

Growing Beyond A Child of God

*Living the Truth of
First Century Christianity*

**by
Gayle and Mike Mooney**

(AgapeAliveMinistries.org)

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Growing Beyond A Child Of God

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Gayle and Mike Mooney

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All scripture quotations are from the *King James Bible*.

Ministry Mission Statement

Agape Alive Ministries is dedicated to helping Christians enter back into the blessings and peace of intimate agape love fellowship with God that Adam and Eve forfeited and that Jesus reclaimed through His death, burial and resurrection.

God's whole plan for man is to grow us beyond immature children into mature daughters and sons of God who think, act and minister through Jesus Christ just as the First Century New Testament Christians did.

We minister this simple message online and in person to Christians worldwide, sharing the good news of the miraculous, fulfilling, New Testament Christianity that Jesus gave us two thousand years ago.

Preface

My wife and I were both born into traditional Christian religious families. For decades we attended church and were schooled in what our denomination believed. During that time, we learned a lot of church dogma and doctrine, most of which did not teach us how to enter into intimate, agape love fellowship with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost. It wasn't until I was almost 30 and on the brink of total disaster from doing things my way that a wise Christian brother suggested I do like Jesus' first followers did and personally, rather than religiously, reach out to Jesus. He told me to simply begin talking to Jesus about anything and everything, just like I would talk to my best friend.

Talking to Jesus turned the bad news of my trying to please men into the good news of me living in the pleasure of God's pure religion of agape love fellowship. When I met Gayle, I shared with her how to simply love and fellowship with Jesus. Today, we both enjoy living through the goodness and glory of Jesus Christ, Who lives in us, teaches us to think and act like Him, and ministers His good news through us to others, just like He did over 2,000 years ago.

The words we read in the New Testament were written by The Living Word of God – Jesus Christ – through His first followers and reveal everything about Jesus and the full ordering of His New Testament. With these words the first believers got Spirit-born, mind-transformed and fully conformed into Jesus' image. When they ministered the good news words of Jesus' love, forgiveness and blessings – signs, wonders and miracles manifested and Christianity flourished. Pure First Century Christianity can again flourish if we will live the life Jesus provided us. By engaging in 24/7 agape love fellowship with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost, our mind will be transformed and our character conformed to love, think, act and minister like Jesus, with signs, wonders and miracles following.

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Dedication

We dedicate this book to God our Father, who loves us so much He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us from Satan and raise us into Jesus' image, as holy sons and daughters of God, ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ.

Introduction

CHRISTIANITY IS ABOUT...

Christianity is about fulfilling God's plan to make man in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). This was God's plan from the beginning. Adam and Eve brought it to a halt when they followed Satan's advice and traded God's thinking and acting for their thinking and acting. Four thousand years later God sent His Savior Son, Jesus Christ, to earth to finish the job that Adam and Eve walked out on. Now, by making Jesus our Lord, we can fulfill God's plan by allowing Him to fully conform us into Jesus' image (Romans 8:29).

Romans 8:29

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

God knew before we were born that many of us would get frustrated with doing things our way and turn to God to save us from our Satan-infected Self IN charge (**SIN**) thinking. Foreseeing this, God predestinated (prepared a way for us) to be conformed into Jesus' image so that we would become men and women who think, speak and act like Jesus, rather than Satan. God does this by overwhelming us with agape love.

Agape love is who God is (1 John 4:8). God overwhelms us with His unconditional agape love by first forgiving and forgetting all our past sin (1 John 1:9; Ephesians 2:1-10). Next, He sends the Spirit of His Son into our heart and adopts us as His eternal child who is a new Spiritual creation in Christ (Galatians 4:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Then, like a mother with her new born child, God begins to fellowship with us through the Spirit of Christ within us. God holds us, hugs us, loves us and talks to us in various ways. He talks to

us from within, like you are hearing my voice within you now; through His written biblical Word when you read it or He mentally catches your attention with it and points you in a direction He wants you to go; through emotional prompts that urge you to think, say or do something in accord with the Word of God; through the common, everyday circumstances and chatter of life; and from the mouths and writing of God-led women and men. God's greatest parental desire is for us to enter into 24/7 agape love conversation with Him so He can renew our manly thinking and emotions with His Godly thinking and emotions and bless us in all our ways (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

Joined in love with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, we read and study the written Word of God, most especially the New Testament. This helps us get to know what God thinks and who we are in Christ. We share all our thoughts – no matter how good, bad, pretty or ugly – with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. They tell us which thoughts are from Them and which thoughts are from Satan or soul-led self. In Jesus' name, we cast out the thoughts from Satan or soul-led self. God's thoughts we keep and learn from and, in Jesus' name, speak and do what God's written Word says to speak and do until what God's Word says comes forth in our life. Over time, the worthless self-willed thinking from our past life of sin decreases and the worthwhile thinking of our new life living through the will of God in heavenly places in Christ Jesus increases.

All the God empowered tools of Christianity, such as faith, praise, prayer, preaching, teaching, etc. come out of the tool box of our agape love fellowship with God. Without that tool box, we build our life in Christ with the impotent, intellectual words and tools of self-centered, man powered religion. Jesus came to give us God's agape love life in abundance so He could provide us with all our Spiritual, mental, emotional and physical needs. Satan comes to steal God's abundant agape love life from us by getting us to meet our own needs, including our need for Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

Beginning with Adam and Eve, Satan tricked them into loving and serving their way of thinking and acting rather than love and serve God's way of thinking and acting. The thinking and acting we love (are intimately one with) and serve is what binds us and defines who we are. This is the definition of religion.

Agape love is what binds God into Who God is. It is His religion: the thoughts and actions He chooses to operate through and wants us to think, act and operate through. God's pure, holy, life fulfilling religion of agape love is the only thing that can transform us from thinking and acting like Satan to thinking and acting like God.

Unfortunately the pure God-authored thinking of Christianity that Jesus provided to His First Century saints, which grew them in love and oneness with God, has, for the most part, degenerated into man-made religious dogma and doctrine that manipulates men to bow to the rule of other men. Jesus did not provide His first followers with a corporate carnal religion full of manly manipulation. He provided them with the pure agape love thinking and acting (religion) of His Father, God Almighty.

Through Christianity, Father God is finally able to fulfill His plan to birth and raise human sons and daughters, who He empowers to reject evil and eternally bond with Him in agape love, so we can completely enjoy God's supernatural, miraculous, totally fulfilling, abundant life of Christ, now upon earth and in the fullness of heaven when we physically expire (John 10:10b).

Colossians 1:26-27

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Christ is the Spirit of The Three that bear record in heaven (1 John 5:7): God The Father, Word (Jesus) and Holy Ghost. Through Spirit-birth we receive Christ into us. Then through Christ in us we live in God's love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, goodness, power and glory in heavenly Spiritual places on earth. Why does the scripture call *Christ in you* a mystery? Because until Jesus came and walked the face of the earth and showed His disciples it was possible for the presence of God to live in and minister to and through a man, men lived in and ministered through Satan-infected personal and corporate religion.

As noted above, religion defines our life by revealing who we truly are through the thoughts we choose to accept and act upon. Thoughts come in various forms such as mental reasoning, emotional feelings, willful attitudes, bodily appetites, memories, imaginations, traditions, beliefs, etc. They come from two sources: good God and evil Satan. Thoughts are the most powerful force in the universe. If we don't capture a thought that is attempting to gain entrance into our mind the thought will capture our attention and pull us where it wants us to go – which may not be the same place God wants us to go. Remember, this is what happened to God's first two human children, Adam and Eve, when they failed to bring their Satan-infected thoughts to God and sinned. Their sin instantly disconnected them from God. The peace and provision of God's heaven on earth was replaced by the pain and poverty of Satan's hell on earth. Sin wrecked their lives and the lives of all natural born men and women to follow. Satan's religion of sin is what God sent Jesus to save us from (1 John 3:8).

Jesus' death, burial and resurrection destroyed Satan's power over our life so that through Spirit-birth we are reconciled and reunited with God. Once we get Spirit-born, God can then fellowship with us and progressively transform us to think, speak and minister like Jesus.

Jesus' First Century followers fulfilled their lives through 24/7 conversing with God, obeying God's written and spoken

Word and following the prompting of the Holy Ghost. This enabled them to successfully see and complete the specific vision and ministry God had for each of them (Ephesians 2:10). The entire book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament books are living testimonies of the lives of the Spirit-born, Holy Ghost filled First Century followers of Jesus Christ.

Mark 16:20 says that Jesus' followers...

Mark 16:20

...went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.

Jesus Christ NEVER CHANGES.

Hebrew 13:8

Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Jesus' ministry to us and through us NEVER CHANGES. Nowhere in God's Word does it say that the miraculous life of Christ that Jesus ministered to and through His first followers was for them alone. In John 17:20-23 Jesus prays to Father God about His first disciples and all the disciples of all time who would follow.

John 17:20-23

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast

sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

This scripture isn't just to First Century Christians; it is for all who believe on Jesus Christ. The scripture talks about the glory God had given Jesus. It is the same glory talked about in the scripture we looked at earlier in this introduction: "***Christ in you, the hope of glory.***" Glory means revelation and manifestation of God's truth and power. Jesus prayed that the glory He had received from His father would also be given to us. When we receive into our heart the revelation that Christ lives in us, then the expectation from Father God is that, through agape love fellowship, we will let Jesus minister (manifest) the goodness and power of God's Word (glory) to us. This renews our mind and conforms our character into Jesus' image, so that Jesus can continue His Savior of Men ministry upon the earth through us, His miracle manifesting ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ to the world (Galatians 4:6; 2:20; Romans 12:3; Mark 12:30).

Spirit-birth instantly makes us new creations in Christ and translates us out of Satan's soul-led world of sin and lack into God's Spirit-led world of obedience and abundance. Our new creation in Christ is the thing Satan fears most. If we fellowship with God and let Jesus minister to us and through us, we learn how to think, speak and act, like Jesus, and take power over Satan and our old stinking religious thinking.

In Genesis 3:15 God first told Satan that Satan's adversary (Jesus Christ) would one day be birthed upon the earth to destroy Satan's evil works, redeem mankind from Satan's religion of sin, and provide us with God's life in abundance (1 John 3:8; John 10:10). Jesus Christ took power over Satan for all who make Jesus their Lord and actively live through the pure religion of God. Jesus raises us into His image and provides us with God's life in abundance. He reaches out through us to the unsaved people of the world to offer them His solution to all their worries and woes. This is Jesus' original Christianity, the pure agape love religion of Chris-

tianity that manifests the good news and miraculous works that Jesus came to provide us with.

Pure Christianity blesses us in all our ways. It empowers us to live through faith in God's Word. It is Jesus ministering to us and through us to others. It is not weak or uncertain. It knows who we are, what we have and what God can do through Jesus in us (Romans 8:29).

Pure Christianity is single minded. It only operates through the mind of Christ. It is not a double minded religious mix of Satan-led manly thinking and Spirit-led Godly thinking. Mixed thinking confuses our life in Christ and makes us Spiritually, mentally and emotionally unstable (James 1:8).

Pure Christianity is not a miserable, insecure experience that promotes a depressing doctrine of guilt and shame, which daily pounds us with our past and present sin.

Pure Christianity is a personal, intimate, loving, 24/7 casual, comfortable fellowship with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost. We love on Them and They love on us. Through our new creation Spirit They lead us to read and believe the Word of God, most especially the New Testament which reveals all we are in Christ. This renews our mind to think and act like Them, so that we can quickly recognize and reject the voices of Satan and our old self-serving manly *me, myself and I*.

By purposefully fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, we no longer purposefully fellowship with Satan and our flesh. We don't consciously operate through the negative, destructive, sin-filled religious ways of Satan's thinking and acting. We consciously operate through the pure religion of God, so that God's unrelenting, unconditional love, grace, compassion, mercy, goodness, blessings and glory transform us to love God, as God loves us, and love self and others through God's love in us (Mark 12:30-31). We live, with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost, in the peace and joy of heavenly places in Christ. All things work for the good for us who answer God's call to passionately – without any

reservations – love and become one with Him, Jesus and Holy Ghost in all our thoughts and actions (Ephesians 2:6; Romans 8:28).

Gayle and I have written this book because we love you and want to help you enter into the marvelous, miraculous life of Christ that Jesus came to provide you with and God has specifically in store for you. This is not a book full of the rules and regulations of man that will imprison you in the fear of religious dogma and doctrine. It is a book full of the living love, Spirit and Word of God that freed the first Christians from the prisons of their personal and corporate religious minds by getting them Spirit-born, mind-transformed and character-conformed into the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Since everyone perceives and manages their life through their unique life experience background, everyone meets Jesus and enters into intimate agape love fellowship with Him, Father and Holy Ghost in their own way. There are no religious rules and regulations that we can follow to become conformed into Jesus' God in man image. The only way we can become who God wants us to become is to, thought by thought, follow the leading of His biblical Word and voice within us, so that we decreasingly think and act through Satan's mind of flesh and increasingly think and act through God's Mind of Christ. God knows the exact way you need to be mind-transformed and character-conformed into Jesus' image. We pray this book about what we have learned and experienced will help you discover God's way for you to put on the Heart and Mind of Christ and enjoy living in the fullness of agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus, Holy Ghost and others.

Part 1

Just Like Jesus

God's plan is for us to be made into His image and likeness by us being made into the image of His God in man Son, Jesus Christ (Genesis 1:26; Romans 8:29).

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

Chapter 1

TRADING OUR GARBAGE FOR GOD'S GLORY

THE BIG QUESTION

Since we bring nothing with us to the earth when we are born and take nothing with us from the earth when we die, it could easily be presumed that life is some sort of cosmic accident which somehow got started, has no purpose, goes nowhere and abruptly ends when we physically expire. The only problem with this type of thinking is that deep within each of us is a truth which we cannot deny. We know that, though our body will one day physically expire, we are not merely our body. We are an eternal spirit who thinks and acts through an eternal soul. One day, no matter how much we deny, fight against or try to turn within and transcend this truth, our spirit and soul will pass out of our body when we physically expire and take up residence not on earth but . . . but where?

Where we wind up when we leave our body is the big question. We can either squarely face it and constructively deal with it now, or we can run from it in the hope it will go away and leave us alone. But it never goes away.

Gayle always sort of knew the answer to the big question was to be found in Jesus. I, on the other hand, spent many frustrating years searching for the answer to this question within myself and the various false gods and goddesses of natural life. However, since I came to Jesus, and Gayle increased her fellowship with Jesus, we have without a doubt answered the questions of why we are here and where we go once we exit our bodies. Our personal experience of pressing into Jesus has only served to prove the truth of Matthew 6:33 which says, *“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

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Romans 14:17 says, *“the Kingdom of God is ... righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”* Once you seek (enter into) agape love fellowship with God and begin to purposefully live through the righteousness, peace and joy of God’s Spirit and Word-led kingdom within you, then all your natural and supernatural needs are provided to you by God through Jesus (Philippians 4:19). In other words, you can thought by thought live in the presence, peace, power and prosperity of Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost. All you have to do is first decide that’s what you want and then begin working out your salvation by enrolling in what I call God School and doing what the First Century Christians did.

God School is 24/7 on-the-job training under the guidance of our master teacher, Jesus Christ, with additional input and guidance coming from Father God and Holy Ghost. Philippians 1:6 states:

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that God which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (guiding all your thoughts).

Thought by thought God renews our mind and transforms our character to think, act, live and minister just like Jesus in every area of our life. As we progress in our schooling we will reach the status of both student and teacher who Jesus can then employ as a minister of reconciliation and ambassador for Christ to our family, friends, fellow Christians and others.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN FOR US

MIKE’S STORY

THE DAYDREAM

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Looking back, I can see that my bumpy road to God began when I was twelve with a daydream I had about the street outside my window. Though it took eighteen more years for me to personally find Jesus and enter into agape love fellowship with Him, at twelve years of age Jesus was already letting me know He had good places to take me to, if I was willing to follow His leading for my life.

Back then, I didn't think much about adult things such as what life was all about and what I had to do to succeed at it. Instead, I thought about things like what I was going to do after school or where the bus line ended.

A short block over from where I lived was Jerusalem Avenue. The Jerusalem Avenue bus ferried New York City commuters to and fro from the Long Island Rail Road train station in Hempstead east through my town, Uniondale, out into the growing suburbs of post World War II Long Island. I could see and hear its traffic from my second floor bedroom window. My Jewish buddy, Hershel, told me that in Hebrew the word Jerusalem meant to flow with peace. I began to think of Jerusalem Avenue as a peaceful flowing river of traffic that led to somewhere wonderful, somewhere I wanted to go and would one day get to.

