is Sovereign God is the highest authority in the universe Gen. 1:3, 26; Gen. 50:20; Deut. 4:39; Isa. 46:10; Eph. 1:11
3. Omnipresence	God is Everywhere God is present everywhere throughout the universe. Col. 1:17; Jer. 23:24; Psalm 129:8; Prov. 15:3; 1Kings 8:27
4. Omnipotence	God is All-powerful There is nothing God cannot do. Isaiah 40:10; Isa.44:24; Job 37:23; 1Chron.29:11-12; Heb.4:12
5. Omniscience	God is All-knowing He has known everything from eternity past. 1John 3:20; Psalm 33:15; Psalm 139:4; Isaiah 46:10; Matt. 6:8
6. Eternal Life	God is Eternal Life God has no beginning and He has no end. Ex. 3:14; Psalm 90:2; Lam. 5:19; Heb. 11:3; Rev. 22:13
7. Immutability	God does not change. He never changes He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. 1Sam.15:29; Malachi 3:6; Jas. 1:17; Rom.11:29; Hebrews 13:8
8. Love	God is Love God is perfect love. His love never fails. 1 John 4:7-8, 16; John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 8:38-39
9. Justice	God is perfect Justice God is perfectly fair and just in all things. Isaiah 30:18; Deut. 10:17; Deut. 32:4; Rom. 2:11; Psalm 89:14
10. Righteousness	God is absolute Righteousness There is no sin, evil or even a mistake in anything He does. Jeremiah 23:6; Psalm 145:17; Rom. 4:3; 2 Cor. 5:21
11. Veracity	God is absolute Truth God does not lie; nor can He lie. Num. 23:19; Deut. 7:9; John 17:17; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18;
<i>Note: Summarised from teaching of R B Thieme, Jr & R B Thieme III, Pastors, Berachah Church</i>	



Day 60: Wednesday..... *God's Essence - Wisdom*

The full wisdom of God may be far beyond our limited understanding. But we can have this same wisdom, given to us through His Word (1Corinthians 2:16). So let us look at it: His wisdom is an eternal aspect of His deity. God's wisdom was present at the creation of the universe. The glory and majesty of His creation is evident of a supreme Being, coming from God alone. The wisdom of God is His thinking. It is absolute truth, the wisdom of the ages before time began, and it can only be found in one place, the Bible.

"The Lord by [means of] Wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens. By His knowledge the deeps were broken up, and the skies drip with dew (Proverbs 3:19-20).

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory" (1Corinthians 2:7).

The Bible tells us that God's Wisdom and understanding existed prior to creation. God speaks of His Wisdom as a fundamental part of His being, His essence, defined in Proverbs 8:22-24, *"The Lord brought me [Wisdom] forth as the first of His works, before His deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth ... I was there when he set the heavens in place"* (John1:4; Proverbs 8:25-31)

Jesus Christ is the exact representation of God, because He is God. He is the radiance of God's glory, and possesses the same eternal attribute of Wisdom, as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. The Mind of Christ is God's Wisdom expressed to us in the Bible. It reflects the very thinking of God Himself. Christ lived His life by this wisdom. This same wisdom is available to us; we simply have to ask Him (James 1:5). In fact, we are expected to have that same attitude which is in Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5). Hence, God has provided His Word, His very thinking, His mind, all written within the pages of His Word, so that we might learn it and apply it in our own lives. This wisdom is what gives us a clearer understanding of the world around us.

The wisdom of God is seen especially in His creative work. Creation itself is the best witness to God's wisdom and His omnipotence (Isaiah 40:12; Proverbs 3:19-20). In Psalm 19:1, David wrote, *"The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands."* Only God knows those things that man cannot know or ever discover. Thus, the depth of His knowledge and His wisdom, is unfathomable and unimaginable (Romans 11:33-36). Yet, He has provided some of that wisdom for our own use.

Biblical wisdom helps us to know how to live in a world of confusion, lack of order, evilness, and falsehood. In other words, it makes us wise in the middle of Satan's cosmic system, in the middle of Satan's lies and deceptions. God's wisdom, as provided in the Scriptures is the foundation for living this life; it is our **armour** (Ephesians 6:11), in making good decisions, and having discernment in life. It brings stability and confidence to our lives. God is far beyond us in wisdom, and yet we can have this same wisdom; His thinking.

Memory verse: *"Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! (Romans 11:33)*



Day 61: Thursday..... *God's Essence - Sovereignty*

God is the supreme ruler of the universe (Deuteronomy 4:39). God is supreme over all living creatures: angels, mankind, and animals. As the Supreme Ruler of the universe, God planned and determined all that has ever happened and all that ever would happen, past, present and future. The Sovereignty of God is His eternal (Psalm 93:2), infinite (Psalm 8:1), unchangeable Will. God is King of kings and ruler overall. No one is greater than God (Hebrews 6:13; Deuteronomy 4:39; Psalm 47:7a). The fact that God exists eternally speaks of His sovereign status over all creation. God has no beginning and no end. He is the Alpha and Omega (Revelation 22:13). No human being can claim this position.

God's sovereign Will *is* His authority, which is absolute (Hebrews 6:13). There is no one greater than God (Psalm 24:1). As the creator and the maintainer of the universe (Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2, 3), God has absolute authority over all creation. God desires that all should be saved and come to know the truth (1 Timothy 2:4).

God's sovereignty makes all things certain, but does not interfere with angelic or human free will. The Sovereignty of God and free will of man coexist throughout human history. Even though God's Will is absolute, He allows man to make his own decisions. Man is free to choose for or against God, God's plan of salvation, and/or His Word. And yet, all of man's choices, good or bad, do not change the overall plan of God as directed by His sovereignty.

God's Sovereignty works in complete unity with all of His other attributes. God will never do anything that would compromise His essence. God is perfect Righteousness. Righteousness can have nothing to do with sin. Therefore, what Righteousness rejects, Justice condemns. Hence, sin had to be condemned. That was why Christ took on Himself the sins of mankind, when He paid for our condemnation on the Cross.

As Sovereign God, His Will is absolute. And as such, He makes decisions for the personal benefit of every believer (Jeremiah 29:11), and for the benefit of all mankind, by dying on the Cross. Therefore, God gave us every opportunity to accept His grace gift of salvation.

As Sovereign God, nature and the animal kingdom obey God. We see that with Daniel in the lion's den, and with the storm on the Sea of Galilee when our Lord calmed the storm with a command, "Be still..." Adversity cannot touch us apart from the Sovereignty of God allowing it. Or the next time we are in the midst of a natural disaster such as a prolong period of drought, we have no reason to worry. God can merely speak the command and rain clouds will appear. But God works everything in His time and for His purpose. But most importantly, that we first come to trust Him in all circumstances.

All authority is from God and no authority exists apart from God (Romans 13:1-3). But God's sovereignty has also delegated authority to mankind for man's benefit. He delegated authority to parents, to governments, to law enforcement, so that we might all come to know and respect all authority (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13; Titus 3:1). And especially God's authority, for God is ultimate authority in all matters (Daniel 2:21).

Memory verse *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (Jeremiah 29:11)*



Day 62: Friday *God's Essence - Omnipresence*

God is omnipresent. This means He is present everywhere, and He is present everywhere at the same time. God is in every place at the one time (Psalm 139:7-8; Proverbs 15:3). We say He is “omnipresent.” This may be hard for our simple minds to fully understand. But we get a picture of God’s omnipresence when we think of heaven as God’s throne and the earth as God’s footstool (Deuteronomy 4:39; Isaiah 66:1). God’s throne room is in heaven (Psalm 13:5-6) and yet He is not confined or restricted to heaven or any other place (1Kings 8:27; Acts 17:24).

To us the universe seems to have no boundaries; but to God, the universe is within the borders He has established. Space is large, but not as large as God. Time can be a long, long period, but to eternal God, a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like a day (2Peter 3:8; Psalm 90:4). He created both space and time, and He maintains both. In fact, Hebrews 1:3b says that Jesus Christ “upholds all things by the word of His power.”

God is also free to have a local presence. He met in the garden with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8). He met on the mountain with Moses (Exodus 19:18, 20). He was in the Holy of Holies above the mercy seat (Exodus 40:34; Leviticus 16:2). And He was free to become flesh and dwell among us (John 1:14). In each of these cases, the Lord Jesus Christ as God was in one place face-to-face with mankind and at the same time, existing everywhere, throughout the entire universe and beyond.

God’s omniscience knows simultaneously and eternally every circumstance of life, while God’s omnipresence makes Him a witness to every situation and every circumstance of history as it occurred. That includes every aspect of our lives. Jeremiah 23:23-24 states, “*Am I a God who is near, declares the Lord, And not a God far off? Can a person hide himself in hiding places so that I do not see him? declares the Lord. Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? declares the Lord.*”

He is personally interested in us every moment we are alive, and He is available to help us immediately. His localized presence within us means that He never leaves us, nor forsakes us (Hebrews 13:5b). Psalm 23:4 states, “*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.*” But these promises are only for His children, those who have believed in Him as their personal Saviour. (John 1:12; Galatians 3:26).

God’s essence is who He is. It is a great source of encouragement and comfort for us when we apply His essence to the problems and adversities we encounter in our lives. Just the very thought that we can have confidence in the fact that He is with us, every moment of our life, should give us great comfort.

Memory verses: “*Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*” (Joshua 1:9)

“*For the Lord your God, He is the one who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.*”
(Deuteronomy 31:6)



Day 63: Saturday *God's Essence - Omnipotence*

God is all-powerful. We call this His omnipotence. His power has no limits (Psalm 147:5). His power has existed eternally and is supreme (Isaiah 50:2). No creature is more powerful than God (Psalm 74:13). His power is evident in His creation of the universe (Job 26:7; Psalm 8:3; 93:1) and all that is in it, in His creation of angels, and in His creation of mankind (Isaiah 40:26; Isaiah 44:24; Jeremiah 27:5). The Bible tells us Jesus Christ holds the universe together by a single word of His power (Hebrew 1:3).

The same power which holds the universe together, is the power which raised Jesus Christ from the grave. His resurrection guarantees our eternal salvation. 1Corinthians 6:14, *“By His power, God raised the Lord from the dead, and He will raise us also.”* That same power that resurrected Christ from the grave, lives within us: *“And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life and power to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you”* (Romans 8:11).

God's power as a part of His divine essence is a great comfort to the believer in time of need. Job 42:2 states, *“I know that You can do all things, and that no plan is impossible for You.”* God's power was demonstrated throughout Israel's history including the Exodus generation and the 10 plagues in their deliverance from Egypt, to the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:13-14), to the provision of water and manna in the desert. Like many Old Testament heroes, David witnessed the power of God for deliverance in battle (1Samuel 17:47; Psalm 24:8). No matter how bad our personal circumstances or even how desperate national circumstances like the rioting and looting we witnessed in parts of the country, we must always remember that Almighty God is our refuge. Deuteronomy 33:27 says, *“The eternal God is a hiding place, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and He drove out the enemy from you, and said, ‘Destroy!’”* His omnipotence guarantees that *“nothing is impossible with God”* (Luke 1:37; Mark 10:27).

