

VICTORY

(Receiving and Sharing God's Promises) By Dr. Randy Brodhagen

INTRODUCTION

I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord. Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalms 40:1-8)

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised! It is the intention of this book to give God honor and glory for the wonderful works which He has done, is doing, and will do in behalf of those who delight in Him and His word.

In God's Word, God has revealed Himself to us through the Lord Jesus Christ. God has also revealed to us who we are once we have received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. God has also given many promises to those of us who believe that we might now have life and have it more abundantly as well as eternally with the Lord.

God has provided so much through our Lord Jesus Christ – even more than we could ask or think. However, many of God's people who love Him are still having difficulty receiving what He has made available to them through Jesus Christ.

“I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit and wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” (Ephesians 1:16-23)

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he could grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church of Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:14-21)

God’s people must know His Word and promises which are available to them if they are to share His Word with others.

The purpose of this book is to help believers understand and apply God’s principles in their lives, enabling them to receive and share salvation and the abundant life Jesus Christ has promised. The reader should search God’s Word while studying this book.

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PART I PREPARING FOR VICTORY

Chapter 1
TOOLS FOR VICTORY
A Brief Look at the Make-up of Man

“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1st Thessalonians 5:23)

Man consists of a spirit, a mind (soul), and a body; he is a spirit who has a mind and lives in body. We were created by God to have communion and fellowship with Him. We know that God is a Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth to be acceptable and pleasing to Him. (John 4:23-24) However, we need to be aware that many times, we focus our attention on the mind and body, time and energy. Why? Because the body is what we can see, and the mind generates our thoughts to operate and care for the body.

The spirit is where the life originates. When we are born again by the Spirit of God, believing on the name of Jesus and receiving Him into our hearts as Lord and Savior, God does not give us a new body. He does not give us a new mind. He gives us a new spirit, *“born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but born of God.”* (John 1:12-13)

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John 3:6)

Some people who receive Jesus do not feel any different, nor do they see any change in themselves. A change *did* happen in us, but not in our minds or bodies. The change took place because God gave us a new spirit, born again, not of a seed which is perishable but imperishable, through the living and abiding Word of God. (1st Peter 1:23) When we die, believing in Jesus, God will give us a new spiritual body which will never perish. (1st Corinthians 15:42-45)

The Word of God is able to divide man as it ministers to us.

“For the Word of God is quick (living), and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

The Power of God’s Word

Jesus says His Word is everlasting: *“Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall never pass away.” (Luke 21:33)*

Jesus’ Word is truth. His Word will bring life: *“My words are spirit and my words are life.” (John 6:63)*

Since Jesus has given us a new spirit in this life, it needs to be nourished as well as the body. We need to feed our spirit some spiritual food: *“Man does not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4)*

Many of us today see a need to get our bodies in shape. Exercise is good; our bodies are temples of God. However, why is it that we can feed our bodies three meals a day, spend time and money on getting our physical appearances in order, take classes and other enrichment activities for our minds, and yet go all week feeding our new spirit a little snack for an hour or two? Many believers wonder why they do not seem to be growing in their Christian walk, why they have no power of God in their lives. It is time that God’s people awaken to the fact that a malnourished athlete cannot run the race properly. The real me – the new spirit – needs to have nourishment, the Word of God. His Word is Spirit and food for our new spirit.

As a believer, I am a spirit. I have a mind. I live in a body. *“That which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” (John 3:6)*

If that is the real me, I am going to make certain that I take good care of myself. I want to feed my spirit God’s Word. As we feed our spirits (the life of God which God the Father has given to us in Jesus Christ), we

activate the gift that God has given us – Faith. *“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”* (Romans 10:17)

No man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord except by the Holy Spirit who produces faith in us through the hearing of God’s Word. (1st Corinthians 12:3)

Peter, the disciples of Jesus, and His disciples today are called “to feed Jesus’ lambs (His people).” At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out that we might have the power to go and teach God’s Word to all nations. (Acts 1:8)

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

Jesus is the Word. Wherever Jesus is, the life of God moves into the situation. Wherever the Word of God is present, Jesus is present, and life is present where there was no life. Healing flows where there was no healing. Hope enters in where there was no hope.

What Does God Say About His Words?

For an exciting moment, let us look at what God says about His Word. We want to know what we base our lives on, don’t we? We do not go to the top of a building and jump off unless we are certain to land on something that will spare our lives. Every day people are jumping into philosophies and ways of life apart from God that will eventually bring them eternal death. There is no substance to what they believe or what they are doing to provide them with eternal life. We must be certain about things to which we commit ourselves.

“Forever, O Lord, thy Word is settled in heaven.” (Psalm 119:89)

“For when God made promise to Abraham because he could swear by no greater, he swear by himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he

obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater; and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil. Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus... ”
(Hebrews 6:13-20)

Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews who had believed him, if you abide in my Word, then you are truly my disciples and you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free. (John 8:31-32)

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.” (John 6:63 Amplified Bible)

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and return not there again but water the earth, and make it bring forth and sprout, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So shall my word be which goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return to Me void...but it shall accomplish that which I please and purpose, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:8-11 Amplified Bible)

“As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations, before him whom he believed, even God, who makes alive the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were.” (Romans 4:17, God was speaking to Abraham)

God’s Word says that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8) and so is His Word. It is settled in heaven. God will not change, nor go back on His Word. What He says is what He will do!

God's Word originates in heaven. Everything from God originates in the spirit realm before we see it in the physical world (Hebrews 11:3). God created the world by putting out His Word: "Let there be," and there was. *"He [God] sent forth his Word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions."*

What God says about His Word:

1. His Word never changes and He will not alter His promises between Himself and His people. His Word is solid substance. It will endure. You can count on it! (Psalm 89:34)
2. God made an oath with Himself based on the blood of the Son, Jesus Christ. Since neither the Father nor the Son ever change, the oath (His Word and promise) is sure and unchangeable. (Hebrews 6:13-20)
3. As we abide in Jesus' Word, we will know the truth and the truth will make us free. (John 8:31-32) Man in his original state, apart from the Lord Jesus, is in bondage. He is ensnared by the powers of Satan, sin, sickness, death, etc. Jesus came to set the oppressed free in fulfillment of prophecy. Freedom begins in the spirit as Jesus gives us a new spirit, alive to Himself (before this, our spirit was dead to the Lord). Man has also a mind and a body. When man enters into the Word of God (receives Jesus as his Lord and Savior), God sets his spirit free. He is "born again." The bondage of Satan is broken! *"If the Son therefore shall make you free, you shall be free indeed [wholly in spirit, mind (soul), and body]."* (John 8:36) Jesus came that we might have abundant life. As a man stands (abides) in the Word of God, God sets him free.

Satan sends the trials and tribulations, problems, sickness, fear and death. These things were not present in God's creation until after man fell to the lies of Satan. They come from Satan, not God. Jesus came to free us from the bondage of all these things.

Nowhere in the Word does God say that we will not be attacked by trials, tribulations and problems. However, nowhere does it say we will be defeated

or trampled down! It says that Satan is walking around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Whom? Those who resist steadfast in the faith. We are steadfast by standing on the Word of God. Sure, *“Many are the afflictions of the righteous,”* but note the rest of the verse: *“but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones, not one of them is broken.”* (Psalm 34:19-20) *“Greater is He who is in us than he who is in the world.”* (1st John 4:4) We have power and authority in the name of Jesus to cast down the lies of Satan. We are the ones entitled to victory, and we no longer need to be under bondage to Satan. God has already overcome by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ which was given for us on the cross.

4. If we do not believe for the things of God, then our minds and our bodies are not going to respond God’s way. Our bodies will do what our minds tell them to do. In Isaiah 55:8-11, God says that He will send His Word out and it won’t return empty. It will accomplish His purpose for which it was sent. He sends His Word out through His people, and that Word, which is spirit and life, will do exactly what it was sent to do. It is a seed, and it will produce. You plant a seed and you can expect that seed to grow into maturity. The potential is in the seed. The Word of God is a seed, and it is being sown in your home, neighborhood, and in the entire world. It is going to produce. God says that it will not come back empty.

5. In Romans 4:17, God calls the things that be not as if they were existent. For instance, if I worry about how I will pay all my bills, God says that I am an heir to all the riches in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 1:3) I am an heir of God. *“But my God will supply all your need according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:19) Why should I be talking about being poor when God calls me an heir to the treasures of heaven? Or, I may say I am sick when God says that by His stripes I am healed. (1st Peter 2:24) We had better start calling things the way God calls them. God says that I am rich in every way. God says to each of us: *“You who believe and love me are my children and heirs to all the promises I have given you through Christ Jesus and I back up My Word with the goods.”*

6. God's Word is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of our hearts and minds. *"for the Word of God is living, powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to dividing asunder of the soul [mind] and spirit [our new spirit], and of the joints and marrow [body] and is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart."* God's Word cuts through our false imaginings about ourselves and reveals everything as it really is, as God sees it, leading us to a dependency upon Jesus Christ. Through God's Word we also know who we are in Jesus Christ, and we know God's provision for us.

What Does God Say About Our Words?

"And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:19)

"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle (non-productive) word that man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned."
(Matthew 12:35-37)

"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness and blasphemies." (Matthew 15:18-19)

"My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou has stricken thy hand with a stranger. Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth." (Proverbs 6:1-2)

God says we have power in our words. Jesus Christ has given authority to those who believe so that whatever is bound on earth is bound in heaven. We who believe on Jesus Christ are doing the binding and loosing in the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has accomplished and completed at the

cross the work of breaking the power of sin, death, and Satan, which once held us in bondage apart from God. We are set free when we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and are baptized. We are now to take the authority in the name of Jesus Christ to set free those who are still in bondage. How do we do this? We speak forth the Word of God from our mouths.

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue [our words]; and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.” (Proverbs 18:21)

“For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yes, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, that you might be justified in your sayings, and might overcome when you are judged.” (Romans 3:3-4)

Just because someone does not believe for the things of God or what God says in His Word does not mean that God is a liar. Just because someone does not believe that Jesus Christ has provided for their salvation, life, every need, healing, etc. does not mean that God’s Word is untrue.

“By your words you are justified and by your words you are condemned:” (Matthew 12:37)

We are declared not guilty (justified) before God by faith in Jesus Christ.

“If you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes to righteousness [right standing with God]; and with the mouth confession is made to salvation. For the scripture says, whosoever shall believe on Him [Jesus] shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 10:9-11)

“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have life more abundantly.” (John 10:10)

We have power in our words. We are believers born of the Spirit of God and whatever we speak forth is going to be.

“Have faith in God [the God-like kind of faith]. For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”
(Mark 11:23-24)

What is it that receives God’s Word? Faith. Faith in God’s Word is the only thing that will please Him. (Hebrews 11:6) If this is the case, we should examine our words. Do we find ourselves speaking faith-filled words, or are we speaking words of doubt, fear, worry, frustration? The Word of God says our words will be examined. The Word of God calls anything not spoken out of faith, unprofitable (idle). Faith in God’s Word is the only thing that will produce results from God. If we are not speaking in faith in God’s Word, then nothing is going to happen from God. In fact, we can speak adverse things upon ourselves and others by what we speak.

“Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth.” (Proverbs 6:2) You are taken into bondage and the words of your mouth hold you in captivity.

Have you ever found yourself caught in your words? We can either speak life or destruction by the words of our tongue. *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”* (Proverbs 18:21) We can either bring life and blessings (or cursings) upon those who receive our words. It is a spiritual law: you reap what you sow: blessings or cursing. By our words we can bind ourselves into a situation from which we might not be able to escape. Our words of unbelief can actually cut off the blessing that God wants to give to us.

Transforming Faith

The Word of God says that we are to renew our minds with the Word of God (Romans 12:2). Let us discuss three portions of God’s Word which will transform our lives as we walk by faith. These are Mark 11:23-24, Matthew 17:20, and Psalm 107:1-9.

“For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, ‘Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea’; and shall not doubt in his heart,

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but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:23-24)

This scripture says we are to have the God-like kind of faith (the faith of God). We who have received Jesus as our Lord and Savior already have this kind of faith because the Holy Spirit produced it in us. We have this measure of faith. (Romans 12:3) When we pray, we are to believe that we receive the things that we ask, and we will have it. Do not doubt! Jesus said, *“If you abide in me and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.”* (John 15:7) God wants to move in behalf of His people and He has given us the authority in Jesus’ name to have what we ask that He might be glorified and we might have joy. (John 16:24) We either believe what God says, or we do not believe. God says: 1. Have faith. 2. Pray. 3. Expect Him to do what you ask.

People sometimes wonder why their prayers don’t seem to be answered. God is consistent. He will do what His Word says. God wants to move in our behalf. We are the ones who are not always consistent.

Hindrances to Prayer:

1. Unforgiving spirit (Mark 11:25-26)
2. Disharmony between husband and wife (1st Peter 3:7)
3. Selfishness (James 4:3)
4. Willful, known sin in the heart (Isaiah 59:1-2)
5. Unbelief or double-mindedness (James 1:6-8, Mark 11:23-24)
6. Not living God’s Word (John 15:7)

Quality versus Quantity of Faith

“And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for truly I say unto you, If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to the mountain, remove to yonder place; and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you.” (Matthew 17:20)

Many times we may feel that we do not have enough faith to believe something may be accomplished. We must recognize that feeling is a lie of Satan. The world thinks in terms of quantity. God has given us the quality measure of faith (Romans 12:3). It is all the faith we need! Jesus said that if we have faith as a mustard seed (one of the smallest of seeds) we can move the mountain by what we say. We do not need truck loads of faith to accomplish mighty things in Jesus' name. We just need to have faith. The amount of faith is not important to God. The presence of faith is important to Him, and He will reward the smallest measure of faith in mighty works to His glory. We have the faith. The measure we act on God's Word is what will make the difference in our lives.

“O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the enemy... Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble... Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

For he satisfied the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness...” (Psalm 107:1,2,5,6,8,9)

Bless the Lord. He is good! In our faith walk it is vital to remember to speak forth who our God is, who we are in Him, and what God has done, is doing, and will do in behalf of His people. Our positive confession in these three areas will reinforce the faith which God has placed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit's working through God's Word. The inner witness of our new spirit will be strengthened also.

We have been redeemed and are to say so. Go ahead and say it (out loud right where you are), *“I am redeemed by the blood of the Lamb! I am free to be His child. I am free from the curse of the law – poverty, sickness, death.”* (Deuteronomy 28) *“All things are possible to me in Jesus' name!”*

DIAGRAM 1

GOD'S OPERATION

Word of God

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Faith ↓
 Love ↓
 Contentment with Godliness
 Faith and good works
 His presence
 Joy
 Hope
 Freedom and peace
 Spirit attitude
 Strength
 Abundance (prosperity)
 Health
 Life eternal
 Love and zeal for the Lord
 Forgiveness
 Patience
 Order and guidance
 Assurance (bold witness)
 Belief
 Truth
 Meekness (humility)
 Build up others
 Fruitfulness

SATAN'S OPERATION

Satan's Word (Lies) ↓
 Unbelief ↓
 Fear ↓
 Striving, discontent, jealousy, envy
 Self-works
 Loneliness
 Worry
 Despair
 Bondage and guilt
 Sense attitude (worldliness)
 Weakness
 Poverty
 Sickness
 Death eternal
 Hate
 Unforgiveness and bitterness
 Impatience
 Confusion
 Timidity (insecurity)
 Doubt
 Lies (falsehood)
 Pride (arrogance)
 Tear down others
 Barrenness

Jesus Christ has freed us so that we might inherit all the treasures from our Father. (Ephesians 1:3) We have the will and ability (power) in God to be shining lights for Him in this world.

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“For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure... That you may be blameless and sincere, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life...”
(Philippians 2:13, 15, 16)

Whoever the Lord Jesus has set free will be free indeed. If we have received Jesus as Lord and Savior, we will see a change in ourselves because God says we have been made new creatures.

“For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And, that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2nd Corinthians 5:14-21)

If there is no change, there is a problem somewhere. It need not be because we are not saved. It need not be because we do not have faith. It need not be because we are not filled with the Holy Spirit. More than likely, the problem is that we have not learned to activate (by what we say and do) the faith which God has given to us. We have possibly not recognized and used the authority over all things in the name of Jesus which God has given to us as His children.

SUMMARY

God's Word will not go out and return empty. It will always accomplish what it was sent to perform. God's Word is sure. It never fails and never changes because God never changes. Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh. Wherever the Word (Jesus) is being put forth, God is bringing life. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Our words can reflect either faith or unbelief. What we say is what we will have. (Mark 11:23) Faith in God's Word will result in God fulfilling our need. If we are speaking doubt or unbelief, then we will receive nothing from Him. The presence of faith, not the quantity of faith, is what moves God to action. We have authority in Jesus' name to do the works of God in the world. We have authority to take back what Satan stole from us. We have authority in Jesus' name to free the oppressed of Satan from sickness, fears, doubt, worry, confusion, death. The blood of Jesus at the cross has already broken the power of Satan. We can loose, in the name of Jesus, any problem Satan attempts to put on us or others as we move in faith in God's Word (Jesus).

Chapter 2

THE NATURE OF GOD

There exist many false impressions of God and how He operates. People imagine Him as an old man blowing clouds around. He is pictured as a living, dignified essence with all majesty and glory; and consequently, He is unapproachable. God is sometimes portrayed as mean and demanding, with a whip, or is thought of as a “sugar daddy.” We need to dispose of any improper and false conceptions that we may have of God. We who know God as our heavenly Father need to understand His true nature and what He has provided for His children.

God is not a “sugar daddy” to whom we have no responsibility. God will give us what we ask of Him, on the basis of His Word, which is His will. God gives His blessings to those who are His children, but with those blessings go responsibilities to God, to ourselves, and to others. We do not give our children everything they want without also giving them responsibility; otherwise, they will become selfish and spoiled. Likewise, God does not want a bunch of “spiritual brats,” but He desires loving, obedient children. When we go before our Father, we are to expect to receive what we ask for, as well as the responsibility that goes with it.

God is not a cruel task master. If He was, we would be afraid to approach Him about anything. God does not change His mood and attitude towards us depending on how He feels at the time (as many earthly fathers do). We, as His children, can always approach our Heavenly Father in Jesus’ name, knowing that He will not reject us or be too busy for us. As we seek our Father, He will do exactly what His Word says He will do.

God is not weak, or small, or handicapped. Many people feel that God is able to do something one time, but not another time. What is our image of God and how He operates? The Word of God says that God is not a respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34) He will do the same for one as for another who asks. God does not play favorites with His children who are obedient to Him.

How big is your God? How powerful is He? How dependable is He? How does He operate? These are all questions we need to ask if we are to receive God's promises. We must know who our Father is, and what He is capable of doing.

Is God there sometimes, while other times we have to hunt for Him? Do you use your Father like a jack-in-the-box? When you want Him, you wind Him up and out He pops. When you don't want Him, you shut the lid.

Many people, because of their unbelief and ignorance of how God operates, limit Him. Although all of God's promises are theirs, they are unable to receive them. They act like God is impotent and, consequently, they do not receive from Him even though He is able to do all things in their behalf.

Others concern themselves with the question, "Is it God's will, or isn't it?" They can never ask God anything in faith because of their doublemindedness. They do not know that He has given us His Word to reveal His will. We can know His will precisely through our new spirit which He has given to us. As we study God's promises, we can know exactly what God will do for us, and what we can ask for, both spiritually and physically.

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him [God], for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)

What is the only thing that pleases God? FAITH! Who produces faith in us? The Holy Spirit, by the Word of God. What did we learn about God in this passage? What will God respond to? FAITH! The only thing that God will respond to is faith. We can cry, beg, and do all kinds of religious works, but we will not please God nor receive anything from Him. The only thing that pleases God is faith; believing what God says and acting on it.

We can say that we have faith, but unless there is action, we do not really have faith. God will match our faith action with the promise we are seeking. For example, the man by the pool had to take up his bed and walk when Jesus told him to.

What else did we learn about God from Hebrews 11:6? We know that He is a faith God. He will respond to faith on our part. We also know that God exists. Before we can receive anything from Him, we need to believe that He exists, and to know who He is, and what He wants to accomplish. God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Unless we seek Him, we will not receive from Him. Those who call upon the name of the Lord and who earnestly want to know and love God are the ones who are saved.

We noted that this verse also says that God is a rewarder – not a punisher. We condemn ourselves for the judgment day by our unbelief and disobedience. The only sin that will be judged at the final judgment is the failure to receive Jesus into our lives as our personal Lord and Savior. Those who have not chosen to receive the life of God have condemned themselves by their unbelief. (See John 14:6; 3:16-18) However, it is possible for a Christian to be saved, yet be living in unbelief. If such is the case, that Christian will be saved eternally, but will be hindered from receiving the abundant life of the Spirit in this world.

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” (1st Corinthians 3:13-15)

John 3:16 tells us that God so loved the world that He gave His own Son. First, God loved the world. What situation was the world in? The world was so far from God and His holiness that it was impossible to return to Him. The world had become God’s enemy. Yet, in His love and mercy He wanted all mankind back into the fellowship and communion with Him that existed before man’s fall. While we were yet in our sin, Christ died for us. We were not worthy, but God paid the price to set us free to be His again.

The key to love is giving. We need to receive from God so that we can give! God gave. Many of us feel we need to do something for the Lord. We cannot do anything for Him. He does not need anything! God is the One who has given of Himself so that we might share in what He has prepared for us. He has prepared the banquet and invited us. All we need to do is

show up and eat. All we need to do is receive by faith what God has already done. It has been completed.

Here is the wonder of God's work. He gave out of His love that we might not perish. He did not send His son to condemn the world, but that through Jesus Christ the world might be saved. Now we are beginning to see the Lord as He really is. He did not come to condemn and punish but to save.

Whoever honors the Son, honors the Father. The only way to the Father is through the Son. Jesus reveals the Father to us and the Father's will for us. In Jesus, God revealed His true nature – LOVE! Jesus and the Father are one. As we learn about Jesus, we also learn more about our Father God.

When we look at the "I AM" statements of Jesus in the Gospel of John, we begin to see the Father. When God presented Himself to Moses and Moses asked for a name so the people might identify their God, God told him His name was "I AM" (Exodus 3:14) Then Jesus said, "I AM": the Resurrection and the Life; the Bread of Life (*"Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God."*); the Way, the Truth, the Life; the Light of the world; the Alpha (beginning) and the Omega (ending); the Good Shepherd.

God wants to give assurance and life to us. Jesus came that we might have assurance of our relationship with the Father by what Jesus accomplished for us, not what we may feel about our relationship with Him. Our feelings are deceptive. One day we may feel saved, and the next day we may feel that God has deserted us. Forget it. God honors Jesus (His Word) and faith in God's Word, not our feelings.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein

he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:3-12)

Ephesians 1:3 tells us we have a blessed God who has given every spiritual blessing to us, a gift in the heavenly places. Everything in the physical world began in the spiritual realm. God spoke forth His Word and it became.

Spiritual blessings are salvation and all the promises of God in Jesus Christ. As God’s sons, everything that is God’s is ours in Jesus Christ. God is talking about power—power to love, to forgive, to do God’s works in this world.

There was an incident with a man from one of our fellowships that illustrates what we are explaining. The city was going to take the parking area which he had in front of his business. We had prayed earlier for a blessing on this individual’s business because he and his wife had opened a hall that they owned for our use in the ministry. (In the Old Testament, when the ark of the covenant rested in a family’s house [before they took it to Jerusalem], the family prospered. We believe that when people open their homes, businesses, etc., to the furthering of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God will prosper them.) What happened? The city wanted to take his front parking which would hinder his business. As a child of God (who was seeking God) and an heir to God’s promises, he believed that God would hinder the destroyer (Satan) from taking his property. It was later discovered that the city owed the man half of the street in front of his business. Praise God!

God says in His Word (Psalm 1) that when our delight is in the Word of the Lord and we meditate in it day and night, we will be like a *“tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”* Everything we do will prosper. The enemy cannot take anything away from me unless I let

him. I will not let him. I know my rights as God's son because my Father has told me. I will not receive anything other than what my Father has told me.

In Ephesians 1:4 we see that God chose us to be sons before the world was formed; that we should be holy and without blame in fellowship with Him. It was God's will that we who believe on Jesus Christ were predestined to be His children. (verse 5) God knew all those who were going to respond to His love-gift in Jesus Christ. Once a lady shared with us that she was predestined to go to hell. This is a lie of Satan. God's will is that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (2nd Peter 3:9). If this is what God says, how could someone say she is predestined to hell? Apparently, she believed God makes a list and decides that Bill, Herb, John and Karen are saved, but Cathy, Henry, and Frank are going to hell. She had decided something was God's will when God says differently. Here is the importance of knowing what God says.

From the moment we repent, receive God's gift in Jesus Christ by faith, are baptized, confess Jesus as Lord and believe that He is risen from the dead, we enter into the life of God. God knew before the creation of the world that we would enter in. All of this is to the praise and glory of the Father. For this, God desires only our thanks and praise.

What is the desire of God? God wants to give us salvation and health, and He wants to meet all our needs. The Word says He cannot give these to us unless we believe that He exists and that He will do these things for us. Our unbelief and ignorance will hinder God from rewarding us. He will not give us things that will harm us. He will give blessings to them that by faith diligently seek Him on the basis of their right in Jesus, their need, and His Word. (Luke 11:1-13)

If we are to receive from God, we must know that He exists (Hebrews 11:6), and who He is (with God all things are possible!) (Luke 1:37). God is a Spirit (John 4:24), and God is love (1st John 4:16). We must also understand our full inheritance in Jesus Christ. We must believe the promises in God's

Word, not what we or anyone else may think. It is what God says. What God says, God is able to perform, but only to those who are obedient, believe Him at His Word, and diligently seek Him.

Chapter 3

SALVATION – GOD’S GIFT

We want to share the Good News with you because salvation is the basis upon which all the promises of God are received. Let’s look at God’s provision for us and how we may obtain the promise of salvation. All the other promises of God belong to us once we have been saved and become God’s children.

In the beginning, God created us, and we were made in His own image. We were created in perfect fellowship with God and given dominion over all things. (See Genesis 1:26-28) However, man decided when he was tempted, that he wanted to be as God, knowing good and evil. Man then lost fellowship with God because of disobedience to God’s command. Man’s fall into sin separated him from God and resulted in the awakening of sin, sickness, sorrow, grief, fear, frustration, confusion, despair, labor, pain, and death. The worst thing of all was that man had separated himself from God and there existed no way for him to return to fellowship with Him.

Many people have tried to work their way to God, but they can never succeed. God knew that man could never please Him and regain the fellowship that He desired we should have.

In His love and mercy, God knew that unless He did something about the situation, fellowship with His people could never be restored.

Man had sold himself into bondage to Satan by obeying him rather than God. By so doing, man gave up his right of dominion over this world, and Satan. Satan became the lord of this world. (2nd Corinthians 4:4) Man had become his servant. Satan would have man think that he is his own master when he really is in bondage to Satan and eternal death. God knew that a way had to be provided for man to return freely and willingly to Him. The bondage of

Satan would then be broken. God began by giving promises to various faithful men. Abraham was promised that from his seed would come a great nation which would be set apart to the Lord. The Lord kept His promises to Abraham. Then came a chosen people, the Israelites. Through these chosen people, God showed His love and power so the world would know that He was the only true God. Many mighty wonders were performed in behalf of Israel. The “exodus” (escaping the bondage in Egypt) is representative of God’s deliverance by the hand of the Lord in behalf of His people.