At night I would lay awake in my bed and listen to the Jerusalem Avenue buses float by my house and think about the place of peace and beauty they were sailing to. Where was it? What was it? I imagined it could be a wonder filled woods where all the animals were friendly and my every need was met or perhaps a beautiful beach with sparkly blue water and dolphins dancing in the waves. It wouldn't be until the summer before my senior year in high school that I got to go to the end of Jerusalem Avenue.

THE BUS CHASE

That summer I took Driver Education. One morning, as I pulled onto Jerusalem Avenue, my teacher, Mr. Jerry, who

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also worked a late night job and could hardly keep his eyes open, told me to drive the car for an hour and then bring it back to the high school. At that point, he promptly fell asleep. Far in front of me I spotted a Jerusalem Avenue bus. My heart melted as my head filled up with the glorious vision of woods and friendly animals, a white sandy beach and dolphins dancing in the waves.

Instead of turning onto one of our regular routes I followed the bus and caught up to it as it drove out of Uniondale into the neighboring town of East Meadow. I checked to make sure Mr. Jerry was asleep. He was. I passed the bus and stared far into the distance looking for another bus to guide me to the goodness and glory of the end of the line.

My heart sang in gleeful anticipation of finally finding the beautiful, peace filled heaven on earth I had long dreamed of. I calculated I had 30 minutes to travel before I'd have to turn around. As Mr. Jerry snored, I kept my eye out for cops and pressed the big blue Ford faster and ever faster on in quest of the end of the line.

After a few miles I spotted another Jerusalem Avenue bus way out in front of me. I wove in and out of cars and trucks changing lanes and surging ahead until I passed it and sped on. I had 15 minutes left before I had to turn around.

Jerusalem Avenue narrowed from four to two lanes. Increased traffic slowed me down. No bus in sight. A truck with a flat tire ground traffic to a halt. I pulled around it. With the road clear ahead of me, I sped on. A few minutes later I spotted a bus. It was turning right off of Jerusalem Avenue. Turning? How could a Jerusalem Avenue bus turn off of Jerusalem Avenue? What was I to do, follow the bus or follow Jerusalem Avenue? Then I remembered, it was Jerusalem Avenue – The River Of Peace – not the buses themselves that would lead me to the place of wonder and beauty I wanted to go. I passed the road where the bus had

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turned and pressed on. I would soon either victoriously find my land of wonder or return home in defeat.

REALITY'S GARBAGE

Jerusalem Avenue turned into neighborhoods. No more stores or businesses, only kids, cars and yards. Then it just stopped. Jerusalem Avenue suddenly turned right and became another street. No wooded wonderland, no dolphins dancing in the waves, just houses with a lot of hot, smelly, fly covered garbage standing at their curbs awaiting the arrival of the garbage truck. My nostrils complained. My heart sunk. My teeth clenched and my anger rose, as my childhood dream of living in heaven on earth was destroyed by the garbage and stink of reality.

Even though I was only seventeen, I'd already been in enough scrapes with the law to know that garbage was a big part of the reality of our lives where nothing is sure nor secure. The stress and strain of people hassling and hustling one another to get what they want regardless the cost stunk! I was no longer a child, yet my heart continued to long for the peace that was always eluding me.

MY LIFE LED ME TO SATAN

It was the time of the hippies. I tried "flower power" but underneath its pretty petals was nothing more than people manipulating people for booze, dope, sex, money and political influence.

I took the straight route. I got married, worked full time, and graduated college with a teaching degree. But I was so caught up in booze-fueled self-will run riot living I couldn't hold onto a job. Nor could I hold onto my wife and daughter.

I joined the military during Vietnam. Boot Camp sobered my body but not my mind. I still longed for some better way than the war of life. Vietnam ended. My wife and daughter

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returned and we all ran off to graduate school with the G.I. Bill.

Two years later, with a masters from one university and doing graduate work at another university, I still wasn't sure I was on the right route for my life. The judge agreed with me and said my next DWI would result in prison time. As I continued to seek peace and counsel through the spirits of the bottle, my wife sought the counsel of her parents. While I was spending a few days away from home searching for myself, her dad drove 1,000 plus miles and loaded up his daughter, granddaughter, and everything we owned into a moving van.

I returned home to an empty apartment and a note that proclaimed, "We've had enough! I'm filing for divorce!" I decided to be my own judge and jury and pronounced a death sentence upon myself. I determined that killing myself was the only way I was going to quit making a mess of other people's lives and hopefully obtain peace of mind.

Though I had been raised in a Christian home, I had never established a personal relationship with Jesus. Church was something I went to because my Dad forced me to go. I went to church until I graduated high school and then went to the honky-tonks instead. I never read the Bible nor knew much about evil, Satan and hell outside of what I saw in cartoons. However, I had a mother and father who knew different. They knew to have faith in God and daily prayed for me. For many years they prayed I'd give up trying to do things my way and begin to do things God's way. Their prayers were answered at 3:00 a.m., January 6, 1977.

I was fully bound and determined to do what I thought was right and die and depart this forlorn farce of life. As I wallowed in self-pity and seriously sought a way to kill myself, there suddenly appeared in front of me a creature with the body of a man and the head of a monster. He stood in the midst of a black mist. His yellow eyes pierced my heart with more fear than I had ever felt. My nerves exploded. I

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began to violently shake as the truth of who this was flooded my mind. It was Satan. This was the monster that made my life a wreck. He owned me and would own me forever if I went to hell. Once dead, I would never be able to escape from his prison of pain. I cried out in fear and Satan vanished.

Killing myself was out, but the prospect of prison still loomed large in front of me. "Unless I could stop drinking," spoke a quiet, friendly voice within my head.

"Stop? How could I stop drinking? It's the only thing that can give me some semblance of peace," I said.

"I can give you peace," the voice replied. "Call Alcoholics Anonymous."

I FOUND GOD IN AA

In the past I'd gone to a few AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) meetings under pressure from my wife or judges. The meetings weren't much better than going to church. They were full of a lot of do-gooders trying to get me to do good. But that night I was desperate. I had seen Satan and realized the seriousness of my situation. I had been given a reprieve from eternal misery. The question was now what would I do with it? I knew I didn't want to keep living in the hell of myself, especially behind the bars of a state penitentiary. Alcoholics Anonymous provided me with the hope that maybe, just maybe, if I did what AA taught me to do, I could stop drinking and avoid prison.

The next evening, instead of attending Alcoholics Anonymous because I was forced to, I went because I wanted to. At the meeting I sat across the table from a man who'd been in AA for over 20 years. As he talked about how messed up his life had been, I felt he was telling my story. Then he said how much better his life had gotten since he'd turned his will and life over to God. He said his sponsor had been one of the early members of Alcoholics Anonymous who had worked the program with him not only through the guidance of the

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“Big Book” of Alcoholics Anonymous, but also with the Bible.

The still, small, peace filled voice, which had stirred the hope in my heart that there was a solution for me in Alcoholics Anonymous, now urged me to ask the man to become my sponsor. A sponsor in AA is a mix between a friend, a coach and a pastor. My new sponsor with many years of God-guided sobriety immediately introduced me to the core biblical truth he had learned from his sponsor. A truth so powerful, that when he began to faithfully employ it, he was able to obtain and maintain not only physical sobriety and stability but mental, emotional and Spiritual sobriety and stability as well.

This truth is seen in the eleventh step of Alcoholics Anonymous, which reads, “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.” Prayer means speaking to God about all things. Meditation means listening to what God has to say to me either directly through His friendly voice within, or through the Bible, AA literature and Spiritually mature others. Conscious contact is on-going fellowship with God through prayer and meditation.

Over the years I have come to realize that 2 Corinthians 10:5 is the biblical source for Step 11.

2 Corinthians 10:5

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.

To maintain conscious contact with God, I thought by thought fellowship with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost. They tell me which thoughts to cast out and which thoughts

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to keep. By keeping God's thoughts and eliminating all other thoughts, I transform my mind to think and act like Jesus.

AA's Bible based Steps led me straight into God's plan for man. First I became God's child through making Jesus the Lord of my life. Then I entered into a one on one personal, intimate, thought by thought, agape love fellowship with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost. They taught me to live in and work through the Spirit and faith of Jesus and only think, speak and do the Word of God. This gradually grew me beyond a child of God, who merely sits on the sidelines and watches God do things. I progressively became more and more conformed into Jesus' Son of God image and started miraculously ministering God's good news at home, work, church and in my community (Galatians 4:6, 2:20; Romans 8:29).

LED BY GOD'S SPIRIT RATHER THAN MY SOUL

I am now led by God's Spirit rather than my soul. Satan and the selfish, self-centered, self-willed ways of my manhood seduce me less and less. I seldom wallow in the garbage of natural manly life. I fellowship with God and I share with others how to remove the garbage in their lives by placing it in the secure receptacles of repentance, prayer, praise, worship, and God's Word.

I have traded my manly garbage for God's glory and now live in heavenly places in Christ Jesus on earth. No longer do I moan and groan with doubt, debate, anger, confusion, poverty, pain and the frustration of failure. Now I praise Lord Jesus for His gifts of Spiritual security, mental stability, emotional peace, physical health, financial solvency, personal fulfillment, and productive ministry. I have been blessed with a new family – a Godly wife of over 38 years and our four beloved children, a good relationship with my first wife and eldest daughter, a local home church with a great pastor, and

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many beloved brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the earth.

I'm no special person. I'm simply a man who got desperate enough to become willing to go to any lengths to do what it takes to trade my garbage for God's glory. Though you may not have experienced what I have, all of us strive and struggle to discover who we are and how we can fulfill ourselves. We all want to succeed at and live the best life we can. Through Jesus, we can successfully do so.

GAYLE'S STORY

Gayle's story is much like her cool, calm, cerebral self. There were no big deals on the outside of her life to drive her to Jesus. It was all an inside job. Reared in a religious Christian home, she was acquainted with ceremonies and traditions but not Jesus. Not in the intimate way that Father God has in mind for us to know Him and Jesus and Holy Ghost.

Gayle met me in graduate school while I was still a ripped roaring mess. As I sought sanctuary in AA and learned to turn my life over to God, Gayle, like everyone else, began to see a new and different me. Over a course of time we gradually got to know one another and when my divorce was finalized we started to date.

Most of the AA meetings in town were "open." That meant anyone could attend. Gayle began to accompany me to AA meetings. In her own words, she explains: "I had always loved God, but I knew Him as some huge compassionate figure in the sky who looked after me and who I prayed to when I had a need. I had been taught as a child that God loved me so much that He sent Jesus to die for my sins, but I'd never been taught to agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus or Holy Ghost. However, as I applied the principles of AA – which I discovered were straight from the Bible – my fellowship with Jesus grew and my relationship with Michael

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deepened. By entering into intimate fellowship with Jesus, and talking to Him about all manner of my life, I began to comprehend how much He truly loves us and how much He wants us to prosper in all ways and to give Him out to others.”

SO WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Gayle and I have written this book to help you see the God-filled, prosperous life we have and that you, too, can have if you will give your heart to Father God through Jesus and then enter into intimate, agape love fellowship with Them. As you learn about God's plan to Spirit-birth you and grow you up into Jesus' image and likeness, you will come to know how good God is and that He loves you and only wants to bless you with His supernatural and natural life in abundance. God destroys all the sin of your past and all the evil in your present and progressively raises you from faith to faith and glory to glory into the image of His dear Son, Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18, 5:17-21; Romans 1:17, 8:29).

You are transformed from thinking and acting through the loser mentality of Satan-infected man to thinking and acting through the winner reality of Jesus-inspired man. The mind of Jesus Christ becomes your mind. Without a doubt, you know you are God's daughter or son who God has blessed to always prosper (succeed at everything) by you continually operating through faith in God's Word and being rewarded with its good results (Hebrews 11:6). In Jesus' name, you constantly pray to Father God and He releases Holy Ghost to destroy the evil that attacks you and create the good you need for yourself and those Jesus ministers to through you (John 15:16). Through your life and ministry, God leads others to Jesus, so Jesus can likewise bless them.

If you seek first the Kingdom of God, the Bible promises all your natural and supernatural needs will be met (Matthew 6:33). God's Spiritual Kingdom on earth is located in Jesus' heavenly places in Christ within us. It's capital city is God's

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holy New Testament City, Spiritual Jerusalem, in which we live with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost (Ephesians 2:6; Hebrews 12:22). God's Spiritual Jerusalem is not built with the garbage of men but with the glory of God upon the foundation of Jesus Christ and His apostles (Ephesians 2:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

If you'd like to trade in your garbage for God's glory. If you'd like to live the fulfilling life of Christ, that God has uniquely planned for you, then hop on Jesus' New Testament bus to Spiritual Jerusalem. Jesus will never turn the bus off the road of God's abundant life of love, peace and prosperity for you.

Let's begin our heaven blessed bus ride by going to Chapter 2 and exploring God's agape love plan for us to live and flow in fellowship with Him, Jesus and Holy Ghost in His Spiritual Jerusalem in Christ, now, upon the earth, and then in the fullness of heaven, at the end of time.

Chapter 2

GOD'S AGAPE LOVE PLAN

God is agape love (1 John 4:8, 16). Agape love is not the sexual, emotional or intellectual bonding men know as love. Natural human love can only momentarily fulfill us. Agape love, the God kind of love, permanently fulfills us when we join and become one with God.

God's greatest desire is to share His agape love filled heart, soul, mind and being with others who are created in His image and likeness. This is what compelled Him to manifest His Fatherhood through His Word and His Holy Ghost Spirit and create the natural universe for us to live in and become joined one with Him in agape love.

1 John 5:7

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

When Father declares His thinking and sends His thoughts forth to destroy evil or create good, He does so through the Word of God.

John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.

Once the Word of God speaks Father's thoughts, then the Holy Ghost Spirit of God activates God's spoken Word.

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Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

The phrase “moved upon” in Genesis 1:2 means “to hover.” The Spirit hovered over the earth that God was in the process of creating. He waited for the Word of God to speak, so that the Spirit could perform the next act of creation.

Genesis 1:3

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

In verses 3-31 we see Father think, His Word speak forth what Father is thinking, “*Let there be light;*” and His Holy Ghost Spirit create what His Word spoke, “*and there was light.*” You will see for each act of creation, it is recorded: “And God said.” And it was so. Father thought, Word spoke, Spirit activated and “BANG!” the natural universe was created. All things then and now are created through God’s faith in His spoken and activated Word.

After God created the heavens and earth, He made man in His image and likeness.

Genesis 1:26-28

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over ... every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

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GOD'S FIRST EARTH SON AND DAUGHTER

Genesis 5:1-2

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

God called the male and female He created "Adam." God states in Genesis 1:26-28 that His plan is to create and populate the earth with Adams/human beings made in God's image and likeness. God's heart compels Him to create human bodied children, who He can raise to think, act, live and minister like Him. He and His children joined together as one in His love, Spirit, Word and faith for now and forever.

God began His plan for man to become one with Him by forming the first male human being out of the dust of the ground and then making the first female human being out of the male human being's rib (Genesis 2:20-23). "Woman" means "plural of man." In God's eyes His man and woman were equal. Both were capable of willfully letting God lead him/her through His Spirit and Word and teaching and maturing him/her into His way of thinking and acting. Once matured into God's image and likeness, God would then seal them in His eternal life of abundance.

God created them as free willed, soul-led men who lived in the love and glory of God in God's Garden of heaven upon earth called Eden. In Eden all their natural needs were provided for and there was no corruption, destruction nor death; there was only God life and natural life in abundance. The two began their lives listening to and obeying the Spirit and Word of God (Christ) within them. This enabled them to live in total faith and obedience to God, which blessed them in all their ways.

In Genesis 1:28 we see God bless them with five provisions that enabled them to live and minister as God's

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Word and Holy Ghost Spirit empowered son and daughter. God blessed them to bear forth fruit. By following God's Word, they would succeed at everything they did. God blessed them to multiply. By living and teaching God's Word, they could duplicate themselves through sexual procreation and training their children to think and act through the Spirit and Word of God. God blessed them to operate through God's Word and replenish (establish upon) the earth God's perfect order of Spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial and social health and wealth. God blessed them to act through His love, Spirit, Word and faith and obediently subdue (take power over) all the natural and supernatural thoughts and things that came upon the earth. God blessed them to take dominion (rule over) the earth for Him, through His voice and presence in them.