God's power is made available to believers so that we can live the spiritual life and fulfill His destiny for each one of us. That power includes the filling of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Word of God in our souls, and the power of faith in His promises (Ephesians 3:16-19; 1Corinthians 2:5; Ephesians 1:19-22; 2Peter 1:3).

There are numerous promises of the power which He has given us. We greatly encourage you to read and even memorise them, so that when you face any adversity, any opposition from people, you will remember these promises and be able to apply them to those circumstances: Ephesians 3:16-19; Psalm 91:1-2; Jeremiah 33:3; 1John 4:4

Memory verses: *“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more abundantly than all we could ever ask or imagine, according to **His power** that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”* (Ephesians 3:20-21)

“To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.” (1Peter 5:11)



Day 64: Sunday.....*God's Essence - Omniscience*

Omniscience means that God is all-knowing. He knows everything which occurred in the past, the present, and what will occur in the future. As we mentioned above, God is infinitely wise. He has perfect, total wisdom and understanding of all things pertaining to man and the universe (Psalm 147:4, 5; Ephesians 3:10). Since God is righteous and eternal, He knows perfectly and eternally all the knowable, whether actual or merely possible (Hebrews 4:3b; 1John 3:20). In other words, God knows not only all that ever will happen, but also all that ever could have happened, but did not occur. Never has there been a time when He did not know all that is to be known (Acts 15:18). There is no limit to His knowledge. Psalm 139 gives us a view of God's detailed knowledge of each one of us. He knows all we think and do; all our deepest, darkest secrets (Psalm 44:21). Nothing is hidden from God.

Psalm 33:13-15 says, *"The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of mankind; from His dwelling place He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, He who fashions the hearts of them all, He who understands all their works."* God never has to learn anything because He has always known it all. His knowledge cannot develop beyond what it already is. He knows the end from the beginning and everything in between (Isaiah 46:9-10). The Bible, God's revelation to mankind, contains all that He wants us to know (Romans 11:33). We simply have to learn it.

Every detail of history and all of creation are in God's mind at all times and always have been from eternity past. Therefore, the future is as clear to God as the past. There never is a time in our life when God is not thinking, concentrating, and focusing on us, His children. Isaiah 44:24 tells us that God has known us since, *"He formed you in the womb."* He has us in mind at all times and wants nothing but the very best for us (Jeremiah 29:11; Nahum 1:7). Read also Psalm 139:1-4 and Matthew 10:29-31.

God knows every thought, decision, and action we will ever have in life (Acts 15:8), but He never interferes with our volition (choices). Our free will is truly free; given to us at Creation. Although He does not interfere with our volition, His sovereignty helps us make our decisions through His Word and the Holy Spirit, and where necessary, controls circumstances beyond our control for our benefit. The Book of Esther is a great example of God's Omniscience used in making decisions to accomplish His Plan. Knowing that God is omniscient in all His actions, we should never second-guess God. We must trust that His knowledge coupled with His love means He always has our best interest in mind. One of the main themes of the book of Job is that God knew all about Job's situation and He did provide deliverance, as He did for Israel in Esther's time. And as He does for us, to this day.

God understands us perfectly at all times, even better than we understand ourselves. As we learn from 1Samuel 16:7, *"the Lord looks at the heart."* God's love and His plan are always available to us. All we must do is "renovate our thinking" as stated in Romans 12:2-3, and follow 2Peter 3:18, which says, *"Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."*

Memory verse: *"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans for prosperity and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.' (Jeremiah 29:11)*



Day 65: Monday *God's Essence - Eternal Life*

God's attribute of eternal life is best described by God, Himself. In Exodus 3:14, God said to Moses, *"I am who I am."* God is, and God will always be. There never was a time when God did not exist. The declaration of *"I am"* is timeless, with no beginning and no end. The Lord Jesus Christ referred to Himself seven times in the New Testament as the great *"I am."* To further prove His Eternal Life, Jesus Christ said in Revelation 1:8, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."* The word, "Alpha" is the beginning letter of the Greek Alphabet, and it refers to the eternal pre-existence of Jesus Christ. The word "Omega" is the final letter of the Greek alphabet, and refers to His everlasting existence. Eternal Life is an attribute held equally by God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. (summarized from the book, ***The Trinity***, 2016, by Pastor R B Thieme, Jr.)

Two of the great writers in the Old Testament, were inspired by the Holy Spirit to record for all time, God's attribute of Eternal Life. Moses stated in Psalm 90:2, *"Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God."* The author of Psalm 102:25 and 27 declared, *"In the beginning You laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish but You remain the same, and Your years will never end."* The Lord told the prophet Isaiah, *"I am the first, and I am the last; apart from Me there is no God"* (Isaiah 44:6).

God is timeless. He invented time for the passing of human history. Psalm 90:4 (a prayer of Moses) compares the eternal time clock of God to man's temporal, fleeting time clock, *"For a thousand years in Your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night."* God uses time as a means to allow the events of history to unfold, but God is not confined or restricted by time. God views a thousand years as yesterday!

In all of God's incredible attributes, as great, and powerful, and as all-knowing as He is, God never loses sight of the one individual person, You. The moment that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, God gives you His eternal life. Jesus Christ said in John 10:28-30, *"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."*

In John 10:28 and Romans 8:38-39, the security we receive from the eternal life Jesus Christ gives us at salvation is expressed as being held in the hand of God. We understand that He holds us firmly in an eternal relationship, and that He will not let go for anything (Hebrews 13:5(b); Deuteronomy 31:6(b)). His hand cannot and will not let you go.

Faith alone in Christ alone puts us into the family of God (Galatians 3:26). We become His children and we can never lose that family status (John 1:12). We can do nothing to gain eternal life nor can we do anything to maintain it. It is strictly the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross for us. And therefore, there is nothing that we can do to lose it!

Memory verse: *"And I give unto them eternal life, they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."* (John 10:28)



Day 66: Tuesday *God's Essence - Immutability*

Immutability means God cannot change. He cannot be better or worse than He is. Hebrews 13:8 states the immutability of Jesus Christ, *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever."* God's immutability ensures that His essence and divine nature do not change (Psalm 102:27; Malachi 3:6). The immutability of God's character means that God never loses His integrity or lets others down. James 1:17 says, *"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."* Unlike a human shadow that keeps moving and changing with the sun. God's character never changes.

From God's immutability comes His faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22-23). The Bible declares repeatedly that God is faithful. He is always reliable. God will never let anyone down. He is faithful to keep His Word (Hebrews 6:17-19). Although we may be faithless, He remains faithful, 2Timothy 2:13, *"if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself."* His never-changing righteousness and justice are constant and absolute in dealing with mankind. For example, God blesses and disciplines the believer; both are done with the same immutable, unfailing love, a love that does not improve, decline, increase or decrease (Hebrews 12:6). His Immutability means His love does not change.

God's immutability ensures not only that His divine love is eternally consistent, but that the door of salvation is always open. God never waivers from the offer of salvation through faith alone in Christ alone (John 3:16, 18, 36). God's immutability guarantees His faithfulness and our salvation. He cannot cancel the salvation of any believer, no matter how bad that believer may become (Jude 24).

Immutability means that God's policies and actions are totally compatible with His sovereign plan and His purpose. Therefore, God's unchanging integrity and His Word are the foundations for the plan of God. Psalm 33:11 says, *"The plan of the Lord stands forever, and the plans of His heart from generation to generation."* The immutability of God is clearly stated in Matthew 24:35 which says, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Words shall not pass away."*

Not only is God immutable, but what He did for us and what He has revealed to us in the Scripture is immutable (unchangeable). God always keeps His Word. When God gives a promise, the fact that He gives it means that promise carries its own immutability (Numbers 23:19). His promises never change. God's promises are iron-clad, easy to understand statements from God to you personally. His power and immutability are behind His promises (Psalm 145:13; Romans 4:19-21). Trust them. Use them. Apply them. All that God promises, God delivers (Joshua 21:45). For God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Memory verse: *"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfil?" (Numbers 23:19)*



Day 67: Wednesday.....*God's Essence - Love*

God **is** absolute love! His love is the absolute unfailing virtue and compassion of His thinking and actions towards us. His love is never ceasing, never failing. It neither decreases nor increases; it is constant. God's love is never frustrated, disappointed, or distracted. In that, we can have total confidence. We should be in awe of God's unfailing love, which surrounds us, constantly. However, God's love is not anything like human love. That may seem obvious, but many Christians use human love as a basis for understanding God's love. We must not do that. God not only possess and expresses love, He **is** love. He does not need an object for His love to exist (1John 4:7, 8, 16); (see ***Greater Love***, page 25). Since God is love, always has been love, and always will be love, God does not fall in love, nor can God's love be changed by our sin, failure, or evil, or any action, good or bad, which we can do. God's love cannot be corrupted, compromised, or bribed by human works. God's love is not impressed with our legalism (human standards), self-righteousness, or good deeds.

God's perfect, stable, never-changing love was expressed toward the entire human race when God the Father judged His son, Jesus Christ, for our sins (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1John 4:9-10). And when we believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour, Gods' ***personal love*** is extended to us because His righteousness was given to us at salvation, and God the Father loves His own righteousness (Romans 5:1-5). We possess that righteousness and will never lose it. God loves us ***personally*** because of that righteousness within us regardless of our spiritual status. God does not love the believer more because the believer is living the Christian life and fulfilling His plan. In fact, God even loves the failing believer, with the exact same ***personal love***. He will discipline a believer who fails and sins, but He always disciplines in love, as Hebrews 12:5-6 says, "*My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are punished by Him; for whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He punishes every son whom He accepts.*"

All the other characteristics of the essence of God further define God's love for us. With God's sovereignty, He makes decisions for our benefit (Ephesians 1:5). God is eternal; therefore, there never is a time when God is not love. The righteousness and justice of God means His divine love cannot be prejudiced, unfair, or discriminatory. God is immutable and so His love is unchangeable. God's love is never disappointed, frustrated, or distracted.

God is omniscient (all knowing); therefore, His love always functions in a rational manner, without emotion or any type of unreasonableness. God's love can never be complicated by ignorance, silliness, or absurdities. God knows every thought that every person ever had throughout history. Many of the thoughts about God are not kind, but that doesn't change God at all. We do not have the power or ability to change God's love, or God Himself. God does not condone sin, but He doesn't stop loving the sinner, and that is why He went to the Cross for all sinners. God is absolute truth; therefore, His love is revealed in the Scriptures. The Word of God is the thinking or mind of Jesus Christ (1Corinthians 2:16). God's love is expressed in His grace toward both believers and unbelievers (Ephesians 2:4).

Memory verse: "*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8)



Day 68: Thursday *God's Essence - Justice*

God's justice is absolute, incorruptible and fair. It is impossible for God to be unfair in the function of divine justice. God is a wise, honorable, perfect, and a fair judge of mankind. It is impossible for perfect God to render a bad decision as judge (Deuteronomy 10:17; Romans 10:1). The justice of God administers the penalties and blessings which are demanded by His perfect righteousness (Deuteronomy 32:4; 2Chronicles 19:7; Job 37:23; Psalm 19:9; Psalm 50:6; Psalm 58:11; Psalm 89:14; Isaiah 45:21; Jeremiah 50:7; Romans 3:26; Hebrews 10:30-31; Hebrews 12:23). God's judgements and penalties are not God getting back at man for sin and evil, but rather they are God's consistent, unchangeable condemnation and resulting judgement of anything that violates His Will. Sin violates His Will.