God freed the children of Israel, and many miracles occurred: deliverance, provision (food and water, clothes that did not wear out, etc.), and protection (no enemy could stand against them). Israel responded by murmuring and complaining. God then made a covenant with them, a pact based on promises of blessing and cursing. “I am the Lord your God and you are my people. I will bless if you obey me; but if you are not obedient, you will receive these cursings.” God remained faithful even when Israel was not. God wanted to bless them and establish them as His people. He gave them the Ten Commandments and the law. The law was given by God out of love so that His people might know His will and that they might be obedient and prosper under His protection. However, the people rebelled, murmured, and complained, not desiring to be obedient to God’s law. Yet no one could keep His law perfectly. They could not earn their way to God by keeping His law because to break one of the commandments was to break them all.

I can say, “I do not commit adultery, lie, steal, cheat, murder, etc.” However, if I put anything else before God, I have broken all the commandments. If I hate my brother in my heart, I have broken all the rest of the law. God’s provision was based on obedience to His law.

The enemy, Satan, tried to prove that God’s law was not just or fair because no man could keep it. In so many words, Satan would say, “You must not be a loving God if your own people cannot keep your law, and are in bondage.” The entire goal of Satan is to prove God to be unjust, a cruel tyrant. This is Satan’s portrayal of God.

We know that the true character of God is love, though. God created man that He might show forth His love. Man fell from God, but God never gave up on man.

“The wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23)

“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

Man was hopelessly lost and separated from God. In His love and mercy, He sent our Lord Jesus Christ. Why? He knew that man could not have fellowship with Him unless He sent His Son. God moved in love. Humbling Himself, Jesus Christ became a man as we are. (See Philippians 2:5-11) He underwent temptations as we do, yet He did not sin against God’s law. (Hebrews 2:17-18)

Someone might say, “But Jesus was Lord!” Do not forget that Jesus had to be like us in every way, susceptible to the temptations of sin, but not sinning. Jesus had put aside His godly attributes and power so that He might be the perfect sacrifice for us. The blood of Jesus was the price for our sins and disobedience. God offered up His only Son in our place that we might have fellowship with Him forever. We shall never die because our Lord Jesus Christ arose from the dead. Though we die, yet shall we live.

“For He [God] hath made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2nd Corinthians 5:21)

Jesus took all our sin at the cross and gave us His righteousness (right standing with God). Satan became a murderer, shedding innocent blood, thereby forfeiting his right to hold mankind in bondage.

“He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him.” (John 8:44)

Sin, Satan and death are conquered and we were set free from their power so that we might freely and willingly love and serve God. In Jesus Christ, God has given us a choice to have fellowship with Him and eternal life and blessing. (See John 3:14-18)

“As the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness...” A serpent was lifted up on a pole when the Israelites were disobedient in the wilderness. All who looked to the snake were healed of their snake bites. The Word says, *“...Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.”* As Jesus is lifted up on the cross, everyone who looks to Him will be saved and healed, and be made whole in every way, having communion with the Father through His Son. This is how God moved in perfect love in our behalf.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, lest his deed should be reprov'd (exposed). But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.” (John 3:16-21)

Before, we had no choice but to serve Satan. But God has provided us a choice: to believe on Jesus and be saved (to have the life of God), or to refuse Him and to be condemned to die eternally with Satan. *“Today I have set before you blessing and cursing, life and death; choose life.”* God’s desire is that we choose life in His son, but He will never violate our will. He desires that we love Him freely and willingly. Those who will be condemned have chosen to refuse His gift and provision. Those who are saved have chosen to accept His gift and provision, and to serve Jesus instead of Satan.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in

mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:1-10)

Salvation is God’s gift to us. We have not earned it nor do we deserve it, but God wants us to have His gift. He wants us seated with Christ Jesus in the heavenly places that He might show us the exceeding riches of His kindness.

We have to receive the gift for it to be ours. How do we receive God’s gift? By faith.

“But as many as received him [Jesus] to them gave he power [right or privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; Who were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12-13)

Salvation is God’s wonderful gift to us, and it is the basis for all the promises of God. All the promises become available to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. If we have not received Jesus into our lives, then we cannot have any of God’s promises. We who have received Jesus are God’s children and rightful heirs to His promises.

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:13-14)

God loves us and wants us to have fellowship with Him. He is love, and He wants us to know Him as our heavenly Father. He is reaching out to us, wanting us to take His hand. He wants us to choose life. God also wants

us to have assurance of our salvation that He provided in Jesus. Our right standing (righteousness) is not based on our action, works, or feelings. It is based upon what our Lord Jesus did for us on the cross.

“For he hath made him to be sin, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2nd Corinthians 5:21)

Instead of having guilt, worry, fear, frustration, and unbelief, we learn that God covered us through Jesus Christ while we were yet in sin. God now looks at us through His Son and what Jesus did for us on the cross to pay the penalty for our disobedience. We are free. God has given us Himself. God lives in us.

“Greater is he [God] that is in you than he [Satan] that is in the world.” (1st John 4:4)

Jesus, You are worthy to be praised! You are worthy to receive glory!

DIAGRAM 2

At Creation – God and Man in fellowship



Man's Father is God

Man Disobeyed God (separating from God)



Fall-second death



Man's father is Satan

promises now based on faith. The power of sin, Satan, and the second death are broken!

pel)

Go

God's Provision



Love promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel) Exodus – God freed His people

God

Jesus

God gave Law (Love promises based on obedience to law)

Jesus Christ paid the price for our separation from God. Love

Man's Response

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Prayer to Receive the Life of God

Father, in Jesus' name, forgive me. I renounce Satan, his works and ways. I renounce my old ways and self that did not serve you. I desire to serve You. I thank You for Jesus' blood shed for me to forgive my sins. I thank You for life because of Your Son.

Jesus, come into my heart. Live with me. I love You and I thank You that I am Your child, forgiven, healed, cleansed and empowered to go out in Your name and serve You. Thank You, Jesus, for now living in my heart.

I believe that Jesus is the Son of God and is risen from the dead. I confess Jesus as my Lord and Savior. I thank You that I have become the righteousness of God in Christ. I thank You that I am saved!

Thank You, Lord.

What is God looking for in return from us? Nothing! You do not give a gift and expect something in return! God is not looking for anything in return. He gave a gift of love. When you give something in love, do you expect something in return? If you do, you have not given in love.

At the cross, Jesus freed us to choose whom we will serve. Before Jesus died at the cross, and we received Him as our Lord, we could only serve Satan. Satan was our father; but now, God is our Father. Now we are free.

"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16)

Man

Believers in Jesus are restored to sonship and fellowship with God.

Unbelievers still separated from God by unbelief.

End Time
Judgment

Father God, Jesus,
and believers

judge

Satan and his
demon forces,
unbelievers.

Once again, God is not a Lord with a whip. He wants us to respond freely to Him by our own choice. He wants us to desire Him above anything or anyone. God is love. God has given us a new nature, a new spirit. He lives within those who have received Him. Jesus says He and the Father will live in us who love Him and keep His Words. (John 14:23)

God loves us and He wants us to respond to His love. How do we respond? We respond willingly, lovingly, thankfully in praise. God does not want any more offerings for our sin. Jesus' offering of Himself was sufficient. He completed the work. (See Hebrews 10:12-13; 16-18) It is only right that we praise our Lord for His completed work in our behalf. When we receive a gift, we express our thanks. We express our love and thanks to our Lord as we praise Him. We also express our love by our obedience to God's Word. As a child of God, I want to respond to my Father in love and obedience.

"If a man love me, you keep my commandments [words]... (John 14:23) and my commandments are not grievous." (1st John 5:3)

Isn't it wonderful to desire to follow your heavenly Father whom you love and trust? Our Father loves us unconditionally. He wants to bless us. Isn't it wonderful to know our sins are forgiven?

When we are saved, we will know it. We will have three witnesses. The first is that we will seek the things of God and obey our Father because He loves us. (1st John 5:1-3) The second is the Word of God:

"...If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation... Whosoever believes on him shall not be ashamed."
(Romans 10:9-11)

The third witness is our own new spirit from God which will assure us that we are God's children and we are saved. (1st John 5:10)

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of

the Son of God; that you may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” (1st John 5:11-13)

We now have right standing with God. We now can come to Him boldly in Jesus’ name because of His completed work, and because the Father Himself loves us. (Hebrews 10:19-23, John 16:27) There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God! (Romans 8:35-39)

Chapter 4

OUR NEW IDENTITY

We have died to our old selves, and it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us. (Galatians 2:20) We are to consider ourselves as dead to the lusts and desires of the flesh as well as our own needs. We are now made new in the Lord Jesus. We have the ability and power of God (through Jesus) to choose the things of God.

Galatians, chapter 5, lists the works (the ugly attitudes and actions) of our old self (nature) which once controlled us. However, before we received Jesus as our Lord, even the “good” things we did could not please God. Apart from Jesus, our old self was dead to the Lord.

The following example may help to illustrate the difference between our two natures. A pig’s nature is to wallow in the mud. It is impossible to keep a pig from wallowing because that is its nature. You could scrub it down, put a bow on its tail and flowers around its neck, but it will run right back to the mud. By contrast, a sheep has an entirely different nature. Sheep do not wallow in mud. In fact, if a sheep gets stuck in the mud, it could very well die. A sheep’s nature prefers the grass. In the same way, our old nature (self) prefers to please the flesh, but our new nature from God desires to please God.

Our old nature keeps us apart from God and will never come to God in thought, word or deed. It will seek self. We can try to make people seek the things of God, but unless they are “born again” by receiving Jesus, they will not be able to do so. It is impossible. We cannot reform people. Only God can transform their natures. It is foreign to man’s old nature to desire and seek to do the things of God. Our nature is to do the things of the world, the flesh, and Satan. This is why tension develops within us.

“That which is born of flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”
(John 3:6)

“For the flesh [old nature] lusts against the spirit [new nature], and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that you cannot do the things that you would.” (Galatians 5:17)

This scripture is not saying that the Holy Spirit wars with our flesh but our new spirit born of God is warring with our old flesh or nature. The battle takes place within ourselves because our new spirit desires to serve God, while our old nature has its own strong desires. This is where the conflict is.

As we noted in Chapter 1, man is made up of three parts: the body (flesh—outer man), the mind (soul—the realm of intellect, reasoning, emotions and will), and the spirit (the eternal part of our being). Before we are “born again,” our spirits are dead to God. There is no life with Him, and we cannot communicate with Him. He has no contact with our minds or bodies because He contacts us through our spirits.

The Word of God tells us to let our new spirit (under the direction of the Holy Spirit) control us. We are the ones who must deal with bringing our minds and bodies under the control of our spirit. How is this done?

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:1-2)

The only way our minds (emotions, will, attitudes, reasoning, values) will change is by renewing them with God’s Word. The ultimate goal of our Christian walk is to think and act like Jesus, to be conformed to His image. (Romans 8:29) Can we ever attain such a goal? Yes, because God lives within us. He lives in our new “born again” spirit (inner man). God has given us a new life. The Word says, “It is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me.” We (our old self) no longer live. We are dead. Jesus Himself lives in you and me.

Why then do people question their salvation after they have received Jesus? Because their thoughts and actions may not be pleasing to God. Does that mean they are not “born again” and are not saved? No! They have received a new nature, a new spirit from God. The problem is that our actions are usually prompted by our minds. Our minds (and bodies) are not yet changed and need to be renewed by God’s Word. We will either rely on the Spirit of God to manage our lives, or we will rely on our minds. It is important at this point to reinforce who we really are in Christ.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”
(John 3:6)

We are now spirit. The real me is my new spirit. God says that we are now new creatures. Old things are passed away. (2nd Corinthians 5:17)

The power of God flows in us when we understand that we are new creations and old things are passed away. We do not have to continue to be bitter, angry, unforgiving, greedy, or to lie, steal, compete, etc. We are new creatures. God has forgiven our past and now, in Jesus’ name, we have His ability for the future. The enemy, Satan, will try to condemn us. He will try to tell us that we are still as rotten as we ever were. He may cause us to doubt our salvation with the thought, *How can I be a Christian and still do such things?* We must deal with the lies of the enemy with God’s Word. God declares us righteous. *“For the love of Christ constrains us... for if one died for all, then were all dead... they which live should henceforth not live to themselves, but to him who died for them and rose again.”* (2nd Corinthians 5:14-15)

Here is the key: We who are born of God by His spirit, have the ability to live for Him and not for self. It is possible for us to live for God; otherwise, He would not have said it.

“Wherefore henceforth know we man after the flesh: yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yea henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.”
(2nd Corinthians 5:16-18)

God has given us a new spirit, and now we must deal with our minds and bodies. Our bodies are to be dedicated to God for His use. The body houses the Holy Spirit who lives in my new spirit. We need to take care of our bodies so that we may be able to accomplish God's ministry of reconciliation. Our minds must be renewed, not be conformed to the things of the world (the thinking of the world, the emotions, ideals or behavior of the world). For example, when someone wrongs us, instead of retaliating, we are to pray blessing upon them and forgive. Our behavior will change as we renew our minds by God's Word.

Satan will try to convince us that we have no power to change or accomplish anything for God. He will try to condemn us and make us feel guilty over past sins. God's Word tells us, "*For He had made him [Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*" Jesus took our sins. God has covered us, cleansed us, and forgiven us. We are not poor, miserable, wretched sinners anymore. God has changed us. "*I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.*" (Philippians 4:13)

When we realize that we are the righteousness of God in Christ, then a motivational change will occur. The old self, apart from God, wanted to please self. The new self seeks to please God because His Spirit lives in us. Our new nature will not desire to go back to the old life – "*old things have passed away, behold all things have become new.*" We must make a choice. We can either serve God or ourselves. Here is where the conflict occurs in our lives. We sincerely want to do the things pleasing to God, but we may find ourselves compromising when we experience pressure from others and the world.

The Word of God discerns the thoughts and intentions of our hearts. (Hebrews 4:12) It is a two-edged sword, dividing our spirit, soul (mind), and body. It will help us to distinguish between the attitudes, values, and actions of God and those of the world, the flesh, and Satan. Then we must choose whether to sin or to obey God. We are servants to whom we serve. Our choice will determine the direction of our lives. Our Christian growth and development of our behavior depend on that choice. Our behavior will only be changed as our minds are renewed to consider and act as sons of God. When we become fully aware of our identity in Christ, then our emotions, values, and actions will begin to reflect who we are in Jesus Christ. We will begin to respond in obedience to God's Word in the same way as Jesus.

I love my heavenly Father. I know that He loves each of us. I know that we can trust Him at His Word. I know that we will be blessed as we respond to what He tells us to do. As a loving son, I want to respond joyfully in obedience to my Father. The more I seek my Father, the more I find that the old self, attitudes, values and responses to the things of the world are not my delight and purpose any more.

Do not be discouraged if you have received Jesus but are not conformed in behavior to His example. This does not happen overnight; it is a growth process. You are a child of God. The only way our behavior will change is if we renew our minds to be obedient to God's Word. The only way I learn to forgive is to forgive as Christ has forgiven me. Remember who you are. You are a child of God. We have God's nature in our spirits. God's nature is to love and forgive. Our new nature is also to love and forgive. As we remember who we are – a new creation of God – our behavior and responses will begin to change. (For further study, see *The Love Disciple*.)

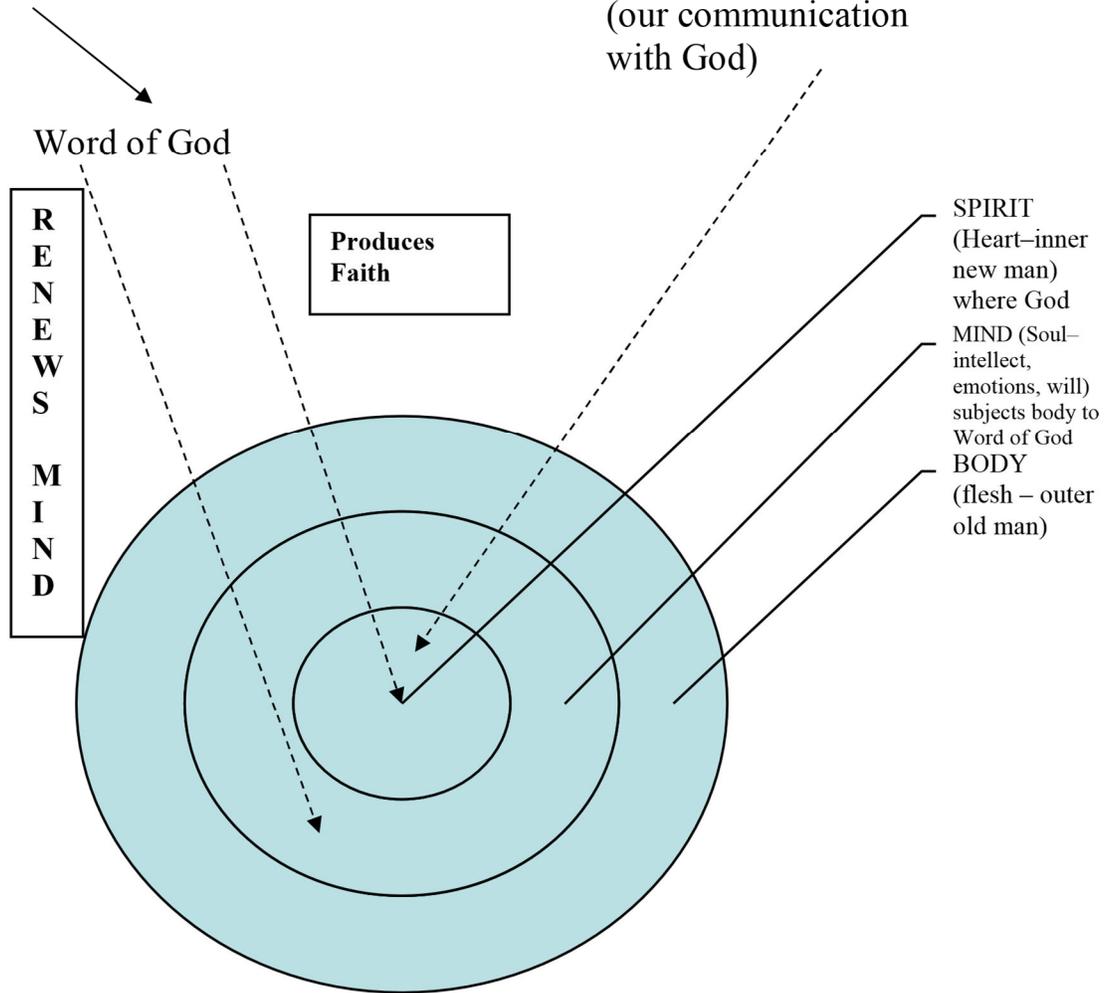
“If then you have been raised with Christ [to a new life, thus sharing His resurrection from the dead], aim at and seek the things [rich, eternal treasures] that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth. For [as far as this world is concerned], you have died, and your [new, real] life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, Who is our life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in [the splendor of His] glory. So kill (deaden, deprive of power) the evil desire lurking in your members [those animal impulses and all that is earthy in you that is employed in sin]: sexual vice, impurity, sensual appetites, unholy desires, and all greed and covetousness, for that is idolatry (the deifying of self and other created things instead of God). It is on account of these [very sins] that the [holy] anger of God is ever coming upon the sons of disobedience (those who are obstinately opposed to the divine will), Among whom you also once walked, when you were living in and addicted to [such practices]. But now put away and rid yourselves [completely] of all these things: anger, rage, bad feeling toward others, curses and slander and foulmouthed abuse and shameful utterances from your lips! Do not lie to one another, for you have stripped off the old (unregenerate) self with its evil practices, And have clothed yourselves with new [spiritual self], which is [ever in the process of being] renewed and remolded into [fuller and more perfect knowledge upon] knowledge, after the image (the likeness) of Him Who created it. [In this new creation all distinctions vanish]. There is no room for and there

can be neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, [nor difference between nations whether alien] barbarians or Scythians [who are the most savage of all], nor slave or free man; but Christ is all and in all [everything and everywhere, to all men, without distinction of person]. Clothe yourselves therefore, as God's own chosen ones (His own picked representatives), [who are] purified and holy and well-beloved [by God Himself, by putting on behavior marked by] tender-hearted pity and mercy, kind feeling, a lowly opinion of yourselves, gentle ways, [and] patience [which is tireless, long-suffering and has the power to endure whatever comes, with good temper]. Be gentle and forbearing with one another and, if one has a difference (a grievance or complaint) against another, readily pardoning each other; even as the Lord has freely forgiven you, so must you also [forgive]. And above all these [put on] love and enfold yourselves with the bond of perfectness [which binds everything together completely in ideal harmony]. And let the peace (soul harmony which comes) from Christ rule (act as umpire continually) in your hearts [deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in your minds in that peaceful state] to which [as members of Christ's] one body you were also called [to live]. And be thankful (appreciative), [giving praise to God always]. Let the word [spoken by] Christ (the Messiah) have its home [in your hearts and minds] and dwell in you in [all its] richness, as you teach and admonish and train one another in all insight and intelligence and wisdom [in spiritual things and as you sing] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to God with [His] grace in your hearts. And whatever you do [no matter what it is] in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus and in [dependence upon] His Person, giving praise to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:1-17 Amplified Bible)

DIAGRAM 3

GOD (actually in us)

Praying in the spirit
(our communication
with God)



MAN

DIAGRAM 4

FELLOWSHIP

God's Nature

Love Love
 Forgiveness
 Faithfulness
Peace Peace
Joy Joy
Patience
 Gentleness
Holiness

Believer's Nature

Forgiveness
Faithfulness

Patience
Gentleness
Holiness Chapter 5

THE INFILLING OF THE

HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus said, *"And I say unto
be given you; seek and ye
it shall be opened unto you.
asketh receiveth; and he that
him that knocketh it shall be
ask bread of any of you that is
him a stone? Or if ye ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall
ask an egg, will he offer a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good
gifts unto your children; how much shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit
to them that ask?"* (Luke 11:9–13)

*you, ask, and it shall
shall find; knock, and
For everyone that
seeketh findeth; and to
opened. If a son shall
a father, will he give*

Jesus also said, *"If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love
him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."* (John 14:23) (See
John 14:20-21.)

When we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, Jesus and the Father come into us.
However, the Holy Spirit does not come in fullness into our new spirit at that point.
Nevertheless, note that the Father will give the Holy Spirit to whoever asks to receive
Him. (Luke 11:13)

Who is the Holy Spirit? He is God. He is part of the Godhead, which consists of Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit.

The Function of the Holy Spirit in Our Lives

- He will teach us and give us understanding about God's Word, calling to remembrance what the Lord has told us (John 14:26 and I John 2:27).
- He is the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:16-17) sent by the Father into this world at Pentecost.
- He gives power and boldness to witness for Jesus Christ. (Acts 1:8)
- He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and that Satan is judged and defeated. (John 16:8-11)
- He gives glory and praise to Jesus and reveals the things of God to us. (John 16:13-15, I Corinthians 2:9-16)
- He gives gifts for the ministry of the church. (I Corinthians 12:1-11)
- He creates faith in us as we hear God's Word. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, our praise life will increase.
- He gives us the power to have the abundant life that Jesus provides for us.

He Shall Baptize You With the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is not in us at the moment we receive Jesus, nor does He come into us when we are baptized. Do not be alarmed if you have been taught otherwise. We will look at God's Word to see when he comes into our lives and learn how we can receive Him.

Jesus said "... but wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." (Acts 1:4-5)

The disciples had been baptized in Jesus' name. They confessed Jesus as their Lord and believed that He was risen from the dead. They were saved. They were to wait for the promise of the Father (the Holy Spirit) to be sent to them. They did not yet have the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist said of Jesus, "I indeed baptize you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost..." (Mark 1:8)

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came into the world and fell upon the disciples who were waiting to receive Him according to Jesus' instructions and promise. We do not need to wait now because the Holy Spirit is already in the world and is available to all who desire to receive Him.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:1-4)

This is what God's Word says happened when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They spoke in other tongues.

Philip and the Early Church

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.... But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." (Acts 8:5-8, 12)

Philip came, and he preached the Word of God. The people received it, confessed Jesus as their Lord and believed in their hearts that Jesus was risen from the dead. They were saved and born again. They were baptized in water, being buried with Christ in baptism. (Romans 6:3-4)

"Repent, be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

It doesn't say that you receive the Holy Spirit at baptism, as many of us have been taught. The Word of God does not say that the Holy Spirit comes into us when we are baptized but that we *will* receive the Holy Spirit.

The people at Samaria were saved -- born again. They had received Jesus into their lives, confessed Jesus as Lord, and they were baptized, believing on the Lord Jesus

Christ. However, they were not filled with the Holy Spirit at that point. (Note this carefully.)

"Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (Acts 8:14-17)

The apostles prayed for these people to receive the Holy Spirit. Apparently He does not fill us at our baptism, as he had not filled these people even though they were saved and baptized in the name of Jesus. If they had received the Holy Spirit at baptism, the disciples would not have made a point to go there, laying hands on them and praying over them to receive Him.

Ask and Receive

"If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him?" (Luke 11:13)

We need to receive the Holy Spirit in the same way that we received Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We ask the Father to fill us with the Holy Spirit, that we might:

- have the indwelling power of the Lord living in us,
- have power to witness,
- lay hands on the sick and they would recover,
- cast out devils in Jesus' name,
- speak in other tongues. (Mark 16:15-18)

We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit to do these things and to fulfill the mission which Jesus Christ has given us to spread His Word. We need to *ask* the Father to fill us with the Holy Spirit before we will be filled.

"For as yet he (the Holy Spirit) was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 8:16) They were baptized, but they had not received the power of the Holy Spirit. This is why many believers do not

experience victory in their Christian walk. They are saved, but they have no power in their lives because they do not yet have the Holy Spirit.

"Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." (Acts 8:17)

Speaking in Tongues Is Evidence

It doesn't say here that the people received their prayer language or tongue when they received the Holy Spirit. However, in the writings of the early church fathers, it is apparent that they *did* speak in other tongues after they were filled. When they received the Holy Spirit, they also received a tongue and the boldness to witness.

"And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostle's hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered to them money, saying, give me also this power, that on whosoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts 8:18-19)

There had to have been some visible evidence that Simon saw or heard to testify that these people had received the Holy Spirit when the apostles laid hands on them. The evidence was that these people spoke in other tongues. The Holy Spirit came on them after hands were laid on them, and they spoke in tongues. The Holy Spirit did not come on them when they were baptized.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. They answered Peter, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked them to stay for a few days." (Acts 10:44-48)

When the people at Cornelius' house were filled with the Holy Spirit, they all spoke in other tongues, magnifying God. Note again that the infilling of the Holy Spirit did not come when these people were baptized. In this case, the infilling came after they had received the Word and *before* they were baptized. The Jews now knew that the Holy Spirit and life in Jesus was for the Gentiles also.