Their free wills enabled them to choose whether or not to fully love and totally obey God. God's plan for them and their children was for them to engage in the natural thoughts and appetites of man for food, shelter, comfort, companionship, etc., but to filter those thoughts and appetites through the Spirit and Word of God within them. By learning to think like God and obey God's voice, the man and woman could faithfully and successfully rule over the earth together by destroying any evil that might attack them and creating all the good of God they needed for their lives.

Each day, the two would walk in the cool of the day with God and communicate with Him. God taught them His Word and ways and what He wanted them to do. They knew no other words or ways of thinking and acting until God's arch-enemy, Satan, entered into God's garden. Satan is a liar. He misleads God's people to sin by putting self desires above God's desire for their life.

Satan came in the form of a serpent. Serpent means, "One who hisses, an enchanter, he who whispers a magic spell." Satan's serpent hissed, he enchanted, he whispered and wove a magic spell that tested first the woman's and then the man's faith in and obedience to God's Word. Would they free will

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choose to love, obey and become fully one with God by faithfully doing what God had taught them to do; or would they free will choose to listen to the enchanter, who whispered in their ears to disobey God's Word and follow Satan's evil leading through their manly souls?

Genesis 3:4-5

And the serpent said unto the women, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then shall your eyes be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

When Satan's serpent appealed to the pride of life within the woman's manly soul, she bit on his deadly words and poisoned herself with the spirit of self-promotion. Instantly she craved to be the god of her life and create herself in her own image rather than God's image. Instead of going to God for guidance, she turned her back on God and for the first time obeyed her word rather than God's Word and sinned.

The man knew God had said that they would (Spiritually) die if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Yet, instead of turning to God and asking Him what he should do about his wife, he listened to the Satan-infected words of his wife. Her words stirred his body and enchanted his soul. He knowingly disobeyed God's Word and sinned, by willfully eating of the forbidden fruit that his wife gave him. In that one moment of giving into the flesh of his manly desires rather than asking God what he should do, everything changed.

The glory of God that had covered them lifted and the agape love life of Christ within them departed. They degenerated into Satan-led, Spiritually dead, cursed men. No longer did they respect and serve one another but rather they began to argue with and try to rule over one another. The man went so far as to do what he did with the animals and put his name upon the woman (Genesis 3:20). He changed her name

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to "Eve," which means the mother of all natural born (self-centered) human beings.

SATAN-INFECTED, SELF-CENTERED, SINFUL MEN

Satan took rule over the earth, not merely because he showed up, but because Adam and Eve failed to reject Satan's words and not sin. God had intended for them to take dominion and rule over everything upon earth including all those things that crept and slithered upon the earth. Instead of ruling over Satan's serpent when it slithered into their lives, Adam and Eve rejected God's Word in favor of the serpent's word and sinned.

Sin is what happens when a person puts Self **IN** charge, rather than God in charge, of his/her thoughts and actions (1 John 3:8, 5:17; Romans 14:23). Sin misses the mark of God's Word, will and way for our life. Since Genesis 1:26 declares we are ONLY made to be conformed into God's image and likeness, then when we put any other words – including our own – in charge of our thoughts and actions, we are no longer being made in the image and likeness of God. God will not share the glory of His authorship of our life with another. When we sin God leaves us alone to suffer the consequences of operating through Satan's religion of sin.

Sin drove God's love, Spirit, Word and faith out of Adam and Eve. This negated God's parental blessing and heavenly provision for their lives. Instead of God being in charge of their lives, Satan's religion of sin took control of them and of the earth God had given them to rule over. When they rejected God and sinned, forfeiting their rule to Satan, Satan instantly replaced the beauty, plenty and tranquility of heaven upon earth with the ugliness, lack and chaos of hell on earth. Satan's curse of a hard life full of the failure and suffering of sin is the legacy Adam and Eve passed on to us.

Yet, despite Adam's and Eve's failure to defeat Satan by bringing all their thoughts to God, God pressed on with His plan. God cursed Satan's serpent and forewarned him that

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God was going to send a savior through the womb of the woman to redeem men from Satan and his curse upon their lives (Genesis 3:14-15). God created a way for Adam and Eve and all who followed to escape the evil and torment that Satan daily attacked them with by establishing a sin-covering blood covenant.

SIN COVERING BLOOD COVENANTS

Genesis 3:21

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

Once Adam and Eve sinned, they realized they were Spiritually and naturally naked (Genesis 3:10). The glory of God's Spirit that had covered and provided them with all their spiritual, mental, emotional and natural needs was no longer upon them. Instead of lovingly seeking God, Adam and Eve now fearfully fled from God. The Bible says they hid themselves from God, like disobedient children who run away and hide from their loving parent (Genesis 3:8). Yet, as He always did, God came looking for His beloved Children.

Do you think God didn't know what they had done? Yet, God still sought them out. He gave Adam and Eve an opportunity to tell Him what they had done and ask forgiveness. But what did Adam and Eve do instead? Adam blamed his wife. Eve blamed the serpent. Neither of them took personal responsibility for their disobedience nor did they ask God to forgive them for giving into temptation.

What would have happened if they had asked God for forgiveness instead of making excuses for their behavior? It is highly likely that their loving parent, God, would have said, something like, "Even though you've disobeyed me, you have enough love and faith in me to turn to me, so I forgive you. Now let's learn not to give into Satan's evil when it tempts you." We will never know what wonderful words God would have said to them, because Adam and Eve

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didn't love and trust God enough to turn to Him when they sinned. Not only did they disobey God, but they also ran away from God's love and protection. Even so, God still loved them with the goodness of agape love that never rejects and always holds out a hand to help. God provided them with a new way to walk and talk with Him despite their sin.

God killed animals and provided Adam and Eve with the animals' skins to cover their natural nakedness. The animal's blood also covered their spiritual nakedness by becoming an atonement. An atonement is a natural sacrifice that God accepts to Spiritually cover man's self-centered, soul-led, sin-filled mind. God's pure breath of life that was in the animals' blood Spiritually covered Adam and Eve so their sin was no longer seen by God. This is a foreshadowing of Jesus' sacrificial, atoning blood that covers New Testament Covenant Christians.

From Adam's and Eve's fall from God's grace to the final blood covenant of Jesus Christ, the only way our loving Father God was able to reach out to spiritually dead men and enable them to enjoy His personal presence, peace, power and prosperity (success in all areas of life) was by establishing a sin covering blood covenant with them. As long as they obeyed the contractual terms of God's covenant, their sins were covered and God was able to look upon them and provide them with His love, favor and protection from Satan.

If, however, they willfully followed Satan's leading and broke the contract of their covenant with God by doing their own thing and disobeying its terms, then God could no longer protect them from being cursed by Satan until they provided God with a sacrifice denoting repentance. It is also important to note that, contrary to what has been traditionally taught, God did not curse the ground. Look what the scripture says.

Genesis 3:17

And unto Adam God said, Because thou has hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou

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***shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake;
in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.***

God tells Adam that because of Adam's disobedience the ground has become cursed. Adam's disobedience forfeited his rule over God's earth to Satan who instantly cursed God's good earth with the corruption and death of hell.

God's not out to get us or punish us or do anything at all bad to us. Satan is. Satan hates God and us, God's children. Satan does not want us to be raised into God's image of love, peace, power and prosperity. Beginning with Adam and Eve, Satan has done all he can to get us to think and act against God by constantly whispering in our ears and telling us we know what is best for ourselves. He tells us that we need to take charge over our life and do what we think is best to get what we want. Satan deceives us into thinking that if we let God control our life, we will lose the power to do things just the way we want, when we want, how we want to do them.

Until we get to the point we realize we don't really know what it takes to fulfill our self, we will continue to frustrate our self by fruitlessly pursuing the religion of *me, myself and I*. Until we get Spirit-born and mind-transformed to think and act like Jesus, we will suffer the failure and frustration of a life without God. This is what Adam and Eve cursed us with and this is why God created blood covenants with Jesus Christ being the last sacrificial offering.

Hebrews 9:26-28

***... but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself
And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but
after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered
to bear the sins of many;***

Jesus Christ – one time for all time – sacrificed Himself on the cross of Calvary so that we could be raised from the death of our trespasses and sin, redeemed from Satan, and

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reconciled (reunited) with God. Mankind can now once again enter into agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and fulfill God's plan for man by becoming conformed into Jesus' God in man image. Turn the page and let us meet Jesus Christ, our beloved Lord, Savior and Spiritual husband, Who loves us, lives in us, and thought by thought conforms us into the image and likeness of God (John 1:14).

Chapter 3

JESUS CHRIST

GOD-CENTERED SPIRIT-LED MAN

Because Adam and Eve forfeited the rule of their lives and the earth to Satan, none of us are naturally born with Father God, His Word and His Holy Ghost living in us and guiding our life. This is why God had to send His Holy Ghost Spirit to impregnate the virgin Mary and have her birth His Word in the man, Jesus Christ (Luke 1:35).

Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word Messiah. Messiah is God's Spirit-led rather than soul-led man, who only listens to and obeys God's Word. Messiah/Christ Jesus was sent by God to fulfill God's love plan for man to be conformed into God's image and likeness. When we ask Jesus to save us, God Spirit births us with the Spirit of the Son of God (Galatians 4:6). This makes us new creations in Christ, who are forgiven all our sin, redeemed from Satan, and reconciled (reunited) with Father God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

Jesus, the Christ, is the express image of Father God (Hebrews 1:3). He is the Spirit-born Word of God made flesh through Whom God lives, moves and has His being upon the earth (John 1:14). Whereas Adam was soul-led, Jesus is Spirit-led. He is the last Adam, the second, final and perfect type of man God would create. Through Spirit-birth, mind renewal, and character conformation, we are transformed from soul-led to Spirit-led men like Jesus. We now live, move and have our being through Christ: the Spirit of Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost within us (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

Jesus is righteous man, the man who is in right relationship with God. He abides in the goodness and glory of Father God and Holy Ghost Who live in, minister to and

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minister through Him. Guided by Father God and Holy Ghost, Jesus fully manifested the Word of God in the flesh and expressed the Spiritual, mental and emotional image of Father God to the world.

Hebrews 1:1-4

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Jesus expressed Father God's Spirit by studying, believing and receiving the Word of God as His own and then stepping out in faith to speak and do what the Spirit and Word of God told Him to speak and do (Hebrews 1:3). This reactivated the five provisions contained in God's parental blessing upon man as spoken in Genesis 1:28. Jesus lived by God's Word and was *fruitful* in all His endeavors. He *multiplied* His ministry through His disciples. He *replenished* Himself with the Spirit and Word of God. He *subdued* the temptations of His manly soul by bringing all His thoughts to God. He *took dominion* over His life through speaking God's Word in faith.

His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection took power over Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack for all men. He became the last sacrifice. Through making Jesus their Lord, no longer would men have to make atonements in order to receive the blessings and promises of God. That is why just before He died on the cross, Jesus declared, "It is finished." What was finished? The old order of atonement through

Jesus Christ

physical sacrifice was finished; Jesus' death became the ultimate and final physical sacrifice for the sin and sickness of men (John 19:30; Hebrews 10:7-18).

Jesus returned the unencumbered agape love life of God to man that Adam and Eve forfeited to Satan. When we become Spirit-born and thought by thought fellowship with Jesus, He renews and transforms our mind to think, act and minister like He does. Jesus' ministry through us to our family, friends and others finally fully conforms us into Jesus' image – as God's righteous, agape love-motivated, faith-empowered, miracle-ministering, obedient, secure, fulfilled daughter or son. We are blessed in all our ways and succeed at everything we do.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For he (Father God) hath made him (His Son, Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Romans 3:22

Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.

Romans 1:17

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

THE LAST ADAM

Jesus is called the “last Adam.” He is the second and last type of man God would create. Unlike the first Adam, who turned his back upon God to serve his flesh, Jesus presented His flesh as a living sacrifice to the Spirit and Word of God within Him. Jesus never sinned but rather brought all His thoughts to Father and did only that which God commanded

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Him to do (1 Corinthians 15:45-50; Romans 12:1-2; John 5:19).

Jesus knew who Satan was and knew how Satan tempted natural man. All of Satan's attempts to sway and influence Jesus were immediately captured and destroyed by Jesus. The Bible says that though Jesus was tempted as we are tempted, in all ways Jesus overcame the wicked one. Jesus came to do what Adam and Eve failed to do. Jesus came to totally obey and do the will of His Father. Father's will was for Jesus to destroy the hold Satan had on the life of men.

1 John 3:8

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

By not giving into sin and yet suffering all the consequences of sin for us on His cross, Jesus literally went to hell for us. Jesus suffered so we don't have to. This is called the act of substitution. God allowed Jesus to be substituted in our place. He allowed Jesus to take on all the sickness and punishments for our sin that Satan afflicts us with. Because Jesus never sinned on earth, Satan had no legal right to afflict, punish or sicken Jesus on earth and take Jesus to hell. Satan's illegal act was condemned by God. God authorized Jesus to take the keys of hell from Satan and destroy Satan's power over Jesus' followers on earth. Jesus' authority replaced Satan's authority over those men and women who get Spirit-born and receive the Spirit of God's Son, Jesus Christ, into them (Galatians 4:6).

SPIRIT-BIRTH

We cannot do religious works to get Spirit-born. We can only believe Jesus rose from the death of hell for us and then ask Jesus to become our Lord. When we do that, God

Jesus Christ

instantly saves us from Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack by covering us with Jesus' sacrificial blood and birthing us with the Spirit of the Son of God, which makes us new creations in Christ (Romans 10:9; Galatians 4:6).

God no longer sees us as men of sin but as His Spiritually perfect, sinless children. As far as God is concerned, only Christ in us is alive (Romans 6:1-23). To God we are His righteous (right related), justified (just as if we'd never sinned), eternal (forever) sons and daughters with whom He wants to fellowship with 24/7. When we fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and let Their Word guide our life, we become mentally and emotionally conformed to think and act, like Jesus (Romans 8:29). Just as Jesus did on earth, we dedicate ourselves to capturing and bringing all our thoughts to God, so Jesus can tell us which ones to keep and which ones to cast out (John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

This enables us to overcome Satan's temptations to suck us back into the sin, anger, loneliness and pain of our past or turn our back upon God by putting our self in charge of our present. When we do occasionally forget to fellowship with God and sin, once we recognize we have sinned, instead of letting Satan condemn and beat us up for our sin, we are to give our sin to God. 1 John 1:5-10 tells us that God knows even though we are dedicated to walking in the light and life of Jesus, we will still occasionally get seduced by self-centered thinking or deceived by the wicked one. However, God provides the way for us to instantly cleanse ourselves from the unrighteous thinking of our sin. As soon as we see we are in sin, we are to pray 1 John 1:9 and, in Jesus' name, ask Father to forgive our sin.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

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Once prayed, Father instantly forgives us our sin, cleanses us from any other unrighteous thinking we might have and restores His peace within us. We then ask Jesus to show us how Satan got us to sin so we can recognize and reject such temptation in the future. This renews our mind to think and act like Jesus rather than our old man of sin.

THE FINAL SACRIFICE

Jesus' blood upon the cross was the final sacrifice of God's blood covering covenants for the sins of men. Jesus fulfilled and eliminated the Old Testament soul-led, religious works system law of sin and death in which men had to continually offer physical sacrifices to God for their ongoing, never ending sins. Jesus' blood forever cleanses us from the sin of our manly spirit and flesh which kept us condemned and unable to enjoy God's personal presence, agape love and good for our life.

Romans 8:1-2

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

We are now under the New Testament law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which operates through agape love, faith and grace. Under it, we get Spirit-born and fully forgiven of all our past sin. God receives us as His redeemed, righteous, Spiritually complete, anointed (Holy Ghost consecrated [set apart for God's work] and empowered) agape love child. As our mind is renewed to think and act like Jesus, we are transformed from a self-centered, soul-led person into a God-centered, Spirit-led person, who fulfills God's Genesis 1:26 plan for women and men to become conformed into the image and likeness of God (Ephesians 2:1-22; Romans 8:29).