Therefore, the greatest demonstration of God's justice was the Cross, where God the Father judged Jesus Christ for the sins of the entire world (Isaiah 53:5-6 and 11; Romans 5:8; 1Peter 3:18; John 3:16-18; 1John 2:2). There never has been a sin committed in the history of mankind which was not judged on the Cross. That is why John 3:16 states that anyone who believes in Christ *"shall never perish but have eternal life."* Since God is fair, there never was and never will be a human being who didn't have a chance to have eternal salvation. 2Peter 3:9 says that *"He is not willing that any should perish but for all to come to repentance (a change of mind about Christ)."* And for those who do not believe, they will face the justice of God at the Great White Throne judgement. And they will be judged not for their sins but for their rejection of God's grace gift of His Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:18 and 36; Revelations 20:11-12).

Divine justice is the function of eternal God as the judge of mankind, rendering daily decisions in the Supreme Court of Heaven with regard to all members of the human race. Most countries in the world today have a Supreme Court that has the ultimate power in deciding legal cases and defining law. Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God the Father, is the Supreme Court Judge over all the universe (John 5:22 and 27). His courtroom is never closed. His justice is perfect justice and His judgements are fair. As the Supreme Judge, He deals with all evil in the world, all injustices in human affairs, the rise and fall of nations and rulers, anti-Semitism, conflicts among believers, Satanic accusations against believers, divine discipline of believers, and much, much more. We should remember what the author of Hebrews 10:31 stated, *"It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"*

When we face injustice or mistreatment, we can take great comfort in knowing that His justice is perfectly fair. He has all the facts and will make rulings and decisions for our benefit. We can leave all injustice in His hands (Romans 12:19). Genesis 50:20 tells us that *"what man intends for evil against you, God intends for our good."* God does not need any help in dealing with the unfairness and injustice that comes our way. Trust His justice!

Memory verse: *"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a person sows, this he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7)*



Day 69: Friday.....*God's Essence - Righteousness*

Righteousness is God's absolute goodness and perfection. God has eternal, unchangeable, and absolute righteousness. Righteousness means God is perfect in His person and character. In fact, every aspect of God's person, His will, His plans are all perfect. As righteousness, God is totally free from sin. God has never sinned. God cannot tempt or seek to sin (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 7:9; Psm.11:7; Psm.97:6; Psm.119:137; Jeremiah 23:6; John 17:25; Romans 1:17; Romans 10:3; 1John 2:29). God as perfect deity cannot in any way be involved in sin except to judge it. What God's Righteousness rejects (sin), His Justice must condemn. That is why Jesus Christ had to become perfect humanity to be judged for sin as our substitute (2Corinthians 5:21). Righteousness is the perfect standard by which the Justice of God acts. It guides the justice of God in all of His acts of judgement and acts of blessing.

Righteousness includes God's absolute goodness. This is not a moralistic good, not a legalistic good, not distorted good from the sin nature whereby man tries to impress God and people with how good he is. It is absolute good from His perfect righteousness (Psalm 34:8; 86:5; 119:68; Luke 18:19). As perfect and absolute righteousness, God rejects all of man's lesser standards of goodness. Our goodness can never compare to the absolute righteousness of God (Isaiah 64:6). Salvation cannot be attained through any system of human works, good deeds, or righteousness. Titus 3:5 says, *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us."* Neither will the works of keeping the Law save a person (Galatians 2:16). Our very best cannot even come close to God's absolute, perfect righteousness. That perspective gives us an appreciation for the enormity of God's matchless grace; the *"provision of grace and the gift of righteousness"* (Romans 5:17 & 21).

We have the righteousness of God given to us when we believe in Christ (Romans 3:22). Just as God gave Abraham His righteousness when Abraham believed (Romans 4:3). God loves His righteousness in us with the result that He blesses that righteousness with everything we need to keep us alive and to accomplish His plan and purpose of us (Matthew 6:33). And He provides that blessing of support, regardless of whether the believer is in perpetual carnality or advancing spiritually, regardless of any system of works, righteousness, or Christian service. That is grace. Philippians 4:19 says, *"My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches and glory in Christ Jesus."* Notice it does not say He will provide our needs because of the good deeds that we perform as Christians.

Since God is perfect, His plan for the believer is perfect. We take great comfort in that. As we advance in His plan, we can have confidence that His plan is greater than our circumstances and that He has nothing but our best interest in mind (2Corinthians 9:8).

Memory verse: *"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."* (2Corinthians 5:21)



Day 70: Saturday.....*God's Essence - Veracity*

Veracity means absolute truth. God is absolute truth. He did not become truth. Truth always existed in the mind of God. He is ***the*** truth from eternity past. God's truth is infinite perfection (Psalm 86:15; Psalm 119:142). God's truth is within Himself and revealed to us. He is the source of all truth. While motivated by love, He reveals His abundant truth to us in His Word, the Bible. His truthfulness guarantees the accuracy of His Word, His divine revelation to us. The Scripture is His truth expressed from His unfailing love. In fact, God's truth is revealed to us in the promises contained in the Bible. And His promises are our grace provisions which God has given us (2Samuel 7:28 and 2Corinthians 9:8).

Veracity is evident in all of His ways (Deuteronomy 32:4). Psalm 25:10 says, "*All the paths of the Lord are faithfulness and truth.*" Veracity is shown in all His works (Daniel 4:37). Revelation 15:3b states, "*Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations!*" And God cannot lie! (Titus 1:4).

God is true to mankind, but even more importantly, He is true to Himself. God is never unfaithful to Himself. God cannot lie. He cannot do anything that would violate His absolute truthfulness. God is true to His own character. Man says, "I speak the truth," but God says, "I ***am*** the truth," (John 14:6). That is why the Word of God is absolute truth and can be stated with confidence (1John 5:20; John 6:32, 15:1; Hebrews 8:2). God's Word, which is God's absolute truth, is the expression of His integrity, and His Wisdom.

When Christ came to earth, He came to reveal God's absolute truth to mankind (John 6:32). That is why the Apostle John referred to Jesus Christ as "*The Word*" in John 1:1 and 14. Christ revealed the very mind and thinking of God. We are now commanded to have the same thinking in us (Philippians 2:5; 1Corinthians 2:16; 2Peter 3:18).

God honors His Word in the soul of believers when we grow spiritually through instruction and training, for correction and blessing (2Timothy 3:16). Therefore, we must acquire God's Truth in our souls. And since God is absolute truth, He must honor that truth wherever it is found. God's plan, His will, and purpose for every believer is related to His truth and veracity. It is impossible for the believer to fulfil the plan of God and thereby glorify Him apart from learning and applying the absolute truth of His Word.

Our faith is totally dependent on the absolute veracity of God and what He has revealed to us. Our faith has no merit on our part because we trust in the one and only true God, in His veracity and in the truthfulness of His Word. Our faith finds strength in His promises knowing that they are true for all time.

Memory verse: "*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*"
(Philippians 2:5)



Day 71: Sunday..... *Jesus Christ & The Hypostatic Union*

Jesus Christ is God and Man in one person. In theology, this union is called the Hypostatic Union. This means that in the person of the incarnate Christ are two natures, divine and human, inseparably united, without mixture or loss of either separate identity, without loss or transfer of character or traits, the union being personal and eternal. What does this mean?

Our Lord Jesus Christ as God always has been and always will be constant deity. From the time of the virgin birth and forever, He will also be true humanity. In other words, His human nature at the virgin birth was united forever with His eternal, divine nature as God the Son. Though the two natures are united, they remain distinct, whole, unchanged, without mixture or confusion. Jesus Christ is not two persons, but one person with two natures. Jesus Christ is the God-man, undiminished (constant) deity and true humanity in one person forever.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the unique person in the universe. He is God with all the attributes of Almighty God. All the attributes of deity stay within His deity and never cross over and become humanity. All the attributes of humanity stay within the humanity of Christ and never become deity.

Why is the Hypostatic Union important? Jesus Christ had to become the God-man in order to be the mediator between God and man. He had to become perfect humanity to be our Saviour, to be our high priest, and to fulfill the promise of the Davidic covenant that David's son would rule forever.

The attributes of the divine nature could not be transferred to the human nature of Jesus Christ to help Him endure the Cross, to resist temptation, or to meet and conquer the great problems of life. The human nature of Christ in hypostatic union had to depend entirely upon the plan and word of God the Father, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the spiritual life, which He pioneered for us.

There are many Biblical references for the hypostatic union, but perhaps John 1:1-2 and 14, state it best. The Apostle John uses the Greek *HO LOGOS* or "*The Word*" for the Lord Jesus Christ because He is the revelation of the Word of God to man. *"In a beginning which was not a beginning there always existed the Word (deity of Christ), and the Word was face-to-face with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God." "And the Word became flesh (true humanity) and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the unique one from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

And in Philippians 2:6-8, it states: *"Who, being in very nature (or in the form of) God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped (taken for granted); vs.7: but made Himself nothing (voluntarily set aside His Deity), taking on the very nature (or the form) of a servant, being made in human likeness. Vs 8: And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a Cross!"* He was obedient to God's Will!

Other Biblical references:

Matthew 1:23; Matthew 16:16; John 1:14; John 3:13; John 17:4-5; Romans 1:3 - 4; Romans 9:5; Galatians 4:4; Colossians 2:9; 1Timothy 2:5; 1Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 2:7; Hebrews 7:26-27; Hebrews 12:2



Day 72: Monday *Jesus Christ & Kenosis*

Following on from the previous message, we will understand more of what is stated in Philippians 2:6-8. How did perfect God humble Himself to become true humanity? How could He function as a man? What happened to the deity of Christ during the Incarnation (otherwise known as the First Advent)? The doctrine of **Kenosis** answers that.

Philippians 2:6-7 states, “*Who although He existed in the form of God, He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied Himself taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men.*” The term, *Emptied Himself* is the Greek KENOO and it means that the Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily limited the independent use of His divine attributes in compliance with God the Father's plan and will for Him, at the First Advent (the Incarnation). He never once used His deity apart from the will of the Father. This means that Jesus Christ did not use the attributes of His divine nature to benefit Himself, to provide for Himself, to glorify Himself, or to solve the daily problems and adversities that He faced.

It is important to make this critical distinction: As the God-man, Jesus Christ did **not** give up His divine attributes; He voluntarily set aside, or restricted, the independent use of His divine attributes. That means certain functions of deity continued to operate, such as holding the universe together (Hebrews 1:3), while at the same time, in His humanity, Jesus Christ subordinated His deity to the Will of God the Father, in His thoughts, decisions and actions.