"And it came to pass that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said to them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since you believed? And they said unto him, we

have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." (Acts 19:1-6)

Paul recognized that these people believed and were saved. However, he asked them, "Have you received the Holy Spirit yet since you believed?" They replied, "We have not even heard if there be a Holy Spirit." Many people today have heard about the Holy Spirit or know about Him, but they do not know how He comes or His purpose and operation in the believer's life. They have heard about salvation. They know they are saved on the basis of God's Word in Jesus Christ. However, they have not heard about God's abundance that is provided in the Holy Spirit. Such was the case at Ephesus.

The people were baptized in Jesus' name. Paul then laid hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit. They received and spoke in other tongues.

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him (Saul) said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost,' And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized." (Acts 9:17-18)

Paul was empowered for his ministry from the Lord as he received the Holy Spirit. We all have a ministry from the Lord; however, we will not have power to carry out that ministry unless we are filled with Holy Spirit.

"I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than you all." (I Corinthians 14:18)

Paul said that as he had been filled with the Holy Spirit when Ananias laid hands on him, and he *did* speak in other tongues. Speaking in other tongues comes to everyone who receives the Holy Spirit.

What Happens When We Pray in the Holy Spirit

- *"For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: For no man understandeth him: however in the spirit he speaketh mysteries." (I Corinthians 14:2)*
- *"For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding (mind) is unfruitful." (I Corinthians 14:14)*
- *"For if I pray in an (unknown) tongue, my spirit (by the Holy Spirit within me) prays, but my mind is unproductive -- bears no fruit and helps nobody." (I Corinthians 14:14 Amplified Bible)*
- *"He that speaks in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; ..." (I Corinthians 14-4)*
- *"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27)*
- *"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit." (Jude 20)*

After we have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit now lives within us. When we pray in a tongue, we are praying directly to God from our new spirit by the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Since our mind (which produces doubt, fear, worry, etc.) is being bypassed, we are praying in perfect praise and perfect prayer to our Father from our new spirit which is also incorruptible. (I Peter 1:23)

When we are in situations where we may not know how to pray, the Holy Spirit will intercede in our behalf as we pray in the spirit or tongue. Since the Holy Spirit cannot groan, it is we who are groaning as the Holy Spirit prompts our new spirit, and we speak or groan what is given by Him according to the will of God for us. That is how *"All things then work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose."* (Romans 8:28)

As we speak in tongues, God says we are edified and we improve ourselves. We build up our most holy faith. Our praise life with God comes alive! Praying in tongues has been compared to putting a charge in a battery. It keeps us "charged up" in the Holy Spirit. When the time comes for the power of God to flow in our lives, the power will be there.

How to Receive

Personally, I had many questions concerning the Holy Spirit and tongues. I had always been taught that when I was baptized, I received the Holy Spirit. However, as I meditated in God's Word, I found that Jesus said to ask the Father to be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Luke 11:13) So in obedience to God's Word, I asked the Father to fill me. I was filled with the Holy Spirit on the basis of God's Word and promise (Luke 11:13) -- "*Ask and you shall receive*" (Luke 11:9) -- "*What things soever you desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.*" (Mark 11:24). I knew that I was filled with the Holy Spirit. Even so, I did not know, nor was I taught at that time, that I would speak in tongues. Consequently, I did not speak in tongues. It was not that I could not, but I did not know that God had already given me the new tongue when I received the Holy Spirit.

I had my tongue or prayer language the moment I received, but I didn't know how to release it. No one told me to open my mouth and speak it out. I was sitting around with my mouth closed, waiting for the heavens to open up, and "zappo," I could speak in other tongues, as God's Word said I would do.

I believed for a long time that since God had not given a tongue or prayer language to me (not true, but that is what I thought in my ignorance), I believed God thought I didn't need it.

I was moving in spiritual pride and ignorance until one day I started being prompted from within for a deeper communion with God in praise. I began to search the Word of God and seek out people who were really praising God. I looked where the victory and power of God were moving.

I thought that the Holy Spirit would just take control of my tongue and speak in my prayer language, but the Holy Spirit will not do it for me! I learned that it is my tongue that gives the utterance by the prompting of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:4)

Many wonderful, sincere believers in Jesus Christ also believe incorrectly that the tongue or prayer language is not for every believer who has received and been filled with the Holy Spirit. I used to believe this in my ignorance. Some do not even believe tongues and the gifts of the Spirit are for today. Is the resurrection for today? If Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever -- if His Word will not pass away -- then the same promises and working of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament are working today as they were then. We cannot believe some parts of God's Word and not others. God's workings in the Holy Spirit have not changed for His church, nor will they be done away with until Christ's return.

Prayer Language vs. Ministry Office Gift

I was overjoyed for those who had received their tongue, but I believed it was not for all. I would quote, *"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?"* (I Corinthians 12:28-30)

It is true that not all of us will minister to the body of Christ through these gifts. How we will minister is up to the Holy Spirit. However, the Lord showed me that there is a difference between these ministry office gifts and the tongue or prayer language which comes to all believers when they are filled with the Holy Spirit. How so? The tongue or prayer language only benefits the person using it, not the church. (I Corinthians 14:4) The ministry gift of tongues with interpretation benefits everyone.

One day as I was meditating upon the gifts of the Spirit, the Lord also revealed this to me: *"For to one is given by the Spirit a word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; ..."* (I Corinthians 12:8-9). I asked the Lord, "What does this have to do with whether you have given me a tongue or not?" The Lord showed me that He had given to me and all believers a measure of faith to receive Jesus and be saved. (Romans 12:3) We all have to have faith to be saved and to please God. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Hebrews 11:6) But yet I read that the Holy Spirit had given faith to some. (I Corinthians 12:9) This gift of faith is a special outpouring above and beyond the faith which all of us have, in order that a ministry work of God might be accomplished. I then understood.

In the same way, God had given the tongue or prayer language to me and all believers who have received the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, it is not the ministering gift of tongues mentioned in I Corinthians 12:28-30 which not all believers are given by the Holy Spirit. In Acts, all who received the Holy Spirit spoke in other tongues. I was freed to believe that God had also given me a new tongue when I received the Holy Spirit (as occurred in the book of Acts). Since that time, I have also found (in obedience to God's Word) that every born again person we lay hands on to receive the Holy Spirit also has received the new tongue to magnify and praise God and to build up his most holy faith. (Jude 20)

Praying in tongues (or the Holy Spirit) ignites the faith which we have been given by God on the basis of His Word. Praying in tongues does not give us more faith, but it sparks our faith in God's Word as we praise God. As we meditate in God's Word and pray in tongues, God strengthens us for the battle and gives us His victory.

Being Empowered

When the people in Acts were filled with the Holy Spirit, they were "on fire." No one could stop their witness of the Lord Jesus from going forward. Even though they were facing persecution for sharing Jesus Christ, their boldness could not be dampened. The fire of the Holy Spirit burned within them. They rejoiced and praised God even while they were being thrown to the lions. They had peace, joy, and love.

They certainly had something going for them. People just do not have such strength in themselves. They had the Holy Spirit -- the Comforter sent from the Father. No matter what situation we are in, God will give us victory to His glory. Others will wonder why you and I are so excited about Jesus! We can have God's "charger," the Holy Spirit, empowering our lives to victory.

In order to be saved, we need to repent, believe on Jesus (Romans 10:9-10), and be baptized (Acts 2:38). To be empowered by God we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. That is why the apostles asked the people, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" God wants to give us His gift, that the power of God and the ministry of God might become evident in us and through us to reach others.

"And he (Jesus) said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover...And they (disciples) went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." (Mark 16:15-18, 20) In the authority of Jesus' name, these signs will follow all believers. The gifts of the Spirit in I Corinthians 12 will also begin to be in effect in our lives as the Holy Spirit directs.

"But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me... unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

We are saved and empowered by the Holy Spirit, not only to receive every blessing from God, but that we also might boldly be about the ministry which the Lord has for each of us. We should share Jesus Christ, his Word, and His meaning for our lives with others.

One time before a meeting, the Lord spoke to me, "My people desire to be like Me. They desire to be loving, kind, joyful, peaceful, forgiving and so on. However, if My people are truly going to be like Me in everything, they must also move in all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as I did."

The fruit of the Spirit are for holiness of life. They come with being born again in Jesus and doing God's Word. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are for ministry and power in witness, which only come with being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Reasons for Speaking in Tongues

1. The evidence of Holy Spirit's infilling.
(Acts 2:4, 10:46)
2. As a continual reminder of Holy Spirit's presence.
(John 14:16-17)
3. For spiritual edification through supernatural communication with God (I Corinthians 14:2, 4, 14)
4. To energize our faith. (Jude 20)
5. To pray for what is known or unknown according to God's perfect will.
(Romans 8:26-28)
6. To help keep our tongue under control, to keep us free from worldly influence as our spirit prays to God. (I Corinthians 14:2, James 3:1-8)
7. To give thanks well and worship God in Spirit. (I Corinthians 14:15-17, John 4:24)
8. For rest and refreshing. (Isaiah 28:11-12)
9. For spiritual warfare, intercession and to loose other spiritual gifts.
(Ephesians 6:18, Romans 8:26-28; I Corinthians 14:2)
10. To heighten sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's leading. (Romans 8:14, 26-28)

PRAYER TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

Father in Jesus' Name,

I confess Jesus as my Lord and Savior.

I believe in my heart Jesus is risen from the dead.

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God -- I thank you that you have made me a child of God.

I renounce Satan and all his ways.

According to your Word and promise, if I ask to receive your Holy Spirit, you will give your Holy Spirit to me, and I will speak in other tongues. (Luke 11:13)

I ask you to give me your Holy Spirit and my new tongue.

I thank you for giving me the Holy Spirit and I thank you that I will now speak in other tongues, praising you.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Further Instructions

If you prayed to receive, on the basis of God's Word and promise, you are now filled with the Holy Spirit and you will now speak in other tongues. Focus your attention on Jesus. Praise Jesus. Open your mouth. Do not speak English or your normal language. Begin to make sounds with your tongue, and the Holy Spirit will begin to form the sounds into the words of your new tongue. It will not be like anything your mind has heard, so don't let your mind make you think it is nonsense. It is a blessing from God. Don't try to form the words in your head because you are not praying with your head but from your new spirit. Focus on Jesus. Praise God! Continue speaking. Continue to use your prayer language daily. It may start gradually but will increase as you use it. Now you are able to worship God in spirit and in truth.

PART II THE WAY TO VICTORY Chapter 6

POWERS IN THE UNIVERSE

God's Order vs. Satan's Order

In the universe there are two powers at work: powers of God versus powers of Satan.

Associated with the powers of God are the following: life, freedom, faith, light, good, love, obedience, health, truth, prosperity.

Associated with the powers of Satan are: death, bondage, unbelief, darkness, evil, fears, disobedience, sickness and disease, untruth and poverty.

“The thief [Satan] cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they [we] might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10)

We cannot visually see either of these powers at work because they are spiritual powers. Unless they take a form and reveal themselves to us, we cannot see spirits with the natural eye because they do not have flesh, blood and bones (Luke 24:39). As God’s people, we are at war, not against flesh and blood (other people or that which we can see) but against the schemes of the devil, against the rulers, powers, world forces of darkness, spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places. (Ephesians 6:11-12)

Although we are not able to see the powers with the human eye, we are able to see manifestations of both powers at work in the world. We see evidence of Satan’s influence in the world: mass suicide in Guiana, death, sickness, poverty, defeated lives, broken homes, calamity, worry, fear, confusion, rape, murder, division in churches, etc. Remember, Satan has come to steal, kill and destroy.

When God speaks forth His Word, that which is produced from heaven is **faith**. When Satan speaks forth his word, that which is produced from hell is **unbelief**. Whatever is not done out of faith is sin. (Romans 14:23) If our words or actions are not done as a response of faith, they are not pleasing to God and are considered to be sin. The only thing that pleases God is faith. (Hebrews 11:6) Faith, when it is put into action, results in **love**. Unbelief, when it is put into action, results in **fear**. *“Perfect love casts out fear.”* (1st John 4:18) Love is a response of faith in action. As we have noted, fear is produced by unbelief. There are various ways in which fear reveals itself: worry, doubt, hatred, envy, jealousy, strife, lying, false pride, false witness, gossip, guilt, greed, frustration, confusion, poverty, sickness, anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, despair, worldly mindedness, self-justification, love growing cold, and death.

As God’s people, we are called to renew our minds to guard against these attitudes which breed actions apart from faith. What we confess with our mouths reveals what is going on in our hearts. Thinking and speaking in unbelief produces fear which results in the manifestations of the unbelief into the physical world. We can speak into existence horrible things to the ruin of personal relationships and

even our own bodies. Satan comes to steal, kill, and destroy. Every manifestation of fear produced by unbelief will eventually destroy us or steal our blessings from God. We need to be aware of the seriousness of this matter.

One manifestation of fear produced from unbelief will lead into another, to another, and another. For instance, your neighbor speaks badly about you to someone else. You find out about it. (It is interesting that when we speak about someone it has a way of always getting back to them.) You are hurt (which is self-pity and false pride). You begin to worry about your reputation. You doubt God's ability to deal with the wrong, so you have to avenge yourself. You are frustrated and confused as to why they did this to you and an inability to think properly develops as fear for your reputation increases. Bitterness and hatred produce unforgiveness toward that neighbor. In anger, you go to the person who told you about your neighbor's action against you. You cannot go to the neighbor who wronged you because of unforgiveness. You lie and gossip about your neighbors to build yourself up. This produces strife which produces high blood pressure, ulcers, colitis, etc. (sickness) in your body which can eventually lead to physical death. You then feel guilty about the way you have behaved. After all, you are a Christian.

Another example: God says He will supply all our needs. (Philippians 4:19) The bills come in each month, and you fear for financial security. Frustration and confusion set in because you just keep the bills paid. You begin to think, "What if...?" You begin to worry. Impatience, bitterness and strife break out in the home over finances, and then over other things. You get sick. Poverty sets in. Guilt sets in because you are not able to provide for your family. Depression and despair concerning life grow in you. Families break up. Suicide, or just "giving up," is the end result.

The key to breaking this vicious cycle of self-destruction is turning to the Lord Jesus and confessing unbelief and fear. God is faithful to forgive and restore as we acknowledge our sin to Him. (1st John 1:9) We then need to allow God's Word to renew our minds so we may be able to deal with our problem in faith. At the first sign of pressure, tension, worry or fear, get into God's Word. There is a promise for every situation. Believing God's promises in His Word will give hope, sparking the faith in us to receive God's blessings according to His promises.

If this is the case, then what does the enemy want to steal from us? The Word of God! If we allow Satan to move us away from God's promises into fear, then we will have nothing to stand on, which will result in a life of fear and all the byproducts of unbelief.

All of Satan's operation (as listed in Diagram #4) is countered by God's promises on the left. There is a word of promise to replace all unbelief with faith. For every problem, doubt, fear, jealousy, etc., God has a Word for us that will lift us out of that situation and enable us to get out of unbelief and to walk in faith. We are free to choose what we want.

"...I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live." (Deuteronomy 30:19)

There was a man at Niagara Falls who had gathered a large crowd to himself. He asked the people, "Who believes that I can cross the Falls, pushing this wheelbarrow while balancing on a rope? Just raise your hand." None raised a hand. Finally after a moment, one fellow did raise his hand. The performer said to him, "Sir, if you truly believe that I can do this wondrous feat, would you please seat yourself in my wheelbarrow?"

If we really believe what God says, then we should be willing to trust Him with every part of our lives. The presence of belief results in the presence of victory. The presence of unbelief results in defeat.

Satan's Order of Operation

All the manifestations of fear produced by unbelief can be categorized into three groups: the curse of the law, the wisdom of Satan, and the works of the flesh.

We learn in Deuteronomy 28 that the curses of the law are poverty, sickness, and disease, barrenness and death. We find in James 3:13-16 that the wisdom of Satan is bitter envying, strife in the heart resulting in confusion, frustration and every evil work.

Galatians 5:16-21 tells us that the works of the flesh are immorality, impurity, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, divisions, factions, envy, drunkenness and carousing. All these manifestations of fear produced by unbelief are apart from God's operation and are the operation of Satan, through the flesh.

God's Order of Operation

All of the aforementioned manifestations Jesus Christ canceled out at the cross. *“For he (God) hath made him (Jesus Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”* (2nd Corinthians 5:21) Jesus took our place and was made sin that we might be made in right standing with God. God now looks at believers through the Lord Jesus Christ's covering.

We find in Galatians 3:13-14 that Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law (poverty, sickness, death) that we might inherit the promises of Abraham (prosperity, fruitfulness, health, life), through faith. We find in James 3:17-18 that the wisdom from God is pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, wholehearted and sincere, and works for peace.

We find in Galatians 5:22-23 that the fruit of our new spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, humility and self-control. Jesus Christ has made all these blessings of God available to those who have received Him. The bondage of the enemy was broken once and for all!

Spiritual Battle

The promises of God stand in opposition to the powers of darkness. We stand in the middle of a spiritual battle.

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ:” (2nd Corinthians 10:3-5)

We recognize that the battle is between spiritual forces. We are spiritual people, born of God, fighting not with flesh weapons but spirit weapons from God. God tells us if we are a spirit man, then our true life is in the Spirit. (At present, we have fellowship with God in the Spirit.) Although we have physical bodies, the Word of God says that our battle is not here in the flesh. I am not fighting with flesh weapons if this is a spiritual battle between God and Satan, and I am a spirit man born of Jesus Christ into the spiritual realm. Flesh weapons would not do

me any good. Satan would just laugh at me and try to lay something on me if I try to fight him in the flesh, because he works in the flesh. Satan is the lord of this world (2nd Corinthians 4:4). Satan works through the senses. He deceives us through our minds and through the senses: what we see, hear, perceive. The Word of God calls these things false imaginations, proud things that exalt themselves against the knowledge or Word of God. Satan is limited to warring in the flesh. As God's children, we are not limited.

However, we must not be ignorant of his ways (2nd Corinthians 2:11). Satan's goal is to take the Word of God away from us, or make its use of no consequence to changing our lives. God says our weapons against Satan are not of the flesh; they are of the spirit. They are mighty weapons and will cast down false imaginations or lies that Satan puts in front of us to deceive us. The mighty weapon we have been given, the sword of the Spirit of God, is the Word of God wielded by us under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit in the name and authority of Jesus Christ.

When we use the Word of God against Satan, he cannot stand his ground or maintain his lies because the truth of God is revealed. (John 3:19-21) Jesus Christ and the Word of God are the same. There is no way that the enemy of God and man can stand against us at that point. It is imperative that as we go forward in life, we use the Word of God because our new life is based on God's Word.

Faith is produced and sparked by God's Word.

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17)

"We walk by faith and not by sight." (2nd Corinthians 5:7)

Faith will produce blessings. God will give contentment instead of discontent, His presence for loneliness, joy for worry, hope for despair, peace for guilt, strength for weakness, health for sickness, forgiveness for bitterness, etc. (See Diagram #5) The negative things have died if we have surrendered our lives to Christ Jesus.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:24-25)

We have died to that old self, and it is Jesus Christ Who now lives in us.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

We have crucified and buried that old man in baptism, and he is dead. (Read Romans 6:1-23) We are now alive to the things of God. We do not have to doubt or fear anymore. Many times people who are Christians run around saying, “I don’t see how we’ll make it. I just can’t seem to stop...” Brother or sister, you are listening to a lie of Satan. According to God’s Word, that old man is dead, so why try to raise him back up? You are a child of God. Tell him in Jesus’ name he is dead, and to lie down. Our lives center out of the spirit and in faith in God. The more we fill our minds with the Word of God, the more we will be walking with God in faith and obedience to His Word, and the more blessings we will see in our lives.

Chapter 7 OPERATION OF THE MIND

“And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.” (Deuteronomy 30:6)

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

The fulfillment of these promises rests in the Lord Jesus Christ. He fulfilled God’s law. Keeping the law perfectly in our place, Jesus Christ enabled us to have the choice for life and every blessing by faith..

“And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for

us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”
(Galatians 3:12-14)

As we receive Jesus, we receive the life of God. As we reject Jesus, we reject the life of God and choose death by our unbelief.

If we have received Jesus, we have become heirs to all of God’s promises. However, many believers are defeated from receiving what is already provided for them. Why is this the case? Because the mind can hinder us from receiving from God. All of His promises can become, in effect, null and void if we allow our minds to shut off what God promises to us.

We need to remember that when we, by faith, received Jesus into our hearts, God gave us a new spirit, not a new mind or a new body. Our mind, as God’s Word says, needs to be renewed by His Word to think as He thinks rather than the way of Satan, the world, and our old flesh. Our minds will operate with what we put into them whether for good or for evil.

The natural tendency of the mind is toward unbelief, fear, worry, doubt, frustration, depression, etc. All these attitudes are produced in our minds. In a born again believer in Jesus, the mind is the battleground of the flesh (influenced by Satan) and the new spirit (which is directed by the Holy Spirit). A person who has not received Jesus whether he is aware of it or not, is under the direction and influence of Satan, and he is not able to understand or accept the truths of the Spirit of God. (1st Corinthians 2:14)

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” (Romans 10:9-11)

God’s Word states that we do not believe and receive Jesus Christ by our minds, but by our hearts. People will never be able to understand the work God did in Jesus Christ at the cross by their intellect. The Greeks (and all others) worked out of reasoning and could not understand or

receive God's workings. (1st Corinthians 1:22-29) God's ways truly are not our ways. Understanding only comes after we receive God's Word by faith.

“For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally [sense] minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be [not able to be so]. So then they that are in the flesh [operating by senses instead of faith] cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.”
(Romans 8:5-11)

Apparently, we who have received Jesus and the Holy Spirit do have a choice as to whether we will set our minds and actions on the things of the world, the flesh, and Satan or on the things of the Spirit of God. Jesus Christ has freed us from the power of sin which separated us from thinking and doing what God desired. Now we are servants to whom we yield ourselves, whether to sin in disobedience resulting in death by being carnally minded or to an abundant life by being spirit minded. (See Romans 6:3-18) The key for a Spirit-filled believer is where we set our minds – on the things above or the things below.

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection [mind] on the things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead [to the desires of this world], and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (Colossians 3:1-3)

Our minds operate by our senses and by our reasoning. The mind is like a computer. The mind deals with what we see, hear, taste, touch, smell, perceive, and feel emotionally. For instance let's say we are on a picnic. We hear thunder, see the clouds rolling in, and feel coolness in the air. Our minds say it will rain and storm, and we should go inside. The emotion which our minds produce is disappointment.

Apart from the Holy Spirit controlling and renewing our minds in the Word of God, all our natural thinking is still motivated by the way we were before we received Christ. Fear, worry, doubt, depression, frustration, confusion, negative thinking, competition, etc., will dominate our thought life if we allow it. All of these things will eventually lead to physical death and eternal death (if not a believer in Jesus Christ).

Many believers have not received the fullness of days that God has promised – of at least 70-80 years (Psalm 90:10) and many other promises concerning a long and blessed life – because they have allowed in their minds a pattern of worry, stress, fear, and competition to destroy their bodies. It has been proven scientifically and medically that the human body is able to live up to 120 years if it is kept free from stress, worry and fear, and treated with proper health principles of care (diet, exercise, proper sleep, etc.). God's Word says that the maximum of our days will be 120 years. (Genesis 6:3)

The Lord knows the danger of our continuing to use our minds apart from the renewing of His Word. The Lord knows that we cannot have the abundant life of Jesus in this life which is promised to us unless we begin to think like He thinks.

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”
(Philippians 4:8)

God wants us to stop filling our minds with garbage and unbelief, and start thinking on the things of Him which are profitable for us. God will then bring His peace into our thought life. This is how we can rejoice in the Lord always.

At one time, before we received Jesus, we were controlled by Satan to satisfy the desires and will of our flesh and minds. We were separated from God. However, God in His love has saved us in Jesus Christ and has made us to sit with Him in heavenly places. As we receive Jesus by faith, we will also reign with Him.

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”
(Ephesians 4:17-18)

Apart from God, our minds were once vanity and emptiness. Our understanding of spiritual realities was darkened so we did not even realize we were lost and apart from God.

The Word of God says, *“We walk by faith; and not by sight.”* (2nd Corinthians 5:7) The people of the world, and sometimes many believers say, “Show me. Then I will believe!” Thomas said this and Jesus responded, *“Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”* (John 20:29) Again, the principle of the Lord is that we walk by faith (the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen), and not by sight. (Hebrews 11:1) If we believe what God says, then we will see. The things of God are all realized by faith. For us to believe our senses and intellect, contrary to what God says in His Word, would be to believe a lie of Satan.

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”
(Ephesians 4:23-24)

We need to start looking at things the way God does. We can do it because God has given us right standing with Himself and His holiness.

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.” (Colossians 3:10)

As we are in God’s Word, God is renewing us in the knowledge of Himself and who we are in Jesus Christ. What a wonderful thought!

As a baby must learn everything, so must we who are reborn from heaven in Christ. You hold up a ball and tell the baby “Ball.” You touch its nose and say, “Nose.” The baby has the ability to walk, but does not realize it,

so you take it by the hand and walk the child until it gets the idea and can do it alone.

When we received Jesus as our Lord and Savior, God gave us a new spirit born of God. However, we may be living in an older body, with a mind that is used to operating apart from God in unbelief. Our minds need to be renewed to think the way a child of God thinks, by faith. We need to know Who our Father is, who we are, and what is available to us and what we are able to do by the strength of our Father. The renewing of our minds by God's Word is a daily process.

"Roll your works upon the Lord [commit and trust them wholly to Him; He will cause your thoughts to become agreeable to His will, and] so shall your plans be established and succeed." (Proverbs 16:3, Amplified)

As we trust God with every aspect of our lives, He brings our thoughts into agreement with His will, and we prosper.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

Here the Lord is dealing with believers, exhorting us to get our weak (not reborn) areas under the direction of our new spirit which desires to follow God. *"Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."* (Matthew 26:41)

Our bodies and minds need to be dealt with. Our bodies are to be dedicated to God, and all that we do with them is to be done to God's glory. Our minds are not to think in the ways of the world, but to be renewed by God's Word so our thoughts are conformed to God's thoughts. The only way that we can know God's will for any situation is to have our minds renewed by meditation in His Word.

The term "meditate" means to chew over and over as a cow would chew her cud. Think on the Word. Let it go into your spirit. Bring it up again. Think on it some more. For instance, God says that we who believe in

Jesus are sons of God. (John 1:12-13) For years we may have thought we were miserable wretched, inferior, unworthy. Others told us that, and our minds responded by saying the same thing. However, God says that in Jesus Christ, we are declared sons of God. (John 1:12) Regardless of what anyone else says, or even what our own feelings say, we are sons of God. God has declared us so. We need to renew our minds to think, *I am a child of God. I am a child of God. I am a child of God.* We must not believe a lie to the contrary.