Jesus Christ

Jesus' sacrificial blood and Spirit-birth brought us full circle back to Adam's and Eve's original righteous relationship with God in the Garden of Eden. However, unlike Adam and Eve in the garden before they sinned, we have an intimate knowledge of the evil generated by our soul-led, self-centered, Satan-infected manly ways. Adam's and Eve's disobedience taught us the first thing we need to know about thinking and acting like God. Namely, that evil is evil. No matter how our self-absorbed soul (*me*), flesh-centered body (*myself*) and self-will run riot mind (*I*) may dress themselves up in robes of light, they are still evil. All they can and ever want to do is steal the Word of God out of our mind, kill the hope of God in our heart, and destroy the life of God in us (John 10:10a).

OUR FATHER

God introduced Himself to Moses as "I AM": the great self-existent one without beginning or ending of days. When we make Jesus Christ our Lord and get Spirit-born the great "I AM" becomes "our Father" and we fulfill the first part of God's love plan to make men and women into Jesus' image (Genesis 1:26; Romans 8:29). That part begins the moment we ask Jesus to come into our heart, save us from Satan, sin and hell and become our Lord and Savior.

If you've never asked Jesus to come into your heart and be your Lord and Savior or you would like to reaffirm this reality in your life please say this with me:

"Jesus, I believe that God raised you from the dead. Right now, become my Lord. Forgive me my sin. Spirit-birth me and make Almighty God my loving Father. Thank you, Jesus, for saving me. Thank you, Jesus, that your Father God and Holy Spirit now live in me, talk with me and guide my growth in you. I love you Jesus."

It's that simple. As soon as you prayed this, Jesus, Father and Holy Ghost crucified your spirit of flesh, Spirit-birthed you with the Spirit of the Son of God, made you a new man-

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bodied, God-Spirited creature and married you to Jesus (Galatians 2:20, 4:6, 6:14; Romans 7:4). Your old man of sin died. All your past sins disappeared. God no longer remembers any of them. Satan remembers all of them but God sees you as His sinless child.

Satan will try to get you to still see yourself as a child of sin by beating you over the head with your past sins so you will doubt you are saved. You see, the devil doesn't doubt God's Word and God's Word says that when you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is your Lord then you will be saved (Romans 10:8-13). Not, might be saved; not, let's see how bad a sinner you've been then God will decide if you are worth saving. No, God's Word says you will be saved. Satan knows that's true. His only way to keep you from knowing and acting like you are saved is to keep you ignorant of God's Word and full of condemnation and guilt for the sins that died with your first Adam, self-centered man of sin.

The main thing about being Spirit-born is to believe it. Don't doubt it. Don't think you don't deserve it. Above all, don't think that Spirit-birth fulfills and ends your life in Christ. No! No! No! Spirit-birth simply opens the door and enters us into the supernatural life of Christ, like when we enter into our natural life by coming out of the womb of our mother. Through Spirit-birth out of the supernatural womb of God we become new Spiritual creations in Christ. All the thoughts and actions of our sin-driven, self-in charge, first Adam natural spirited man are destroyed and forgotten by God. God no longer sees us as sin driven men but as Spirit and Word led sons and daughters, like Jesus. We become new creatures in Christ. Our old natural Adam man is crucified with Jesus and our new supernatural man is resurrected with Jesus. All things are new and fresh. Our new life in Christ is birthed and just beginning (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

Jesus Christ

WORKING OUT OUR SALVATION

Through fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost we enter into on-the-job training to learn who we are in Jesus, what we have through Jesus, what we can do in Jesus and how to do such through Jesus in us. The Bible calls this working out our salvation. Salvation is all the Spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social and ministerial good that God has made us joint-heirs of with Jesus (Romans 8:10-18). We work out our salvation by stepping out in faith and believing, speaking, doing and receiving the Word of God into our life.

That's the second part of God's love plan. God fully conforms us into Jesus' image by 24/7 talking with us and renewing our mind with His Holy Word. Through obeying God's written and spoken Word and Holy Ghost prompting, we grow beyond a fruitless child of God into a fruitful daughter or son of God, who lives in and ministers out the good news of the abundant life of Christ to our family, friends and others, as noted in our next chapter.

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

Chapter 4

GOD'S GOOD REPLACES SATAN'S EVIL

Until we are Spirit-born and put on the mind of Christ, we live by Satan-infected, soul-led, manly thinking. We pursue life through this thinking until, over a course of tests, trials, tribulation and time, we discover our thinking is our worst enemy.

Unless you were blessed to be raised in a good Christian home with parents who led you into intimate relationship and fellowship with Jesus, you were probably like me: a natural minded, self-centered man who got what I wanted, when I wanted it, no matter what it took to get it. I never thought doing things “my way” to fulfill “my self-interests” was wrong or evil. Manipulating people to get what I wanted was merely a part of the dog-eat-dog of everyday life.

Jesus told the world-wise, ultra-religious, rich young ruler, that no man is in and of himself good. Only One is good and that is God. Once Spirit-born, however, through the Spirit of Father God in us, we become filled with Father's good. By us letting Jesus transform our mind with the Word of God, He can replace our evil soul-led thinking and acting with His good Spirit-led thinking and acting (Matthew 19:16-22; John 14:9-15; Philippians 1:6).

KICK OUT SATAN AND THE ZOMBIES

Through the soul-led mind of man we think and live in hell on earth. Through the Spirit-led mind of Christ we think and live in heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon earth. We renew our mind to think and act like Jesus by rejecting all Satan's words and accepting only God's Word into our life.

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

The key to becoming God's mature sons and daughters who think and act through Jesus is to first believe that becoming conformed into Jesus' image is what our new life in Christ is all about (Romans 8:29). Thought by thought we act on the truth that through Christ all things are possible. When we do this, we no longer are the helpless victims of Satan and our sick and sorrowful manly soul. In Jesus' name, we have total power over our soul-led *me, myself and I*, who continually bombard our mind with all sorts of negative thoughts and feelings.

Think of *me, myself and I* as three zombies who 24/7 try to devour your new sinless creation in Christ with your old life of sin. Through Jesus, these zombies are dead to us and with no power over our life – except for the power we give them. Satan continually commands the zombies to feed us the same old thoughts they always have, so we will continue to think and act in the same old way we always have. But now, through Christ in us, we have the divine power to pray in Jesus' name and bind (tie up) and cast those evil, destructive thoughts out of us and loose (release) the good creative thoughts of God into our life (Matthew 16:19; 18:18-20). When we do this, we enforce Jesus' victory for us over Satan by replacing our corrupt personal and corporate religious thinking and acting with God's pure religious thinking and acting.

Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost do not merely want to save us from going to hell. They want to raise us in the peace and power of God's Word-based, faith-filled, sound-minded thinking and acting. Though Spirit-birth instantly makes us new Spiritually-perfect creations in Christ, it does not instantly transform our soul-led mind from thinking and acting in the destructive religious ways we always have. As Jesus had to thought by thought present His body a living sacrifice to Father and Holy Ghost in order for Them to guide Jesus in His thinking, so do we (Romans 12:1-2; John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6). As we learn to turn all our thoughts over to Jesus, we will begin to experience personal and ministerial

God's Good Replaces Satan's Evil

fullness. Within our Spirit we will accept our position as Jesus' minister, ambassador and bride, who sits with Jesus on His throne next to Father God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 7:4; Revelation 3:21).

GOD'S WORD AND FAITH

God lives and moves and has His being through His Word. He obeys no other Word but His own. Satan cannot successfully tempt God to disobey God's Word nor does God ever tempt men to disobey God's Word.

James 1:13

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:

God's Word contains the life and the light of men.

John 1:1-4, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men . . . and 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.

Jesus is the living Word of God made flesh. When we open our mouth and make Jesus our Lord, God's Holy Spirit enters into us and births us with the Spirit of The Son of God (Galatians 4:6). God becomes our father in the same way He is Jesus' father. We are made God's new creations and children in Christ, who He graces (loves, forgives and favors) at all times (Romans 10:8-13; Galatians 4:6; 2 Corinthians

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5:17-21). Once Spirit-born, we enter into thought by thought fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost through which They renew our mind with Their Word and ways, which grows us beyond a child of God into a mature son or daughter, like Jesus (Philippians 1:6).

We fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost by both directly talking with Them and hearing Them speak to us when we read or listen to Their biblical Word. This stirs the measure of God's faith that we received at Spirit-birth to believe, speak and activate who the Word of God says we are and what it says we can do through Jesus in us (Romans 12:3, 10:17).

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Through faith, we diligently (without stop) seek (talk with) Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Doing so, we come to experience the reward of letting God love us and we loving self and others through the love of God in us. This fulfills God's two New Testament commandments of agape love, as well as Jesus' prayer for us to be made fully one with Him and Father in all our thoughts and ways (Philippians 1:6; John 13:34; Mark 12:30-31).

John 17:20-23

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;

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and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Father God is raising us, His family, to do His business upon the earth. Father's business is to Spirit-birth and raise children into mature sons and daughters of God, ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ. Reconciliation means to bring a person back into a mutual relationship of love, trust and loyalty with another person. That relationship was lost in the Garden of Eden, but Jesus' death, burial and resurrection restored it. Jesus reconciles us to Father God. The instant we are Spirit-born we become Father's child and Jesus' bride (Romans 7:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21). Through us Jesus then ministers the good news of reconciliation to others.

Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost are the only Ones Who know what it is like to totally think and act like God. Only through Them and Their Word can we become progressively transformed to think and act like Jesus. Father will not share His Godhood with anyone other than His Spirit-born sons and daughters. Satan has infected our manhood with the religion of sin. Even though we are born-again and Spiritually perfect the **Self** **IN** charge stinking thinking of man continually tries to reassert its power over us. So when we are attacked by Satan and his zombies, we overpower them through praying in Jesus' name and binding their evil and loosing the good of God into our life (Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20).

GOD IS ALWAYS GOOD

Always keep in mind that God in all ways is good to us. He is never evil or causes bad things to happen to us. He is our good agape love-filled parent who 24/7 graces (loves, forgives and favors) us, so we can grow in the Word, ways, wisdom, knowledge, peace, power, blessings and glory of Christ in us. All natural minded men and too many Christians have a wrong perception of God. They think that God is out

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to get them, or at the very least, they view God as a creator of rules and regulations which they must strictly follow or suffer dire consequences. Many Christians erroneously believe that God puts stress, strain and sickness on us, or causes other bad things to happen to us, to teach us a lesson.

The only ones who try to teach us a lesson – by attacking us with bad things – are Satan and our soul-led self. Don't forget, Satan still rules over the earth and he hates us since we are the sons and daughters of God. Though through Jesus in us, we can easily overcome evil when it attacks us, we can't live lives totally freed from evil attacks. Keep in mind that manly *me, myself and I* and Satan – not Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost – are the bad guys. Otherwise, if you mistakenly think God attacks you with evil, then how can you believe that you can ask God to remove the evil you think He has caused you? Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost are the only good guys. When called upon, They will destroy any evil thought or work of Satan and soul-led self against you. They will create all the good you need to live the peace filled, prosperous life of heaven upon earth that was first provided to Adam and his wife, and now, through our faith and obedience, is provided to us (Ephesians 2:6).

Until we enter into intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost we will not know how good God really is. We will fail to see that God would never do anything to cause us pain, distress or suffering. He only wants to love us, bless us, and help us succeed at everything in life.

Jesus came to the earth as a man to show us how to destroy the works of Satan. Then, before He left the earth, He promised He would send the Holy Ghost to help us and guide us in all things. Through our thinking and acting like Jesus and the anointing (empowerment) of the Holy Ghost we are able to be fruitful, multiply, replenish, subdue and take dominion over our life by binding (destroying) the evil of Satan and man and loosing (creating) the good of God (1 John 3:8; John 14:26, 15:26; Matthew 16:19).

God's Good Replaces Satan's Evil

Jesus said that He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). He will never reject us. We need to get this into our heart. Put away all your stinking thinking about how God's out to get you. It's Satan who's out to wreck your peace and get you away from God by incessantly whispering lies into your manly mind.

Genesis 3:1 says that the serpent is the most "subtle" of creatures. Subtle means crafty, cunning, difficult to distinguish, elusive. Satan doesn't deceive us by shouting in our ears or telling us things that are so preposterous we can easily see the lie within them. Instead, he tries to counterfeit God's still small voice by whispering to our flesh or pride or feelings. He quietly urges us to always do what we want, when we want, how we want. He always justifies what we think or do through him. Others are always wrong and we are always right and righteous (Proverbs 21:2). With that kind of thinking, who needs God to guide us, since we know all about how everything should go in our life? This kind of thinking and acting is by no means exclusive to non-Christians.

Who hasn't had thoughts such as, "Go on and speed, there aren't any cops around and you're late." Or, "Call in sick. You stayed up late last night watching that movie. You'll be miserable all day and make everyone else's life miserable. Go on: call."

How about it's morning and your spouse gets up and walks into the kitchen about half-conscious with a dazed look on his/her face and instead of smiling at you and giving you a kiss, she/he crosses in front of you and goes to the refrigerator – and an angry voice within you whispers, "What's that wacko mad at me for, now?" You bite on Satan's bait and do the worst thing in the world at that time and angrily say, "So, now what's the matter?" Satan then stirs your spouse, who is merely trying to wake up, to likewise bite into Satan and angrily respond, "Me? What's the matter with you?" And the battle is on. Two hours later, after you've once again regurgitated all the things you don't like about one

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another, you simply stop talking to each other for ... how long? In my and Gayle's case, it's until we both see we failed to bring our thoughts to Jesus. Once seen, we join together in a 1 John 1:9 prayer and, in Jesus' name, ask Father to forgive us, and then we apologize to one another.

Any time a Christian fails to bring his/her thoughts to Jesus for evaluation and recommendation as to what to do with them, that Christian is already being misled by Satan to do her/his own thing and get beat up by it. God does not beat us for not thinking and acting like God. Satan does. Because Adam and his wife followed Satan's whispers and fell from their God-given position as the rulers over this earth, Satan now rules over natural manly life. He corrupts it with his cruelty and pain that daily punishes us for merely being here and being dumb enough to listen to and run our life through his wicked whispers. God provides The New Testament for us to come in out of the daily punishment of Satan's hell on earth. If we don't enter into the fullness of God's New Testament Covenant protection and provision for our life, it's not God's fault. He's offering us His good life of abundance. If we remain ignorant of God's Word and ways, Satan and soul-led self will continue to wreck our life.

God's greatest desire is for us to love Him and become like Him by fully rejecting Satan's self-centered – *get all I can, hoard it up for myself and give nothing for free to anyone else* – life of evil. We are to live in and through the good life of God. By faith and obedience to God's Word and will, we receive God's good life in abundance and can abundantly give God's life in us to others (John10:10).

What does it take for us to finally admit that on our own we have no defense against evil's hell on earth? How much pain do we have to experience as we serve ourselves rather than God? How long are we going to let Satan rule over what is rightfully ours and wreck our life with sin, sickness and the lack of true success and joy in our life?

The simple answer is that once we have enough of evil's pain we will seek God's gain. The more complicated answer

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is we first have to recognize evil's pain comes through the godhood of our Satan-infected, man-centered self. It often takes quite a bit of pain to fully admit the self-centered choices we freely make are imprisoning us in the hell of self. As said earlier, our own manly thinking and acting are our own worst enemies. When we finally see that free will is nothing more than an excuse for our Satan-infected self-will to run riot, it is God's hope that we will reach out to Jesus and begin to do whatever is necessary to die to the hell of Satan in self so we can live through the heaven of Jesus in self, upon earth, and then later in the fullness of heaven.

The road to heaven first runs through the hell of Satan-infected natural life. Let's face that reality, reject Satan's introduction to hell on earth, and seek heaven on earth through Jesus. Let's trade in Satan's garbage for God's glory. Like our First Century forefathers did, let's die to our self-centered nature and wrong religious teachings, which keep us from personally fellowshiping with God and miraculously ministering through God's love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, obedience, goodness, power and glory. Let's walk with God like Adam and his wife did before their fall and Jesus did on earth despite the temptations of Satan and the *me, myself and I* of His manly soul, body and self-will. Let's become what we are Spirit-birthed to become: God's mature sons and daughters. We new creations in Christ who, like Jesus, thought by thought fellowship with God and overcome the temptations of Satan and soul-led self. Through God we live in the peace, power and prosperity of heavenly places in Christ on earth and in the fullness of heaven when we die and depart our physical body.