Understanding Kenosis is important for two reasons. It was critical that Jesus Christ only use His divine attributes when the plan of the Father called for them. For example, Jesus Christ performed many miracles to identify Himself as God and as the Messiah. Satan understood this and that is why He tempted our Lord to use His deity to turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger in Matthew 4:3. All the temptations that Satan brought against Christ attacked **Kenosis** (Matthew 4:1-11). This is why these temptations were unique to Christ. He set us an example. If He could withstand Satan's temptations in His humanity as man, then so could we. And He showed us how, by using the Word of God as our sword. Three times, Christ told Satan, “*It is written.*” That should also be our counter to temptation.

Hence, understanding Kenosis is important because, **without** the assistance of Jesus Christ's deity, He set the example for the spiritual life for all Church age believers. He is “*the originator and perfecter of the faith*” (Hebrews 12:2). The human nature of Jesus Christ did not call on His divine nature for help. He had to use the spiritual life to maintain His human perfection and thus, to be qualified to go to the Cross and be judged for the sins of the world.

Our Lord Jesus Christ voluntarily limited the use of His divine attributes in compatibility with the Father's objective that He live among men with their human limitations. By so doing, He established in His humanity a spiritual life which is an example for believers today.

Memory verse: “*Looking only at Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*” (Hebrews 12:2)



Day 73: Tuesday *Ministry of God the Holy Spirit -1*

While on earth, Jesus Christ understood how tough and complicated life would become, not only for His twelve disciples, but for all people who would follow Him. Before the Lord was crucified, He told the disciples, *“My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going you cannot come”* (John 13:33). The disciples were confused. Peter asked, *“Lord, why can’t I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you”* (John 13:37).

Jesus Christ loved His disciples, just as He loves each one of us. He reassured them, *“I will not leave you as orphans!”* Christ said, *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth (God the Holy Spirit). The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you”* (John 14:16-17).

This statement from our Lord, was His promise that God the Holy Spirit would come and live inside of every believer. This promise was fulfilled exactly ten days after our Lord’s ascension into Heaven, on the Day of Pentecost.

Miraculously, God makes the believer’s body and soul into a “temple” for the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul said, *“Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you”* (1 Corinthians 3:16). God the Holy Spirit becomes our Teacher, Comforter, Counsellor. He helps us to remember all that we have learned and studied from the Bible. But, take note of this: The Holy Spirit can only help us to remember something that we have previously learned! We must first learn and understand promises from God, before we can remember them. We cannot remember something that we have never known or learned!

God the Holy Spirit is completely equal to God the Father and God the Son, The Lord Jesus Christ. He possesses all of the same attributes and the perfect essence of God, as in the Messages stated in, ***“The Essence of God”*** (page 64-75). The Holy Spirit in us also recognises our own volition (free-will). He will never force us to follow His will, obey Him, love Him, or control us like mindless mechanical robots.

Also, inside our body is our sin nature that was inherited from Adam’s original sin. The sin nature wants to do things that are contrary to what God the Holy Spirit desires for us. So, there is always a struggle inside the body and soul of every believer, between the sin nature and God the Holy Spirit. The Apostle Paul stated this conflict very clearly, *“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sin nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want”* (Galatians 5:16-17). (See ***Old Sin Nature***, pages 95 and 96).

We choose to allow the God the Holy Spirit to guide, fill, and lead us, by always using 1 John 1:9 to name our sins to God the Father: We will then be able to enjoy the “fruit” of the Spirit, which is, *“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”* (Galatians 5:22-23).



Day 74: Wednesday.....*Ministry of God the Holy Spirit - 2*

The Holy Spirit was given us so we can become the Ambassadors for Christ, and obey Him in every aspect of our lives! Thus, we have the **power** to live the life we are commanded to live; the same **power** which raised up Christ (Ephesians 1:19-21).

The Old Testament believers were not indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but He was “with” them. Only a few were given the Holy Spirit, like the Prophets, the Temple Builders, and specific craftsmen, for them to be able to carry out their missions. The Old Testament believers came under the Mosaic Law. Now we, in this current Age, after Christ was resurrected, have come under a New Law – the **Law of Grace** (John 1:16-17; Romans 5:20-21).

The Holy Spirit was given to us believers as a seal (2Corinthians 1:22), certifying that we are now the sons of God, for all eternity. This is our seal and down-payment of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14). **This is God’s DNA in us – His Righteousness** (2Corinthians 5:21; 1Peter 3:18; Hebrews 9:15). It is no different to having our own earthly parent’s DNA, which certifies us as their child, no matter what we may do to attempt to change it. It is God’s **absolute** promise and guarantee of Eternal Life (see *Eternal Security*, page 9).

“In you” (John 14:17c and 20), certainly refers to an **indwelling** presence of the Holy Spirit in our body. But it also includes another internal ministry of the Holy Spirit, called the **filling** of the Holy Spirit. Note the difference between *Indwelling* and *Filling*. These two ministries, although falling under the same heading of “In you,” have separate **functions**, but are completely inseparable in the life of the believer.

The **indwelling** is a fact of the Holy Spirit’s work, which started at the moment of Pentecost. But we now have that same indwelling, for, at the moment of our salvation, the Holy Spirit now indwells us (John 14:23, Romans 8:11; 2Timothy 1:14).

The **filling** of the Holy Spirit is also a status of the internal presence of the Holy Spirit. We are given a command in Ephesians 5:18b to **be filled**, so we can have Fellowship with God (1 John 1:6-7). But there is no **command** given to **be indwelt**. That is because the indwelling happens instantaneously at salvation and is permanent (John 1:12-13). You do not lose the permanent indwelling, but you temporarily lose the **function** of the Filling of the Holy Spirit! When you are not in fellowship, He is not **functioning in you**. One is the **guarantee** (the indwelling), the other is the **function** (the filling). The use of the Divine power depends on the filling of God the Holy Spirit, rather than the indwelling.

The commanded “to be filled,” which comes after salvation, indicates that the believer has a choice, and the command can be refused. When it is refused, then the believer chooses to sin, which puts us out of Fellowship with the Holy Spirit and with God the Father (1 John 1:6-7). Thus, God cannot answer even our prayers, let alone guide us (Psalm 66:18). The fact that we are **filled** with the Holy Spirit but can lose it, God has therefore, given us a way to recover His empowerment. This is done by simply acknowledging our sins and failures directly to God the Father, as stated in 1 John 1:9. (See **Diagram** on page 97).

Memory verse: “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God the Father. You are not your own!” (1Corinthians 6:19).



Day 75: Thursday *Compilation of the Canon*

The **Canon of Scripture**, is the completed Bible. But people question its veracity (truth), from many viewpoints. However, the Bible is a critical source for mankind and must be understood! The Lord Jesus Christ is no longer on earth to speak to us directly. Neither do God the Father or the Holy Spirit speak directly to man. They speak to us through His Word! Which is the thinking (mind) of Christ. The Word of God is alive and powerful (Hebrews 4:12). This is the **Mind of Christ** which we can possess (1Corinthians 2:16).

So, here are some facts to consider why the Bible is God's absolute Truth. For the Bible is not just one single book.

1. The Bible is a collection of 66 books – called the ***Canon of Scripture***.
2. These 66 books contain a variety of genres (categories) – history, poetry, prophesy, wisdom, letters, epistles, and apocalyptic.
3. These 66 books were written by 40 different authors.
4. These authors came from a variety of backgrounds – fisherman, doctors, kings, prophets & other walks of life.
5. Most of these authors never knew the others personally; some did; some did not.
6. These 66 books were written over a period of 1,500 years.
7. The 66 books were written in three different languages – Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic.
8. The languages reflect the historical and cultural circumstances in which they were written.
9. These books were written on three continents – Africa, Asia and Europe.
10. Consider: 66 book; 40 authors; 1500 years; 3 languages; 3 continents.
11. This collection of books, shares a common story-line: **The Creation, The Fall, and the Redemption of Mankind**, beginning in Genesis and all the way through to Revelation.

Salvation to all mankind is clearly presented! In addition to sharing these commonalities, these books contain no Historical errors or contradictions; just improvements, but they never change the ultimate meaning. The doctrines found within, never contradict each other, rather, they are intimately connected.

Go to any library in the world and try to match any set of books that meet these conditions. The books must share a common story, a common theme, and a common message, with no historical error or contradictions. The entire bible bears the mark of divine revelation.

That is why the Bible is so hated. From the time of the Pharisees, down through the Ages, within its pages lies the shining light of God's absolute Truth! The ***Living Word***, plus the voice of God the Father (that's how He speaks to us today). They have all been rejected.

Our challenge to you is this: Do you believe the Bible is the Inspired Word of God (2Timothy 3:16-17). Do you study it? Do you apply its promises and principles to your daily life?

Memory verse: *"All flesh is like grass; and all its glory like the form of grass; the grass withers and the flowers fall off. But the word of the Lord abides forever." (1Peter 1:24-25)*



Day 76: Friday *The Temptations of Christ - 1*

The three attempts by Satan to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ are covered in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12, 13, and Luke 4:13. Some say these temptations were not true real temptations for Jesus Christ, because God is not able to sin. That His deity would not allow Him to sin, so how could they be real temptations to our Lord. However, keep in mind, a temptation in itself is not sin. It is only when we **choose** to accept that temptation, choose whatever temptation is put before us, then it becomes sin. Christ chose not to accept Satan's temptations. He chose not to turn the stones into bread. He chose not to "prove" and test God's promises, nor would He worship Satan to gain the whole world.

In His humanity, Jesus Christ had volition (free will), just as we do. But with these temptations, he chose not to accept them. Even though He could have sinned, He chose not to sin. Likewise, we too can choose to accept the temptation, or reject them. Satan cannot make us sin. Only we can. We can **choose** to sin. It is our free will.

However, Jesus Christ is both God and man in one person forever. He had to be in order to be the mediator between God the Father and man (1Timothy 2:5). He had to be true human, just as we are. His humanity had to have volition or free choice to choose to sin or not to sin, just as Adam did, and as we do. (Jesus Christ is the last Adam, 1Corinthians 15:45-48.)

His deity did not take over. As true humanity, he had to fulfill the plan of God for salvation. He had to remain the spotless "*Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world*" (John 1:29). Jesus Christ's deity could not be less than perfect righteousness. And in His humanity, by saying no to the temptations, it kept him out of sin. And so, He remained perfection in His entire person, and at the same time, He confirmed His submission to the authority of the Father and His plan of salvation for mankind.

What was Satan's goal in this? The temptations of Christ were not so much designed to get Christ to sin, but rather to get Him to step outside of the Will and plan of God the Father, while Christ was on earth in His First Advent, and the reason for the Cross. Just prior to this, Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, demonstrating His full obedience to the Father's plan. Jesus Christ would use the power of the Holy Spirit to live the spiritual life that He founded and perfected for us (Hebrews 12:2). Satan did not want that. He wanted our Lord to submit to his plan rather than God's. Satan wanted Jesus Christ to use His divine attributes independently of His Father's Will and plan.

Satan knew Jesus Christ was God. Before his fall, Satan had been face-to-face with God the Son. And he knew that God the Son had agreed to take on true humanity so that He, Christ, would go to the Cross, be our substitute, and pay for our sins (Genesis 3:15). In these three temptations, Satan was trying to prevent the Cross from ever occurring. If he could just get Jesus Christ to follow his will and side-step from the Will of the Father, Satan wins.