“But, on the contrary, as the Scripture says, What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard and has not entered into the heart of man, [all that] God has prepared (made and keeps ready) for those who love Him [who hold Him in affectionate reverence, promptly obeying Him and gratefully recognizing the benefits He has bestowed]. Yet to us God has unveiled and revealed them by and through His Spirit, for the [Holy] Spirit searches diligently, exploring and examining everything, even sounding the profound and bottomless things of God [the divine counsels and things hidden and beyond man’s scrutiny]. For what person perceives (knows and understands) what passes through a man’s thoughts except the man’s own spirit within him? Just so no one discerns (comes to know and comprehend) the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the spirit [that belongs to] the world, but the [Holy] Spirit Who is from God, [given to us] that we might realize and comprehend and appreciate the gifts [of divine favor and blessing so freely and lavishly] bestowed on us by God. And we are setting these truths forth in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the [Holy] Spirit, combining and interpreting spiritual truths with spiritual language [to those who possess the Holy Spirit]. But the natural, nonspiritual man does not accept or welcome or admit into his heart the gifts and teachings and revelations of the Spirit of God, for they are folly (meaningless nonsense) to him; and he is incapable of knowing them (of progressively recognizing, understanding and becoming better acquainted with them) because they are spiritually discerned and estimated and appreciated. But the spiritual man tries all things [he examines, investigates, inquires into, questions, and discerns all things]; yet is himself to be put on trial and judged by no one [he can read the meaning of everything, but no one can properly discern or appraise or get an insight into him]. For who has known or understood the mind (the counsels and purposes) of the Lord so as to guide and instruct Him and give Him knowledge? But we have the mind of Christ (the Messiah) and do hold the

thoughts (feelings and purposes) of His heart.” (1st Corinthians 2:9-16 Amplified Bible)

The Word of God says that all knowledge of God is available to us through the Holy Spirit who lives in us (who have received Jesus and who have asked to receive the Holy Spirit) (Luke 11:13) If we do not possess the Holy Spirit, these truths of God will remain a mystery to us and we cannot appreciate them. The Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth and nothing of God will be hidden from us. In verse 16, we see that God has given the mind of Christ to us through the Holy Spirit. We hold the thoughts and purposes of God’s heart. We have the power of God living in us.

Our minds can either go back to what our own reasoning and senses dictate (which is foolishness to the Lord) (1st Corinthians 1:19-20 and 3:18-20), or our minds can operate as the mind of Christ operated, in faith and obedience to God. Jesus Christ believed God, not His senses. Jesus saw the withered, the blind, the crippled, the lepers, and the dead. He could have said, “Oh, that’s too bad. You are crippled.” Or, “I’m so sorry your brother is dead.” But no, what did Jesus say and do? Jesus Christ said, *“Cripple, walk! Blind man, see! Dead man, rise!” The cripple walked, the blind man saw, the dead man arose. Bless the Lord! “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.” (John 8:28)*

The Lord Jesus says that everything He did was pleasing to, and in the will of, His Father. The Word of God says that we have the mind of Christ. The Word of God says that we have the ability of Christ (John 14:12-14). In the name of Jesus, we are to have dominion and power over all things on this earth that the Father might be glorified.

Jesus died to set us free to reign with Him. (Ephesians 2:5-7) At the creation, God had intended for us to reign. Through Jesus Christ we are restored to our place of dominion and power. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the promises of God are available to us. However, we can reason them away with our minds. God has given us the choice of life or death as we are free to choose Him and His blessings.

Perfect love casts out fear. Perfect love contains obedience – obedience (to God’s Word) casts out fear. A disciplined mind casts out fear.

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. ...If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.” (John 14:21, 23-24)

In verse 23, we see that the Father and Jesus will live in and reveal themselves to the believer who is walking in obedience to God’s Word. There can be no fear present where the power of God is moving by faith and obedience in God’s Word.

“For God has not given us the spirit of fear [timidity]; but of power, and of love, and of a sound [calm, well balanced, disciplined, self-controlled] mind.” (2nd Timothy 1:7)

Since our new nature is not of fear, but of faith, as we discipline our minds in God’s Word, fear will have no place in us. The mind, when influenced by the enemy, is the source of fear. A disciplined mind will not allow fear to take hold.

For a battle, you train and discipline the troops to face any situation. If the troops are not disciplined, they will scatter when the danger comes. We are in a battle. Many believers wonder why they do not have victory over situations. Could it be that they need to be more disciplined with God’s Word in their minds?

We have a choice to move in fear and unbelief, or to move in obedience, love and faith. Daily renewing our minds in God’s promises will fortify and strengthen our faith in God. God’s Word (2nd Timothy 1:7) says that we have been given a spirit of:

Power – *“All things are possible to him that believeth.”* (Mark 9:23);

Love – because of Christ’s love we are able to love as Christ loved us.

(1st John 4:7-12);

A sound mind – the mind of Christ (faith in obedience). (1st Corinthians 2:16)

The measure of renewing of our minds by God's Word will determine the measure of victory in our daily lives. What we are able to believe for is what we will have.

For instance, if I believe that I am getting a cold and I start to get a chill, my mind says I had better take some aspirin, drink water, and get rest. Then I will have what I have accepted as my portion in life: to suffer through a cold.

To the contrary, the Word of God says that by His (Jesus) stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5). The power of the Lord is available to keep the cold from taking hold of me (if I want to and believe for it). We have been taught to accept many things which are contrary to what God's Word says is our portion in life.

For those of us who believe in Jesus, God has provided abundance in every area of our lives. We will have that abundance in the areas in which we believe and obey God's Word. If we believe salvation is all God has for us, we will have salvation, but nothing else until our minds are renewed. If we believe God at His Word for healing, we have healing. If we believe God at His Word for our finances, we will have our needs supplied. For instance, let's say we made \$174.83 a week after taxes. We have \$184.72 in bills. Our minds interpret that we are broke, but we give our tithe to the Lord. Our minds and senses say, "You'll never make it!" God's Word tells us not to worry about what we will eat, drink, or wear. We are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to us. The mind says fear, fear, fear! God says don't worry. Believe, and you will see the victory of the Lord in your behalf. My God will supply all my needs. If we fear, we are cutting off God's blessings which come to us if we believe.

Just because we do not feel that healing or financial provision in our situation does not mean God would not do it if we asked and believed to receive on the basis of God's Word and not our thinking. Too often we

have lain down and let the enemy run over us instead of standing our ground and resisting in the name of Jesus, believing God at His Word. It is time that we stop handcuffing God because we find it difficult to simply believe Him. It is time that we stop saying it is God's will that awful things happen to us simply because it was not our will to take God at His Word. He wants to and will work in our behalf if we would only believe and act in faith rather than fear.

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...” (2nd Corinthians 10:3-5)

We are not using human weapons. We cannot afford to limit ourselves and strip the armor of God off us by following our senses and reasoning. A believer of the Lord God will only walk by faith in what God's Word says.

Today some Bible scholars and teachers who are working out of their own reasoning leave out of their teachings the miracles of the Lord, or limit God's power to certain situations or to a certain time period (“not for everyone, not for today”). *“O ye of little faith,” “With God all things are possible.”* (Mark 10:27) *“If you [we] can believe, all things are possible to them that believe.”* (Mark 9:23) God is able to do, and is doing, impossible things in behalf of them that believe. As you read God's Word, is that not what it says? If God is no respecter of persons, will He not do for you what He has done for others who have believed and obeyed Him at His Word?

Jesus Christ paid the debt that you and I might have all the blessings and promises of God fulfilled in our lives. However, if we let our senses and reasoning block God's power from us, we will not have what God promises.

Watch how the mind can steal our blessing if we let it. For instance, God gives a prayer language, a new tongue, to everyone who asks to be filled with the Holy Spirit. (In Chapter 5 we noted the distinction between the prayer language and the gift of tongues for ministry.) We receive it by faith like we receive anything else from God. The Word of God says that

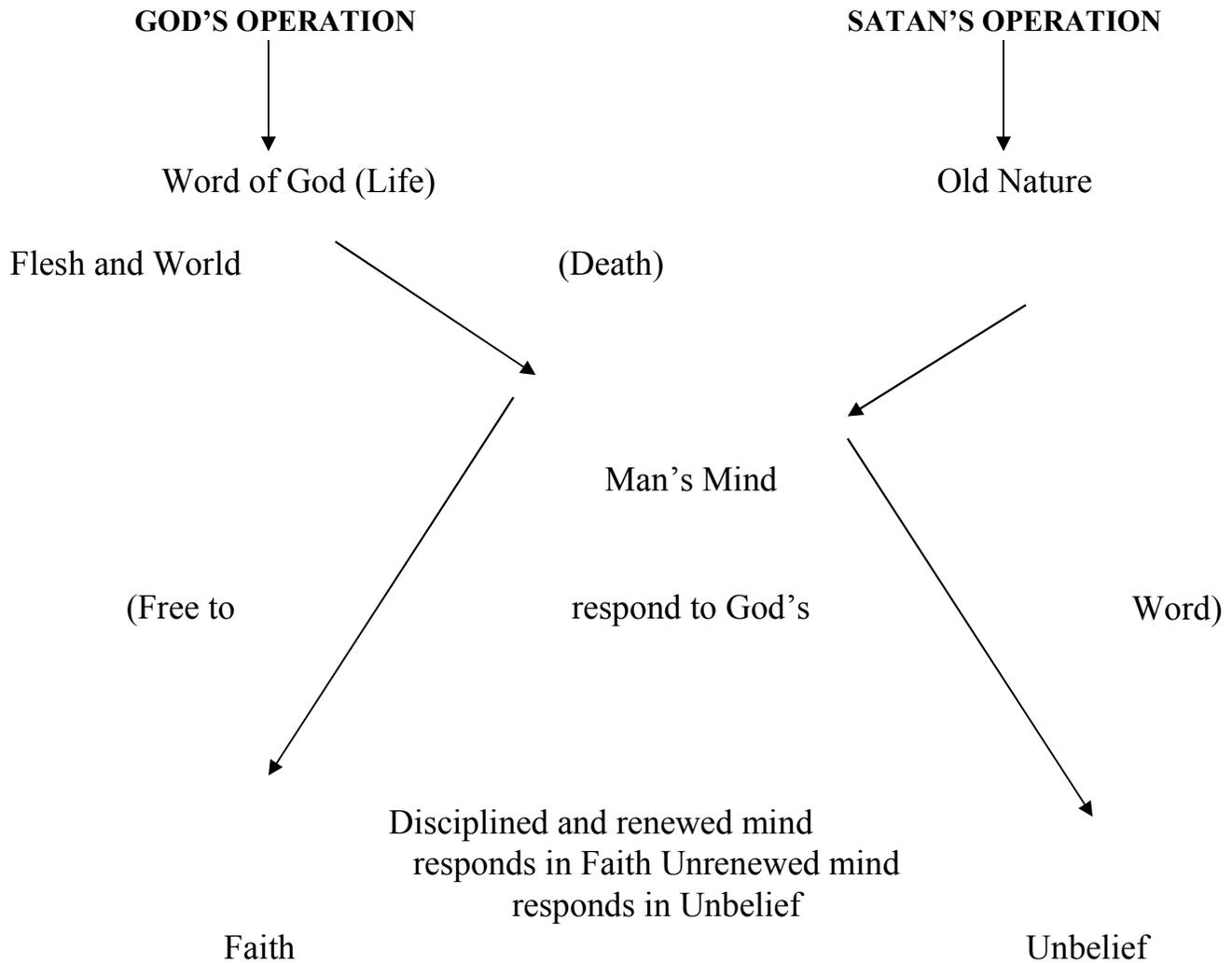
the prayer language builds up our most holy faith. (Jude 20) It is direct communication to the Father from our new spirit, and we are edified in the Lord. (1st Corinthians 14:2 and 4) If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding (mind) is unfruitful. (1st Corinthians 14:14) The Amplified Bible reads, *“For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit by the Holy Spirit within me prays, but my mind is unproductive – bears no fruit and helps nobody.”* What happens? You open your mouth to pray in the Spirit. Out come certain sounds. The Word says your mind (not your prayer) is unfruitful at that point because you are praying from your new spirit. Right away your mind says, “Does not compute – gibberish – nonsense – meaningless – does not edify!” The mind has to do something with this language. It does not know what is going on. The mind then produces feelings. The mind works in emotions, feelings, rationalizations, justifications, etc. It registers: “You are talking gibberish. You’d better stop it right now!”

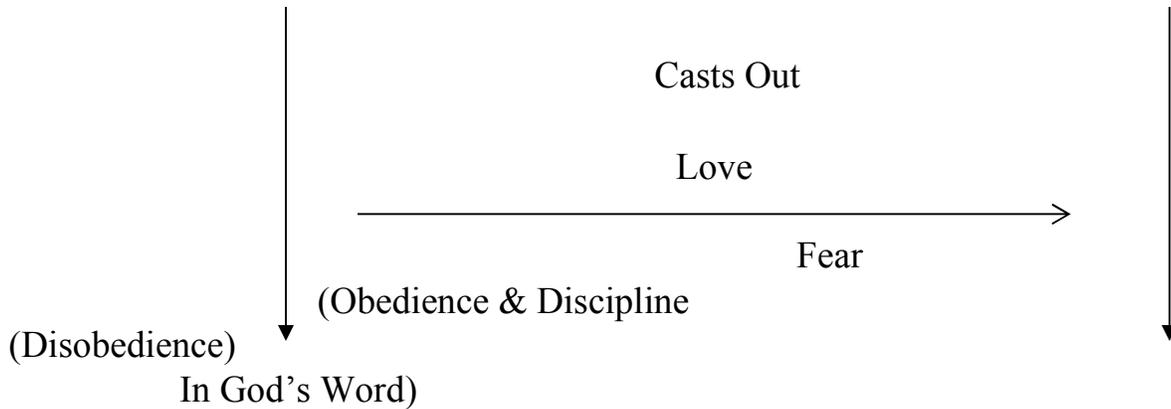
However, a mind renewed by God’s Word sees this prayer language as a perfect gift from God for perfect communication with Him. The prayer language is a part of being filled with the Holy Spirit. No fear, or doubt, but perfect praise, is present when we pray in the Spirit. We pray from our new spirit directly to the Father, bypassing our minds where doubt and fear arise. The renewed mind says: “Bless the Lord, I’m talking to the Father from my new spirit now. I will sit back and rest and just praise the Lord. I may not understand what is going on, but I know God’s perfect gift is operating that I might praise Him. It is for my good and others’ good as the Holy Spirit prompts me to pray for them.”

Our entire prayer life can be affected by our minds if they are not renewed. Not only can our prayer language be denied, but our prayers in our normal language can be hindered also by a mind that is not renewed. For instance, let’s say we have a loved one who seems to be going away from God. Our minds take in the data and think, “There is just no hope.” How can we pray for someone to receive salvation if we believe there is no hope for them? To the contrary, God said to His disciples (who had asked Him, “Who then can be saved?”), *“With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”* (Matthew 19:25-26) *“All things are possible to them that believe.”* (Mark 9:23) God is able to turn people to Himself if someone is believing. However, if those who are “believing” are the same ones who are saying there is no hope (because of what they see or hear

from the individual for whom they are believing), they are not walking by what God says (faith), but by sight. A double-minded person will receive nothing from God. (James 1:6-8) You either believe your husband, wife, or children, etc., are saved after you pray, or you do not believe. God says you will have what you say. (Mark 11:23-24) If you prayed for them to be saved, treat them as Christians. I praise God that you have a desire to seek God and have what He has promised.

DIAGRAM 5





Chapter 8

FAITH AND GOD'S POWER A Look at the Miracles of Jesus

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. Praise and glory be to the name of Jesus! Jesus truly is the Word made flesh – the Lamb of God for sinners slain.

In the life of Jesus we see the perfect will of our God of love setting His people free. We see the power of God that is able to do all things. Jesus says, “My Father works and I work.” (John 5:17)

“Truly, truly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what he sees the Father do: for what things he does, these also the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all things that He does: and He will show him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises up the dead quickens [makes alive] them; even so the Son quickens [makes alive] who he will.” (John 5:19-21)

“For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said to me, so I speak.” (John 12:49-50)

Jesus did nothing, He said nothing apart from the perfect will of the Father. It was the Father who directly did the works through Jesus that He might receive glory. (John 14:10)

“Truly, truly I say unto you, he that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father. And whatever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:12-14)

Let us examine a few of Jesus’ many miracles that we might understand how the power of God works, and apply it to our lives. Remember that wherever Jesus was, the power of God was also present. What is it that releases the power of God to perform the task at hand?

The Centurion’s Son

“And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it; he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 8:5-11)

The centurion came to Jesus seeking healing for his servant. Without hesitation, Jesus said He would go and heal him. (God wants to move in our behalf. If we speak forth faith, it will be what we are asking.) Jesus said in verse 13, *“Go thy way; and as thou has believed, so be it done for you.”* The centurion believed that his servant would be healed just by Jesus speaking the Word (verse 8). Jesus told him it was done according to the centurion’s belief.

If I believe God cannot do these works, then God is not going to do the works. As I have believed, so it will be done for me – nothing. However,

if I believe God can free me from the power of sickness, hatred, jealousy, greed, strife, etc., it will be as I believe. I will be set free.

The Demoniac Boy

“And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

He answered him, and said, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him. Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead, insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, lifted him up; and he arose.”

(Mark 9:14-27)

The father of the boy possessed of the demon spirit implored of Jesus, *“If you can do anything, have compassion on us, and help us.”* Note Jesus’ reply: *“If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”* (verse 23.) The Lord Jesus directed it back to the man – for him to do something by his faith.

There is no question that God is able to supply the power to perform whatever it is we are seeking. The question is, are we able to receive by faith what God says He will do, as we believe Him at His Word? What is

the power that will heal that boy? Faith. *“If you can believe, all things are possible to them that believe”* (verse 23). The power is already present, for it was supplied at the cross of Jesus. The powers of Satan have been broken. If you want your son healed (or if you want another need met), then you must have faith. Even if it is just as much faith as a mustard seed (Matthew 17:20). The size of the faith does not matter. The presence of faith makes the difference. God promises that He will do the work on the basis of His having given His Word.

Faith is an uncompromising conviction that God is able. All things are possible to those who believe.

“...He that believes on Me the works I do he will do also, and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father... If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:12,14)

The response of the father to Jesus is noteworthy. He cried out and said with tears, *“Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief”* (verse 24). Only faith would save that boy. Doubt would hinder God’s work. The father believed, and sought God’s help to remove doubt.

We have God’s Word to remove any possible doubt as to what God will do in our behalf. *Forgive us, Father, for the times we have doubted Your Word because of our little understanding. We believe that you are able to perform all things in behalf of those who believe.*

The Calming of the Sea

“And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there rose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow; and they awoke him, and say unto him, Master carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, ‘Peace, be still.’ And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one

to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:35-41)

Note the attitude of Jesus versus the disciples' attitude. Jesus was at rest, asleep, having the confidence (faith) that He was in the hand of the Father's loving care – no evil or any plague could come near Him. (Psalm 91:10) The opposite reaction is exhibited in the disciples: fear. Jesus spoke to the wind and the sea, and the storm stopped. He turned and said to His disciples, “Have you no faith?” All authority in heaven and earth has been given to Jesus. All things must obey Him. In Jesus' name, all things must obey us.

In Ephesians, Paul prayed for the believers (us):

“...That they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which wrought in Christ when he raised Him from the dead...And has put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church [us] which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:18-20, 22-23)

As Jesus had authority over the wind and waves, so we also have been given authority in the name of Jesus, over all things as Christ's church. Jesus is the head. We are the body. All things are under our feet. When the difficulty comes, do we fear, or do we speak against it by faith in the authority of the name of Jesus? Jesus has given us the authority to use His name to the glory of the Father.

Jesus asks, *“...when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?”* (Luke 18:8) The children of Israel saw the visible evidence of the presence and the power of the Lord (the Red Sea parted, water came from the rock, manna and quail appeared, clothes did not wear out, victory over enemies, etc.) yet they did not enter into God's rest because of their unbelief. Today we are seeing a powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit. However, unlike the children of Israel, we will not be among those who are turning away in unbelief. We know that just as God is true, His promises are sure and they are for us. Thank You, Jesus.

What is it that overcomes this world? Jesus tells us:

“In the world you shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

“For whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world:” (John 1:12-13. We who have received Jesus are born of God.) *“And this is the victory which overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”* (1st John 5:4-5.

Read 1st John 1-5)

The Canaanite Woman

“Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with the devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered her and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, it is not good to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” (Matthew 15:21-28)

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

This lady was diligently seeking the Lord. What was it that moved Jesus to action? *“O woman, great is thy faith; be it to you as you want it”* (verse 28). If this woman had not believed, she would not have received anything from God.

Many people make an issue out of praying according to God’s will. God made an issue out of this woman’s faith. In fact, Jesus made it clear that she could have what she wanted because of her faith that God would and

could do; and she wanted it done. “*God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*” (by faith in His Word). As we are moving in faith on God’s Word, God will do the same for us.

Jairus’ Daughter and the Woman with an Issue of Blood

“And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus’ feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: For he had only one daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay dying. But as he went the people thronged him. And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace. While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue’s house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him saying, Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat. And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.” (Luke 8:41-56)

Is it possible to steal something from God? If it was possible, this woman with the issue of blood stole from God. No, you cannot steal something that God has already provided for you. This woman with the issue of blood just reached out by faith, touched, and believed what God has already provided for her – healing. She actively sought after God, and

God rewarded her according to her faith (verse 48). He will do the same for us, if we believe God is able and His gift is ours to be taken. If this woman had not taken the initiative and by faith reached out, believing God, she would not have been healed.

In Jairus' case, he had sought God, as we often do, and then came the circumstantial bad news (as so often happens when you are believing God for something). Have you noticed how things sometimes appear to get worse after you have prayed? The enemy comes along trying to make us believe the lie that there is no hope, moving us into fear and making us doubt whether God will answer our prayer. Jesus responded, "*Fear not: only believe, and she shall be made whole*" (verse 50). The Lord is teaching us to only believe what His Word says, even when the situation seems hopeless and impossible. The command is not to fear or disbelieve God, which is the lie of Satan. Satan will try to rearrange situations and evidence to make us disbelieve God. Satan is the father of lies, but we are the children of our Father Who is Truth, and we will see our hope materialize as we believe God's promises and do not fear.

As so often happens (when we are confessing and believing what God says), the people laughed and mocked at Jesus when he called things that were not as though they were (she was alive). With God and faith in Him, nothing is impossible. However, the world and many saved believers are not necessarily operating by the principles of God. They believe they must see it if they are going to believe. This is why they often do not see any blessings of God in their lives. Faith operates by believing first, then you will see those things for which you are believing God. Jesus removed the unbelieving out of the room; only faith should be present. Jairus believed God and saw his daughter raised from the dead. We also will see the blessings of God in our lives as we believe God's promises instead of our senses, worldly knowledge, and circumstances.

In each of these examples, what is it that releases the power of God into the situation? The faith of someone who believed that God exists and is able to perform His Word in their behalf. "Your faith has made you whole" came again and again from the lips of Jesus. "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.*" (Hebrews 11:6)

Peter on the Water

In Matthew 14:22-32, the disciples saw something on the water. They believed it to be a spirit and were afraid. Jesus, Who was the One walking on the water, said to them, “Be not afraid.” He knew the minds of men are quick to move into fear and need to be renewed to believe, and walk by faith. Peter called out, “Lord, let me walk out on the water to you!” By faith he got up on the edge of the boat and jumped into the water, then walked on the water. What happened? He looked around at the waves eight feet high, the wind blowing water on him. He began to think, *What if I sink? I’ll drown!* And Peter sank. Down he went. But he called for help, and Jesus saved him. What did Jesus say to him? “Why did you doubt, Peter?”

Our minds will either respond in faith on the basis of God’s Word, or our minds will go by our senses, reasoning, feelings.

Feeding the 5,000

Jesus had compassion on the people following Him. He saw their need for food. He asked Philip, “How shall we buy bread that they might all eat?” Jesus was testing Philip to see if he would move in faith, or unbelief. Jesus knew what miracle He would do. Philip responded from his mind’s reasoning that circumstances (as we so often do); “\$30.00 worth is not enough for all of us to have a little.” (Looking to human resources instead of God’s resources!!!) (John 6:1-13)

A boy present had five barley loaves and two small fish. The disciples asked, “What are they among so many? (Can we identify the disciples’ reasoning – faith or fear and doubt?)

Jesus said, “Sit them down.” He prayed over the loaves and fish. He thanked the Father. They divided the goods, and after all had eaten, Jesus said, “Gather up what is left.” They gathered up twelve baskets of fragments from the loaves, over and above what they originally had, after feeding more than five thousand people! Is there any question that God can supply all of our needs today as well?

Jesus at Nazareth

Jesus went to His home town of Nazareth. On the way, the people were amazed at His workings and His teachings. Then he got home. The people remembered him as a little boy, the son of Joseph and Mary. How could He be a great One of God? They believed what they thought they knew to be the truth. As the people in Jairus' house believed their senses and worldly knowledge, so the people at Nazareth did not leave room in their thinking to receive the presence and miracles of God. (Matthew 13:58)

They did not believe Jesus was the Son of God. How could He be? *He is the son of Joseph and Mary*, they thought (and said). God will not make any movement of His presence and power where there is no faith present. Faith moves God. These people's minds were not renewed to receive God by faith. As God's Word says about Jesus' stay in Nazareth, "*...He did not many works there because of their unbelief.*"

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones." (Proverbs 3:5-8)

Chapter 9

FAITH BEHAVIOR

As discussed in a previous chapter, there are two forces at work – the forces of God and those of Satan. God moves through His Word. God’s Word is spirit knowledge. It is discerned, and received by our new “born again” spirit (or inner man) which was born of God when we received Jesus as Lord and Savior. His Word is based on the things of God, all of which have their origin in the unseen spirit realm.

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”
(Hebrews 11:3)

God moved into this world when the Word (Jesus) became flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1:14) Jesus and God’s Word are one and the same.

Why did Jesus have to come in the flesh? Jesus had to come as the perfect sacrifice, taking our sin on Himself and giving us His right standing with God. (2nd Corinthians 5:21) Jesus became flesh so that we who are in the flesh might have victory over our flesh. He broke the power of the flesh (old nature) and gave us the power of the Spirit of God instead. Jesus destroyed all the works of Satan and won the victory over all of Satan’s works. This victory is ours in Him. (Hebrews 2:17-18)

“But as many as received him to them gave he power [the right or privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them who believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12-13)

Through Jesus, we have become sons of God. His blessings and victory now belong to us, His children.

What has come to us from Satan is an old nature, modeled after himself. In the bible it is called the “old Adam.” This nature is controlled by the flesh and is centered upon the things of the world. It is at war with God and cannot do anything but sin against God. It operates by sense knowledge:

what we see, feel, taste, touch, our circumstances. The forces of Satan move through these sensory perceptions to produce temptations that work upon the lusts of the flesh (old nature). When we are tempted in this way and yield to the enemy, the result is sin. The bible says, "*The wages of sin is death* [physical and spiritual]." (Romans 6:23) The end result of the old nature produced by Satan is death.

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The blood of Jesus was shed at the cross that we might receive a new nature through faith in Him, a new nature (spirit) born of the Spirit of God. Our new nature is the life of God which now lives within us who believe. "Though we die yet shall we live." (John 11:25-26) Where the life of God is present, the power of God is also present.