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Chapter 5

NEW CREATIONS IN CHRIST

None of us – except Jesus – have been naturally born with the Spirit of Christ already within us. Until Jesus births us with His Son of God Spirit of Christ, we are self-centered rather than God-centered. We can only behave like natural minded men putting ourselves first in all we think and do. This Satan-infected, self-centered behavior puts us at odds with the primal purpose for our life which God programmed into us in Genesis 1:26. God intends for us to be made into His loving, giving, creating not Satan's hating, stealing, destroying image. Only by becoming Spirit-born and mind-transformed can we complete our divine destinies to become character-conformed into the love filled image of Jesus.

We are all driven to discover who we are, why we are here, where we fit in and how we fulfill ourselves. Until we are Spirit-born, however, God can't guide our life. We are guided by our soul-led manly thinking, or by the thinking of other soul-led manly minds.

You say that you are a good person, that you are not infected by Satan's self-centered, do-it-my-way thinking and acting. Since Satan is the god of this natural world, if you do not 24/7 fellowship with God and bring every thought to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost before saying it or acting upon it, then Satan will always find a way to influence you in even the smallest of ways. For example, a Christian friend of ours was driving to work one day along the same route she always took. The thought came into her head to take a different route. She dismissed it and kept going her normal way. A few blocks later she was rear-ended. Her first thought was: "Jesus, I'm covered by the blood. This shouldn't have happened!" Jesus reminded her she should have paid attention to the thought to take a different route.

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Does that mean you have to obey every thought that pops into your head? No, because the next time it might be the devil trying to get you to turn and you end up in a traffic jam. The point is: recognize when the thought appears and then take it to Jesus and examine it with Him. He will tell you whether to obey it or discard it.

Sadly, we Christian men and women, like our worldly counterparts, can easily forego God and instead rely upon our manly nature to try and control, promote and protect our life through self-centered, self-serving, often habitual, rigid (religious) thinking and acting. This seldom serves us well and even when it does seem to make our life worth living, we are soon hit by the next unforeseen, uncontrollable jab of doubt, worry, fear, anger, pride – you name it – that attacks and wrecks our peace of mind. The Bible calls this being tossed to and fro. Wouldn't it be nice to stay calm, have everything work out for the best and not find yourself on the roller coaster of life? I don't know about you, but roller coasters make me sick – I much prefer an easy smooth ride.

This is why once we are Spirit-born it is imperative that we immediately enter into intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Through the faith of the Son of God within us, we are empowered to capture and cast out our weak, corrupted, destructive manly thinking and replace it with the powerful, pure, creative Word of God. God's Word reveals to us what to believe, what to speak and what to do through Christ in us (Galatians 2:20; Romans 12:1-3; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Romans 10:17).

Jesus is the living Word of God. Holy Ghost is our teacher and counselor. Father oversees all we think and do. By bringing all our thoughts to Them, we renew our mind and work out our salvation. The more you know, believe, receive, speak out and act upon what the Word of God declares you now are in Jesus, the more you will think and act like Jesus and complete God's work of salvation in your life. It is great to know and operate through the truth of God's Word. It allows God to bless you in all your ways and makes

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you a blessing to others (Romans 7:4, 8:17; Philippians 1:6, 2:12; Ephesians 4:11-15).

NEW CREATURES IN CHRIST

Looking back at Genesis 1:26-28 we can see God blessed us to: be fruitful (successful) in all our God-guided ways; multiply (increase) the work of God in our life, replenish (plant) the good news of Jesus wherever we go, subdue (take power over) all evil that comes against us, and take dominion (rule) over every moment and aspect of our life. Adam and Eve gave that up, but these blessings are again ours through the life of Jesus Christ in us. We are truly new creatures in Christ; our old nature passed onto us through Adam and Eve is gone.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

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.

From the womb, Jesus was a new type of creature (creation) of God. Instead of operating His life through the religious words and ways of self-centered, Satan-infected manhood, Jesus lived through God's pure religion of agape love. Within Him was the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word,

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obedience, goodness, power and glory of Christ. This made Jesus the last Adam, the last and perfect (completely God-led) type of man, the type of man we become at Spirit-birth and through fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost are fully raised into (1 Corinthians 15:45-50; Philipians 1:6).

Jesus is the first minister of reconciliation and ambassador for Christ. He first reconciles (reestablishes) our righteous relationship to Father God as God's sinless children, like Jesus. He then trains us how to manifest the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, obedience, goodness, power and glory of Christ in us through Him. The more our mind is transformed and our character conformed into Jesus' image, the more Jesus is able to minister God's natural and Spiritual blessings to us and through us to others.

BLESSED

Ephesians 1:3-5, 13

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 . . . in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.

Through Jesus we are blessed beyond measure by being adopted by God, Who forever seals us in His Spirit and love. We stand holy and without blame before our Father in heavenly places in Christ upon this earth (Ephesians 2:6, 4:30).

The New Testament reveals God's plan for man is now being fulfilled through Jesus in us. The challenge we are faced with is to believe and act upon this truth. No matter that

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God sees us as His righteous, sinless son or daughter, we must see ourselves the same way. But as you may have already noticed while reading the above scriptures and words, there is a thinking that comes against the truth of God's Word. No matter that the scriptures plainly state through Spirit-birth you have become God's new creation, His eternal son or daughter, Jesus' bride and joint-heir to all God's blessings today, tomorrow and forever... there is a voice that tells you it's not so. That voice is your Satan-infected manly self.

Romans 7:21-25

I find then a law (a way of thinking), that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Your *me, myself and I* flesh will never stop telling you God is lying to you until, in Jesus' name, you tell it to shut-up and replace its thinking and acting with the thinking and acting of Jesus. For not only must we be Spirit-born, we must be mind-transformed by 24/7 fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, putting on the Word of God and totally renewing our mind to think and act through Jesus Christ in us.

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that God which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (guiding all your thoughts).

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The self-centered manly thinking and acting of personal and corporate religion pays little heed to the fact that Jesus desires to thought by thought guide and thoroughly transform us into His way of thinking and acting. Religion doesn't clearly comprehend that Jesus has reconciled (reestablished our) relationship with Father God so that all things of our old life have come to pass (been destroyed by God) and all things of our life are now new and of God. Religion doesn't realize we are completely redeemed (totally bought back from Satan and sin in all ways) and provided with the relationship Adam and Eve had with God before they followed Satan's voice and disobeyed God. Religion cannot relate to the reality that we become God's sin-rejecting, righteous children, citizens of heaven living on earth in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We joint-heirs with Jesus to all Father God is and has.

Jesus' death, burial and resurrection enable us to get Spirit-born and translated out of Satan's cursed world of darkness, sin and death into the blessings, light and life of the kingdom of God's dear Son, Jesus Christ. Through Jesus, we Spiritually become a new type of man. The same kind of man Jesus is. A man in whom God lives, loves and reigns. A man through whom God's Son, Jesus Christ, continues His miraculous Messianic Ministry of Christ upon the earth.

In our next chapter we'll continue with how God transforms our mind so that Jesus guides all our thoughts and fulfills God's love plan for us to become fully conformed into Jesus' image.

Chapter 6

SPIRIT-BORN AND MIND-TRANSFORMED

Jesus became a flesh bodied man so He could show us how to live and operate through the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, obedience, goodness, power and glory of God.

WHO'S YOUR FATHER?

When Adam and Eve turned their backs upon God and sinned they replaced God's fatherhood with Satan's fatherhood of our lives. Through Spirit-birth Jesus redeems us from Satan by reconciling (reestablishing) God's Spiritual fatherhood of our life. In John 8:42-44 Jesus severely upset the Satan-infected religious rulers of His time who thought their manly orchestrated works had secured God's seal of approval upon their lives because they claimed God as their father. Jesus set them straight when he told them:

John 8:42-44

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

Father God is pure agape love. The only way to get to know Him is to love Him as He loves us – with His whole heart, soul, mind and strength (1 John 4:8,16; Romans 8:29; Mark 12:30-31). The Bible says that those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth. The truth is that He loves us so much He sacrificed His Son, Jesus, to save us from Satan, Spirit-birth us into His family and make us like Him (John 3:16-21, 4:23-24). So, who is your father?

BEST FRIENDS BECOME WORST ENEMIES

Me, myself and I have been our best friends from natural birth. They contain all our personal and corporate religious thinking: all the words and images, all the rules and regulations, all the emotions, attitudes, habits and beliefs through which we have to date conducted our life. Until we get Spirit-born and see them for who they truly are, we think *me, myself and I* are our best friends. But it's their stinking thinking that has wrecked our life and driven us to Jesus. We can now see who they truly are – the children of Satan and the gods of our sin life. They were the ones who decided which turns we took in the pursuit of our flesh-centered self-fulfillment. Believe me, they won't voluntarily quit talking to you even though Jesus has taken their place in the temple of your mind. Remember they have been sitting in that temple, having complete authority for all your life. Even though Jesus has Spiritually killed their power over you, like zombies who want to devour you, they constantly harass you with their lies that you are still one with them rather than one with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Defeated Satan keeps telling them to tell you that you are still the same person you've always been. This is why God strongly urges us to work with Him to renew our mind from thinking and acting through the words of *me, myself and I* to thinking and acting through the Word of God.

Spirit-Born And Mind-Transformed

Romans 12:1-2

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.

Prove means to test. We are to test God's written Word, which is His will for us, and determine whether it brings better results to our life than the words and will of our manly *me, myself and I*. God has faith in Himself and His Word. He designed us to flourish through It. By presenting our bodies as living sacrifices, as living test cases to prove whether *me, myself and I* or Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost have the best plan for our life, we soon know which plan to follow. Since God's Word contains the good, acceptable and perfect will of God for our life, by replacing the words of *me, myself and I* with the Word of God for our life, we soon see the good results of living through God's creative will rather than Satan's destructive insanity.

LIFE AND DEATH ARE IN THE TONGUE

What is in our heart comes out of our mouth.

Luke 6:45

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

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Our heart is what we conduct our life through. It contains our intellect, will, imaginations, emotions and bodily appetites. Our heart can be run by either our *me, myself and I* manly spirit and soul or the Spirit of Christ in us.

Our actions and words indicate what is truly in our heart. Everyone has heard someone say one thing and then act completely different. What was in the person's heart, what he said or what he did? It's like the old adage, actions speak louder than words. Conversely what we say also can show what is in our heart. We profess that Jesus heals us and then we walk around claiming to be sick all the time. Reread Proverb 18:21 above. The tongue is mighty. James says through God our tongue can keep the ship of our life on God's true course. On the other hand, through Satan it can cause us much evil by setting our ship on fire and sinking us in the sea of life. How often does your tongue help you out? How often does it get you into trouble?

When we speak or act, good or evil, it declares what's in our heart; it will either produce life and creation or produce death and destruction. We need to insure our heart is operating through God's good rather than Satan's evil. If we don't do this we become double minded. Our life becomes unstable as we create God's good and then turn around and destroy it with Satan's evil (James 1:8).

This is why God tells us to capture every thought and bring it to Christ in us. Jesus can then tell us the source of the thought and whether to keep it or cast it out (2 Corinthians 10:5; Matthew 16:19). This simple plan of action brings us into intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and renews our mind with God's Word, so that we progressively think and act more like Spirit-minded Jesus than flesh-minded *me, myself and I*.

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND REJECT EVIL

Our casual, comfortable, intimate agape love fellowship with God, through which we constantly converse with Father,

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Jesus and Holy Ghost, enables us to clearly hear and correctly apply God's written and spoken Word and Holy Ghost prompting. We destroy Satan's evil and create God's good and thought by thought fulfill God's Genesis 1:26-28 plan for us to be made in the image and likeness of God and His God in man Son, Jesus Christ.

God knows who Satan is and what Satan thinks and acts like. God totally rejects all Satan is, thinks and acts like. At the end of the book of Revelation God throws Satan and all his followers into the eternal Lake of Fire. This brings an end to evil. Until that time, evil – the stock and trade of Satan that he has infected the human soul with – is still with us.

As Jesus rejected Satan's' evil in the wilderness, we, who are being raised in Jesus' image and likeness, must learn to fellowship with God and likewise reject the evil Satan sets against us. How did Jesus do it? He knew God's Word and acted upon what It said He was, had and could do. He didn't listen or believe what Satan was telling Him. He knew the Word so well that He easily deflected Satan's spin on the Word (Luke 4: 1-13). Remember, how did Satan beguile Eve? He quoted back God's Word and added the word "not," "***You shall not surely die***" (Genesis 3:3-4). He appealed to Eve's fleshly desires through twisting the Word of God.

Let's look at another way Jesus rejected Satan. Jesus had just finished telling the disciples what He was going to have to suffer. Peter immediately said what he would do to keep Jesus from suffering. Jesus' responded, "***Get thee behind me Satan***" (Matthew 16:23). Jesus knew God's plan and rejected anything that came against it – including his disciple's "manly" desire to protect Jesus from harm.

How was Jesus able to do all this? Because the Holy Ghost and Father God lived in Him and counseled Him. Unlike Eve and Adam, Jesus never turned His back upon Father God. He brought His every thought to Father for examination and recommendation as to what to do with the thought. Jesus only did what Father showed Him to do (John 5:19). By us doing like Jesus and 24/7 fellowshiping with

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Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, we can easily recognize and, in Jesus' name, bind and cast out the evil that tempts us to believe, think and do what it's misleading us to believe, think and do (2 Corinthians 10:5; Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20).

On earth, Jesus occasionally talked about fellowshiping with His Father who He called "Abba", which means intimate, loving Father, Poppa or Daddy. When we are Spirit-born we too can think of God Almighty as our intimate, loving Father, Poppa or Daddy, who only wants the best for us and blesses us in all our ways (Galatians 4:6; Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 1:3-14).

Jesus is our Lord and Savior. He is God in man. Through Christ in us, we too are God in man. He is also our husband (Romans 7:4). We are married to Jesus. All Christians, male and female alike, are married to Jesus. We are His bride for whom He died on the cross and went to hell and then rose from the dead so we could rise from the death of our trespasses and sin and live with Him in heavenly places upon earth, today, and then in the fullness of heaven at the end of time. There is no more intimate association two people can have than to be married to one another. Married couples use wonderful, personal terms of endearment with one another. To me, Jesus is my "Beloved" as well as other intimate names that He and I personally call one another. Remember, true Christianity is intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost – not man-made religion that keeps Them far from us.

The Holy Ghost fills us with all the goodness and glory of God to the point we are called His temple in which He lives upon the earth – CHRIST IN US (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19). Holy Ghost does everything for us and through us that He did for and through Jesus when Jesus lived upon the earth. Like a good big brother, He teaches us, comforts us, watches out for and protects us, brings forth all the Words of God we speak in faith through Jesus, assigns us our angels and works with them in all ways to help raise us into Jesus' image.

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Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost are the heads of our Spiritual family. They are joined as one in God's agape love. Through Spirit-birth we are likewise joined as one with Them (1 John 5:7; John 17:20-23). All we have to do to know we are one with Them is to believe They are real and within us and that when we talk to Them, They hear us and – even when They have to correct us – They peacefully speak to us from within. Seldom do They speak to us in what we perceive to be an audible voice outside us.

The Bible is the Word that God wrote through holy men of old to us. By reading the Bible we can hear God's voice and get to know God's ways for us, especially as written in the New Testament. Daily reading the Bible helps us get to know God's voice and ways so that when we talk and listen to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost we can tell the difference between Them, Satan and the *me, myself and I* of our flesh. Attending a love, Word and Spirit-filled church that is centered around Jesus and teaches who we are in Christ and what we can do through Jesus in us will also strengthen our fellowship with God.

Our personal religious ways of thinking and acting, and the corporate thinking and acting of well-meaning but manly minded Christian religious groups, focus upon self-help rather than intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. But self-help is self-defeating since it employs our Satan-led manly thinking to try and solve the problems it causes us. The only effective solution to our stinking thinking is to enter into intimate, thought by thought, 24/7 agape love fellowship with God through which we capture and destroy (rather than get captured and destroyed by) our manly thoughts.

CAPTURING OUR THOUGHTS

The more we purposefully capture our thoughts and bring them to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost for evaluation and recommendation, the more thoughts we will capture and the

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more time we will spend in Their presence rather than in the presence of *me, myself and I*. Maybe you've never considered this before, but if you take a few minutes to look at what goes on inside your head, you will notice that it is constantly filled with thoughts. As noted earlier, there are different types of thoughts such as intellectual reasoning, emotional feelings, memories, imaginations, bodily appetites, willful dispositions, beliefs, habits, etc. We do nothing in life until we first have a thought so where a thought comes from is of great importance. If the thought comes from the good guys: Jesus, Father and Holy Ghost, then we know if we act upon the thought it will provide us with a good result. If the thought comes from the bad guys: *me, myself and I*, Satan or manly minded others, then we know if we hold onto the thought and let it take us where it wants us to go we will wind up with an evil result. This is an absolute truth. A thought can only produce what it is, either good or evil.