Hebrews 4:15b says, He is, "*One who has been tempted in all things just as we are, yet without sin.*" So, the temptations, the possibility to fail were real. Christ's choice to resist the temptations was real. We will see in the following messages what Jesus Christ used to oppose Satan. He did not simply say "no" to the temptations. We too can follow Christ's example.



Day 77: Saturday *The Temptations of Christ – 2*

As we continue with Satan's attempts to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ, covered in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4:13, our Lord was led out into the desert by God the Holy Spirit for 40 days and nights of fasting, which for Him was a concentrated time of prayer and concentration on God's Word. It was preparation for what was next. Afterwards, with our Lord in a very weakened physical state of extreme hunger, Satan approached with the first temptation. *"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread"* (Matthew 4:3).

At Satan's fall, when he said, *"I will be like the Most High"* (Isaiah 14:14b), Satan put his own self and his own desires before the plan of God. Now Satan asks Jesus Christ to do the same. He asks Christ to provide for Himself with a miracle that is outside the Will and plan of God the Father. If Christ did that, He would be following the authority of Satan, and Satan's authority would have replaced the Will of the Father. What was Satan's sin at his fall? Arrogance! So, here we see Satan trying to get our Lord to be arrogant. In effect, he is saying to our Lord, "You are the God-man. And since you are God, you can do anything you want. Turning a stone into bread is easy for you. So, let's see you do it."

This is a test designed to get Jesus Christ who was suffering severe hunger pains to act independently from the Father's plan for His life. Satan tempted Christ to perform a miracle to take care of Himself, rather than rely on the power of the Holy Spirit in His spiritual life, with the Word of God in His soul to carry Him through it. The Father will provide for His every need, just as He does ours (Philippians 4:19). All Christ must do is trust in the Father and His grace provision, rather than performing a miracle not authorized by God the Father, which would be a sin; anything that goes against the Will of the Father is sin.

What is the application for us? Eating was a legitimate function for the Lord, especially when he was in such terrible hunger. Yet His priority had to be to wait on God's provision in God's timing. We must do the same (Lamentations 3:21-26). We constantly face temptations to change our priorities and put something else as more important than our daily learning and studying of the Word of God. There are many distractions which take us away from the Word, such as friends, social life, money, good times, fun, etc. None of those things are wrong in themselves. But we will fail the temptation when those things take precedence over our spiritual life.

Notice the answer Jesus Christ gives to Satan. He did not simply say "no." Instead, he answered with the authority and power of Scripture. ***"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'"*** (Matthew 4:4). Jesus Christ emphasized the priority that must be given to the Word. If the Word of God is first in our life, everything else will fall into place. We must not depend on our own works; instead, we must depend on the grace and power of God for our needs (Philippians 4:19). God is much more capable of fulfilling our needs at just the right time and in just the right way. We must put the Will and plan of God first in our lives. It must be our number one priority. This is the only way we grow spiritually; the only way we can ever glorify God in our lives.



Day 78: Sunday..... *The Temptations of Christ – 3*

As we continue with the three attempts by Satan to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ, as covered in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12, 13, and Luke 4:13, we note His answers. When He answered Satan's first test with the words, "*It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*" Matthew 4:4, Jesus Christ was putting the emphasis on God's Word as the solution for all of our problems, troubles, and adversities. When He said, "*It is written,*" our Lord was quoting Deuteronomy 8:3. In the context of that passage, the people of Israel were hungry and without food, and God in His grace provided daily manna to eat. And the lesson of the daily manna was not the food itself, and may not have even been what they wanted but rather that God promised to provide for His people, and He did, every day. The humanity of Christ knew this in His soul, and He trusted God for every provision for His life on this earth. He knew God's Word, and He believed it. And the same is true for us.

The manna of God's Word must be our daily spiritual bread; it must be implanted daily into our soul. There is nothing more important than spiritual food for spiritual growth; no different to our need of physical food for our physical growth. In 2Peter 3:18, we are commanded to grow spiritually, "*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*" What really comforts, encourages, and provides strength to the believer are the promises of God's Word, but to be sustaining, they must be firmly rooted in our soul. They must become real to us. We must be taught, we must learn, and we must know the Scripture, and we must believe it. We must use it when adversity strikes. You see, it is not about the adverse circumstances or the difficult people that we face. It is about how we deal with them. It is about applying Bible doctrine, which is the very thinking of Christ, and then relaxing knowing that God will keep His promises and He will provide.

When our Lord responded to Satan, He most likely was thinking of Psalm 138:2b, which says, "*You have magnified Your word above all Your name*" (name or person; names in the Hebrew language reveal the character of a person). Ignoring the hunger pains, Jesus Christ instead focused His thinking on the Word of God. He put the emphasis on the priority of God's Word. In so doing, He was fulfilling Psalm 13:2b. He was magnifying the Word of God above His very own person, above His own personal needs.

Notice, in the adversity, Jesus Christ is all alone. He does not have family or friends to help Him through it. He does not have anyone He can reach out to for advice. He relies totally on the support and guidance of God the Holy Spirit and on the power of the Word of God in His soul. He recalls and answers with Scripture. It was His strength in His time of need. Also note that the solution is the Word of God, not a miracle. Many times, when we face an adversity, like a debilitating illness, we ask God for a miracle. We want God to do something supernatural to solve it. That is *not* magnifying God's Word above our person. If the Word of God was a sure defense for our Lord, how much more so should it be our defense (Psalm 46:1) It is our strength in the face of any circumstances. Circumstances do not matter (Philippians 4:12-13). What matters is the Word of God in your soul.



Day 79: Monday *The Temptations of Christ - 4*

As we continue with the three attempts by Satan to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ, covered in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12, 13, and Luke 4:13, we see that in each attempt, there is a common theme, and it is to get the Lord Jesus Christ to act apart from the Will of the Father, and to depart from the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

As we saw previously, our Lord relied on the Word of God as His dependable defense against the first temptation. Now in the second temptation, Satan quotes our Lord's own Scripture and tries to use it against Him. He takes Jesus Christ to the pinnacle of the temple, which is a wing of the temple called Herod's Portico located about 450 feet above the Kidron Valley. Here, Satan challenges Jesus to throw himself off and let God deliver Him. Satan quotes Psalm 91:11a - 12, which says "*He shall give His angels charge over you...in their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*" Satan is basically saying to the humanity of Christ, if you trust God so much to deliver you, and His Word says He will, then jump and let Him save you. If Jesus jumps, He would be putting God to the test, through an unnecessary proof of His care. This is a distortion of God's Word. Satan has nothing to do with truth except to distort it (John 8:44). God never intended for any of His promises to be a test of his provision, protection, or deliverance.

We must trust God for everything, and have absolute confidence that His care and protection are always there for us. But we must not misinterpret or misapply His Word. His Word never contradicts itself. If we take unnecessary risks or make bad decisions, God's protection does not mean we will not suffer the consequences. God's permissive Will allows our negative volition to make bad decisions. God will never force us to do anything. Any time we superimpose our will over God's, we are misapplying God's Word. If we misuse God's Word in a direction that is against God's Will, we are distorting His promises. One way that we might distort God's Word is to sin and use 1John 1:9. In other words, there is a sin we want to do, and we think, well if I do it, then I just name it and it will be forgiven. That would be distorting God's grace gift of recovery from sin. God is faithful and He would still forgive us, but we could be subject to discipline for the distortion. Be very careful never to twist God's Word into something for which it was not intended. Our misuse of scripture to suit our own desires will never benefit us, nor will it glorify God.

Jesus answers Satan by saying, "*It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'*" Matthew 4:7. He replies with Scripture that has direct application to the circumstance. We must do the same. We trust God not because of what He does for us, but because He always fulfills His promises. In adversity, we should not focus on when or how is God going to deliver, but rather that God will provide everything we need to endure. And we should see the adversity as for our benefit. God's promises are simple, iron-clad statements for each of us *personally*. Claim them as your own, because they are. Believe them. But never distort them.

Memory verse: "*For You are my rock and my fortress; therefore, for Your name's sake, lead me and guide me.*" (Psalm 31:3)



Day 80: Tuesday *The Temptations of Christ – 5*

The three attempts by Satan to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ are covered in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12, 13, and Luke 4:13. In the first two temptations, we have seen Jesus Christ remain totally subservient to the Father's Will and plan, and we have seen Him use the power of God's Word in the Scriptures, as His response to Satan. We learned that the Word of God must be number 1 priority in our lives, above all else. Also, that we must be very careful not to distort the Word, misuse it, or twist it to say what we want it to say to suit our own desires.

Now Satan comes at the Lord with a third temptation, a last attempt to get Him to fail. He takes Jesus to a very high mountain (the exact location is unknown), a place where Jesus can view all the kingdoms of the world at that time, in all their magnificence, most likely the Roman Empire, Greece with all its culture, Asia Minor (now Turkey), Egypt, and Arabia. At that moment, our Lord saw all the grandeur which belonged to the ruler of this world. So, Satan said to Him, "*All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.*" Satan offered it all to Jesus if He would just for one moment worship him. If Jesus acknowledges him as, "*the Most High*" (Isaiah 14:14), then Satan would bring God down to his own level.

Satan knows Jesus came into this world for one purpose—to go to the Cross and pay the penalty of sins for the entire human race. He knows the Cross must come before the crown, before Christ can establish the promised Jewish kingdom. Satan is offering a way to avoid the Cross, which our Lord certainly did not want to go through (Matthew 26:39 and 42). His spiritual death on the Cross would be the most horrible experience of His life. And here, Satan is offering Him an out. He is proposing that Jesus have the kingdom without the Cross.

As the ruler of this world, the kingdoms Satan was offering belonged to him. He had the authority to give those kingdoms to Jesus Christ. So, what Satan offered was real. And had Christ accepted, Jesus would not only avoid the Cross, but Satan would attempt to bring about a perfect environment of world peace. Then there would be no salvation for all mankind. That was Satan's goal. The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 would not be fulfilled, which states that the seed of the woman (Jesus Christ), would crush Satan's head (defeat Satan).

If Christ had worshiped Satan, our Lord would have been under Satan's authority. Instead, our Lord again answers with the authority of Scripture when He says, "*Away with you, Satan! For it is written (in Deuteronomy 6:13), You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.*" (Matthew 4:10). We worship God, and that worship means obedience and service to Him through learning and applying God's Word to our lives. We are always either serving God or serving Satan. There is no in-between. We either think with the mind of Christ and divine viewpoint, the way God views things, the way He thinks; or we think with human viewpoint. True worship is in the soul, and it is thinking with the Word of God and obeying His commands. The only way for us to prevent the attacks of Satan's cosmic system, is to use the power of the Holy Spirit and God's Word, which we should have in our souls. This is the only way we can know what His Will is for our lives, so that we can fulfill His plan and our destiny and purpose, for each of our lives.