The power of God will deal with what the old nature produces – unbelief. Unbelief and the resulting worry, fear, guilt, and frustration all come from Satan. We who have received Jesus have crucified our old nature with Christ at the cross. (Galatians 5:24) The power of the old nature and its control over us was destroyed, and our new nature is now that of our Father God. The nature of our Father is love and faith. Through Jesus, we have been restored into the image and likeness of God as man was made to be at creation. God has changed our hearts (spirits) into His image. God has given us a new heart (spirit) born of Him, which is perfect, incorruptible, and eternal. In spirit, we have been restored to fellowship with God. Jesus Christ died that we might be free spiritually, emotionally, and physically from the power of Satan. The power of sin, Satan, the old nature, the world and death have been broken by Jesus at the cross. The power of God and His promises can now be ours through Jesus Christ.

It is up to us to believe God and act upon His Word to receive what Jesus has already provided. Jesus Christ will not die on the cross again. The work is completed. In the name of Jesus, we can receive from God. He desires that we have an abundant, joyful life.

"...Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Up to this time you have asked nothing in my name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full." (John 16:23-24)

God would withhold nothing from us. (Psalm 84:11) He wants to move on our behalf. How do we receive His promises? By faith, just as we received salvation by faith. We simply believe God's Word that when we repent of our sins and call on the name of Jesus, we shall be saved. (Romans 10:9-13, 1st John 5:9-13) If I were to die right now, I know that I would be with my heavenly Father. Praise God! We can have that assurance and not question it one bit. In the same way, we can believe and receive all of God's promises by faith in His Word.

We must learn to develop our faith in His Word and to deal with those things that would hinder us from receiving from God. Unbelief is our greatest hindrance.

Unbelief is born in an unrenewed mind. Although our spirit is "born again," recreated by God, we still have a physical (perishable) body and an unrenewed mind. The unrenewed mind does not always conform or respond to the new spirit that God has given us. It is free to respond in either faith or unbelief. The mind is like a computer; it will program whatever we put into it. If we fill our minds with God's Word, it will produce faith. If we fill our minds with data from our old nature, apart from Christ, our minds will respond in unbelief.

The behavior which follows will be motivated by fear. When we act out of fear, the consequence will be disobedience to God. The bible says, "*...for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*" (Romans 14:23)

If we find ourselves moving in unbelief and fear (or any of the byproducts which are all sin before God), we need to confess (acknowledge) our disobedience to God, and thank Him for forgiveness in Jesus' name. We can simply say, "Lord, I'm moving in unbelief. Forgive me. Thank you, Father, for forgiving me." Confession and claiming God's forgiveness will permit us once again to receive God's promises by faith.

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

We can count on receiving God's forgiveness and ability to believe His Word. After receiving His cleansing from our fear, doubt, worry, jealousy (or whatever the case may be), we then need to go to His Word

and promises in order to move from fear into faith. We must stop thinking unbelief which was part of our old nature from Satan, and start thinking faith. To do this, we must renew our minds by the Word of God. We should then meditate on the promises pertaining to the area of need in our lives. God's Word will develop our faith to believe for those promises.

Faith is the only thing that is pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6). Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. (Romans 10:17). Faith will motivate us into actions of love and obedience which will enable us to receive from God. We must make a choice: (1) Do we center our thoughts and minds on the things of God, disciplining and renewing our minds with His Word? Or (2) Do we allow our minds to be filled with the things of this world: man's knowledge and reasoning? In time of need or trouble, how will your mind respond? Will it stand fast on the Word of God and respond in faith, or will it respond to its own reasoning and unbelief? What will your mind do? Our minds will respond in faith or unbelief, depending on the choice we make.

The choice we make will be reflected in our behavior. Our behavior will be the outward evidence of our faith or our unbelief. Actions of love and obedience to God will be prompted by true faith. Our faith will grow and develop as we meditate in the Word of God and give it first place in our lives. Our faith is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8), and He will develop an even greater capacity for faith in us as we spend time in His Word. As it gives insight and understanding of God's perfect love and will for us, our hearts respond to His love. With the heart, man believes. (Romans 10:10) It is from the heart (spirit) that faith is born. In faith, we responded to God's love and His Word when we received Jesus as Savior. That faith action resulted in love and obedience to God. All fear of death, judgment, and hell was gone as we believed for salvation. Fear cannot remain when we choose to believe, obey and act upon God's Word. Perfect love casts out fear.

The same "heart faith" that motivated us to receive salvation can enable us to receive all of God's promises. As God's Word becomes alive in our hearts, the mind will ultimately receive God's truths. Both our minds and spirits will then respond in accordance with His Word. It will become a vital part of our daily conduct and speech. Faith behavior becomes our

response. Faith behavior responds in love, which is obedience to God. Jesus said, *“If a man love me, He will keep my commandments.”* The evidence of love will be obedience to God’s commandments and there will be discipline in the believer’s life. We will put aside the things of the flesh that are not helpful to our Christian walk and are not productive to faith. (In my own life, I found myself watching too much TV instead of spending time with the Lord and my family.) Read Hebrews 12:1-4, 1st Corinthians 6:12, 19, 20.

The importance of spending time in the Word cannot be overemphasized. By meditating on His Word, it can “take root” in our hearts. The Holy Spirit moves in and through God’s Word. He will lead us into all truth and understanding of the teachings of our Lord Jesus. He will bring to our minds the Word of God that we need in a particular situation. That Word, however, must have been placed down in our hearts (spirits) if the Holy Spirit is going to recall it for us. Then when trials or troubles come, it is available for us to act upon. It will activate our faith and cause us to respond in obedience to it. It will empower us to stand in faith until we have the victory in our situation, and the fulfillment of the desired promises in our lives.

If we are not acting on God’s Word, we really do not believe it, even though we may say all of it is true. “Head faith” will not bring the change of behavior that “heart faith” produces. True faith demands action. Faith without works is dead. The promises of God will be of no effect in our lives until we start acting on them. The power of God will move in our behalf only when we begin to act on His Word. Peter, seeing Jesus walking on the water, asked, “Lord, can I come to you?” First Jesus did not tell Peter, “Come.” Peter first believed and sought Jesus; then his request was granted. He acted in response to belief and jumped into the water.

Peter asked permission. We do not have to ask permission because we have God’s Word and promises. Peter jumped into the water. When did he walk on the water? When he was in the water. When will the promises of God take effect in our lives? When we step out in faith and begin to act on His Word and promises. We will never experience God’s power in our lives until we act on His Word. The promises of God begin to work for us when we say, “I’m not going to believe what I see, feel, or

touch, or the circumstances around me. I am going to believe what God says.” When we are able to do that, we are “*walking by faith and not by sight.*” (2nd Corinthians 5:7) We operate in faith, depending on the Word alone, and God honors that kind of faith. We do not seek physical evidence for our senses (as Thomas did) in order to believe God. We are believers, not doubters, when the Word prevails in our lives.

Psalm 91 promises that no evil will come to me nor will any plague come near my dwelling, for God will give His angels charge over me to keep me in all my ways. Total, complete protection is promised by God. I believe that. Now, how will I respond in my behavior? If I do not really believe that promise in my heart, but believe only with my mind, I will go out and buy a gun and extra locks. I will seek to provide my own protection. My behavior has been motivated by fear instead of faith in God’s Word.

Our behavior will reveal what is in our hearts and whether or not we are truly believing and trusting God. Every day we trust in physical things around us. We believe, for instance, the chair we sit in will hold us. We do not give it a second thought. How much more should we trust and believe God and His Word. Chairs have been known to break, but God’s Word is everlasting.

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away.”
(Matthew 24:35)

God’s promises will do for us just what they say. His promises will hold us, carry us through, and give us victory in this life.

How do we see the promises we desire manifested in our lives? Faith behavior must be present if we are to receive anything from God. We can have all of God’s promises in our heads. However, if we do not claim those promises and act on them, they will not profit us at all. For example, James 5:14 and 15 tells, “If any are sick among you, let him call the elders to lay hands and pray.” Why? God does not want us sick. He wants us delivered spiritually, physically, and mentally. God says when we follow these instructions, we will be healed, and if we have sinned, we will be forgiven. God’s Word also says, “*By His stripes we are healed! My God supplies all my needs! I can do all things through Christ who strengthens*

me!” That is exciting, but until I actually apply God’s Word, I am not moving in faith.

Our actions speak louder than our words. Our inaction also speaks. When I do not call the elders, or claim God’s healing for myself, what am I actually saying? The message is loud and clear that I do not believe what God says, that the prayer of faith will heal the sick. The result of my unbelief and fear is disobedience. Therefore, I do not call the elders to pray. I will then have to suffer through something for which God has already provided my release. It is only when I believe and act on His Word that I can receive God’s provision. We might think, “Oh, I’m not going to bother to call the elders to pray over a sore throat.” Then take authority over it yourself. God says to do it. If we do not believe and act in faith concerning minor things, what will we do if the enemy comes against us with cancer?

I was called to pray over an individual who was in the hospital. God raised him up as He promised to do. While departing, I saw acquaintances coming from the emergency ward. I asked them if I could lay hands and pray for the injury. Their response was, “No, thanks, it’s really not serious enough!” If it was serious enough to go to the hospital, it certainly must be serious enough for prayer. God’s people need to learn what God wants to do for them, and will do in their behalf.

The problem is not our physical, financial, emotional needs, or our circumstances. What is the real problem? Unbelief and ignorance of God’s promises result in fear. God is able and willing to do all things in behalf of them who believe. Unbelief, ignorance, and fear hinder our faith, which God requires in order to do the work. We can respond in unbelief concerning our situations: “It sounds good that God wants me healed, but I’m still sick.” Conversely, we can respond in faith, believing God that we are already healed.

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1st Peter 2:24)

I can speak faith with my mouth, but if my actions are contrary to what I say, what good is it? For example, I can curse the sickness off my body in

the name of Jesus and believe that *“by His stripes I am healed.”* Meanwhile, I run for the thermometer, moaning and groaning, putting the ice pack on my head, etc. My words are inconsistent with my actions. My actions must be consistent with the faith I am professing so that God can take care of my problem.

The need may be financial. For example, let's say I have bills totaling \$39.58. In my pocket, I have but one set of keys. God says, *“Don't worry about what you will eat, drink or wear.”*

“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you.” (Matthew 6:31-33)

“My God will supply all my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

God tells us not to worry. The problem is not the bills. The problem is the worry which is the result of fear and unbelief. God is able to do what He says in our behalf, if we believe Him.

I can respond with my mind in one of two ways: unbelief or faith. Unbelief says, “Well, that sounds good, but I still have \$39.58 in bills to be paid.” Faith responds, “Yes, I know that my God will supply all my needs. I will not worry. I will seek God's kingdom and His ways first. I will believe that God will provide what I need.” I tell my mind, “Quit worrying. God is greater than this situation.” The renewing of the mind begins when we stop worrying and move into faith in God's Word. I begin to spend time meditating in it during the day, at work, or wherever I may be. (Psalm 1) (Remember, to meditate in the Word means to think it over and over again. It does not necessarily mean reading it all day long.) Is there something else I should be doing? The Word says that I should be giving. (Malachi 3:8-12, Luke 6:38, Proverbs 28:27) I may question, “How can I give when I'm \$39.58 in debt?” Then I start looking for something to give. I begin to give to God's ministries even though it is very little. (Read Luke 21:1-4) There may be a neighbor who needs some help. I help them. There may be someone in a nursing home who needs to be visited. I go visit them.

Faith will always involve action behavior based on the promises of God. Peter wanted to walk on the water. He would never have received the ability to do that had he not stood up and jumped in. At that point, Peter moved in faith. Jesus said, "Come," and Peter went. Faith produces obedience.

Jesus is saying to us, "Come. Salvation is available. Come. Freely receive what I have provided. Healing is available. Come. Provision for your need is available. Come." All we need do is receive by faith what God has already supplied in Jesus Christ.

Throughout God's Word, we are called to take action, and God promises to do something for us in response. Let's look at a few examples:

PSALM 37

OUR ACTION

GOD'S RESPONSE

vs. 3

Trust in the Lord and do good.

We shall dwell in the land and be fed (needs supplied).

vs. 4

Delight in the Lord.
(Put the Lord first)

He shall give us the desires of our hearts.

vs. 5

Commit our way to the Lord, trust in him.

He will bring it to pass (all of His Word).

vs. 7

Rest in the Lord (do not fear, worry); wait patiently for Him.

Evil doers shall be cut off.

vs. 8

Cease from anger, forsake wrath, consider not to do evil.

We shall inherit the earth (we were created to have dominion over the earth).

Matthew. 7:7

Ask.

It shall be given to you. (We will receive, if we ask)

Seek.

You will find. (We will find, if we seek)

Knock.

The door will be opened. (We will enter, if we knock)

These are all action responses on our part. God does not work for us, but we must respond in obedience to receive from Him. All the promises of God are available to those who are in Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus, nothing can be received from God. Jesus has already completed everything for us at the cross. Now it is a matter of receiving what God has provided. How do we receive? We receive by faith on the basis of God's Word and promises.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who builds his house on the rock.

The rain came down, the streams arose, the winds blew against that house but it did not fall because it had its foundation upon the rock.

But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on the sand;

The rain came down, the streams arose, and the winds beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash. (Matthew 7:24-27 NIV)

Jesus always operated in faith and obedience to accomplish the works that He did while on this earth. Yet, He tells us that He could of Himself do nothing.

“I can of myself do nothing; as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me.” (John 5:30)

How then did He do such mighty and powerful things? Jesus did these things by the power of the Father. This is important for us to know if we are to understand the authority given to us through Jesus Christ. What was the attitude of Jesus in relation to the Father? Jesus lived in total obedience to the will of His Father. He did nothing, He said nothing that was not in obedience to the Father. Who did the works? Jesus said His Father did the

works. We must understand this if we are to know how God's principles operate, and our role in God's workings.

“Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do because I go to my Father.

And whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:11-14)

What is Jesus, our Lord, saying? First of all, He is directing these promises to those who believe (He is not speaking to unbelievers apart from Christ, or to “believers” in Christ who do not really believe His promises). Jesus is telling us that true believers will be able to do the same works that He did, and even greater works in His name so that He might do the work of God. What is His purpose in doing what we ask in His name? His desire and purpose is to give glory to the Father. (John 14:13) Note that He tells us we shall be able to do these works because He is with the Father (verse 12).

We know that when Jesus arose from the dead and went to the Father, the Holy Spirit was given. The ability and power of the Holy Spirit is available in Jesus Christ. What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit? His purpose is to give glory to Jesus. (John 16:14) Who lives within us? The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live within us. (John 14:23)

When we speak in the authority of Jesus and step out in faith behavior as Jesus did, we take the place which God has ordained that we should take. God will then truly be glorified.

The glory from the works never goes to the one who appears to be doing the work. That person is merely a physical contact for a spiritual work. Jesus took no glory to Himself. He was a vessel for the Father to do the work through Him. He was one with God, and a co-laborer with God. We

certainly can take no glory for the works we do in Jesus' name because He is doing the works through us to glorify the Father. As Jesus could do nothing apart from the Father, so we can do nothing apart from Jesus. (John 15:5) We are to be obedient, and in faith, use the authority in the name of Jesus so that God may do works through us. We too are one with God and a co-laborer with Him.

We have an example of how Jesus used His authority during a storm at sea. The disciples became fearful, believing they were going to perish. Jesus, however, was calm; so calm that He was asleep. When they awakened Him, He asked, "Why are you afraid? Why don't you believe?" Jesus then stepped into the bow of the ship and spoke to the wind and the waves, "Peace, be still!" There was no fear present in Jesus whatsoever. The wind and waves obeyed. In Jesus' mind, everything was under control even before He spoke.

You may think, *But He is the Lord Jesus Christ*. See what the book of Philippians has to say:

"... 'Who [Jesus] being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

But made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men:

and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also has highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name:

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth;

and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father." (Philippians 2:6-11)

Jesus humbled Himself and became a man. He put aside His godly powers. He had to do this in order to go through everything, as we do. Only in this

way could He gain the victory for us at the cross by giving His life in our place. Jesus, as a man, was acting in faith and obedience to God. The same power that enabled Jesus to respond in faith and obedience to the Father is available to us in His name. Jesus had the same Holy Spirit we can have today. The same authority is available to us today in Jesus' name to do even greater works than He did.

How then should we respond in our behavior? Just like Jesus. How do we become like Jesus in our behavior? His will and purpose were conformed to that of the Father. We must be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Jesus is to be Lord of our lives.

Many people receive Jesus as their Savior. They respond to His love and forgiveness, and they desire eternal life. Some who receive Jesus may regard Him as good "insurance." They are not certain what lies ahead, so just to be safe, they receive Him as Savior. However, Jesus wants us to know Him not only as our Savior but as our Lord.

What does it mean for Jesus to be Lord? He is to be the ruler of our lives so that our every attitude is conformed to the mind and attitude of Christ. Then the reality of Christ living within us becomes evident. The world should see Christ through us. Our goal is no longer to do our will or purpose, but to do His will so our heavenly Father receives glory. Is it possible for us to attain that goal? The Word tells us that we have the mind of Christ. (1st Corinthians 2:16) The mind of Christ is total obedience. Remember also, we are declared sons of God the moment we receive Jesus (John 1:12) and the Spirit of God lives within us. As we seek to be conformed to the Lord Jesus Christ and study the Word of God, Jesus will reveal Himself to us. We seek Jesus by meditating in His Word.

"But his delight and desire are in the law of the Lord and on this law (precepts, instructions, the teachings of God) he habitually meditates (ponders and studies) by day and by night.

And he shall be like a tree, firmly planted [and tended] by the streams of water [the Holy Spirit, see John 7:38], ready to bring forth its fruit in its season, its leaf also shall not fade or wither and everything he does shall prosper [and come to maturity]." (Psalm 1:2-3 Amplified Bible)

We are planted in God's Word, and our delight is in meditating on it day and night because it is in the Word that we find Jesus. We are planted in living waters. The Holy Spirit moves in and through God's Word. Nothing will steal from us the fruit of God in our lives. Fruit comes naturally when the tree is nourished. As our minds are renewed by His Word and we respond in faith, all that we do will prosper.

"O taste and see that the Lord [our God] is good. Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) is the man that takes his refuge in Him.

O fear the Lord, you his saints [revere and worship Him] for there is no want to them who truly revere him with godly fear.

The young lions lack food and suffer hunger, but they who seek (inquire of and require) the Lord [by right of their need and on authority of His Word], none of them shall lack any beneficial thing." (Psalm 34:8-10 Amplified Bible)

Those who seek will find. To seek is to inquire or require of the Lord. What right do we have to seek the Lord? Every right!

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

For we have not a high priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Hebrews 4:14-16)

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

And having a high priest over the house of God;

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised).” (Hebrews 10:19-23)

We have a great high priest, our Lord Jesus Christ, who went through everything that we do, but He did not sin. He is now our high priest and we can come boldly before the throne of God because Christ Jesus has made us heirs to all the blessings in the heavenly places. (Ephesians 1:3). If we have a need, we have the right to go to our Father God. Before we received Jesus, Satan was our father, but now God is our Father. We have authority on the basis of God’s Word to ask for the things that we need.

“...Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6 NIV)

If we do not believe that God exists, we have no right to receive anything from Him nor will we have any desire to receive from Him. Our minds will be deluded by Satan and the things of this world. When we believe that God exists, we must also recognize that His nature is total, perfect love. If He is total, perfect love, then all the evils we see around us must be of Satan—sickness, poverty, grief, sorrow, fear, death, etc. Christ came in the flesh, lived as we do except without sin. He gave His life for us that we might have all the things of God, and then He arose from the dead. All power has been given to Jesus Christ. Jesus gives that same power to all who believe in His name. If we believe all of this, then we can also believe that *“He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”*

We must believe two things. First, that God exists. With that, we must believe that God’s nature is perfect love and that He came to free us from Satan’s power. God has freed us to receive Him and all of His blessings.

The second thing we must believe is that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. We seek God by believing His promises and doing what He says. God’s nature is to reward faith.

When we do not live by faith in God's Word, then we are really saying, "God, I do not believe you exist." This is serious!

"... We are not of them who draw back to perdition [because of unbelief]; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." (Hebrews 10:39)

The power of God is available to those who diligently seek God. When we believe that He is the only answer for our need and we apply His Word to our lives, then we will find His reward.

Jesus says, *"So everyone who hears these words of mine and acts upon them..."* It is one thing to hear and know the promises of God, but it is another thing to act on them. If we are to receive the promises of God, we are to be hearers of God's Word, seekers of God's Word, and doers of God's Word.

"What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?"

If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy work, and I will show thee my faith by my works.

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"

Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?"

And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” (James 2:14-26)

Works will be the result of true faith. If faith is present, good works will follow. Abraham was considered a friend of God because he was obedient to, and acted upon, God’s Word. We are already friends of God through Jesus Christ. Our works (acts of obedience and trust in the Lord) will be produced as a result of our faith in Jesus Christ.

DIAGRAM 6

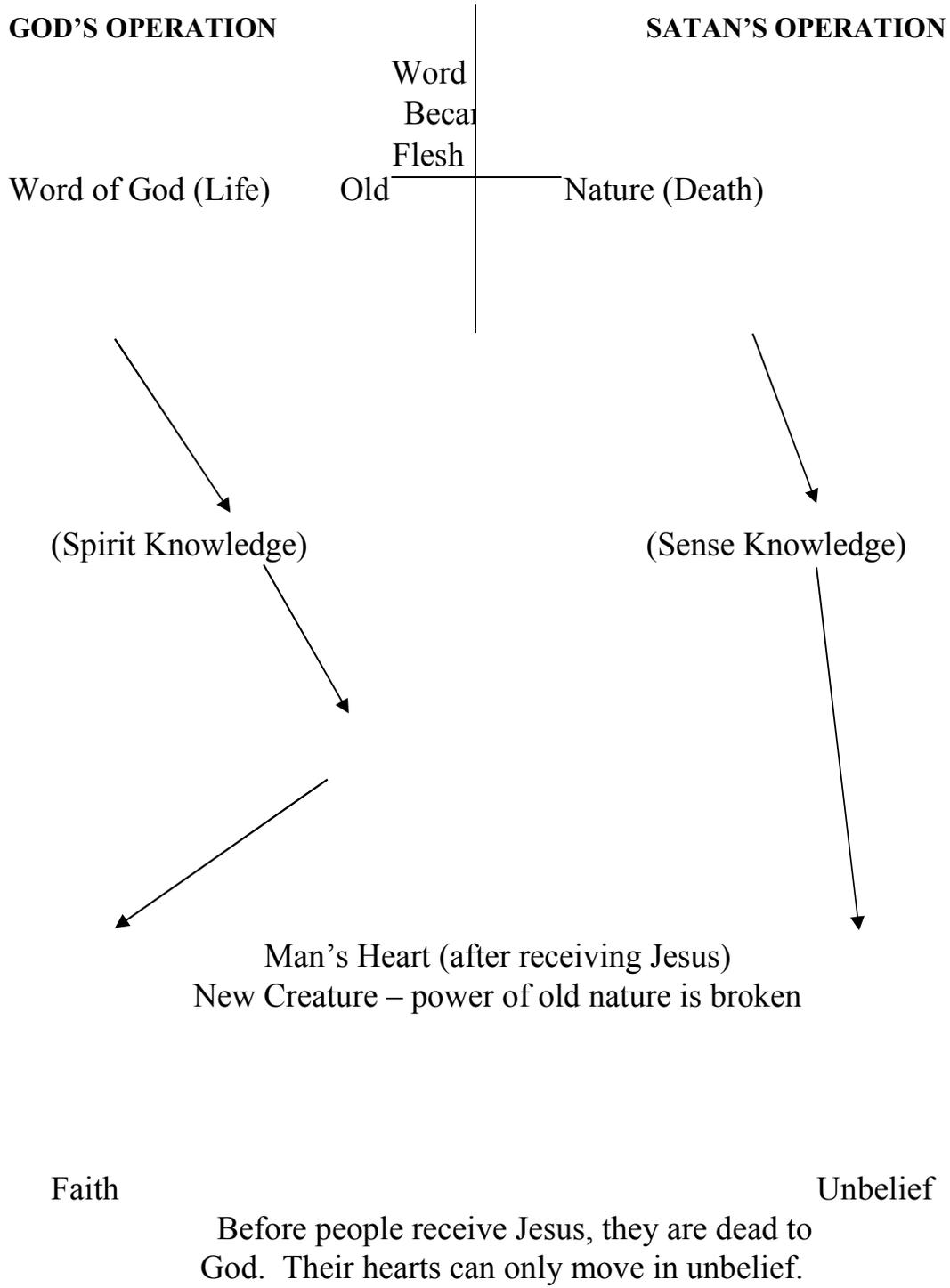


DIAGRAM 7

GOD'S OPERATION

SATAN'S OPERATION

Word
Became
Flesh

Word of God (Life)
Spirit Knowledge

Old Nature (Death)
Sense Knowledge

Man's Heart (after receiving Jesus)
New Creature – power of old nature is broken

Man's Mind

(Free to respond to God's Word or sense knowledge)
Disciplined and renewed mind responds – Faith
Undisciplined and unrenewed mind responds – Unbelief

Faith

Unbelief

Man's Behavior

(Free to act on God's Word or old lusts)
Faith behavior is love and obedience
Unbelief behavior is fear and disobedience

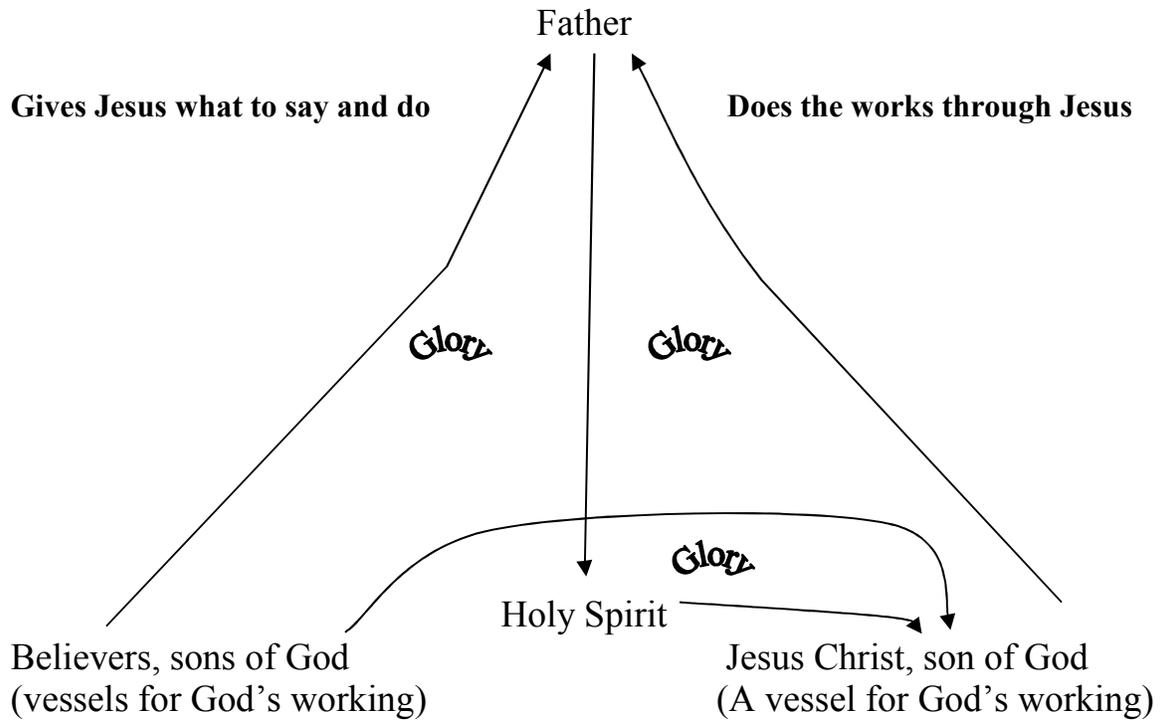
Casts Out

Love
(Obedience and discipline
In God's Word)

Fear
(Disobedience)

DIAGRAM 8

AUTHORITY AND WORKING ORDER



- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Be conformed to Jesus' image | 1. Did the will of the Father |
| 2. Give glory to the Father through glorifying Jesus | 2. Gave glory to the Father |
| 3. Obedient to the Father through Jesus' Word | 3. Obedient to the Father |
| 4. Operate by faith in Jesus' Word | 4. Operated by faith |

Chapter 10

THE DANGER OF PRESUMPTION

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” (Ephesians 1:3)

In Hebrews 11:3, we learn that everything must have its beginning in heaven before we see it in this earth. Everything must begin from things that are not seen. How did God create? He spoke forth His Word and everything was created. In the same way, all the blessings that are ours in Christ must come from the heavenly places. They must be called into existence. All things are ours in Christ. We were created to have dominion over all things. Now it is a matter of learning how to bring all that is ours in Christ from the heavenly places to this world.