Many religious minded Christians never enter into the joy of relaxed, intimate love fellowship with God. Instead they haphazardly operate through both the mind of Christ and the mind of man and become unstable (James 1:8). Father God's hope is that once Spirit-born we will become best friends with Him, Jesus and Holy Ghost by entering into relaxed, intimate agape love fellowship with Them. They want us to hang out with Them, so They can teach us who we are and what we can do in Christ. This then enables us to totally access and fully enjoy God's blessings for us now and then forever in heaven with Them.

No matter what *me, myself and I* or Satan mislead us to believe we can have or become, there is no way to successfully and permanently fulfill our life through man-made religion. Only by becoming Spirit-born, mind-transformed and fully conformed into the love-filled, God-fellowshipping, Spirit-led, Word-speaking, miracle-manifesting image of Jesus can we fulfill God's love plan for our life. Mind-renewal grows us beyond a flesh-minded child of God into a Jesus-minded son or daughter of God.

Spirit-Born And Mind-Transformed

Though we have inherited all Jesus is and has, unless we fellowship with God and put on the mind of Christ, we have no clear idea about who we are and what we can do through Jesus in us. Most Spirit-born Christians know Jesus came to forgive them their sins and save them from going to hell. But they don't know that Jesus also came to raise them into His Spirit-led, Word-speaking image. They don't know they can thought by thought join with Jesus and work out their salvation so they become God's mature sons and daughters who live the victorious, abundant, miraculous life of Christ on earth. They don't enjoy being Jesus' bride and God's ambassadors for Christ through whom Jesus ministers God's love, Spirit, Word, faith, signs, wonders and miracles to their family, friends and others.

Whether on earth or in heaven, all Spirit-born Christians will fulfill God's love plan for them to become fully conformed into Jesus' image. Why wait until we get to heaven to live the victorious, abundant, miraculous life of Christ? Why not begin to enjoy it on the earth today? Let us totally dedicate ourselves to working with God to renew our mind to think and act like Jesus so that we are one with God in all our thoughts and succeed at everything we do, as discussed in our next chapter.

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

Chapter 7

ONE WITH GOD

Acts 2:46-47

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

The First Century pastors, prophets, evangelists, teachers and apostles, who Jesus called to serve His church, lived like Jesus through the Spirit of Christ within them. They were Spirit-birthed with the Spirit of the Son of God. They were Spirit-filled with the tongues and fire of the Holy Ghost. They thought by thought fellowshiped with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and worked out their salvation by renewing their soul-led manly minds to think, act and minister through the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, obedience, goodness, power, glory, revelations and blessings of God (Galatians 4:6; Acts 2:41-47, 10:41-44; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Romans 12:1-2).

These New Testament leaders raised the First Century believers to do the same (Ephesians 4:11-15). The First Century Saints learned how to live through the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, obedience, goodness, power, glory, revelations and blessings of God by asking (praying) to Father, in Jesus' name, to provide them with what His Word said was theirs. They were taught how to let Jesus minister to them and through them at home, work, church and elsewhere with signs, wonders and miracles following (Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:1-4). Those believers, who dedicated themselves to working out their salvation by 24/7 fellowshiping with God, filtered all their thoughts through Christ in them and fulfilled their lives by pursuing the specific ministries Jesus

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had for each one of them (John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 10:5). This made them wholly one with God and holy unto God.

1 Peter 1:14-16

As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy.

Holy means to live through the right thinking and acting of God rather than the wrong thinking and acting of man. By 24/7 fellowshiping with God, Jesus' first followers were one with God. They enjoyed the agape love-filled, holy thinking and acting of God. They lived the abundant life of Christ through which all their needs were provided for by God (Philippians 4:13, 19).

John 17:20-23

Neither pray I (Jesus) for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The core of Christianity is our holy oneness with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost through our constant fellowship with Them.

1 John 1:3

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and

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truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Agape love fellowship with God transforms our thinking and acting and conforms our character into Jesus' image. This completes God's plan for us to right now enter into heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon earth and receive all the blessings of our life in Christ. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, Matthew 7:21-23 and Luke 13:23-30 clearly warn us that without charity (agape love fellowship with God) we cannot get to know God in the intimate, blessed, life-transforming way we need to know God in order for us to become wholly one with Him in all our thoughts, words and deeds.

WHOLLY ONE THROUGH AGAPE LOVE

Jesus and His First Century followers fully focused upon being intimately joined and wholly one with God in thought, word and deed. This is why Jesus said the greatest commandment of all is for us to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30). When we are Spirit-born and become God's child, God provides us with His holy, unconditional agape love. Agape love joins us in the oneness of divine fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost so that we get to know God and trust His Word. The more intimate we grow with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost the easier it gets for us to believe that we can think, act, live and minister through Jesus in us. The agape love-based, faith-activated Word of God is what Jesus lives in and miraculously ministers through. Since we are being conformed into Jesus' image, we likewise live our lives through the agape love-based faith of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, within us (Galatians 2:20). God teaches us to exclusively operate through the faith of the Son of God so that we will only believe, speak, do and receive what God wants us to believe, speak, do and receive, including receiving God's love for us

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and releasing God's love through us to God, self and others (Romans 12:3; Galatians 5:6).

The faith of the Son of God within us is activated by us intently listening to and clearly hearing what God is saying to us through His written and spoken Word (Romans 10:17). Through fellowship, we speak to God and God speaks His Word to us within our Spirit. When reading the Bible, we hear God's Word in our mind. The preaching, teaching and sharing of our pastors, other ministers and fellow Christians puts God's Word in our ears. All this releases Jesus' faith within us to believe and obediently speak and do what God's Word says with the full expectation that it will accomplish what it says it will (Isaiah 55:11).

Jesus fellowshiped with Father God and faithfully did what Father God showed Jesus to do.

John 5:19

Then answered Jesus and said unto them verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

This is why we are urged to do as Jesus did and capture all our thoughts and bring them to Christ within us.

2 Corinthians 10:5

... bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Our thought by thought fellowship with God grows us up in God. Without it, we can easily be misled by Satan and soul-led self to pursue the sin filled, destructive thinking of man rather than pursue the faith filled, creative thinking of God. The first is the way of death; the second is the way of life in abundance. Jesus knew this. That's why Jesus captured all His thoughts, brought them to Father God and let Father

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and Holy Ghost direct Him to cast out or keep the thought and act upon it (John 5:19).

Look at the apostle, Paul. Before he came to Jesus, he was so expertly trained in the religion and politics of the Jews that he was well on his way to becoming the ruler of their nation. Once Jesus got hold of him, however, Paul regarded all his religious and political training and thinking to be dung (Philippians 3:8). Paul trashed it all in order to be conformed into the image of Jesus. Instead of depending upon the rules and regulations of religion and politics, Paul became totally dependent upon his fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. As Paul intimately came to know Them, his trust and faith in God's Word and ways increased. That was why he could refer to Father God as "my God." He was wholly one with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and holy unto Them. We can likewise consider all our old stinking thinking to be dung. When it tempts us, we cast it out. This keeps our thoughts and deeds wholly one with God and our heart holy unto Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

GROWING INTO THE IMAGE OF JESUS CHRIST

Without daily fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and growing into the image of Jesus Christ, your Christianity can easily degenerate into a ritualistic religious relationship with the general concept of God. You will be hard pressed to trust (have faith in) Father, Jesus, Holy Ghost and Their biblical Word. Satan will easily be able to mislead you to think that God couldn't possibly forgive your sin, love you and provide for you.

Many Spirit-born Christians needlessly suffer from worrying whether or not they are truly saved. All we have to do to know we are saved is to look at our heart. Does it love God and seek to grow in God? Does it love others and want to help them get to know and grow in God? Does it feel bad when we sin? Does it urge us to quickly ask God to forgive

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us of our sin and teach us how not to sin like that again? We need to understand that it is human nature to sin.

Our Satan-infected human nature wants to put itself above all others, thinks only of itself and does everything it can to please itself. When we get Spirit-born, we become a new Jesus-Spirited creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our Satan-infected, soul-led man of sin is crucified (put to death) by Jesus' Spiritual resurrection within us . . . ***“our old man is crucified with (by) him (the Spirit of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, coming to live in us [Galatians 4:6]) that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin (Romans 6:6).”*** When we think, act and operate through the Spirit of Jesus Christ in us rather than the soul of man in us, we do not sin.

1 John 3:5-9

And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

When we are Spirit-born the “want to” of sin is taken from us. Our heart is turned to God, our desires become God's desires. Our heart will let us know when we give into Satan's temptations to think and act through our old man of sin. When we do succumb to a temptation and sin Satan will then whisper into our ear that since we sinned we couldn't really be Spirit-born. Don't believe his lie. Instead, recognize you are sinning and stop sinning. Then, in Jesus' name, ask God

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to forgive you your sin (1 John 1:9). Accept His forgiveness. In Jesus' name, cast Satan's condemning words out of your mind and step back into Jesus' peace within you.

The more you get to know Jesus the more you get to know who you are, what you have and what you can do through the Spirit of Jesus Christ within you. Christianity is not a dusty, dry, dead religion in which God is far from us and seldom for us. Christianity is the living, loving family of Father God, Jesus, Holy Ghost and us living in heaven on earth. The more we fellowship with God the more we live the abundant life of heaven on earth rather than the stingy life of hell on earth.

Like any other intimate fellowship with another person, we develop our fellowship with Jesus by talking to and hearing from Him about everything. One of the ways we can gain an insight and understanding of who Jesus is and what He wants from us is to read our Bibles, especially the New Testament.

When you begin to read and receive the words of the New Testament as the new words of your life in Jesus Christ, then you will more and more comprehend who Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost are, how They think and how They act. You will begin to understand what Father God requires of you, since He wants you conformed into Jesus' image.

By filtering all your thoughts through Jesus Christ in you, you put on the mind of Christ and eliminate the instability caused by double mindedness. Only a Christian can be double-minded. Think about that. Only a person who has made Jesus his/her Lord and become Spirit-born will have access to both the Spirit-led mind of Christ and the Satan-led mind of man. Only a Christian can choose to operate through either the soul of man or the Spirit of God. Only a Christian can think and act through Satan's evil will and God's good will.

God's good will is contained in God's biblical Word. Jesus is the living biblical Word of God within us. By filtering all our thoughts through Jesus we eliminate the confusion and instability of wondering if something is God's

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will for us. We become sure of God's good, creative will and way for us, as well as see the evil, destructive will and way that Satan and soul-led self are tempting us to act upon. Our ability to discriminate good from evil is derived from our fellowship with Jesus. Jesus said it this way in John 10:14, "***I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.***" Jesus' sheep hear and know His voice and another they will not follow.

I am moderately intelligent, have three college degrees, have taught school from the junior high through the college level and have lived a lot of life on both sides of the track. I spent the first 30 years of my life exclusively thinking and acting through the egomaniacal misled mind of man. This not only failed to fulfill me, but consistently led me no where worth going to. Then I met Jesus and began putting on the mind of Christ. Today, I wouldn't dare consciously try to think or do anything without first checking it out with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Do I capture and bring 100% of my thoughts, feelings and imaginations to Them for evaluation and recommendation. No, I don't. Not because I don't make a diligent effort to do so, but like all of us, sometimes I get suckered by Satan or self through hunger, anger, loneliness, tiredness, loony thinking or laziness. But as soon as I notice I've let down my guard and am operating through stinking thinking or see a mess I'm making, I quickly ask Father to forgive me for letting this sin into my life. I accept His forgiveness. I give the thoughts to Jesus and, in Jesus' name, bind up and cast the evil out of the situation and loose the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels to bring peace into the situation (1 John 1:9; Matthew 16:19; Hebrews 1:13-14).

The land of our thoughts is where the battles between the light and life of God and the darkness and death of Satan take place. Jesus has already defeated Satan and the sin-filled soul of man through His death, burial and resurrection (Ephesians 4:8). All we have to do to enforce Jesus' victory in our life over Satan is to bring every thought to God so He can tell us where a thought is coming from. If from Satan or our soul,

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then, in Jesus' name, we cast it out into the trash. If from God, we keep it and use it to prosper our life.

Thought by thought communicating with God is the most basic and important thing we Christians must do. Our mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social, Spiritual and ministerial lives prosper when we constantly communicate with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and in faith follow Their leading. Personally loving on and constantly fellowshiping with God is what distinguishes living Christianity from the dead religions of the world.

Other world religions don't communicate with their god. Instead they engage in religious works systems full of man-made rules, regulations and mechanical prayer through which they hope to please their silent, distant god. Christianity is the only religion whose God is alive and continually communicates with His followers. We need to fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost all the time about everything in order to get to personally know Them, Their Word and Their ways. As you increasingly fellowship with God, you will come to understand the truth of Proverbs 3:5-6. Instead of leaning on your own manly understanding, you will turn to the written and spoken Word of God (Jesus Christ in you) to direct your life.

Fellowship with God creates friendship. Friendship creates trust (faith in one another). Faith creates intimacy. Intimacy creates oneness: you and God joined together in tune with each other's words and ways.

In the natural, the people we intimately associate with are the people we become like. The same principle applies in the Spirit. By hanging out with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost we begin to think like, act like and become like Jesus. Fellowshiping with God creates the friendship that manifests the faith that moves the mountains of man out of our life (Mark 11:23-24).

In John 15:5 Jesus says, "***I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abides*** (Spiritually lives) ***in me, and I in***

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him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

When we 24/7 live and fellowship with God, we eat the good fruit of His Word and receive revelation, knowledge, understanding and blessings. Our mind is renewed and transformed to think and act like Jesus. Through Jesus we share God’s love, Spirit, Word, faith, peace, power and prosperity with fellow Christians and those who have not yet entered into the abundant life of Christ.

If you are Spirit-born, but have yet to enter into a relaxed, friendly, personal fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, then start by talking to Jesus. He’ll later introduce you to Father and Holy Ghost. Just begin talking to Jesus like He’s your best friend. Ask Him questions. He will respond to you through His calm, friendly voice within your new creation Spirit. Talk to Him about who He is and what He’s done for you. Read God’s Word with Him. Let Jesus tell you what it means and show you how to release its many blessings into your life. Do this and everything will grow for the good in your life.

JESUS SPEAKS TO US IN MANY WAYS

In various ways, Jesus constantly encourages us, kindly corrects us and calmly instructs us as to what He wants us to think and do. One way is His peaceful voice within our Spirit, to which we can respond. Also, through the Holy Ghost, Jesus will prompt us to think or do things or get us to notice a life event He wants us to learn from.

Since Jesus is the Word of God, He always speaks to us through the scriptures. Jesus also speaks to us through Spirit-led women and men. This is one of the many reasons it’s very important for us to have a Spirit-led pastor and reliable Spirit-led friends who help us grow and go in the ways of God, especially in those times when we are so caught up in *me, myself and I* that we are spiritually deaf, dumb and blind.

One With God

If you hear a pushy, annoyed, angry, aggravated, condemning, conniving or critical voice, it is not from God. God doesn't push; He doesn't get aggravated; He doesn't condemn. That is strictly the thinking and acting of your Satan-infected soul, body or self-will. The Bible calls Satan the accuser of the brethren who accuses us before God day and night. In other words, day and night, 24/7, not only can you hear the friendly voice of Jesus encourage and correct you but you can hear the fear filled voice of Satan discourage and misdirect you (Revelation 12:12).

One of the things about getting to hear Jesus better is that you will also hear the voice of evil much better. You will more and more be able to distinguish between the two. This is good. It enables you to quickly kick the evil out and keep the good in.

Don't be ashamed to check two or three times with Jesus to make sure you're hearing what He's telling you. He's in no hurry and is always patient and kind and comforting. He's much more interested in you getting to know His voice than having you jump up and go and do something in a flash. He never tempts you or tries to confuse you (James 1:13-14).

Remember, Jesus loves you and wants the best for you. Evil tends to push and shove us to go do something right now. Jesus has all the time in this world to get things done. Listen to the heart of the voice you are speaking to and you will always be able to tell the difference between the good voice of God and the gross voice of evil.