Day 81: Wednesday *The Resurrection*

Christianity is based on one critical factor, which no other religion in the world could claim. And that is that we worship a **Living God!** Who is this God? Jesus Christ *is* the Son of God. He died for our sins so that we might live! Yes, He died! This is fundamental to the Gospel. For there is no greater message that can be presented to anyone. However, He did not stay dead and buried. *“And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the 3rd day, according to the (Old Testament) scriptures” (1Corinthians 15:4).* Christianity is based on His resurrection.

Christ was resurrected and is alive today, seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven. Being seated at the “right hand,” was and still is a place of honour and status. Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 10:11-14; Hebrews 12:2; 1Peter 3:22; Acts 7:55-56; Mark 16:19.

Christ’s resurrection guarantees that we who believe in *Who* Christ is and in *His work* on the Cross (clearly delineated in the Salvation messages above), will also have a resurrected body at the rapture of the Church. Therefore, our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). And our home is in heaven (John 14:2 -3). We too will then live with Almighty God in heaven, for all eternity. Christ Himself emphatically stated this in **John 11:25-26**.

Peter also stated in 1Peter 1:3-5 *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

Timothy stated it in 2Timothy 1:9-10 *“Who has saved us and called us to a holy life — not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us (those) in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has **destroyed death** and has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”*

Also firmly stated in 1Corinthians 15:14, *“And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, and your faith also is vain.”* Therefore, have confidence, we believe in a living God!

So, when we believe in Jesus Christ, we have **Eternal Life** (see page 70), and **Eternal Security** (see page 9). And we will also have a **resurrected** body, just like Christ’s. *“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is (1John 3:2).* (See also page 86).

When we believe in Jesus Christ; who He is and what He did for us, we can then have the hope and confidence, and with it the peace of mind that we have a secured future. These subjects have been covered in great detail in many sections of this study book. We pray and hope that when you read them, the information may become part and parcel of your soul so that you may have the confidence to face life’s harshest adversities, knowing that you have an eternal future.

Memory verse: *“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live (eternally), even though he dies (physically), and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”*
(John 11:25-26)



Day 82: Thursday.....*The Communion Significance*

The Eucharist or Communion, is a Memorial in our souls to the work and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Communion is the only ritual commanded of the believer (1 Corinthians 11:23-27). But this ritual must have reality to have meaning and appreciation. And to have appreciation, we must have knowledge to worship our Lord.

The significance of communion is found in 1Corinthians 15:3 – ***Christ died for our sins.*** Christ “died,” refers to his **spiritual death**, when the sins of the world were put upon Him. Jesus Christ was **separated** (spiritual death) from God the Father, during three hours of the most excruciating period, over and above all the beatings and torture He went through. His cry, while on the cross, *My God My God why have you forsaken me?* (Matthew 27:46), demonstrated His agony, and His separation. God could have nothing to do with sin, not even with His own Son, while Christ bore our sins on the cross. God the Father turned His back on His Son while Christ took on Himself, our own sins: *1Peter 2:24, “He bore our sins in His Body on the Cross. And by His wounds we are healed!”* Christ’s spiritual death and separation was as our substitute. He died spiritually for you, so that you can live forever with Him, by accepting what Christ did for you on the cross.

Christ's substitutionary death on the cross accomplished your salvation in these ways:

Imputation, Propitiation, Reconciliation, Redemption, & Justification

- **Imputation:** Charged; Indicted; Condemned.
The sins of all mankind were charged to Christ on the Cross. These were not His sins, for He was without sin, nor did He commit any sin. But for our sake, God the Father imputed (charged) all our sins onto Christ. Then they were judged. He paid our penalty, our condemnation, so that we would not be judged and condemned.
- **Propitiation:** Satisfaction; Fulfilment; Appeasement.
By judging His perfect Son, God’s Justice and Righteousness were satisfied. As difficult as it may sound, God the Father was pleased with the work of His Son on the cross (Colossians 1:19-20).
- **Redemption:** Released; Liberated; Delivered; Rescued.
Christ redeemed us from the slave market of sin. His payment purchased our freedom. Slaves cannot free themselves. Christ’s payment delivered us to the freedom of Grace. We who were formerly slaves to sin became members of His Royal Family. From slavery to Royalty, in one moment of time by simply believing in Jesus Christ.
- **Reconciliation:** Settlement; Peace; Understanding; Reunion; Bringing together.
Christ’s sacrifice removed the hostility and enmity between mankind and God. Nothing stands in the way, except a person’s own rejection of Jesus Christ. Any person is reconciled to God by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-19).
- **Justification:** Acceptable; Declared not guilty.
At the moment of Faith in Christ, God’s Righteousness is credited to us – given to us permanently. We are Justified (acceptable) to God, declared “not guilty!”



Day 83: Friday.....*The Communion Ritual*

The Old Testament rituals represented parts of Biblical doctrines for believers in the nation of Israel, and many pointed to the person and work of the Messiah. Today, following His Incarnation (Christ's life on earth) and His salvation work on the Cross, we as members of the Church, the Body of Christ, are mandated to participate in only one ritual, and that is Communion. The Old Testament believers looked forward to the Cross. We look back at the Cross.

At the Lord's Supper found in Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, and Luke 22:19-20 (the synoptic Gospels), Jesus Christ gave His disciples bread and said, *"This is My body which is given for you. Take eat."* And then He gave them the cup and said, *"This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. Drink from it, all of you."* Jesus Christ also added, *"Do this in remembrance of me"* (Luke 22:19). With those words, Jesus Christ instituted the ritual of Communion, in which we as believers in the Church Age are commanded to participate.

The only requirement for participation is that we be believers in Christ, in fellowship, filled with God the Holy Spirit. We regain the filling of the Spirit and are restored to fellowship with God every time we name our sins to God the Father (1John 1:9). Without the filling of God the Holy Spirit, we are not able to have fellowship with God. Please note that church membership is not a requirement for partaking in the Communion, and is not found anywhere in the Word of God.

The Eucharist, another word for the Communion, consists of two elements: the bread and the cup.

- The bread represents the perfect humanity of Christ. Jesus Christ, born of a virgin, was born without the imputation of Adam's sin and without a sin nature, and He lived a life without any personal sin. He was as John the Baptist stated in John 1:29, the perfect *"Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."*
- The cup represents the blood of Christ, which is figurative. It represents the spiritual death of Christ on the Cross, the terrible price He paid for our redemption. His spiritual death is the time He spent totally separated from God the Father and the God the Holy Spirit, bearing the judgement for our sins (2Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:8).

Jesus Christ instituted this one ritual for the Church as a way for believers to have a time of concentrated focus on His person and work on the Cross. It is a time for you to reciprocate in your thinking the love that God demonstrated toward you (Romans 5:8), by recalling all that you can about Jesus Christ and the wonderful work of salvation that He so graciously provided. He is our Lord and Savior. He is Sovereign God, just and righteous, and full of grace and truth.

To assist with concentrating on the Lord Jesus Christ, the categories on the "Communion Messages," are specific to our Lord Jesus Christ. They will provide you with some great content upon which to think as you participate in your next Communion service.



Day 84: Saturday.....*Seven Things Christ Said on the Cross*

There are seven sentences recorded in the Bible that give us perspective into the thinking of Jesus Christ as He hung on the Cross. Let's look at each one individually.

1. *"Father, forgive them for they know not what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34). As the ordeal of the Cross began, He was thinking of only one thing—forgiveness. He disregarded the degradation that He endured, the total injustice of His trials, and asked this prayer for withholding God the Father's just wrath from His oppressors. That was the glory and grace of God in all of its splendor.
2. *"Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in paradise"* (Luke 23:43). On either side of the Lord was a thief. One ridiculed Him and the other thief believed on Him as Savior. *"With Me in paradise"* reveals that Jesus had life and eternity on His mind, even when approaching death. The thief wanted eternal life and He recognized that Christ was eternal life, that He gave eternal life. There is a paradise for believers after life. And it did not depend on good works. It depended only on faith in the One who hung on the Cross.
3. He saw His mother at the foot of the Cross and He saw the disciple, John, whom He loved. And so He said to her, *"Woman, behold your son."* And to John, *"Behold, your mother"* (John 19:25-27). Hearing these deferential words at the moment of great agony facing death is to see virtue love and compassion in his soul. Jesus was always thinking of others even in His dying hours.
4. *"My God My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"* (Matthew 27:46). Jesus Christ screamed those words over and over. He understood what He was doing in sacrificing Himself for us. In the darkness of those moments, He was separated from God the Father, something that had not happened before and would never happen again.
5. In the fever of suffering, which was consuming Him, He cried, *"I thirst"* (John 19:28). It was His body enduring awful pain bearing our sins. This lets us see the humanity of Jesus Christ as a human being. He became man so that He might suffer spiritual death and then physical death.
6. *"It is finished"* (John 20:30). The work of salvation had been accomplished once and for all. There was in His mind the reason that He came—redemption. The price had been paid in full. Unbelief cannot reduce His work, nor can our works add to it.
7. *"Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit"* (Luke 23:46). He bowed His head and died. As the complete master over death, He dismissed His physical life. Death acts upon us. But here, Christ was in control. His death was the mightiest act of His life.

These seven sentences are the thoughts and actions of Jesus Christ as He hung on the Cross paying the terrible sacrifice of the penalty of sin as our substitute (2Corinthians 5:21).



Day 85: Sunday.....*Signs Confirming the Deity of Christ*

The miracles Jesus Christ performed during His life on this earth (His Incarnation), were designed to show who Jesus Christ was. They are recorded to show that He was God and the promised Messiah (John 20:31). The Apostle John recorded seven signs as confirmation of His divinity and Messiahship.

1. Turning water into wine (John 2:1-11). When the wedding feast ran out of wine, our Lord changed water to exceptional wine, better than any wine tasted before, much greater than what the soil could produce. And He did it instantaneously. It manifested His deity and creative power was far greater than nature itself.
2. He healed the nobleman's son, who was ill to the point of death (John 4:50-53). The son was in Capernaum while Jesus was in Cana. The royal official with our Lord in Cana asked for a miracle knowing our Lord could heal his sick son who was many miles away. To this man, Jesus possessed divine power not only to heal the sick but to do it from a separation of distance. He recognized that Jesus Christ was sovereign God and the Messiah.
3. The healing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:2-9). This man had been a paralytic for 38 years, yet Jesus asked him, "*Do you wish to get well?*" The purpose was to get this man to focus on his real problem of spiritual separation from God. And even though there were other people at that pool with ailments, only the paralytic was healed. Healing was not the chief business of our Lord. Rather it was a sign of His Messiahship and His divinity. Christ was focused on spiritual healing not relief from physical malady or physical suffering and pain.
4. The miraculous feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:1-15). By creating a great quantity of food out of the five loaves of bread and the two fishes, Jesus again demonstrated His deity.
5. The miracle of walking on the water (Matthew 14:22-33). Again, Christ was demonstrating His complete control over nature. After all, He was the creator of the universe (Genesis 1:1), and He had separated the land from the water. The disciples concluded from this miracle in Matthew 14:33b, "*Truly, you are the Son of God.*"
6. The miracle of healing the blind man (John 9). He in turn witnessed to others that Jesus Christ was from God, and that He was the Messiah (John 9:38). He clearly saw what Jesus's sign meant. Jesus Christ as God had absolute power over any human malady.
7. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44). Lazarus had been buried for four days but with the simple words, "*Lazarus come forth,*" Lazarus was restored to life. This was the greatest miracle of them all. Here the Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated His power over death (1Corinthians 15:55-57).