To receive from God we must believe that God exists. Otherwise, nothing can be ours. We must also know that God is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6) If we are not diligently seeking Him, standing on His Word and promises, and believing that He is going to do what He says, we will not receive.

Before we study the promises of God, there is one caution area that we must look at: presumption.

“But the person that [does anything] presumptuously [with a proud hand], whether he be born in the land or a stranger, the same reproaches the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among the people.

Because he has despised the Word of the Lord and has broken His commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him.” (Numbers 15:30-31)

To be presumptuous is to be knowingly, willfully violating God’s principles. It says here that “he has despised the Word of the Lord and has broken His commandment.”

“And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken [listen] to the priest that stands to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die: and thou shalt put away evil from Israel.

And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously.”
(Deuteronomy 17:12-13)

The scripture is referring to those who know the commandments and ordinances of God but presumptuously go against God’s will, fully violating His Word.

“Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgressions.” (Psalm 19:12-13)

If you have not heard about sins of presumption, then you need to learn about them and their consequences. Presumptuous sins violate God’s promises, making it impossible to receive them. We will show you how this works, so that you may not be hindered from receiving from God.

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.” (1st Corinthians 10:1-9)

Presumptuous sins: to be arrogant, insolent, proud, to presume upon someone else’s standing or our own standing.

Israel was the fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham that from his seed would arise a great nation, a nation and a people chosen by God. They were to be a select, peculiar, set apart people through which God would show forth His power, love, and plan that other nations might know Him as God. Israel saw the deliverance of the mighty arm of the Lord: the parting of the Red Sea and freedom from bondage in Egypt. When they were hungry, God provided manna and quail. When they were thirsty, the Lord had Moses tap the rock, and water flowed. They saw many miracles of God showing them that they were a set-apart people, and that God was with them. They had God’s promises. Yet, they presumed upon Him. “We are a chosen people. Show us a sign that you are present!” After all the mighty works that God had done, they continued to complain and question, “How do we know He is with us? How do we know He is our God?”

Israel presumed that because they were the chosen people of God, no harm could come to them. According to these passages in Corinthians and Exodus, Israel committed willful idolatry and sin against God. The first of God’s law is: *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart [spirit] and with all thy soul [mind, will and emotions], and with all thy might [body].”* (Deuteronomy 6:5) God requires that we love Him with our entire being. Israel decided they would follow other “gods.” While Moses was on Mt. Sinai getting the law from God, Israel was making an idol to worship. Israel presumed upon God’s love and mercy their position as God’s chosen people. They tempted God.

Israel seemed to gladly acknowledge the law that said, “I am the Lord your God, and you are my people.” They remembered that part quite well. However, it appears they forgot the rest that said, “Obey Me, and I will provide all these blessings for you!” They reminded Moses and God again and again that they were God’s chosen people. They complained, “How can You leave us, Your chosen people, wandering and starving in the wilderness?”

We were better off in bondage. At least we were provided for.” They were unthankful. Their attitude was, “Lord, just shower those blessings and promises upon us. We are ready for them.” They chose to forget the part that said, *“Obey Me and I will bless you. I will give you the Promised Land flowing with milk and honey. I will establish you as my people forever.”* God’s Word to them continued, *“If you do not obey Me, plagues, barrenness, poverty, etc. are going to come upon you.”* (Read Deuteronomy 28)

The behavior and attitude of the Israelites illustrates the need to find a balance between our expectations of God and His expectation of us. We cannot presume upon the Lord when we are claiming His response.

“Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted and were destroyed by the destroyer [Satan].” (1st Corinthians 10:9-11)

Let us look at Jesus’ temptations. In the second temptation, Satan came to Jesus and said: “If you be the Christ, does not God say that you can cast yourself off the pinnacle of the temple and the Lord’s angels will catch you lest you fall?” It is interesting to examine that temptation. The Lord responded to Satan: *“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”*

Where was the temptation? Did not Satan’s words sound like the promises of God in Psalm 91:11-12? Satan came to the Lord Jesus Christ and tempted Him to presume upon God. We see that the true promise in Psalm 91 says the Lord will give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways. Satan left out the part, “to keep you in all your ways.” The ways of a believer are to be governed by obedience to the will of God as revealed in His Holy Word. Would it have been God’s way for Jesus to jump from the top of the temple to prove that His Word is true? Certainly not! Had Jesus jumped, His life would have been in jeopardy. It is not God’s way for people to foolishly risk their lives, deliberately putting themselves in danger. The angels of God will “keep us in all our ways.” However, our ways must be in compliance with God’s ways if we are to have their protection.

Satan knew that Jesus was the Son of God. He tempted Jesus to prove who He was, and to prove the Word of God. If Jesus had obeyed Satan, He would have disobeyed God by trying to prove something that God had already said to be true. Satan was attempting to persuade Jesus to act in

pride and self-will, against His Father's will. God's will was certainly not that His Son should leap to His death, but that His Son should give His life on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins.

It is true that Satan was using the Word of God. However, he was using only a half-truth from the promise of God. God's promises do not apply to people who deliberately jeopardize their lives by walking in disobedience to God.

A few years ago, a group of people took the promise of God in Mark 16:18: *"They [believers] shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them..."* They said they believed this promise, so they deliberately submitted themselves to walking into a pit of poisonous snakes. They died from the snake bites.

Was God's promise not good? Certainly it was good! However, their application of the promise tempted God for no purpose, and they were not protected by God's promise. When Paul was bitten by the snake (Acts 28:5), he was not deliberately jeopardizing his life. When he was bitten, he took authority in Jesus' name and was instantly healed. God is the author of life, not death. Paul was not proving or testing God. He was believing God and taking the authority of God in Jesus' name.

"Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

"Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (1st Corinthians 10:9-12)

Remember how God disciplines? He disciplines through His Word. (John 15:3) (Also see John 15:1-7; 2nd Timothy 3:16-17). Do not presume to be standing, lest you fall. The only way we can stand is on the promise of God's Word, not on our own.

Presumption comes from Satan. We know that a person moving in unbelief (which comes from Satan), rejects the Word and promises of God. Unbelief is one way Satan will work against us to hinder us from receiving God's promises. If we reject His promises, they will not be ours. If we choose not to receive a gift, the gift goes back to the giver. Satan is a liar who wants to steal blessings from us. He says, "I can get half of the people with unbelief. They will not know what they are missing. Now I need to give them something so they will think they have the promises." What does Satan give to the people? He gives them presumption. Presumption is counterfeit faith. It acknowledges the promises of God, but only so far as the blessing.

The Israelites had no problem receiving from God. However, they did not want to have anything to do with obedience. Presumption says, "I can have the blessings without obedience."

There are many people today, as God's Word says, who have a "*form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.*" (See 2 Timothy 3:1-7) They deny the power of God when faith is not put into action in obedience to God's Word. There is no power in presumption. There will be no blessing evident in their lives. Yet, they think they have the promises of God. They may believe they are saved. They may believe that all God's promises are available to them: prosperity, healing, etc. However, they do not experience these blessings. Why? Because they are missing it when it comes to obedience to God's Word. We cannot take half a promise and believe God for blessings when we do not want to follow what the promise requires of us: obedience.

We may go to the grocery store and say, "I will take a can of pears, a head of lettuce, a T-bone steak." I'm willing to take those, but when it comes to paying for them, I may not be willing. I want all those things, yet I will not have them because I do not want to pay the cost.

Our blessings are already paid for. Jesus, Himself, has paid the cost by giving His life at the cross. (Galatians 3:13-14) The problem is that we can presume upon Him. He asks us to simply love Him and show our love by obedience to His Word. In John 14:23, Jesus said, "*If you love Me, you will keep my commandments.*"

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1st John 5:1-5)

Many people think that God is all loving and forgiving, which He is. They think they will be alright. Yet, they never repent of their sins or believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, are baptized, or obey God’s Word. God has provided salvation and every blessing for us as gifts. However, we do not possess those gifts if we are not obedient in doing what God says to do. Presumption on the part of a believer can actually provide an excuse for disobedience. People may say, “I’m a child of God, blessed be the name of the Lord!” Then they commit fornication, adultery, quarrel with family and neighbors, are bitter, unforgiving, angry, etc. If we say we are Christians and then live contrary to what God says, we are presuming upon and tempting God. Presumptuous Christians expect God to perform His promises in their lives even though they choose not to be obedient to Him.

God does not want us to be disobedient to His promises because that will endanger us. If Jesus would have yielded to Satan’s temptation, He would have nullified God’s promises to Him. He would have moved out from under God’s protection and entered into disobedience.

Following Jesus Christ involves a cost. The Word of God says that our lives are no longer our own. We are to live in obedience to God’s Word. The blessings of God will flow into our lives when we are yielded and surrendered to Jesus Christ, seeking the things of God out of love and obedience to the Lord.

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

If we are not trusting the Lord, we are leaning on our own understanding. If we do not acknowledge God in our lives, we cannot expect Him to guide us and keep us in all our ways.

“Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.” (Mark 14:38)

The Lord Jesus is admonishing us not to enter into temptation. By watching and praying, we can guard our faith on the promise of God. When we go to God, seeking His promises for us through Jesus Christ, our attitude should not be that of proving God. We do not have to tempt or prove God. We do not prove God’s love by tempting Him on His promises and saying, “Father, You made this promise so I’m going to prove Your love by believing You will provide all my needs.” Instead, we are simply going to believe for the promise because we know He loves us. Our attitude should be that God has said it, and God will do exactly what He has said He will do.

What does God say about His Word? *“I will hasten my word to perform it.”* (Jeremiah 1:12) This holds true for all the promises of God.

Many people have presumed to have God’s salvation. They have gone to church all their lives. They know God is all loving and forgiving, plus they do go to church. Therefore, they believe they are saved.

God has provided salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. God is also a just and holy God. At Pentecost, when the people were touched in their hearts by Peter’s preaching Jesus, the people asked, “What must we do to be saved?” Peter replied, “Repent. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.” (In other words, renounce Satan and his past hold on your life, and make Jesus the Lord of your life.)

Let’s look at some examples of the promises:.

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
(Romans 10:13)

“...That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart [spirit] man believeth unto righteousness [right standing with God]; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation;

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”
(Romans 10:9-11)

The next directive is to be baptized for the remission of sin. Faith must also be present in baptism if we are to receive from God. Without faith being present in the ones being baptized, they are just taking a bath. How does faith come? *“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.”* (Romans 10:17) People have been baptized for many different reasons other than believing that Jesus is Lord of their lives, and they have forgiveness for their sins. They assume that because they have been baptized, they are saved and free to go on their own way. Hogwash! Without faith, their baptism means nothing. If faith is present, they will be motivated to walk in obedience to God and to seek after the things of God.

God will also perform His promise to supply our needs. Do you want your needs supplied? The Word of God is clear. He will supply our needs. God tells us to do something—to stop worrying about our needs—because He already knows what we need. We must seek God first, and then everything else will be supplied.

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”

For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:31-33)

The Israelites were wonderfully content in having all their needs supplied, but they were not willing to put God first. Yet, God in His mercy, did not

cast them off the first time they rejected Him. Again and again, God stepped in with His mercy and love just as He is doing for us today. Yes, God is a just God, and there came a point when He no longer tolerated their behavior. Because of their unbelief, He did not permit them to enter into the Promised Land. (See Hebrews 3:7-19)

We cannot presume the promises of God to be ours and not move in faith to receive them. Faith needs to respond to God's Word and then He will move (Hebrews 11:6). We cannot presume to be Christians and not seek first the things of God.

Do you want to prosper in all your ways? God also desires to perform His promises concerning prosperity in our lives.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” (Psalm 1:1-3)

Isn't that wonderful! How does the promise of prosperity come? By our delighting in the law of the Lord (His Word), and by meditating day and night in His Word. God gives direction and wisdom through it, and as we apply His principles, we prosper. Those promises cannot be ours if we are not delighting in the Lord, offering up praises to Him and seeking Him first. He does not want us to miss out on His promises. They are all ours through Jesus, waiting to be taken.

“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy

days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.” (Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Galatians 3:13-14)

God has given us a choice between blessing and cursing. Through Jesus Christ we can have every blessing and promise. They are all ours, but let us not presume upon the blessings. We now choose what we will have. Sometimes we wonder why we do not receive what we ask from God. God never fails, so we must be the ones who fail. Could it be that we are presuming upon God for finances when we are not seeking Him first? We cannot believe for the blessing without choosing to be obedient.

Every promise of God is based on God’s love, power and faithfulness. Many promises also are contingent on a proper response on our part, as in the following examples:

“...Have faith in God.

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:22b-24)

What a powerful promise from God to change our lives and increase our joy and His ministry. We can have what we say.

What is the promise based on? God’s love, power, and faithfulness. What are we called to do? Speak what is to be, not doubt, and believe that what we say will happen.

“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.” (Mark 11:25, 26)

When we ask forgiveness, God will forgive. We cannot be unforgiving and still demand His promises. People often wonder why they do not see God’s promises fulfilled in their lives, when they have bitterness, anger and unforgiveness in their hearts. The promises of power become null and void until we move back into faith and obedience, forgiving others as God has forgiven us. (See 1st Peter 3:7-12)

In presumptuous sins, people will come to God and in so many words, say, “Dear Lord Jesus, I will follow You if You will satisfy all my needs. Give me salvation, the Holy Spirit, riches, joy, peace, love, contentment. Gimme, gimme, gimme! I will serve You, Lord Jesus, one hour a week, Sunday mornings, not more than one hour. I will tell someone about You every two years (or when I feel like it). When I have time, I will read the Bible. I will live as I please.” Some people need the Lord for their own convenience and needs, not allowing Him to be their Lord.

We cannot expect the promises of God to work for us when we are trying to be a Christian on our own terms. Presumptuous people who think they are believers, but living as they please, had better repent. We are deceived by Satan if we believe we can be a disciple of Christ on our terms. Presumption is counterfeit faith.

Churches are filled with people who are not really saved. They have never confessed Jesus as their Lord. They could care less about His Word. There is a form of godliness (measured by going to church). However, there exists no power, no life of godliness conformed to the image of Christ. There is very little desire to be obedient to Him. It is time for us to awaken.

Satan will allow people to go to church and hear God’s Word, but he will attempt to hide the true gospel from them. (2nd Corinthians 4:3-4) During one of my early experiences in dealing with demons, the demon was laughingly telling me how he had deceived a woman who was being

delivered. He said that he allowed her to read the Bible and go to church. However, there existed no power, understanding, or delight in God's Word as far as she was concerned. She did not care to discuss Jesus. There existed only a form of religion. Presumption is a form of godliness, but denies the power. (This account is recorded in full in the book, *Satan's Defeat*.) It is an entirely different situation when someone is truly hearing and doing God's Word. Then Satan is threatened. He cannot touch a believer who is acting on God's Word.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works?

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23)

Apparently, we can be moving in the power of God, using the name of Jesus and doing all kinds of mighty work; yet, if we are not born again by God's Spirit, Jesus will say to us, “I do not know you!” Let us not be deceived. If we are saved, there will be fruit in our lives. (Matthew 7:17-20) Let us not become “fruit inspectors,” inspecting others, but let us examine ourselves to see whether we are in faith. (2nd Corinthians 13:5)

I pray that we are alert to the danger of presumptuous sins and “seeking a blessing Christianity,” devoid of obedience to God's Word. The times of testing which lie ahead will separate the true believers from those who profess, but are not committed to Christ. What would we say if we were approached and told we had a choice: reject Jesus, or go to prison? How will we deal with persecutions from the world for being a believer? (See Mark 10:29-31, John 15:18, 16:1-4, 2nd Timothy 3:12)

It is easy being a believer when everything is a blessing, but Jesus says we are to count the cost of true discipleship (Luke 14:25-35). We are to count the cost of following Jesus. Jesus is not trying to make us fearful to come to God. However, He is saying that everything will not always be easy when

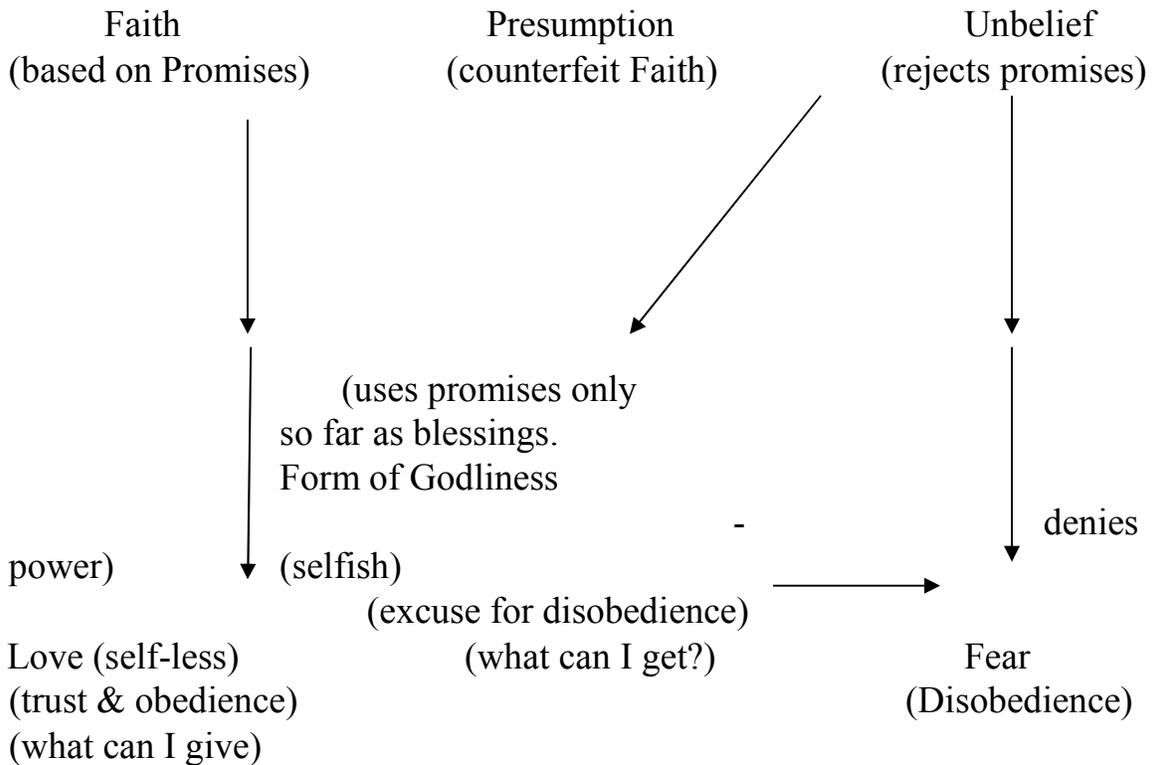
we follow Him because we will have made an enemy (Satan). Jesus has given us His Words of comfort.

“In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

DIAGRAM 9

GOD’S OPERATION

SATAN’S OPERATION



**PART III LIVING IN VICTORY Chapter 11
HOW TO OVERCOME TEMPTATIONS**

Before we can experience victory over temptations, we must have a clear perspective of their source.

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” (James 1:13-17)

Temptations and trials do not come from God because He has nothing to do with evil. God’s nature is holy and pure. Temptations and trials come from the three different sources: Satan, the world, and our own flesh. The power of Satan, the world, and the flesh were broken when Jesus shed His blood at the cross for us. He has already won the victory. Jesus Christ lived a perfect life without sin. He was tempted as we are, yet He did not disobey God. Jesus is our example. We, too, can have the ability and power to overcome in His name.

God has given us instructions in His Word whereby we can overcome all trials and temptations. It is a matter of applying them to our situation. If we will only renew our minds with just one promise of God for an area of our lives, we will have victory. Satan, the world and our flesh do not deal with spiritual things, nor can they. If we use just one promise of God against them, they will remember their defeat at the cross. Victory is assured when we use God’s spiritual weapon, the Word. We are spiritual warriors in a spiritual battle, and we must learn God’s tactics and strategy in fighting the battle. The victory is already won, and we can “hold on” to the victory that is the Lord’s until He returns. We can come against the temptations of the devil and win.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)

We fight against Satan’s temptations by resisting him. Stand up against Satan by faith in Jesus Christ and who you are, a son of God. He has no choice but to surrender. Tell him, “Satan, in Jesus’ name, you are the father of all lies. I am a child of God. You have no right to cause me to fear, doubt, worry, or to become sick. You are bound in Jesus’ name.” Once we take authority in Jesus’ name and bind Satan, then we should use the promise of God that applies to our situation. For example, if Satan attempts to make us fearful, find him and declare, *“I am born of God, not of a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind.”* (2nd Timothy 1:7)

If he tries to make us worry, bind him and state, “I rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. I am not going to worry about anything, but I am going to commit it to God in prayer. I thank Him that it is taken care of, and I thank Him for His peace that is surrounding me.” (See Philippians 4:4-8)

How do we recognize temptations that are from the devil? Watch for thoughts and responses (your own, or from others) that are not in accordance with God’s Word. Satan tempted Jesus through others around him. He used Peter to tell Jesus that He did not need to suffer and die. Satan may tempt us through others to violate God’s Word. If someone tells us to retaliate against a person who has wronged us, that is a lie of Satan to tempt us to violate God’s Word. Satan may also tempt us through our circumstances that appear to be contrary to God’s Word. We may feel like the world is caving in around us and on us; everything is falling apart. The enemy is trying to move us out of faith into fear. Sickness is another means of attack, or temptation. Feelings of pressure and tension, depression, and confusion in our minds is evidence of Satan’s oppression. There are many ways that temptations come from Satan. A helpful guide to detecting Satan’s presence is to determine if the thought, response, or circumstance is hindering and undermining our faith and obedience to God; and if we are focusing on self rather than God. If so, resist in Jesus’ name and speak the promise of God for the situation. The Word of God states that Satan will flee from us (as in terror). (James 4:7)

As we begin to stand against Satan in faith, in Jesus' name, he will "check us out" to see if we mean business and are really taking authority. When Satan sees that we are refusing to believe his lies and we are confidently standing on the Word, he will flee from us. He has no choice but to flee; he has no defense against the Word of God.

It is also important to remember that we must first submit ourselves to God. When we are submitted and obedient to God, our lives are under His control and protection.

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1st Corinthians 10:13)

Satan has no "new" temptations. As Jesus was tempted by Satan and overcame, so we will also overcome in Jesus' name. God will not allow the enemy to tempt us beyond what we are able to bear. As we are yielded and obedient to His Word in dealing with the temptation, He will deliver us from the temptation or trial. We will be stronger in the faith.

The second source of temptation is the world. We also need to recognize temptations of the world and know how to deal with them. What are the temptations of the world? Deceitfulness of riches is one. The world snares us into competing and striving. We must get a little more and a little better than we have. Worldly pleasures that come before God can become idols. Another temptation is thinking that we should have recognition for what we are doing. Jesus says that if we seek glory from men, we cannot have glory from the Father, and our witness is not true (John 7:18; 5:44). Temptations of the world set our hearts on the glitter of things of the world instead of the things of the Spirit of God. We can get caught up in the "rat race" of competitive life, bringing pressures on ourselves that God never intended us to have.

The way to overcome temptations of the world is, "be not conformed to the world." Do not base your values on the way the people of the world think and function. We should instead walk by faith in what God's Word says. *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."* (2nd Corinthians 5:7)

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:2)

The way to overcome the world is: (1) know the world’s standards, (2) Do not conform to the world’s standards and ideas, (3) Renew the mind by God’s Word to know His standards and values, (4) Rely on Him, not on ourselves or the things of the world. God has already seated us with Christ in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). This world has nothing more to offer us. God has established who we are in Christ.

“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” (James 4:4)

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” (1st John 2:15-16)

The third area of temptation concerns the flesh. What are the temptations of the flesh? They include habits that we think cannot be broken, dependency on anything apart from dependency on God (smoking, drinking, drugs, food, sex, dependency on doctors and others), seeking to satisfy needs of the body apart from godliness. In Galatians 5:19-21, you will find other temptations of the flesh.

God wants us to have all things, but He does not want us dependent upon anything or anyone but Himself. Money is not a problem, but the love of money is a problem. Things are not a problem, but the love of things is a problem. It is idolatry to put anyone or anything before God.

“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.” (2nd Peter 2:9)

How do we overcome temptations of the flesh?

“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2nd Timothy 2:22)

There is a different tactic used in each of the three temptation areas. Against Satan: submit to God in Jesus’ name; resist Satan, and he will flee. Against the world: be not conformed to the world, but be transformed by renewing the mind in God’s Word. Against the flesh: flee youthful lusts, follow after God’s ways of faith, love, and peace. Pray to God. God will strengthen you to overcome your weakness.

When Jesus was tempted, He resisted with the Word of God. If Satan tempts us to think that we are unworthy, we resist Him in Jesus’ name and tell him he is a liar. God has made us the righteousness of God in Christ. God has made us worthy.

If the world tempts us, we are not going to be conformed to the world, but we are going to renew our minds by God’s Word and start thinking, talking and acting by God’s principles. Since God has made us His children and seated us with Christ in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:6), we no longer need to seek our own recognition, or anything else from the world. God in Christ has given us far more than anything this world has to offer. As we begin to understand who we are in Christ, we can begin to re-pattern our lives and come against the world’s attitudes and values. God is our Defender, our Protector, our Provider.