It's okay to talk to your thoughts. That way you'll know if they're from God or from your Satan-infected self. One day, as Gayle was rushing to get ready for church, the thought popped into her head, "Check your e-mail." As soon as the thought came to her, she responded, "I don't have time for that now. Are you crazy?" Instantly she heard an almost maniacal voice respond, "Yes!" So she thought, "OK – I know where that came from! No need to check my email right now." Granted, that first thought could have been from God – maybe there was an important email she needed to see.

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If that was the case, though, she would have heard the kind, patient, friendly voice of Father, Jesus or Holy Ghost repeat: “Check your email.” When your thoughts become pushy or frantic, then the thoughts aren’t from God.

Suppose you forget to bring a thought to Jesus for evaluation, or maybe you think it’s Jesus but it turns out not to be the case? Don’t get all worried, or feel condemned. Just stop and repent by praying 1 John 1:9. Then ask Jesus to show you what misled you. When He reveals that to you, ask Him to educate you on what to do to keep you from being misled by Satan or soul-led self, so that you won’t sin like that in the future. This keeps you in constant conscious contact with Jesus and is a big part of how you progressively transform your mind from thinking and acting like a sinner to thinking and acting like a saint.

Since we are joined one with God, and God isn’t a chatterbox, there are often periods of time we quietly snuggle up with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost in the pleasure of our oneness with Them. This type of fellowship also enables us to do the daily things of life without separating from God’s presence.

The more we fellowship with Jesus, the more His Love, Spirit and Word grow in us and leave no doubt that the Word of God will do what it declares when prayed through the agreeable love, Spirit and faith of Christ in us. Faith is activated when we believe and receive the Word of God as our own. That Word, prayed, in Jesus’ name, to Father through faith, will destroy evil, create good or reveal and confirm who we are and what we have in Christ.

We are like actors who have to continually read, speak and act out our script (the scriptures of God) until we become the part (a son or daughter of God) that the author and director (Father God) has cast us in. Once we learn and speak God’s Word then we can operate through the power of Jesus Christ in us and successfully play out the part God has given us.

One With God

FOR WE ARE GOD'S WORKMANSHIP

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Since it is God's plan for us to be conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ, and continue the good works of ministry Jesus did upon the earth, then it's up to God to provide us the power of His Word. He would not tell us to do something and then not give us the guidance or the equipment to do it.

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (guiding all your thoughts).

With our permission and cooperation, Father God is going to perform the good work of conforming us into Jesus' image. We should be confident of that. Even if we don't get everything right the first or even fiftieth time, Father never gives up on us. Eventually, we *will* think and act like Jesus. We don't worry about Father rejecting us when we now and then make a mess of things. Instead, in Jesus' name, we ask Father to forgive us our sin and then rejoice in our righteousness with God (1 John 1:9). We thought by thought transform our mind by seeking only the Spirit and Word of God to guide our thoughts and actions (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Colossians 3:1-4

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 on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ,

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who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

Colossians 1:26-27

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

These scriptures tell you that when you seek Jesus and follow after His righteousness then He will be seen in you. God's workmanship in you will become apparent. Others will begin to notice you are a new creature in Christ who, like Jesus, does the work of God on the earth. Through the Spirit of Jesus Christ in you, you will love God as God loves you. You will live the holy, agape love filled life of a Spirit-led, Word-speaking, faith-filled son or daughter of God. To you and through you Jesus will minister God's Word and manifest His glory. The signs, wonders and miracles of the Holy Ghost will flow into your life and out through your life to others. This fulfills God's hope and plan for your life in Christ.

When we continually fellowship with God, we leave behind our past life of sin and pain and prosper in the things God has in store for us. We do so by relentlessly engaging in spiritual warfare to destroy Satan's evil and create God's good for our life and the lives of others, as noted in our next chapter.

Chapter 8

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

We live in a body which operates through a soul that is fed by either the self-centered spirit of man or the God-centered Spirit of Christ. Until Jesus Spirit-births us, all our intellectual reasoning, emotional feelings, willful dispositions, bodily appetites, memories, imaginations and beliefs are fed into our soul from our manly spirit. Since Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, all men know good God and evil Satan exist. Through God, we intuitively know that if we pursue God's way it will work out for the good. Through Satan, we are deceived to think God's way will limit our freedom. Our Satan-infected, self-centered, sin nature puts our freedom above God's good by turning our back upon God's Word and pursuing our evil. Evil is simply anything "that steals, kills and destroys God's good influence upon our life" (John 10:10). *Me, myself and I* are totally dedicated to deceiving us that "our way" is better than "God's way." This is why God considers manly thinking and acting as ungodly, unrighteous and fit for destruction.

Romans 1:18-23

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was

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darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man.

Through *me, myself and I*, Satan gets our manly carnal mind to reject and replace God's glory with Satan's garbage.

Romans 8:7

Because the carnal mind is enmity (adversarial to and totally) *against God: for it is not subject* (submissive) *to the law* (thinking and acting/Word) *of God, neither indeed can be.*

Our Satan-infected, self-centered carnal mind not only will not – but it CANNOT – obey the law/Word of God. Satan is God's adversary. He is obsessed with destroying God and God's creations. Satan continually attempts to steal, kill and destroy the glorious words God speaks to us through the Spirit of Christ in us. Our carnal mind of flesh is anti-the Spirit of Christ in us just as the Spirit of Christ in us is anti-our carnal mind of flesh, so that God's Spirit and Satan's flesh are constantly at war within us (Romans 7:14-8:39).

Galatians 5:17

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

This is why God admonishes us to bring all our thoughts to Him. By 24/7 walking with God through the Spirit of Christ in us we can successfully destroy Satan's evil and release God's good into our life (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

Galatians 5:16, 24-26, 22

This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not

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fulfil the lust of the flesh. . . . For 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 (and enjoy) the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness (teachable) and temperance (self-control) are the characteristics (good fruit) of Jesus that we received at Spirit-birth and now manifest in our life. Through Spiritual warfare we cast out the rotten fruit of hate, anger, aggravation, impatience, arrogance, worry, unbelief, stubbornness and intolerance that are the characteristics of our flesh-centered self and replace them with the good fruit of Jesus that we eat and feed to others.

JESUS WON THE WAR; WE WIN THE BATTLES

Jesus defeated Satan and manly self through His death, burial and resurrection. Though Jesus has won the war against evil for us, we must enforce Jesus' victory by engaging in Spiritual warfare against the evil that daily attacks us. This is why we purposefully fellowship with Jesus, capture our thoughts, process them through Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, reject Satan's evil thinking and put on God's good thinking. The more we do this, the more we renew our mind to think and act like Word-speaking, faith-flowing, miracle-manifesting sons and daughters of God. We get to the point that no matter what evil thoughts or situations attack us we count it all joy. Not joy that evil is attacking us, but joy that through Jesus we will overcome the evil attack.

James 1:2-4

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

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PATIENCE JOINS WITH FAITH

The mind of Christ only operates through faith in God and His Word. Faith knows that once a believer sees within his divine Spirit what God's Word is saying and then speaks and acts on that Word, then that Word will sooner or later come forth.

James 1:3-4

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Patience joins with faith to stand steadfast against the negative evil words of Satan that tempt us to forsake the Word of God. Patience joins hands with faith and smiles in the joy of the Lord knowing full well that no matter how long it takes, steadfast faith will prevail, since God's Word can never fail once spoken through faith (Hebrews 11:1; Isaiah 55:11).

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Tribulation is the pressure, affliction, anguish, burden, persecution or trouble that Satan's evil thoughts and situations manufacture. Glory releases the goodness of God to overcome tribulation when, in Jesus' name, we faithfully

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speaking God's Word against the tribulation and ask Father to release His good into the situation. The goodness of God then blesses us with God's joy and success. Faith plus patience provides us with the experience of God's glory, goodness, joy and success. This stirs our hope (expectation) that next time we are attacked by evil, we will not be ashamed (defeated by evil), if we will once again absolutely trust in God by believing and, in Jesus' name, speaking God's Word against the evil, so that God's good gets released into the situation.

ABSOLUTE TRUST IN GOD AND HIS WORD

In order to effectively engage in Spiritual warfare, we must absolutely trust (totally love and have complete faith that) God's Word will release God's glory to destroy Satan's tribulation when we believe, speak and do it (Mark 12:30). We cannot lean on our own misled manly understanding but in all our thoughts and actions we must let Jesus lead us through God's written and spoken Word. If we will trust and accept both Jesus' creative leadings and corrective instruction, then thought by thought, in all areas of our life, we will be transformed by the renewing of our carnal mind with the mind of Christ.

Proverbs 3:5-12

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 (love and respect) the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. Honour the LORD with (all) thy (heart, soul, mind and physical) substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine (financial) increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. My son, despise not the chastening (instruction) of the LORD; neither be weary of his

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correction: for whom the LORD loves he corrects; even as a father the son in whom he delights

Revelation 3:19

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent (turn your back upon your manly thinking and seek God's thinking and acting).

Only God's thinking and acting can overcome the various temptations and tribulations our manly soul and Satan daily attack us with.

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

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; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

The weapons of our Spiritual warfare against Satan and soul-led self are the biblical words and truths of God's pure religion within our heart. As noted earlier, what is in a person's heart comes out of the person's mouth. Life and death are in our tongue. How we see, believe, speak, and act directly determines how much of the life of God or the death of Satan we release into our life. Jesus came to provide us life and life in abundance. The thief, Satan, comes to steal, kill and destroy Jesus' life of abundance. Satan tries to get us to believe his lies and speak through the worry and unbelief of man rather than the Word and faith of God (John 10:10).

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WHEN WE CONFESS FATHER FORGIVES

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death;

God transforms us into Jesus' image by renewing our mind to operate through God's Word rather than our words. Since only God's Word can conform us into Jesus' image, Satan battles God's efforts by tempting us to think and act through the words of man rather than the Word of God. When we give into Satan and put our **Self IN** charge of our words and actions, Satan attacks us with guilt and shame which kills our fellowship with God.

Satan's desire is to get us to focus upon our ability to sin instead of focusing upon our righteousness in Christ. When we sin, Satan tries to make us feel so lousy about our new sin that we hide from God. However, Jesus' cross not only saves us from our old sin but provides us the way to instantly cleanse our self from new sin and enter back into the peace of agape love fellowship, by confessing our sin to Father.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he (Father God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

No matter how lousy you may think or feel about any new sin you've committed, once you confess it to Father, He will instantly forgive and forget your sin. By refusing to confess our sin we enable Satan to fill our head and heart with guilt and shame. Guilt and shame lie to us that God no longer loves us. The truth is that God loves His Spirit-born children, even when we sin. However sin interferes with our fellowship with God, so God wants us to trust Him enough to bring Him everything in our life, including our sin. That way God can assure us we are forgiven, as well as help us renew our mind with His Word to no longer sin as we did

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Satan is called the accuser of the brethren. In the book of Revelation it says we overcome him by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony (Rev 12:10-11). Born-again, Spirit-filled people know about the blood of the Lamb, which kills their old man of sin and births their new creation man of God, but they often forget about the word of their testimony which destroys Satan's evil and creates God's good for them. This is why we need to renew our mind with God's Word and constantly employ it to destroy the evil that attacks us, call forth the good we need in our life and, in Jesus' name, instantly ask Father to forgive us when we occasionally sin.

MIND RENEWAL AND TRANSFORMATION

Romans 12:2

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.

Being transformed by the renewing of our mind from thinking and acting like sin-filled men to thinking and acting like sinless Jesus takes time. Through our casual, ongoing, friendly conversation and fellowship with God we learn how to discipline our mind to capture thoughts, identify their source and, in Jesus' name, cast them out or keep them. One thought at a time we walk and talk with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and get to know Their voices. We also get to know and distinguish Their voices from the voices that try to override what They are saying to us. One way that Satan has success in our thought life is to throw distracting thoughts at us to keep us from effectively fellowshiping with God. Have you ever tried to read your Bible or pray and have random thoughts pop up like, "I have to remember to defrost dinner", or "my gas tank is almost on empty, I'll have to fill it soon." That is Satan trying to distract you when you are communicating with God. Although in themselves such

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thoughts aren't evil, it is the evil intent of Satan to pop them into your head to steal, kill and destroy God's Word to you in that moment.

The more you talk to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, the more quickly you will come to recognize distractions of any sort, whether mental, emotional or physical. When they show up, in Jesus' name, quickly tell them to shut-up and turn your attention back to God. Sometimes though we don't immediately catch and kick-out distracting thoughts. Instead, Satan succeeds at distracting us away from God. When you wind up going on a magical mystery tour in your mind, or a guilt trip back into the anger, condemnation or garbage of your past, or you worry about the present, as soon as you see you have disconnected from God, in Jesus' name, tell the thought to shut-up and get out of your mind. Then ask Father to forgive you for wandering off.

If you commit some obvious sin while distracted away from God, then employ 1 John 1:9 and, in Jesus' name, ask Father to forgive you your sin and accept His forgiveness. You will be cleansed not only from that specific sin but simultaneously cleansed of all other unrighteous thinking Satan may have infected your mind with.

It's a good practice to daily ask God to forgive you for anything you did that even without you realizing it took you away from God. That way no matter what, sin won't be able to hinder your communication with God. If you realize you have sinned, ask the Holy Spirit to show you how Satan got you to commit the sin. Put a big red Spiritual flag on what led you to sin and, in Jesus' name, ask Father to wave the red flag in your face if you ever start down that road of sin again. Since you are no longer dedicated to sinning, this helps you more easily identify the habitual manly thinking that tries to get you to sin. Once you identify an habitual manly thought, you can revenge its disobedience against you and God.

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REVENGE ALL DISOBEDIENCE

Our life before coming to Jesus was full of spiritual, mental, emotional and physical hell on earth. Hell is Satan's home where spiritual, mental, emotional and physical murder is the norm and lying is the only way people know how to talk. Satan tempted Adam and Eve with the self-centered thinking of hell. By them giving into the temptation to think and do things their own way instead of God's way, Satan infected their minds with the anti-Christ thinking and acting of hell. This murdered Adam's and Eve's spiritual, mental and emotional lives by filling their heads and mouths with lies, which turned them against God and one another. Through Adam and Eve all natural born women and men have been likewise infected with Satan's lying tongue and murderous (don't interfere with my life or I'll kill you) thinking and acting.

When we are Spirit-birthed, our Satan-infected thinking and acting does not instantly depart from us. God forgives us for it, but we still see and remember it. We have to consciously identify the thinking and acting of our old – *me, myself and I* – man of sin. Once we recognize it, then, we can take revenge and destroy it.

2 Corinthians 10:6

... and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

This is the only place in God's Word that God tells *us* to take revenge rather than having Him take revenge for us. The enemies being talked about here are not living people, places or things, but the habitual evil thinking of our old man of sin that generates out of the stinking thinking of our forefathers. We have to recognize it and deal with it.

From Adam and Eve on, all our parents have been sinners. Generation by generation the ungodly, cursed thinking of sin has increased and been passed onto us through our natural

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bloodline. By the time it gets to us we believe it's who we are and it's how we should think and act.

The Israelites knew they carried the cursed thinking of the sin of their forefathers within them. Through it, they would turn their backs upon God. ***“They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers,”*** (Jeremiah 11:10). Because of their cursed thinking Satan could continually accuse them before God, as being self-willed and unrighteous in the sight of God, so that they deserved no favor from God (Revelation 12:10).

Knowing this, the Israelites would pray for God to forgive the sin of both themselves and the sin of their fathers, from whom they had inherited the iniquitous, cursed thinking that led them to sin.

Nehemiah 9:2

And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

Danial 9:16

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

We have a better covenant with God than the Israelites had. We are new creations in Christ for whom the blood of Jesus atones for, forgives and eternally covers all our past sins. This allows God to continually view and treat us as His righteous sons and daughters who He loves, listens to, talks to, and blesses.

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2 Corinthians 10:6 strongly advises us to first revenge (destroy) the cursed iniquitous thinking of our bloodline that we are habitually tempted by. But how do we do this? In Jesus' name, we ask God to reveal it to us. Once revealed, we ask God to forgive us for the habitual thinking that leads us to sin. Father instantly forgives us, and covers the iniquity with Jesus' blood.