Day 86: Monday *Christ Emptied Himself*

Philippians 2:5-8 is one of the great Christological passages of Scripture that tells us much about the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 7 says, “*But emptied Himself by taking the form of a bond-servant and being born in the likeness of men.*” When it says that He emptied himself, this does not mean that His deity was lessened in any way; nor does it mean that His essence was lost during the Incarnation, His time on this earth. “*He emptied Himself,*” means the Lord Jesus Christ as God set aside the independent use of His deity for us. He denied Himself the *independent* use of His divine attributes. We must seriously consider the meaning of this statement.

Who does a sovereign person, a sovereign king obey? No one. Just so, Divine sovereignty is not subject to obedience to anyone. Yet Christ did not use His sovereignty to reject obedience to the Father’s plan for salvation. Christ as God possesses eternal life and eternal God cannot die. Only in the humbled state of humanity, Jesus was born to die, and He would die on the Cross. In the greatest demonstration of humility, He subordinated Himself to the plan of the Father and went to the Cross to pay the penalty for our sins (2Corinthians 5:21).

Christ is perfect righteousness. The very thought of coming into contact with sin was abhorrent to Him. But when He bore our sins in His own body on the Cross, He refused to invoke the attribute of righteousness as a reason to bypass the just wrath of God. If He had done that, He would have rejected the awful judgment of our sins, and hence, we would perish in those sins. Only the sacrifice of truly righteous Christ makes our salvation possible.

Omniscience (all-knowing). Although the omniscience of Christ was revealed in His prophetic ministry, yet He kept silent on future events, circumstances and tragedies that had no bearing on His mission. He was persecuted, and yet He persevered. His Omnipotence (all-powerful), never did whatever He wanted and never provided for His every need. He traveled the long roads of Palestine spreading the message of His Messiahship and salvation. During these wanderings, the performance of miracles were credentials of His deity, but never *independent* of God the Father’s Will or plan.

His attributes of deity were not used to improve His human existence. Why? Because He had to fulfill the plan of the Father for mankind as a human being just like us, but only without sin. He had to model the unique spiritual life for us. That is why the Bible commands us in Philippians 2:5, “*Let this thinking be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.*”

No attribute of His deity was ever used to gain advantage for Himself. Therefore, He denied Himself the *independent* use of His divine attributes. That is true humility. He suffered for more than we would suffer, but He never gave up His deity or His ability to function as almighty God. In His lifetime, He remained constantly undiminished deity and true humanity, what theology calls the hypostatic union.

Memory verse: “*He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even the death on the Cross.*”
(Philippians 2:8)



Day 87: Tuesday *Satan's Cosmic System*

As the ruler of this world, Satan wants to keep unbelievers from salvation, and he wants to influence the thinking of believers away from the Word of God. That's his plan for their lives. Thereby, Satan hopes to win the conflict he started with God at his fall when he said in Isaiah 14:14, *"I will make myself like the Most High."* He seeks to accomplish this through his cosmic system. The cosmic system is the overall plan, policy, and thinking of Satan. It is his propaganda and the way he seeks to control mankind, keeping unbelievers from accepting God's grace gift of salvation, and believers from living the spiritual life that God has for us.

Satan's cosmic system (his thinking and plans), deceives and is antagonistic towards anything related to God, especially the grace of God. Satan is the greatest enemy to the grace of God and he opposes it in every possible way. Every religion in the world promotes works as a means to gain the favor and approbation of god or some other supreme being. Christianity is not a religion but a personal relationship with God, through faith in Jesus Christ, based on the grace of God alone. It is God's grace that saves us and it is His grace that provides everything we need to live the spiritual life, fulfill His plan, and thereby glorify Him.

Human viewpoint is the perspective of the cosmic system in contrast to divine viewpoint. Divine Viewpoint is the perspective of God as revealed in the Scriptures. The cosmic system is very subtle; it represents Satan's attitude and his evil plan in this world. Cosmic system thinking separates the believer from the reality of God's plan and person. A believer in the cosmic system will be strangled in arrogance and pre-occupation with self (Romans 12:3). In self-deception that person will not take responsibility for his own actions, and may lead to make excuses and blame others when he is wrong. In self-justification, he will justify what he does and call it right when it is actually wrong. And with self-absorption, he will relate everything to himself. It is nothing more than, *"it's all about me,"* attitude.

Such a believer is not oriented to the grace of God and shows no gratitude or thoughtfulness towards others. However, if a believer recognizes the grace of God in his life, he will appreciate that grace. Then he will be thoughtful, compassionate, considerate, and have an attitude of appreciation, in all circumstances. He will know that God controls all and nothing happens to His child, without His knowledge (Ecclesiastes 7:14).

To avoid Satan's cosmic system, the believer must renovate his thinking through the consistent learning and applying the Word of God (Romans 12:2). The believer enters the cosmic system of Satan by ignoring or rejecting Bible teaching. If he does not fill his soul with God's Word, then a vacuum forms and it sucks in the very thinking of Satan; his very own cosmic system by which he controls and manipulates this world.

Memory verse: *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the Will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. 3 For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith."*
(Romans 12:2 - 3)



Day 88: Wednesday *The Angelic Conflict*

Martin Luther wrote in hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” with the words, “*For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe – his craft and power are great and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not His equal.*” This refers to the angelic conflict and our chief adversary, Satan, and his army of fallen angels. The “fallen angels” are angels who having free will to choose, opposed God and followed Satan. Hence, Satan was cast out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-12), and was condemned to the eternal Lake of Fire at the end of time (Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41). Until then, Satan still roams the earth (Job 1:7 and 1Peter 5:8). Satan and his fallen angels are not only totally opposed to God, but they are also opposed to any believer, especially the believer advancing in the plan of God and growing in the spiritual life.

God created mankind lower than angels, with the same free will to make choices for or against God. This was to prove to Satan that even in a lower state, man could still make positive decisions for God. This was also true of the humanity of Christ, who also had free will, but never sinned and consistently obeyed the Will of the Father in all His actions on earth. Each person can accept or reject the grace gift of eternal salvation through faith alone in Christ alone, and each believer can decide whether to fulfill the plan of God for his or her life, through the daily learning and application of His Word (2Peter 3:18; 2Timothy 2:15).

The angels, both fallen and elect(chosen), watch mankind intently. And so, every time the angels witness mankind choosing for God, it is evidence that God was just and fair in His condemnation of all the angels who rejected Him. When the elect angels see anyone believe in Jesus Christ, they rejoice (Luke 15:7,10). And the angels observe believers today to see if they are going to live the Christian life (1Corinthians 4:9; Ephesians 3:10; 1Peter 1:12). It is no wonder that the cosmic system comes from the self-centered, and arrogant thinking of Satan, which so easily ensnares and confuses believers.

Satan's major objective is twofold: First, to blind the minds of unbelievers so they won't accept Christ. Second, to hinder and distract believers from fulfilling God's plan by keeping them from learning and applying the Word of God. Satan and his minions hate the advancing believer and will oppose and persecute that believer with the highest levels of cruelty that God will allow (Ephesians 6:12-17; Job 1:6; Job 2:1-3; 1Peter 5:8-10).

Apart from the spiritual life and Word of God, we have nothing to meet the attacks and avoid the deceptions of Satan. Relying on human ability is relying on human viewpoint and our own abilities. Without the renovation of our thinking (Romans 12:2), we remain stuck in the mud of Satan's cosmic system. But we are not without options. We have a game changer. The Lord Jesus Christ! The mind of Christ! (1Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5)

Memory verse: “*But greater is He that is in you than He that is in the world.*”
(1John 4:4).



Day 89: Thursday [Atheism – What is it?](#)

Have you ever wondered why certain people are so vehemently opposed to Christianity? Always in the back of their mind might be the terrifying thought, “What if God does exist?” This person is referred to as an atheist – one who does not believe in God. Atheists have no proof that there is no God. They have accepted the fact that there is no God based on their own reasoning, blind faith and negative beliefs. They put their trust in science and only what they know from the natural world.

The atheist believes there is no proof of God that anyone can offer. This is untrue. They simply do not accept that God exists. Yet the concept of God is natural to all societies and human beings. The study of civilizations shows that most people have a concept of a Supreme Being, a higher power, even though in many instances it is a false god. That fundamental awareness is confirmed by the Bible itself in Romans 1:20, “... *His eternal power and Divine nature have clearly been seen ...*”

To a non-atheist, God’s creation is clear evidence of God’s existence. The complexities of science and the world around us, and how it all works, in harmony, are all evidence of a Supreme God. God ordered the universe. A perfect example is how the human body works. We are fearfully and wonderfully made by God. And yet the atheist overlooks that, believing in a theory (not proven) of evolution.

Atheists hate the Bible because it is a threat to their way of thinking. Even a remote possibility that there is a God creates fear in their souls. Their only solution is to mock God and yet God will not be mocked (Psalm 94:1-2; Galatians. 6:7). They will never triumph or win. Their anti-God ideology is one of frustration and confusion.

The order and precise working of our planet are proofs of the existence of God. The following passages in the Bible provide evidence of the existence of God: Hebrew 11:3; John 1:3; Psalm 95:3-5; Psalm 104:24-25. Since the universe could not have been held together on its own, its creation required a source outside of itself. The complexities of order and arrangement in the universe demanded a designer, a master-planner. It required wisdom beyond human intelligence. It required power to keep the oceans separate from the land. Even the intricate design of flowers, or the elegant beauty of birds, and the majesty of animals, all proclaim God’s Infinite Wisdom of the Ages!

Atheists do not believe there is a God of Infinite Wisdom, the supreme power of the universe. And yet, the Bible, which itself has survived the human test of time, as well as man’s useless attempts to destroy it; the Bible, itself proclaims, “*The fool says in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt, their deeds are vile*” (Psalm 14:1). Does not even nature itself tell us there is a God! (Job 12:7-10; Job 37:5 and 14).

Memory verses: “*For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.*” (Romans 1:20)

“*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the works of His hands.*” (Psalm 19:1)



Day 90: Friday *The Old Sin Nature - 1*

We call it the *Old* sin nature because its origin dates back to Adam and the woman's rebellion against God when they ate from the forbidden fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden. Since Eve was deceived, but Adam was totally aware of what he was doing and deliberately chose to sin, the sin nature is passed down from Adam through all fathers to their children so that all of mankind has a sin nature. That was the reason Jesus Christ was born of a virgin; the man (Joseph), was not involved in Christ's conception. Therefore, when we are born, because of this original sin of Adam, we are all born spiritually dead, with a sin nature (Romans 5:12; 1Corinthians 15:22a; Romans 5:19a; Romans 3:23).

At the moment of our birth, we each receive from our earthly father the original sin of Adam. Therefore, the sin nature becomes part of our physical makeup. Simply said, we are born into sin. That is why we are condemned at birth. But God did not leave us in that state. He sent His Son to be the redemptive solution so that through faith alone in Christ alone we have eternal salvation. Even though we are saved, we still have the sin nature in our bodies. But as children of God, we have been given the special gift of God the Holy Spirit, who also permanently resides in our bodies (1Corinthians 3:16; 1Corinthians 6:19).