If the flesh tempts us, we use another tactic. We resist the devil. However, we do not resist the lusts of the flesh. We flee the lusts of the flesh. If I have difficulty with overeating (gluttony), and I love donuts, I do not sit in the donut shop to overcome the temptation. I would be using the wrong tactic. I must flee those donuts. If we have a problem with the lust of the flesh in any area, we must flee from the temptation.

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (Matthew 26:41)

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” (1st Peter 5:8-9)

As we respond to faith in God’s Word and promises, and are obedient to follow God’s tactics in dealing with temptation from Satan, the world, and the flesh; we will have victory. As we experience more and more victory over these temptations and trials by responding in faith and obedience to the Word, God builds in us the character of Christ Jesus. Satan cannot defeat us. The world cannot corrupt us. The flesh cannot control us.

When persecution comes because of our witness for Christ Jesus, we will not waver, and we will be able to count it joy. God will perfect, strengthen, establish, and settle us. (1st Peter 5:10) God will work perseverance and love in our hearts. (James 1:2-5, Romans 5:3-5) We truly are more than conquerors in Jesus Christ!

CONFESSIONS TO BE SPOKEN ALOUD WHEN TEMPTATIONS COME

AGAINST SATAN:

*“I submit myself to God.
I resist the devil and he will flee from me.” (James 4:7)*

*“Greater is He [God] that is within me than he [Satan] that is in
the world.”
(1st John 4:4)*

*“Jesus has destroyed the works of the devil.”
(1st John 3:8)*

AGAINST THE FLESH:

*“I will flee from my evil desires,
and I will pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace.”
(2nd Timothy 2:22)*

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
(Philippians 4:13)

*I have crucified my old sinful nature with its passions and desires.
I live by the Spirit, and I will walk in the Spirit.*
(Galatians 5:24-25)

AGAINST THE WORLD:

*“I am no longer conformed to this world, but I am
transformed by the renewing of my mind [with God’s
Word].”*
(Romans 12:2)

“Jesus has overcome the world. I have victory through Him.”
(John 16:33, 1st John 5:4-5)

DIAGRAM 10

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

<u>Source</u>	<u>Battle Tactic</u>
1. Devil	- Submit yourself to God and resist devil (use Word of God) (James 4:7, 1 st John 4:4)
2. World	- Be not conformed to world – be renewed in mind (by Word of God) (Romans 12:2, 1 st John 5:4-5, John 16:33)
3. Flesh	- Flee youthful lusts. Follow God’s way. (2 nd Timothy 2:22, Philippians 4:13, Galatians 2:20, 5:24-25)

Chapter 12

HOW TO RECEIVE HEALING

We pray in the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” Many people have not received God’s healing for their bodies because they are not certain it is His will to heal them. They believe God heals others, but interestingly enough, they usually think it is not God’s will to heal them.

When Jesus Christ prayed the prayer, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” he was saying, “Move in this earth, Father, as you do in heaven.” According to Revelation 21:4, in heaven there shall be no more tears, death, sorrow, crying, or pain. There will be no sickness.

It is important for us to establish what God’s will and plan is for healing before we are able to receive healing for our own bodies. We must know for a fact what God’s will is for us. Let us turn to God’s Word, which is His

will. Let us put aside our experiences, or others' experiences concerning healing, or the lack of it. Let us see what God has to say.

In Genesis 1-3, we see that man was created in God's image. Sickness was foreign to him. Sickness and disease had no part in God's original creation. Sickness and disease are a part of the decaying process to death which also had no part in God's original creation. *"The wages of sin is death"* (physical and spiritual). When man fell into sin, he fell into bondage and captivity to Satan. According to Jesus, *"The enemy [Satan] has come to steal, to kill, and to destroy."* (John 10:10) Man became susceptible to sickness in his body as a result of Satan becoming man's lord.

Sickness is from Satan, not from God

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." (Acts 10:38)

"And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God." (Luke 13:11-13)

"And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"

And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him." (Luke 13:16-17)

The power of God flowed through Jesus to accomplish the works of the Father in this world ruled by Satan. The power and will of God is to release people from oppression and bondage. As Jesus points out, sickness is oppression from Satan (*"whom Satan hath bound these eighteen years."*) To have sickness does not mean we are possessed (filled and controlled by a

demon). However, in most cases, sickness is oppression of Satan attacking our bodies or our minds.

Why Did Jesus Come?

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” (Luke 4:18-19)

Jesus came to free us all from the bondage, oppression, and power of Satan. Satan is defeated. Jesus has bound him and given us authority in Jesus’ name to bind him. (See Matthew 12:28-30, 18:18, speaking of forgiving sins or not forgiving sins, loosening the power of Satan, or not loosening the power of Satan.)

Jesus said, *“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”* (John 10:10)

In the Old Testament, under the old covenant, God promised blessings to His people if they were obedient to Him. (See *Deuteronomy 7:11-15, 28:114*) God’s people would have everything: prosperity, fame, fruitfulness of crops and the womb, and no sickness would be found among them (*Deuteronomy 7:15*). If they were disobedient to God’s law, there were curses or punishments including poverty, barrenness, sickness and diseases, death, etc.

The only problem with the old covenant was that no one could keep God’s law perfectly. So God gave a new covenant (promise) centered around Jesus Christ.

“But now hath he [Jesus] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.” (Hebrews 8:6)

God established a new covenant promise with mankind based on better promises fulfilled in Jesus Christ for us.

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”
(Galatians 3:11-14)

Jesus, at the cross, took the curse of the law (poverty, separation from God, barrenness, death, sickness) in our place, freeing us to receive the blessings of God by faith (prosperity, communion with God, fruitfulness, life and health). We receive all these blessing as our inheritance by faith in Jesus Christ.

God has given us a free will to decide what we want! Under the old covenant, God said, *“I have put before you blessing and cursing, life and death. Choose life.”* (See Deuteronomy 30:19-20) To choose blessings and life was to choose to be obedient to God’s law. God desired that we have all blessings from Him.

Under the new covenant, every blessing of God has already been provided for us by Jesus’ death and resurrection. To choose blessings and life is to choose to receive them by faith in Jesus Christ. We choose to receive Jesus by faith, or to reject Him and condemn ourselves, and be cut off from God’s blessings. (See John 3:15-21) Health is one of our blessings in Jesus.

“Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” (Isaiah 53:4-5)

If you look up some of these terms in a Hebrew concordance, you will find some interesting things that Jesus accomplished for us at the cross. These verses are often used to verify that Jesus took our sins away on the cross. True. However, Jesus also accomplished more.

In verse 4, the term, “grief,” in the Hebrew (according to Strong’s Concordance) means “malady, disease, worries, sickness.”

“Sorrow,” means “anguish, affliction, grief, pain sorrow.”

“Healed,” means to “cure, heal as a physician, thoroughly make whole.”

(Note: It does not say go to a physician to be healed.) We are healed by Jesus’ stripes. At the cross, Jesus freed us completely from the bondage of Satan, our sins, death, malady, disease, worries, sickness, anguish, affliction, grief, pain, sorrow. Jesus made us thoroughly whole in spirit, mind, and body. We who believe in Him can (by faith in Him) be living on earth as in heaven according to Jesus’ prayer. In the world around us all these things are going on. However, we need not have them because in Christ we are “*in this world, but not of this world.*” (See John 17:14-17) The power of the indwelling Christ lives within us, and He prayed that we might be kept from evil.

“When the evening was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his Word, and healed all that were sick:

That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” (Matthew 8:16-17)

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1st Peter 2:24)

“For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

But that ye may know that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

And he arose, and departed to his house.” (Matthew 9:5-7)

Jesus pointed out that forgiveness of sins and the healing of body and mind go together, and He has power to do both.

Those who truly believe God at His Word will clearly see that God has also given a ministry of healing to His church. We can go forward in the name of Jesus, proclaiming the gospel that Jesus has set us free in spirit, mind, and body from the oppression of Satan. This is what God says. We can receive and believe it, or we can disbelieve and reject it. Just because we do not believe it does not mean that God is a liar. Just because we do not believe it does not mean that God would not do it if we would believe. Today, God is healing those who believe all over the world according to His Word.

Jesus says: *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues;

They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” (Mark 16:15-18)

“Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

(James 5:14-16)

We have been made the righteousness of God in Christ. We desire to be obedient to God. (This passage is for believers). God will raise up, heal, and forgive all those we pray for who want to be healed and forgiven on the basis of His Word, if we believe.

“And Jesus answering saith unto them. Have faith in God.

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith,

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:22-24)

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the son.

If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:12-14)

There are those who have the gifts of healings by the Holy Spirit. However, these passages apply to all believers in Christ. We are to pray, laying hands on people and expecting God to heal. Healing may not happen instantly, but the person will receive healing. (In the spirit, the healing occurs the moment you speak the Word. The manifestation in the physical realm will occur.)

It is God’s will to heal. Jesus healed all that were brought to Him. Jesus’ ministry was in perfect obedience to the Father.

“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (John 6:38)

“Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” (John 14:9-10)

Jesus said the Father did all those healings and mighty works through Him. It must be God’s will to heal everyone who seeks Him. (See Acts 10:38, 5:16; Matthew 4:23-24, 8:16-17, 9:35, 10:1, 12:15, 14:14, 14:34-36; Luke 4:40) Jesus did mighty works everywhere except in Nazareth because of their unbelief. (Matthew 13:58)

Either we believe that God can and already has healed us (1st Peter 2:24) or we do not believe. God can heal us, and sickness need no longer live in our bodies because we are God’s children by faith in Jesus Christ. It is amazing how it is possible for people to believe that their sins are forgiven yet not believe that God heals. How do we know that it is God’s will that we are saved? On the basis of God’s Word. If God does not want us saved or healed, why bother to pray for salvation or healing? We would be wasting our time.

God is no respecter of persons. (See Acts 10:34-38, Romans 2:11, Ephesians 6:9, Colossians 3:25) He does not want some saved and others not. He does not want some healed and others not. God wants all men healed! Salvation and healing go together according to God’s Word.

You may think, *Well, why is not everyone healed?* For the same reason that everyone is not saved. Some people choose to be sick. Some people actually do not want to be healed. Some people do not believe God to heal them. Some people are ignorant of God’s promises and His Word concerning His will and inheritance for them in Christ.

Misconceptions Concerning Sickness:

1. It is the result of sin. Many times this is the case. Worry, fear, guilt, etc., will bring on sickness. However, this is not always the case. According to the promise of God (James 5:14-15), even if sin is the

cause of sickness, it will be forgiven as it is confessed, and the person will be healed when we pray.

2. Sickness gives God glory. Not true. In the Gospels and Acts, God always received glory when the people were healed or delivered. Something that is from Satan does not give God glory. Glory goes to God when a person is released from Satan's bondage.
3. Sickness is the result of God purging or disciplining us. Jesus redeemed us from the curse or punishment of the law, sickness included. God does not teach us not to go out into the street by running us over with a car. God does not put cancer or heart trouble on us to teach us a lesson, although a lesson is learned as we seek God in the situation. God disciplines us with His Word.

"Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3) To discipline our child, we do not break an arm. We instruct the child. God instructs us with His Word. *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."* (Hebrews 12:6) The term, "to chasten," means "to train up, educate, discipline, instruct, teach." As we obey God's Word, we are covered by His protection and the evil one touches us not. (1st John 5:18) No sickness or disease can live on us any longer. However, if I disobey God, I choose to move outside of God's protection and Satan can harm me. God allowed sickness to come on those who disobeyed Him, but those who obeyed were not sick. Jesus Christ redeemed us from the curse or punishment of disobeying God's law: sickness, poverty, and the second death. We are disciplined by His Word. God cannot be tempted with evil. We can resist sickness that attempts to come on us from Satan. If sickness is the result of our sin or abuse of our body by overwork, overindulgence, or wrong attitudes, we can, by confessing our sin and receiving God's forgiveness, obtain healing and power to overcome temptations, thereby preventing sickness.

4. Sickness is the result of a lack of faith. Not necessarily. It is true that many people do not believe in resisting sickness or in healing by God. However, in many cases people are sick because of a lack of knowledge concerning God's will and healing power available to them. They need to meditate on God's promises to know that healing is already provided for them in Jesus Christ.

What about Job? Job received all his disasters at the hand of Satan. Didn't God allow it? Yes. God could do nothing else. Job had chosen to move in

fear rather than faith. *“For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.”* (Job 3:25) Job, by his fear, had opened himself up to attack and captivity by Satan for nine months, not a lifetime. Yet, in Chapter 42, when Job repented and prayed for his friends: *“Also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before,”* (Job 42:10). God healed Job and gave him double the wealth, and released him from Satan’s hold. *“After this lived Job a hundred and forty years... So Job died, being old and full of days.”* (Job 42:16-17)

What about Paul’s thorn? (2nd Corinthians 12:7-9) God’s Word clearly states the “thorn” to be an angel or demon of Satan, not sickness or disease. (verse 7)

Some consider the thorn to be a physical illness or handicap. (See Galatians 4:13-14) (Note: Galatia was Paul’s first stop after Lystra.) However, in my opinion, it would be more likely that when Paul’s “thorn” (demon of Satan) stirred up persecution, Paul was stoned at Lystra (Acts 14:19-20). The result of the persecution was an affliction. The “thorn,” however, was a demon, not a disease or sickness. We know Paul was shown what great things he would have to suffer for Christ’s sake (Acts 9:16). Everywhere he went, he was buffeted by Satan through people, and he suffered persecution.

In Joshua 23:13, God told Joshua that if Israel did not continue to love God, the people of Canaan would become a “thorn” in Israel’s eyes and side. (The same thing is found in Numbers 33:55 and Ezekiel 28:24.) In Paul’s list of things he endured for Christ, he does not include any sickness, but all had to do with persecution for Christ’s sake. (See 2nd Corinthians 6:4-10, 11:23-27) God would not remove the messenger of Satan, his “thorn,” from Paul because Satan’s day is not yet up until Jesus returns. Paul prayed that Satan be removed. God could not grant that prayer until the fulfilled time. However, God has given to Paul and to us grace (power) that is sufficient for victory against the devil. *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”* (James 4:7)

We cannot use Paul’s “thorn” as an excuse for enduring sickness because it is questionable as to whether Paul’s “thorn” even was sickness. Let us not use Paul’s “thorn” as an excuse for unbelief concerning God’s will and desire that we have health and healing. Jesus, our example, was never sick.

What heals? God's Word heals. Our faith in God's Word is how we receive God's healing.

"He [God] sent his Word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." (Psalm 107:20)

"My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

For they are life unto those that find them, and health [medicine] to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:20-22)

How to Pray to Receive Healing:

Desire healing. Find God's Word for you, and believe it. Pray on the basis of God's Word; then thank God that you received your healing. (Mark 11:24) Confess what God's Word says, not what you see or feel. *"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* (Hebrews 11:1) Your faith in God's Word is the substance and evidence of your healing until you see and feel it in your body. According to God's Word, you *will* see your healing. Praise and glory to God! You can continue to thank and praise God that by His (Jesus) stripes you were healed. Act on your healing. Do what you normally would do.

Chapter 13

HOW TO RECEIVE GOD'S FINANCIAL PROSPERITY

God has made provision for us, His people.

"But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day." (Deuteronomy 8:18)

God is the One who has given us power to acquire wealth. For what purpose? That His promises might be established in us, His people. By faith, we are now a part of Abraham's seed and heirs to God's provision. (See Galatians 3:6-16)

“I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasure.” (Proverbs 8:20-21)

The promise of God’s Word says to those who are seeking after the wisdom and righteousness of the Lord above anything else will inherit substance (property), and their treasuries will be filled.

“The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.” (Proverbs 10:22)

Spiritual, physical, and mental blessings will come upon those who are seeking the Lord and are obedient to His Word. They will have blessing.

The curse or punishment of the law is barrenness, sickness, death and poverty. The blessings are health, life, and every blessing including material prosperity. (See Deuteronomy 28)

You may think it isn’t Christian to seek after material blessings. That is right. We are not to seek after riches. God says that He will give material blessings on the basis of His Word to those who are seeking after Him. We will not lack for any good thing!

God does not say there is anything wrong with money, or having goods and money. He *does* say that the love of money, or the love of (or preoccupation with) the things of this world, is evil. We cannot serve both God and mammon (worldly things). (See 1st Timothy 6:9-10, Matthew 6:24) There is nothing wrong with money or goods. God wants us to have them. The problem rests in us loving money or material goods.

We must not seek after riches and goods. Here is where many believers miss it when it comes to understanding how God’s prosperity promises go into effect for us. They say, “God intends for me to prosper.” This is true. However, then they proceed to seek after acquiring riches and worldly goods which God says is serving two masters, and is evil. We either serve God, or we serve the things of the world.

Consider the great men of the bible. All of them (Solomon, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.) did not seek after money or material goods. What did they seek after? They sought after the kingdom of God, and were obedient by faith to God's Word and promises, which was counted as righteousness in their behalf. They sought after God, and God prospered them for their faithfulness. Today we cannot even begin to imagine the wealth that these men possessed, which was given by God.

When Job turned back to God, God gave him health and a double measure of all the goods and money Job had before his troubles. Job was one of the wealthiest men of his day, and God doubled that wealth. (Job 42:10)

God's desire is that we prosper. These promises belong only to those who are seeking God first in faith and obedience to His Word. God promises not only spiritual blessings but also abundant physical blessings for His people in this life.

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithall shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” (Matthew 6:31-34)

People who do not know the Lord spend their time worrying, seeking after provisions and depending on riches. We are to spend our time seeking after the Lord and His righteousness in obedience to His Word, and depending only on Him. The Word says He already knows what physical things we need. It also says that He will supply all our needs as we seek Him first before anything else. We are to stop worrying about worldly things.

Why are believers in Jesus still on this earth? Certainly not to worry, fear and seek how they are going to survive. No! We are in this earth to be

“shining lights in a perverse and crooked generation.” We are to be holding forth God’s Word of life and truth. (See Philippians 2:15-16) We cannot spend our time like this perverse and crooked generation, seeking worldly things and worrying about how we are going to provide for our families. We have no time to spend in such nonsense. We are children of the King, and we must be about our Father’s business. We must be busy proclaiming God’s Word, and witness about the abundant life in Jesus so others can have Him in their lives also. Wherever we are, and whatever we are doing, God has a mission for us at home, work, downtown, etc.

God says, *“I know your needs, and I will provide.”* After His disciples returned from their mission, Jesus asked them, *“Did you lack anything?”* They said, *“No.”* (Luke 22:35) They went without wallets, bibles and shoes; yet they did not lack anything. God supplied all their needs.

We are in God’s army. In the army, you are given a shirt, britches, shoes, hat, food, weapons, etc., so you can get out into the battle. God says He will provide everything for us for the battle at hand. He wants us to be free to think only of the mission and ministry He has for each of us. God does not want us weak and beaten down. He wants us strong. He has given us promises for health, prosperity, freedom from worry, fear, confusion, sin, guilt. He has given us promises for everything we will ever need in this life as well as the life to come. We need to realize God’s provision for us so we can be about the ministry He has for each of us.

“And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?

No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Luke 16:8-13)

To those who are seeking after riches and are covetous, these words of Jesus smack them in the face. Their values are disoriented and false. Jesus spoke this to the Pharisees who put the worldly things and goods above the truth of God (concerning what is true godliness).

Jesus said, *“Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.” (Luke 12:15)*

What is Jesus saying to us? He is saying if we cannot handle financial matters according to godliness, how can we handle spiritual truths that are of more importance? Our attitudes and how we deal with material and financial things will be a measure as to how we will deal with spiritual truth. God will not commit even more spiritual truth to someone who is not handling their finances. Why may we not be handling our finances properly? Because we are focusing on maintaining or increasing our goods, worrying and fearful about how we are going to survive. We can become dependent on money and goods rather than dependent on God.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33)

Churches do not have to run fund raising drives. Christian families do not need to be concerned about how they are going to survive. God wants to supply the money for His ministries and for His families. God has made provision to supply the needs of His people.

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

(As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth forever.” (2nd Corinthians 9:6-9)

A spiritual principle of finance is that if we sow or give little, we will reap little. If we give much, we will receive much more from God. We do not give from pressure put on us, but because we are thankful to our Lord for His blessings, and we give willingly and cheerfully.

Many people have been turned off because some churches are more concerned about their finances and how they are going to survive, than about God’s promises of provision – and people giving to the Lord from a thankful heart. If a church truly wants to be blessed, then it must free its people to give from their hearts to the Lord. God loves a cheerful giver and will honor faith that believes God will provide. It is better that people not give than to give from an unwilling heart. Are we concerned about funds coming, or having God’s blessings and provision by faith?

Have you ever looked in your wallet at offering time, and all you had was a big bill? Did you hesitate, or think about making change? Or, did you give cheerfully to the Lord, and believed God’s Word and promise that He would honor your offering and bless you? As you gave to the Lord from a cheerful heart, God honored His promise in your behalf. (Come to worship prepared to give to God’s ministries.)

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work.” (2nd Corinthians 9:8) God wants every one of us to be sufficient, knowing all our needs are supplied. Why? That we may abound to every good work. The goal of God prospering us is so that we can give it away to His ministries of the gospel, the poor, widows and orphans. God will prosper us so that we can give to Christians in need. God says He will supply our needs, and our prospering will reach beyond to minister to others. If we think that God will prosper us so we can store up our wealth and use it on ourselves, we are mistaken. That is not the purpose of God’s prosperity, and if our motives are selfish, our hearts are not right before God.

The more we give, the more God will give us. This is not a “get rich quick” scheme. It will work for those who are God’s children, obedient to His Word and His purpose.

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.” (Luke 6:38)

God will always give more back to us than we have given, so we can bless others.

“He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.” (Proverbs 19:17)

If we cheerfully give to someone in need, God says that we are loaning to Him, and He will repay. We do not expect anything back from those to whom we have given. God’s Word says God will repay us.

“He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.” (Proverbs 28:27)

In James 2:15-16, the Lord shows us that if a brother or sister has a need and we say, “May God bless you;” but we do not take care of their need, there is no blessing. When we give to the need and pray the blessing, God will bless both parties.

“Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” (Proverbs 3:9-10)

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open

you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Malachi 3:8-12)

This is one powerful promise. God does not need our money. In the tithe, we dedicate to God (out of a thankful heart) the first of what we have earned or produced. Before we pay our bills or put funds toward anything else, we give a tenth of our gross earnings (or more) to the Lord. God is the one Who has provided for us, and we are grateful. We would encourage you to give to a church or ministry in which God’s Word is being taught and where you are physically working and being served.

It may be that we have given to God what is left over after we have paid our bills and met our needs. However, if we want to prosper, we need to reverse that order. Give cheerfully to God first; then He meets our needs.

God says, “Prove me, test me whether I will not fill your barns (or bank account) when you give to me first! Try my promise!” God means just what He says.

When we thankfully give to God first, God says that He will rebuke the devourer. Who is the devourer? Satan. Jesus says that Satan is a thief who is come to steal, to kill and to destroy (John 10:10). God will keep Satan from stealing our jobs, causing our businesses not to prosper, our crops not to grow, our appliances and cars to break down, our families to be sick, or anything that takes away and wastes our funds. God will hold back the enemy and prosper all that we do. Our other 90% or 80% will be like 250% under God’s provision. God can make our \$50.00 stretch into \$300.00, or He can increase \$50.00 to \$500.00. We can expect God’s blessings as we are obedient to His Word. We will not lack for anything.

The world does not think along these terms but will stand up and take notice when they see God prospering us. We will be called “blessed.” When the

world sees us content and resting in God's abundant provision, they will take notice that the Lord has blessed us.

“But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

“O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”

O fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.” (Psalm 34:8-10)

How to receive God's prosperity:

- Stop worrying about needs being supplied, and acquiring riches, but seek God's kingdom and righteousness (meditate in and be obedient to God's Word).
- Give cheerfully of your firstfruits to the Lord. God will rebuke the devourer and what we do will prosper that we will have more to give so God receives glory.
- Give to the poor and needy.

Here is an attitude caution to receiving God's prosperity: Since in Christ, we are heirs to God's prosperity, we need not seek after acquiring wealth. Prosperity is not the goal of our Christian walk. Knowing God and living a godly life is the goal of our Christian walk. Prosperity is a benefit that follows godliness. We are to seek after the Lord and godliness with contentment in God's provision rather than riches and goods. We expect God to honor His Word as we seek and obey Him, and we will have prosperity. God intends to prosper those who seek Him, but not at the expense of being “godly” and being content in Him. True prosperity is actually knowing God.

“...Peverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”

But godliness with contentment is great gain.

For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is a root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” (1st Timothy 6:5-10)

“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:11-13)

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

The Lord will provide for our needs as we trust and seek Him first. He came to Solomon and told him he could have anything he desired. In Psalm 37:4, He tells us the same thing. He will give us the desires of our hearts if we delight in the Lord. What did Solomon desire? See 1st Kings 3:3-14 and 2nd Chronicles 1:7-12.

“Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?”

And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but has asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.” (1st Kings 3:9-14)

Solomon desired wisdom. *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge [wisdom]: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* (Proverbs 1:7) Solomon could have asked for riches or fame, and God would have given it to him. God did give him riches and fame beyond measure because this was a man who could be used by God. God received glory through what he did. He caused so much to come into Solomon’s country that nations all around came to honor Solomon and his God.

If we want God’s blessing to flow into our lives, we need to desire wisdom (Proverbs 2:4-5). The reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. If we want anything from God in this life, we must seek Him, giving Him praise, glory and honor in everything. God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Then He says He will move in our behalf that others would give Him glory through our lives. We are intended to have dominion over all things so that He receives glory.

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that geteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.

She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honor.”
(Proverbs 3:13-16)

As we seek the wisdom of the Lord, God will give to us length of days, riches, and honor as His sons by faith in Jesus Christ.

The second attitude caution should be practiced after we have received God’s prosperity.

“When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shall bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

Lest when thou has eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.” (Deuteronomy 8:10-19)

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (Hebrews 13:5-6)

“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.” (1st Timothy 6:17-19)

We need to be aware of these cautions in order to receive prosperity, and we need to know what to do with it once we have it. God will do just what He says He will do as we seek Him first. We will have the prosperity of God in our lives. Bless God!

Chapter 14

OVERCOMING THE IMPOSSIBLE

I BELIEVE THAT God is able to do the impossible in behalf of them that believe. If we are to receive the promises of God, it is important that we believe Him.

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19)

God is not a man that He should lie. Man has a tendency not always to tell the truth. Man can praise God and curse his brother out of the same mouth. This is not what God wants, but it is sometimes the case.

However, God is not a man that He should lie. Regardless of how spiritual we are, none of us have arrived yet. Paul says, *“I have not yet arrived, but I am forgetting those things that are past, and reaching on to those things ahead, I press on towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,”* (See Philippians 3:13-14). We are to be pressing forward.

God is perfect. God is 100% true. His Word never fails, nor is He the son of man that He should repent or change what He has said. When some people flew in from Canada, they had purchased round trip tickets. When they confirmed their return flight, they were told the price had been raised from what they had originally paid. They had already purchased their tickets, and now the rates had changed. The deal was supposed to have been complete; but there was a change of mind.

I want you to know that if we have confessed with our mouth, “Jesus Christ is Lord,” and we believed in our hearts that He is risen from the dead, we were baptized and have lived in obedience to God’s Word; and if we should die, when we stand before Jesus, He is not going to open the Book of Life and say: “I do not see your name here!” The moment you received Jesus, you were saved. God is not going to change His Word or His way of working. He says that He is not a son of man that will lie, or the son of man that He will change His mind.

If you are believing God for your healing and are confessing and acting like you are healed, God is not going to come back to you and say, “Get back on your medicine. I’ve changed my mind.” If you are healed, you are healed according to God’s Word.

“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” (Mark 11:24)

We need to stand on the fact that God is not a man that He will lie, nor the son of man that He will repent or change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and then not fulfill? If we are going to receive anything from God, we must come to the point where we take God as 100% true, and everything He says as 100% true. Has He not promised, and will He not fulfill it? There is no promise of God that He will not stand behind 100% to fulfill.

When I began to meditate on this passage (Numbers 23:19), the Spirit of God welled up within me because I knew that God means just what He says, and He will do exactly what He says. We need to know in our hearts that: 1) God is 100% true; 2) God is not going to change His mind 100% of the time, and 3) We need to believe that God is 100% true, 100% unchangeable, 100% able to perform that which He has promised.

Our faith is released when we act on God's promises. Many people say, "I believe in God. I believe that God's Word is true. I believe, I believe." Yet, when it comes time to actually act on the Word, they fall.

Believing in God is not the same thing as having faith in God. Faith in God acts. Peter jumped out of the boat and walked on the water. The lame man stood and took up his bed when Jesus told him to get up.

The key is knowing that God is 100% true and acting upon it 100% of the time, knowing that "Has He not said it, and will He not do it?"

The fact is that God says the impossible is possible. Meditate upon this thought that the Holy Spirit revealed to me as I was meditating over Numbers 23:19: "It is actually impossible that the impossible not happen when you are acting upon My Word!"

The first impossible in this phrase means that "it" cannot happen any other way. What is the "it?" The "it" is the circumstance or situation which appears to us to be impossible to help; broken bones, health conditions, etc. Regardless of the situation, God says, "I am able to do this impossible in behalf of those who believe upon My Word." This is why this book has been written. We need to know what His promises are, believe God for the impossible, and act like He is able to do the impossible for us.

We need to get into our spirits that God's Word is 100% TRUTH, and when we are acting upon God's Word, it is actually impossible that it will not happen. God is able to move in behalf of those who believe, and to do the impossible. Regardless of how impossible we may feel a situation is, there is nothing impossible for God.

Many of you agree with me that there is nothing impossible for God. God's Word says this again and again. God is able to do the impossible. (See Matthew 19:25-26) Here we see that the plan of God is the only way the impossible can be accomplished. It is impossible for man to come to God on his own. The wonder of God's love is that He moved in our behalf in Jesus Christ according to His promises. All we do is receive salvation, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, health, finances, etc.

The power of God moved into this world raising Jesus Christ from the dead. Impossible to man's way of thinking, but God is able to do the impossible to fulfill His plan for us. We know that God has honored Jesus, and that *"at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* (Philippians 2:10-11)

God has already done the impossible for us in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is Lord. God's gift is waiting for us to receive it and apply it. I believe that we also, in Jesus' name, will now be vessels for God to continue to do the impossible through us. The impossible will not happen today unless we believe God for it, and act in faith to receive the impossible.

A father came to the disciples asking them to cast a demon out of his son. They were not able to do it. What was it that kept the disciples from the work? When the man brought the boy to Jesus, His answer was:

"O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me." (Matthew 17:17)

"And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour."

Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” (Matthew 17:18-20)

Notice that the reason the work of God was not accomplished through the disciples at that point was because of their unbelief. Jesus did not mess around like people today who do not want to offend others by telling them they are not using their faith. Jesus did not care about the possibility that the disciples might be offended. Jesus’ goal was that the disciples might be equipped and thoroughly trained to believe 100% of God’s Word, believing for all that God had to give. Jesus bluntly told them, *“It is because of your unbelief that you could not do this work.”*

Jesus knew that unbelief would hinder God’s power from flowing. Unbelief will hinder a person from receiving salvation. Unbelief will hinder a person from receiving the Holy Spirit. Unbelief will hinder people from receiving healing, finances, or any of the other promises of God. Unbelief will cut off God’s miracle working power.

“...Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” (Matthew 17:20)

This is consistent with what we read in Numbers 23:19. *“Has God not said it, and will he not do it? Has he not promised and will He not fulfill?”* God will do 100% of what He says He will do 100% of the time. How is He going to do the impossible if we do not believe? God wants to do the impossible, but we will not have them unless we believe for the things of God.

It is impossible that the impossible not happen when we act on God’s Word. When we say to the mountain (impossible situation), *“Move, in Jesus’ name,”* it must move! God is able to accomplish all things in behalf of those who believe. God has given us 100% faith to match 100% of the Word of

God to match a 100% God. We must act on God's Word. *"If you can believe, all things are possible to them that believe."* (Mark 9:23)

God is going to save people, fill them with the Holy Spirit, and heal them, to accomplish the impossible in behalf of those who believe. Families can be restored. God has a better way.

"Nothing will be impossible for you" as you have faith in a 100% God. If we are moving in 99.9% faith, we are always going to act in the .1% faith. We do not conjure up this faith. God has already given us the measure of faith when we received Jesus (Romans 12:3). All we need to do is renew our minds. The mind is where doubt is produced. Our minds look at the senses, feelings, and circumstances and say, "Hey, Hey, Hey, that can't happen. That's foolishness! That's absurd!" The mind is limited because it looks at the things of this world and what it knows of this world.

We have the ability to move in 100% faith as we begin to renew our minds by the Word of God. We see that the disciples had already been given authority over spirits (Matthew 10:8), yet at this point, they were not able to do the work. Why? It seems to me that they had forgotten the fact that they had already been provided the ability to do this work. We do not have to start over each time a new situation arises. The power is there to accomplish the work in the name of Jesus Christ if we would just believe and act on the promises of God, and do what God says to do.

See Mark 9:19-27. This is the other account of the demoniac son. This father came to Jesus saying, "If you can do anything, heal my son." Jesus looked him squarely in the face and said, "If you can! If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes." In other words, the power of God is ready, willing and able to move in behalf of those who seek and believe for the things of God. God will perform the work in behalf of those who believe.

We see again and again that there are many mighty miracles of God which are recorded in the Gospels, and many more that did not get included. Those people believed God to do something. So great was their faith in God that in one case, they made a hole in the roof to lower a man on a stretcher down into the room where Jesus was in order to have Jesus heal him. Their faith was so great that they went out of their way to seek God's power.

This is what it means to seek God. It is not trying it one time to see what happens. That attitude is not faith. Faith is acting upon God's Word, knowing that we will have exactly what we are seeking from God.

We know that everyone who sought Jesus was healed. Everyone! Spirits were released. Ailments were cured. Cripples walked. Blind saw. The power of God flowed through Jesus. People may say, "Jesus did not heal everyone while He was here," but not everyone was seeking Jesus to be healed. Jesus healed those who, by reason of their faith, were seeking healing.

Today, Jesus heals, delivers and saves those who are seeking Him and His life. The life of God comes to those who are seeking God. They are the ones who receive. Those who do not seek God will not receive anything from Him. It is not that God does not want to give life and blessing to them, but that they do not seek God. God has provided it all. Blessing is there waiting for every one of us. It is a matter of seeking and knowing that we have what we seek. God says it is ours through Jesus Christ.

Mark 9:23 says everything is possible to him that believes. Matthew 17:20 says nothing shall be impossible to you.

I like this father's response in Mark 9. He knew that his son was going to be delivered. He knew it. He knew there was nothing to prevent his son from being delivered. He knew the power of God was his, and the life of God was going to flow into his son, and he would be delivered. This man knew it, and he did not want anything to hinder the power of God from flowing. In verse 24, the boy's father exclaimed, "Help me overcome my unbelief!" This man wanted that 100% faith that would deliver his boy because the power flows through the faith of them that believe. Jesus again and again said, "*Thy faith hath made thee whole,*" and "*Be it done according to your faith.*"

Praise God we have the faith to receive the things of God as we begin to understand that God is able to do the impossible in behalf of them that believe. I thank God for the privilege to share this word with you: As you seek God, you will never be ashamed. (Romans 10:11, 4:17-25, 2nd Peter 1:3-12)

It is impossible that the impossible not happen, when you act upon God's Word.

Chapter 15

PROMISES—PROMISES—PROMISES

Praise God for His promises. In God's Word, there is a promise for every situation that we may encounter in this life. We can indeed have victory in all situations as we "*Trust in God and lean not on our own understanding,*" and as we keep God's Word constantly in our thoughts.

In order for us to have the victory of God in our lives, it is important that we allow Him to move in our lives. We allow His promises to come in by:

1. Searching out God's promises that apply to our situation.
2. Believing that God means and will do exactly what He says. He is our source.
3. Confessing to God any known sin which may be present in our hearts and minds. For instance, if hatred, anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, jealousy, strife, or lust, etc., is present, we need to ask God's forgiveness before His promises will operate for us. "*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*" (Psalm 66:18) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" (1st John 1:9)
4. Confessing God's Word and promise with our mouths, rather than the situation. God calls things that be not as though they are (Romans 4:17). We will see victory.
5. Doing what the promise says. We cannot expect God to do His part if we are not obedient to do our part of the promise.
6. Acting as though we have the answer the moment we claimed and believed God's Word.

Many times people feel they need to know all God's Word before they can apply the promises. We need to remember that our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual. (See 2nd Corinthians 10:3-6) It is good for us to know God's Word and every promise He has for us, yet it takes only one promise of God, acted on in faith, to set to flight the powers of Satan. Satan is a liar. God is truth.

Search God's Word and begin to apply by faith one promise of God for your needs. Memorize the promise that applied.

Salvation for You

"That if thou shall confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shall be saved." (Romans 10:9)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24)

Receiving the Holy Spirit

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13, also Matthew 3:11, Acts 8:14-17)

Power of Jesus' Blood for You

"...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1st John 1:7, also Isaiah 53:5, Romans 5:8-9)

Right Standing With God for You

"For he (God) hath made him (Jesus Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him (Jesus Christ)." (2nd Corinthians 5:21)

Answer to Prayer

"If ye abide in me, and my Words abide in you, you shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7, also Mark 11:24, 1st John 3:22)

God's Protection for You

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shall go. I will guide thee with mine eye." (Psalm 32:8, also John 6:45, 14:26, Psalm 91, 46)

God's Power in You

"...If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."
(Mark 9:23, also John 14:12-14, Ephesians 3:20)

God's Freedom for You

"...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."
(John 8:36, also Isaiah 61:1, Romans 6:22)

God's Faith for You

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."
(Romans 10:17)

"...Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he hath shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." (Mark 11:22-23, also 1st John 5:4, Hebrews 11:6)

Daily Forgiveness for You

"...If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1st John 2:1)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1st John 1:9, also Titus 2:14, 1st Corinthians 6:11)

God's Word is Powerful

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35, also Psalm 19:7-8, Hebrews 4:12, Psalm 119:105)

God's Hope for You

"...I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2nd Timothy 1:12, also Romans 15:4, Hebrews 6:18-19, Psalm 42:11)

God's Desire for You

Obedience: *"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."* (John

15:10, also John 14:23, Matthew 7:21, Revelation 22:14, Luke 11:28)

Surrender: *“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”* (1st Peter 5:6, also James 4:7, Proverbs 22:4)

Holiness: *“For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.”* (Psalm 11:7, also Proverbs 11:20, Matthew 5:48)

Live in Peace and Unity: *“...Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.”* (2nd Corinthians 13:11, also John 13:35, Psalm 133:1, 1st Peter 3:9, 1st John 4:12)

God’s Prosperity for You

“And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday.” (Isaiah 58:10)

“The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” (Proverbs 11:25, also Malachi 3:10-11, Proverbs 28:27, 1st Chronicles 22:13)

God’s Financial Provision for You

“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19, also Psalm 37:3, 25, Luke 12:27, Psalm 1:3, Matthew 6:31-34)

God’s Blessing for Your Family

“And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.” (Jeremiah 32:39, also Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 26:11, Ephesians 6:2-3)

God’s Assurance for Unsaved Loved Ones

“...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts 16:31)

“For with God nothing shall be impossible.” (Luke 1:37, also 1st Peter 3:1, Proverbs 22:6)

God's Equipment for Your Ministry

"...Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:19)
"...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."
(Zechariah 4:6, also Luke 12:12, Isaiah 51:16, Acts 1:8, 1st Timothy 4:16, John 14:26, Ephesians 6:13)

Against Fear

"Fear not, believe only..." (Luke 8:50)
"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2nd Timothy 1:7, also Psalm 112:7, Isaiah 41:10, Psalm 34:4-6)

Against Doubt

"and being fully persuaded that, what He (God) had promised, He (God) was able also to perform." (Romans 4:21, also Mark 11:22-24, Hebrews 10:23)

Against Temptation

"...In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Romans 8:37, also 1st Corinthians 10:13, 2nd Peter 2:9, Hebrews 2:18)

Against Guilt

"There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1, also Romans 8:33-34, Psalm 103:12, 32:1-2, 1st John 1:9)

Against Discontent, Striving

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain.
For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." (1st Timothy 6:6-8, also Philippians 4:11-12)

Against Loneliness

"...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13:5, also Matthew 28:20, John 14:23)

Against Worry

*“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.
Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.
Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication
with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the
peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and
minds through Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:4-7, also
Matthew 11:28-30, Isaiah 26:3)

Against Worldliness

*“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.
If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the
eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the
will of God abideth for ever.”* (1st John 2:15-17, also James 4:4)

Against Despair

“For with God nothing shall be impossible.” (Luke 1:37)
“...If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.”
(Mark 9:23, also John 16:22-24, Philippians 4:4)

Against Weakness

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”
(Philippians 4:13, also Isaiah 40:31, Ephesians 3:16, Job 17:9)

Against Sickness

*“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.”*
(Psalm 103:2-3, also 1st Peter 2:24, Isaiah 53:3-5, James 5:14-16)

Against Discouragement

*“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted
within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of
my countenance, and my God.”* (Psalm 42:11, also Hebrews 10:23,
Deuteronomy 31:8, 2nd Corinthians 5:7)

Against Grief

“In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.”
(Psalm 94:19)

“...The Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted.” (Isaiah 49:13, also 2nd Corinthians 1:3-4, Psalm 119:50)

Against Impatience

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” (Hebrews 10:35-36, also James 1:3-4, Psalm 37:7-9, Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 27:14)

Against Marriage Problems

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord.” (Psalm 27:14, also Ephesians 5:22-33, 1st Peter 3:1, 7:12, 1st Corinthians 7)

Against Unforgiveness, Bitterness, Resentment and Hatred

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6:14-15, also Mark 11:25-26, 1st John 4:20-21, Matthew 18:25-35)

Against Unhappiness

“The joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Nehemiah 8:10) *“He has given me a new song to sing, of praises to our God. Now many will hear of the glorious things he did for me, and stand in awe before the Lord, and put their trust in him.”* (Psalm 40:3 Living Bible, also Isaiah 55:12, 1st Peter 1:8)

Against Pride

“...Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” (1st Peter 5:57, also Proverbs 3:7, 1st John 2:16, Philippians 2:8, Luke 22:26, Proverbs 22:4)

Against Satan

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.” (1st John 4:4, also Luke 10:19-20, 9:1, 1st John 5:18)

Against Timidity and Insecurity

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me...” (Acts 1:8, also 2nd Timothy 1:7-8, Philippians 4:13, Galatians 2:20)

Against Poor Self Image

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20, also 2nd Corinthians 5:17, 21, John 1:12-23, Ephesians 2:6)

These are just a few of the many promises of our Lord which He has provided for us. There are promises for every aspect of our lives. Search God’s Word for His answer to your need. Pray that God would direct your reading. God bless you!

DIAGRAM 11

Promise of God	When Claimed	Result
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PART IV — TESTIMONIES

TESTIMONY: S.S. PALM SPRINGS, CA

Could you have ever imagined Mary turning down the honor of bearing the Savior of the world? Would it be possible for you to imagine her taking that child's life from her today in an act of willful murder? Can you see Joseph being in rebellion to the Lord by agreeing with this action, knowing that his fiancée was carrying a child that was not of his own flesh? Can you imagine both of them being in rebellion to God's delivered message by an angel of the Lord?

“Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

How many of you reading this, father or mother, at the announcement of a new life wanted it not to be true, for the fantastic news of this miracle of God to vanish into thin air, never to be heard of again? That is the way I felt when I found out I was to have our first child. My husband came out with the comment, “You had better not be pregnant for your own good.” With that piece of dreadful news I too wished that this child was not a reality. With this turmoil going on, my husband, in an attempt to escape, was drawn into the sins of the world. I then was left at home attempting to pray this baby out of my body. It almost worked because Satan got hold of us and immediately I began bleeding. I continued to profess, “I don't want this baby if it means losing my husband.” In times of confusion we sometimes forget our Creator and that our warranty with him never runs out. He loves us so much and wants to help us when we're hurting. I prayed the best I knew how and employed intercession on the part of friends, Randy and Diana. Praise you Lord! Here is where the miracle takes place – During my course of bleeding Diana continued to intercede and actually took on my miscarriage in the spirit, going through actual labor pains so I wouldn't have to. During all this, Randy's daughter was a witness during the course of events and received her prayer language. With all this prayer and intercession going on within a week my marriage was restored and now a year later is better than it has ever been.

Eight months later we were blessed with a beautiful baby girl, Sara. To see a part of my husband and myself knit together by the Lord is a feeling my husband and I will always keep in our hearts. Our plans now are for more children, and I just praise the Lord for turning this situation around for His glory.

TESTIMONY: W.D. BEAUMONT, CA

In April of 1979, I committed myself to God; that is to say that I confessed Jesus Christ as my Lord; as it says in John 3:5, *“unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God;”* and Romans 10:9-10. *“If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe with your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for man believes with his heart and is so justified, and he confesses, with his lips and is so saved.”*

The following Sunday, I was to be baptized. On Tuesday of that week, on the 24th of April, I had left for work that morning on a new motorcycle that I had purchased some weeks before, and since I was to take it in for its 600 mile break-in-maintenance that morning, and the fact that I had to come back home for some paper work, I went off without a helmet in just a T-shirt, my levis and my work boots. I live about two miles from my work.

I left work about 8:00 a.m. that Tuesday morning to return home for the paper work, my helmet, and a jacket. As I came into the intersection of 6th Street and Beaumont Avenue, a vehicle turned left in front of me, I could do nothing but hit it. I went over the hood of the car, rolling over it and making one more revolution, landed on the asphalt in a sitting position.

At this point, what had happened, is stated in John 10:10, *“The thief, comes only to steal and kill and destroy.”* He had tried to take my life, because I was to be baptized on Sunday. But thanks to God, the rest of the verse says, *“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”*

There I was, in a sitting position ready to get up and get over to the curb and sit down, when a gentleman put his hands on my shoulders and told me to stay put. I told him I wanted to get to the curb because I did not want to get run over by the passing cars. He said stay put and I did.

At this point, I was looking myself over to see what damage had been done. My right leg was swelling up. I had a small scrape on my left elbow and even though all I had on was a T-shirt, pants and no helmet, that was the extent of the damage.

The ambulance had arrived. They put the right leg in a splint and took me to Pass Hospital. They x-rayed the leg in four different positions and

determined the leg was broken, muscles were pulled and some ligaments torn. They asked me who my doctor was and called him and informed him I was on my way to Redlands Hospital.

When Dr. Dombrowski arrived, I was in the examining room, on the gurney and he walked in and said, “Oh no, you didn’t ruin my master piece?” (Referring to my left leg on which he had operated to remove torn cartilage a couple of years prior). I said, “No, it is the other one.”

He had two interns with him, and proceeded to extract fluid from my swollen right knee into a plastic bowl. At this point he called to the two interns and commented that if they didn’t x-ray, they could tell by this fat substance floating on top of the fluid that there was a break because the only way for it to get there was by a broken bone.

He then put a cast on my leg with a slight bend in it from the ankle to the top of my thigh, and said to come back on Friday. After we arrived at home, my wife and I discussed the event as it had happened, and discussed the length of time the doctor said I would be off. His prognosis was 90 days or more with this type of injury.

Now in 2nd Timothy 3:16 it says, “*All scripture is inspired of God,*” and in Numbers 23:19 it says, “*God is not a man that he should lie, or the son of man, that he should repent. Has He said and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?*”

As a believer his promises were now mine. In Mark 16:18 it says they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover, so on Wednesday our pastor came over, and we laid hands on my leg and prayed as God’s Word said. “Having faith in God,” I claimed his promises, Mark 16:18 and Mark 11:23 and 24 for here it is written “*Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be taken up and cast into the sea and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you whatever you ask in prayer, believing that you have received it, and it will be yours.*”

Now on Friday I returned to Dr. Dombroski’s office, and when he came into the waiting room I requested he remove the cast from my leg. He chuckled and reminded me that the cast was to be on at least 90 days.

He asked me if I could stand and bear weight on my leg with the cast, and I assured him I could, so he informed me he would put on a straight leg cast, and I was to return in one week.

I returned the following Friday, which was exactly eleven days from the date of the accident, to have the leg x-rayed and checked.

During this week, on a daily basis, I renewed my faith by the Word of God and by prayer, thanking him for his promises for he had healed my leg and I believed his Word to be true. I went to the person to x-ray my leg. Three pictures were taken over the cast and my pant leg. I was given the x-rays and went over to the doctor's office.

When the doctor came in, he opened the envelope and set the x-rays up the wall encasement where they look at them, and asked, "Where did it go?" speaking of the break. He turned to me and said, "Did you know these (xrays) were going to be this way?" I said, "Yes doctor, I told you God healed my leg a week ago."

He told me he was going to cut off the cast, put me in a wheel chair, and send me back over to x-ray for some more pictures. I told him fine, but about the wheelchair, "no," because God had healed my leg and I had no need for any wheelchair. He then cut the cast, put tape on it to hold it in place while I went to x-ray. Three more were taken and I returned to his office, which is across the hall.

He was standing in the office with his receptionist, I walked up with the xrays, he again removed them from the envelope, and said, "I see it but I don't believe it." I am sending you home because there is no reason to keep you. He asked if I had crutches, I said yes (from the torn cartilage). He requested I use them and when I arrived at home to slip into a tub of warm water and very gently move my leg, and if I had any pain at all to call him immediately.

When I arrived at home I removed the cast, took a shower and went out to dinner with my wife – walking on both legs (no crutches) because God had healed me.

I returned to Dr. Dombroski who is considered to be one of the finest orthopedic surgeons in the country. On Wednesday, he had me walk over to him and when I did he told me to go. I asked him if he would put in writing his prognosis, the length of time in his opinion, the healing would take. His statement was “break of the upper femoral condyle of the right leg, requiring six weeks to three months to heal this break.”

His closing statement, “This result is totally unexpected. It is at minimum, three times as fast as would have been expected, and is nothing short of amazing.”

I give all the glory to God for His Word is true, and I thank Him in my testimony to His glory.

EDMUND T. DOMBROWSKI, M.D., F.A.C.S.
ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY
365 TERRACINA BLVD., REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA 92373
PHONE (714) 793-2746

May 11, 1979

Re: Joseph Duncan

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter will verify that the above-named 43 year old leadman for the City of Beaumont was involved in a motorcycle accident on April 24, 1979. At that time he sustained a fracture of the medial portion of the medial femoral condyle of the right leg. He was placed in a long leg cast and put on non-weight bearing.

It was my opinion that he would require from 6 weeks to 3 months to heal his fracture. However, the patient returned in 2 weeks indicating that he had no pain whatever and that it was his opinion that the fracture would be healed. The cast was removed and x-rays were taken and the fracture appeared to be healed. The patient was allowed to begin weight-bearing and he has absolutely no pain or problems of any sort.

This result is totally unexpected. It is, at minimum, three times as fast as would have been expected and is nothing short of amazing.

Sincerely,



Edmund T. Dombrowski, M.D.

ETD:mab

TESTIMONY: H.G. PALM SPRINGS, CA

I have suffered with rheumatoid arthritis and all its miserable side effects for forty years. I have had seven operations for corrective surgery due directly to the arthritis and several other operations due to its side effects.

I was led to believe that this was my “cross to bear,” and that upon death I would surely enter God’s Kingdom because I earned his great privilege by my suffering. It did not seem right to me – but this is what I had been taught.

In May, 1975, I was declared totally and permanently disabled. In November, 1982, praise God, I was led to read Randy Brodhagen’s book, *Victory*. I only got to page ten, and I knew why I felt all along that God didn’t want me to suffer. This is where Randy says:

“I am an heir of God. God says that ‘my God will supply all my needs according to all the riches in glory in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 4:19). I’m talking poverty when God calls me an heir to the treasures in heaven, and I run around saying I am sick when God says by His stripes we are healed (1st Peter 2:24). I had better start calling things the way God calls them.”

I knew then that, as His heir, I could claim the treasure of Jesus’ healing. I wanted that!

At the next meeting with Randy, I asked Jesus to take away my pain. Randy asked if I had any problems in the past with anyone that could be blocking my healing. I recalled that my mother had been very possessive of me. I did not, now I know, blame her – but unconsciously I did have resentment in my heart. We first prayed for that and then for the healing. As Randy prayed over me, I knew something was happening to me. The pain was being drawn from me and I was being filled more fully with the Holy Spirit. I was being healed inwardly as well as becoming free from the arthritis which literally held me a prisoner for those past forty years. Thank you, Jesus! Praise God!

Since then I have become more mobile, pain has completely diminished. I can do things I haven’t done for years, such as shop, move furniture, etc. I can even concentrate more on the Lord’s Word. Thank you, Jesus.

A few weeks later Randy again prayed over me as I asked for the healing of my digestive tract, which had been terribly abused by all the pain killers and other medication I had been taking. Almost immediately there was a big improvement. Even my ankles and legs were not swollen any longer. Praise God! I am less hyper, less fatigued, and, in general, in much better health.

My husband, Ray, who was present at the meeting when my arthritis was healed, had a healing of his finger injured in his youth – it straightened out while I was being prayed over. Thank you, Jesus.

October 13, 1983

Terri Bartholomew
937 E. Oakland
Bermet, CA 92343

RE: WHEELER (BARTHOLOMEW), Richard
PF#: 6016452
DOB: 4/75

Dear Ms. Bartholomew:

I am really very happy to learn that Richard has been doing extremely well as far as his Legg-Perthes disease is concerned. I was told by Dr. Moheimani, who saw Richard on the last visit during my absence, that he was taken off the brace, as he felt that the Perthes disease had healed. Perthes disease is a disease which happens during early childhood, where the head of the femur changes due to most likely vascular insult. Prior to his last visit on October 17, there is a note that his Perthes disease condition of the head of the femur was healing, but it had not yet healed. My initial plan was to keep the brace on until November 1983, and then remove the brace. However, I am really glad that the brace was taken off earlier, because of the healed condition of the Perthes disease. I surely hope honestly that Richard will do extremely well in the future. Hopefully, I will be seeing you again.

Sincerely,



Satish K. Lal, M.D.
Orthopaedic Surgery

SKL:cmw