Therefore, both the sin nature and God the Holy Spirit, permanently indwell our body. They both seek to control our soul, our thinking, our actions. How we *think* is who we are; the ***real you*** (Proverbs 23:7a). The old sin nature tempts us to sin (Romans 7:20). The sin nature is always competing with God the Holy Spirit for control of the soul (Romans 7:18-19, 23). When the sin nature controls the soul, we are carnal; when the Holy Spirit controls the soul, we are spiritual. Being carnal or spiritual is an absolute condition for the believer. Both cannot be in control of our lives at the same time. We are controlled either by one or the other.

The sin nature is called three things in the Bible: *Sin* (singular noun) in Romans 7:13; *flesh* in Galatians 5:16; and *old man* in Ephesians 4:22. As such, the sin nature is the source of temptation to sin; but it is *not* the source of sin. By our own volition, our free will, we ***choose*** to sin. This part of the old sin nature that tempts us to sin, we call ***the area of weakness***.

The area of weakness is where we sin. When we succumb to the temptations of the sin nature, we produce personal sins in three categories—mental sins or sins we think, verbal sins or sins we speak, and overt sins or sins we do. When we sin, three things happen: We temporarily lose fellowship with God (but we never lose our relationship with God as His child), we lose the power of the Holy Spirit, and we stop living the spiritual life.

But the sin nature has other characteristics besides the area of weakness, and we will look closely at those in the next lesson.

Memory verse: *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”*
(Galatians 5:16)



Day 91: Saturday *The Old Sin Nature - 2*

In the previous day's lesson, we saw that the sin nature has an area of weakness, which is one of the sources causing temptation to sin. Sin keeps us from living the spiritual life. It removes us from fellowship with God, and it halts the power of the Holy Spirit in our Christian life.

The sin nature also has an area of strength. This area of strength is from which we produce human good, such as moral and ethical deeds, without consideration given to God, and not in the filling of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 64:6 mentions this human good, "*For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment, and all of us wither like a leaf, and our wrongdoings, like the wind, take us away.*" Good deeds are good. Morality is better than immorality. But neither of these has any merit with God, coming from the sin nature. Mankind is capable of doing good deeds. But only God the Holy Spirit can glorify God (John 16:14). Nothing that man can do in his own merit, earns any merit with God.

In addition to the sin nature's area of weakness that tempts to sin, and the area of strength that produces human good, the sin nature also has two trends. There is a trend toward self-righteousness or legalism; and there is an opposite trend toward lawless, immoral behaviour. Legalism is an attempt to enforce one's own standards on others, and cover personal failures with a façade of good. Jesus Christ called legalists, hypocrites! In the opposite trend of the sin nature, the immoral, lawless person lives a life unto himself, seeking his own self-gratification, and is often in an endless pursuit for human happiness.

The two brothers in the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), are examples from our Lord Jesus Christ of the two different trends of the sin nature (see ***Tale of Two Brothers 1-3***, pages 18-20). The younger brother portrayed a trend toward lawless, immoral behaviour. Whereas, the older brother portrayed a trend toward self-righteousness and legalism.

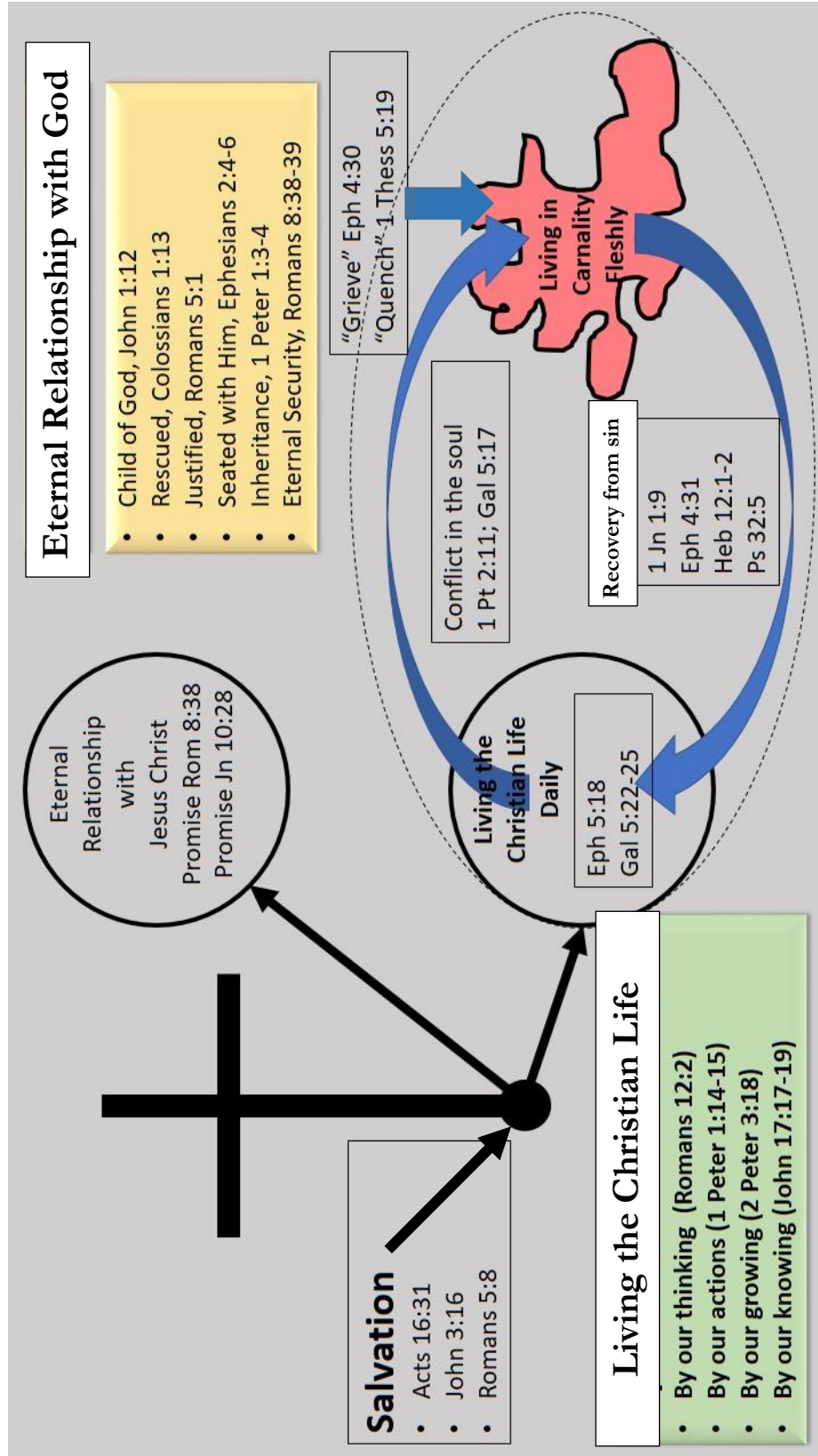
The two trends of the sin nature will reveal themselves differently, but anything that comes from the sin nature is abhorrent to God. For example, while murder is an evil, sinful act of lawless, immoral behaviour, we learn that the mental attitude sin of hatred is mental murder (1John 3:15). Adultery and other sexual sins are immoral and lawless acts against others, just as the mental attitude sin of lust is just as damaging to the soul (Matthew 5:28). Lying, slander, gossip and maligning are sins of the tongue that have far-reaching, damaging effects on oneself and others. But judging, jealousy and guilt are unseen sins, with equally damaging effects. Remember God's mandate that we judge no one lest the justice of God judge us (Matthew 7:1-5).

The only way we ever come to limit the control of our sin nature is through spiritual growth (Colossians 2:6-7; Ephesians 4:15). God's plan calls for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18 and Galatians 5:22-23). And we regain that power through 1John 1:9.

Memory verse: "*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*" (2 Peter 3:18)

Appendix A – Top and Bottom Circles

Note: “Top and Bottom Circles” were a teaching concept originated by R B Thieme Jr., Pastor, Berachah Church, USA. The circles illustrate the eternal and temporal life of a Believer. [\[RETURN TO TABLE\]](#)



Eternal Relationship with God - "Top Circle": is an illustration of what happens to a believer the moment that he or she believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Believer becomes a child of God forever. Though the believer still lives in this world, his eternal home is in Heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:16). The promises shown in the diagram are proof from God that the believer has eternal security and nothing can separate the believer from God (Romans 8:38-39).

Living the Christian Life - "Bottom Circle": is an illustration of the believer's life on earth. God promises that the believer can live in God's Plan. However, every believer has free-will to make choices for or against living in God's Plan, on a daily basis. When choices are made against God, the believer lives in "carnality." To recover and live in God's Plan, God gave us 1 John 1:9, so that when we name our sins to God, He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and we are filled once more with God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).



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Behold the birds of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns;

Promises of God

*Yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
Are you not much better than they?
(Matthew 6:26)*



John 1:3 - God created everything through Him (Jesus Christ), and nothing was created except through Him.

Psalms 147:4 - He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name.

Job 12:7 & 10 - Just ask the animals, and they will teach you. Ask the birds of the sky, and they will tell you. (vs.10) For the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being, is in His hand.

2 Peter 1:3 - His divine power has given us everything we need for life and spiritual growth through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and grace.

2 Peter 3:18 - But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Hebrews 11:1 & 6 - Now faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen. (vs.6) And without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He exists, and that He (God), rewards those who seek Him.

God's Promises reveal

His faithfulness.

His Faithfulness gave us

His Word - His Wisdom

which is the

Mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:16

Promises need only your
faith to believe - the size of
a grain of mustard seed.



Malachite Kingfisher

Tom and Cheryl Molinar are American missionaries serving in South Africa. They arrived in Johannesburg in January 1992, and were witnesses to the monumental transition this nation experienced. It was a time of many questions and few answers. After two years they were prepared to return to the USA, but God had other plans, and thirty years later, they now call South Africa, “home.” The interweaving of people, cultures, secular jobs, and Biblical training created a tapestry that only God designed. Their journey has taken them into the corporate business world and they emerged seventeen years later as missionaries! Tom & Cheryl have prepared relentlessly for over forty-five years of Theological training for this “Great Commission” of their lives. The following verse is their mantra:

If Your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here (Exodus 33:15)



Terry ... Cheryl ... Tom

Terry Wilson, a native Texan, has held leadership positions with Fortune 500 Financial Institutions including JP Morgan Chase, First Data (now Fiserv) and Bank of America. Prior to that Terry had a distinguished 20-year career with the US Army, serving as an Army Ranger and intelligence Warrant Officer. He lives in Dallas, Texas, with his wife and two daughters. He has studied four languages and travelled to 22 countries with South Africa being his favourite. He loves to teach and has taught Divine principles to students wherever and whenever the opportunity arises. Terry has been an incredible encouragement and prayer supporter of this mission and ministry. He provided assistance in writing and editing Divine Wisdom 365.