If Satan can again get us to think and sin like we used to, then he can again begin to accuse and abuse us with it until we confess our new sin and Father puts it under Jesus' atoning blood. After we revenge the thinking of our past, we must keep capturing and bringing all our thoughts to Jesus. When we hear Satan try to tempt us to think and sin, in Jesus' name, we revenge it by binding the thinking and casting it into hell (John 14:13, 15:7; Mathew 16:19; 1 John 1:9). The more we instantly bind and cast into hell any old or new way of thinking Satan tempts us with, the less he will tempt us with it.

DON'T LIVE IN THE PAST

Who we are in Jesus is not who we were in Satan. They are two different people. Spirit-birth makes us a **new God-led creation in Christ** (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). We may still live in the same physical body as our old man of sin, but in God's eyes we are no longer that man. We are God's child, His new creation in Jesus Christ for whom all things of our old life have passed away, have spiritually died and are buried in hell and no longer visible to God. We are dead (separated from Satan) in Jesus. We are alive in Jesus and forever joined through God's love with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost (Romans 5:1- 6:23).

Satan knows he is defeated by Jesus, but also knows he can continue to rule over Christians if he can keep them ignorant of the power they have as a New Creation in Christ. Satan employs the Christian corporate religious spirit to twist scriptures and water down who Jesus is, what Jesus' did for

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us and who we become through Jesus. Satan also stimulates our personal religious spirit to not only think in the habitual ungodly way we just talked about, but to feel condemned by it – as if nothing had changed with our new birth in Christ. If we buy into Satan’s lie that we are so set in our ways that God couldn’t possibly change who we are, it will paralyze us with fear, shame, worry and anger about what God, fellow Christians and others think about us. Instead of loving God and living and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with fellow Christians and others, we will hide from God and turn our back on fellow Christians, believing we are unworthy, or lacking in faith, or not mature enough in Christ, or whatever else Satan plants in our mind.

As always, the only way to overcome Satan and his lies is to fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and renew and transform our mind with such truth as Romans 8:1-2.

Romans 8:1-2

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

God never condemns us with our past. He corrects us through His love by first convicting us in our Spirit that we need to repent (turn our back on) a way of thinking. He next encourages us to give Him the ungodly thinking. Once we give it to Him, He transforms our mind with His thinking about the issue.

All of us have a past that can attack us. All of us have a present that can mislead us. All of us are subject to double mindedness in which one moment we act like a saint and the next moment we act like a sinner (James 1:8). This is why God provided us with Matthew 16:19 and 18:18-20, with which we can bind Satan’s evil and loose God’s good, as well as 1 John 1:9 with which we get new sin forgiven and us

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cleansed of all unrighteous thinking and returned to the peace of mind that living in heavenly Spiritual places in Christ Jesus provides us with.

Jesus' completed work upon the cross frees us from the stress, strain and pain of trying to fulfill our life through the unfruitful works of personal and corporate religion. Instead, we fellowship with Jesus and let Him do the transforming work of agape love in us. Our only work is to believe, speak, do and receive the truth of God's Word. As noted in our next chapter, it's Jesus' work – not ours – that saves us from Satan, renews our mind, and manifests God's love to us and through us.

Chapter 9

JESUS' WORK - NOT OURS

Jesus Christ accomplished in 33 ½ years what 4,000 years of manly religious works failed to do. Through Jesus' life, death, burial and resurrection He fulfilled the Mosaic Law of Sin and Death and removed its curse and the curse of Adam off our life. He also reconciled (reunited) us to God so that God's Genesis 1:26 plan to make men and women into God's image and likeness could continue where it had been forced to stop because of Adam's and Eve's disobedience (Matthew 5:17-18; Galatians 3:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

John 3:16-17

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.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God must believe (have faith) that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (through Spirit-birth and mind-transforming fellowship that rewards them with all God is and has).

Ephesians 2:1-6

And you hath he quickened (made Spiritually alive in Christ), *who were* (spiritually) *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*

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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 [God's forgiveness and favor for you] ye are saved [from Satan by Jesus through Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, which provides you with Spirit-birth];) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (you an eternal citizen of heaven now living upon the earth):

Though Christian religion acknowledges Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, it often seems oblivious to the fullness of the work Jesus did in our behalf upon the cross and when He descended into hell. The Bible clearly states Jesus was substituted in our place upon the cross. He took all the sin and sickness of our Satan-infected manly nature onto Himself, died and went to hell in our place.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

1 Peter 2:24

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.

Galatians 3:13

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

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Hebrews 9:28

So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him (through Spirit-birth) shall he appear the second time (within them) without sin unto salvation.

2 Corinthian 5:17-18

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new (Spirit-born) creature: old things (of sin) are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled (reunited) us to himself by Jesus Christ,

The sin Adam and Eve committed empowered Satan to curse the life of man. Jesus' death, burial and resurrection redeems (buys us back) from Satan and removes Satan's curse off our life. Jesus reconciles us with Father God Almighty, Who Spirit-births us with the Spirit of God's Son (Jesus Christ, Galatians 4:6). Through Spirit-birth Father adopts us as His beloved child, like Jesus.

Adam and Eve would have become like Jesus if they had obeyed God by rejecting Satan. By Jesus rejecting Satan and obeying God, Jesus fulfilled God's plan to have man created and sealed into God's eternal image and likeness. Through Spirit-birth we receive what Jesus went to the cross and hell to get us. We receive Jesus' Spirit and are sealed by the Holy Ghost in Jesus' Spirit until the day of the redemption of our physical body.

Ephesians 4:30

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God (by doubting He is Who He is and will do what He can do for you when, in Jesus' name, you ask Father to send Him to destroy Satan's evil and create God's good for your life), whereby ye are sealed unto the day of (the) redemption (of your mortal body).

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1 Corinthians 15:49

And as we have borne the image of the earthy (soul-led, Satan-infected, sin-filled natural man), *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly* (Spirit-led man, Jesus Christ, who now lives in a glorified, immortal, eternal body, like we will one day have).

No longer do we live under the Old Testament religious works system law of sin and death, which no soul-led man could keep. We are now new creations in Christ who live by the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, that operates through the faith and grace of God's pure religion of agape love oneness with God in all our thoughts, words and ways. The guilt and shame of our old sin-filled manly nature, which spread its doom and gloom through every miserable moment of our unsure, insecure, anger and worry filled existence, is now replaced by God's righteousness, peace and joy.

JESUS' KIND OF CHRISTIANITY

The kind of Christianity Jesus provided us with fulfills God's plan for man to be conformed into God's image and likeness. Through it we agape love fellowship with God and become conformed into the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ, beginning in heavenly places upon the earth and then in the fullness of heaven at the end of time. God's plan has no place for Satan and his religion of sin. The only reason God permits evil (Satan/sin) to exist is for us to finally see it for what it truly is: evil turns us away from God when we permit it to think and speak in us. When we trade in the rules and regulations of manly religion for Spirit-birth relationship and agape love fellowship with God, Jesus transforms our mind to recognize and reject Satan's evil thinking and speaking and replace it with God's good thinking and speaking.

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which

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hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (guiding your every thought).

Men don't know how to conform themselves into Jesus' image. They only know how to conform themselves into what they have been taught and what they have heard or experienced. It takes intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and continually reading and studying the scriptures for a believer to clearly comprehend, speak and apply the biblical Word to his/her life. Since the Holy Ghost wrote the Bible through men, it takes the Holy Ghost to reveal the Bible to men. Once Holy Ghost shows us what God's Word says we are or have in Christ, then through faith we can believe, speak, do and receive the truth and blessing of God's Word into our life.

1 John 2:27

But the anointing (of the Holy Ghost) ***which ye have received of him*** (God) ***abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.***

If we don't intimately fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and let Them open the scriptures to us, we won't know about all the great and wonderful blessings and life in abundance that Jesus has provided us with. Without that knowledge we won't be able to step out in faith and speak and do and receive what God's Word plainly tells us God has provided for us to enjoy and share with others.

Many ministers don't preach, teach or talk about entering into intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Perhaps some of those ministers keep people in the dark because the minister has yet to enter into the light of intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. He doesn't know what it means to comfortably com-

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municate with God and operate through God's love, faith and grace so he can enjoy God's New Testament blessings. Other ministers may know about agape love intimacy with God but they don't want to make any waves with their fellows, so they teach their organization's approved dogma and doctrine despite the fact it fails to deposit the life and light of Jesus into the hearts of His people. Or maybe it's just about money. By saying only what the minister thinks the people want to hear, he'll be sure to keep his financial supporters happy.

Jesus was confronted by similar fears in the religious leaders of His time. Their fears drove many of those Jewish religious leaders to join in killing Jesus and His good news. Today, many of our Christian religious leaders continue to kill Jesus' good news by watering it down with humanism and wrapping it up in self-help that puts us rather than Jesus in charge of our salvation.

God neither lies nor changes His mind. He put Jesus in charge of our salvation, not us. Jesus' death, burial and resurrection provide us with Spirit-birth and new creation which enters us into salvation (1 Corinthians 1:30). Jesus is our master teacher. He is the author and finisher of our faith through Whom we transform our mind, work out our salvation and become conformed into His image (Hebrews 12:2). Jesus teaches us who we are, what we have, what we can do and how to do it through Christ. Jesus is "*The*" Son of God in Whom we sons and daughters of God live. To us and through us Jesus continues His 2,000 year old Messiah-Christ-Savior ministry upon the earth.

The book of Acts shows Jesus' first followers operating through Jesus with signs, wonders and miracles accompanying their preaching and teaching of God's Word. God is not a respecter of persons. What Jesus did through His first followers is the same thing Jesus can do through us. The main reason most Christians don't live in the fullness of Christ, and access all that Jesus has provided for them, is that their religious leaders don't live in the fullness of Christ. How can a Christian leader teach others how to totally die to self and

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fulfill God's plan for them, when the leader is not living in 24/7 agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, through which Jesus can minister God's love, Spirit, Word, signs, wonders and miracles to the leader so the leader can be used by Jesus to minister the same to others?

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS SPIRIT

For the most part the denominational leaders and independent church leaders of Christianity are honest, sincere, well meaning men and women. If they've invited Jesus into their heart, they are also Spirit-born. However, despite being nice people who truly want to help others do well in life, too often their Christian beliefs have been shaped by other men instead of God. Rather than fellowship with God and have God reveal His Word and manifest His love and power to them and through them to others, they fellowship with other men who they do not question and totally rely upon to reveal to them the Word and ways of God.

A Christian leader is either formally educated in a seminary, or through independent study, or through apprenticeship under an overseeing minister. If that leader does not filter all he is taught through Father, Jesus, Holy Ghost and Their Word, he can't be sure that what he is taught is not infected with the mind of man and tainted with ungodly religious thinking. Christian "religious" thinking will often appear to be God like thinking, but when it is applied to our life it bears no fruit. It has a form of Godliness. It looks or sounds like what God might possibly speak or do but there is no power behind it. It's not derived from the personally revealed written Word of God so it lacks the power of God's love, Spirit, Word and faith to creatively affect the person(s) or situation being dealt with (Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:5).

The Kingdom of God is not in the words of men. It is not in meat and drink (natural things), but it is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17). It is being in right standing (righteousness) with Father God because we

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are new creations who, through love and faith, listen to and obey all God tells us to think and do (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). It is peace that passes all natural minded understanding because we live in God, unpolluted and unrestricted by religion. It is joy unspeakable – full of glory – because the Holy Ghost speaks God’s Word to us and through us with signs, wonders and miracles following (Luke 4:32-36; Mark 16:15-20, Hebrews 2:4).

Jesus said that Christians, including leaders, are not to lord over fellow Christians. As Jesus served His first followers, we are called to let Jesus serve His current followers through us. This is how the First Century Christians lived. Everything was about Jesus. Everything came forth from His Spirit in them. Through them Jesus served God’s Word with signs, wonders and miracles to their families, friends and others.

Unfortunately, over time, manly corporate religious thinking crept into the Church of Jesus Christ. It replaced the Jesus empowered, miracle manifesting Word of God with impotent humanistic dogma, doctrine and unbelief. The infallible authority and divine power of God’s biblical Word through which Jesus’ first followers manifested who they were in Christ was traded in for man-made morals, ethics and good works that do nothing to invigorate, much less manifest, the life of Christ in us and through us to others.

CORPORATE RELIGIOUS THINKING

Christian corporate religious thinking and acting wreck our relationship with God by misleading us to presume that the approval of other religious minded men is the approval of God. God’s approval only comes when God leads us to speak and act through His Spirit and His Word in His behalf. We can’t presume that what God has done before in a situation is what God will do now in a like situation. If we don’t seek God in all our thoughts and actions then we can easily act through a Christian religious spirit. Such a spirit can emotionally stir us. But emotional stirring without the

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evidence of signs, wonders or miracles is merely emotional stirring, not a God-led moment of ministry. God's ministry glorifies God by doing what manly religion can't do. Manly religion cannot mentally, emotionally or physically heal. It cannot Spiritually reveal and pierce people with the truth God wants them to apply to their lives. It cannot release God's faith, hope and love into people's hearts. It cannot invigorate people to live and minister the life of Christ. It cannot bless people with the abundant life of Christ that they can then bless others with.

The life of a Spirit-born, Spirit-filled Christian who constantly fellowships with God will continually manifest God's presence and blessings. A religious Christian who does not fellowship with God is hard pressed to perceive God's presence and partake of God's blessings.

Sadly, many modern Christian churches have strayed so far from their First Century roots they no longer preach nor teach the Spirit-filled Word of God; they no longer talk about Jesus, Spirit-birth, fellowship, intimacy and holiness (being wholly one) with God. Some churches no longer even talk about good and evil or heaven and hell. They don't tell us who we are in Jesus and what we are blessed to do through Him in us.

Father God did not resurrect Jesus from the dead to provide us with more man-made moral and ethical religious doctrine like the Jews had. Jesus came to free us from Adam's curse by fulfilling and removing from us the Mosaic Law of Sin and Death and replacing it with the blessed New Testament Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1-9). Through this new and eternal law Jesus, Father God and Holy Ghost come to permanently live in us and guide us in all our thoughts and ways. God provides us with His Holy Ghost Spirit and living Word (Jesus Christ) through Whom we can 24/7 fellowship with and worship God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Out of our worship pours forth Jesus' ministry to us and through us (Mark 12:30-31). This is the good news of God that all Christians can enter into by

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trading in well-meaning but ineffective religious Christian programming for a personal, intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, Who program us with Their Word and ways.

JESUS IS ALIVE TODAY

God's New Testament Word is as alive for us today as it was 2,000 years ago when Jesus provided it to His first followers. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus never changes nor takes back what He first gave us 2,000 years ago. Through Spirit-birth and working out our salvation with God, we are thought by thought conformed into the thinking and acting of Jesus. This fulfills God's plan to Spirit-birth and raise us into mature Spirit-filled, Word-empowered, miracle-manifesting sons and daughters (Genesis 1:26-28; Colossians 1:26-27).

Jesus is the Spirit-filled Word of God made flesh (John 1:14). Through Jesus in us, so are we.

Jesus is one with Father God and Holy Ghost (1 John 5:7). Through Jesus in us, so are we (John 17:20-23).

Jesus brought all His thoughts to Father and did nothing unless Father first showed Jesus what to speak and do (John 5:19). We capture and bring all our thoughts to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost (Christ in us) and only speak and do what They lead us to (2 Corinthians 10:2-6).

Jesus spoke God's Word through God's Spirit and destroyed Satan's evil and released God's good (1 John 3:8). Through Jesus in us, so do we (Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20).

Jesus performed miracles, signs and wonders (throughout the gospels). Through Jesus in us, so do we (1 Corinthians 12:8-11; Mark 16:15-18; Hebrews 2:4).

Everything Jesus is and did we are and do through the Spirit, Word and faith of the Son of God within us (John 14:12; Galatians 2:20, 4:6; Romans 8:10-17).

The greatest challenge we Christians face is to truly believe and receive the divine truth of who the Word of God

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says we are in Jesus and then do what Father God would have us speak and do. We no longer live under the Old Testament Law of Sin and Death in which we could not speak to God for fear of being killed. We live under the New Testament Law of The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. God is our loving Father. He lives in us. He wants us to talk to Him about everything.

We are called to come boldly into the throne of grace and find help in time of need. Think about it: boldly before the King. Does that sound like we are to be quiet and meek when we are around Father? No, God's Word says to come into His presence singing and dancing and worshipping Him. He wants to rejoice with us. He wants to give us everything that we ask Him for and then some. (Hebrews 4:16, Philippians 4:4-6, Psalms 100:1-2, Ephesians 3:16; Psalm 37:4).

Jesus reveals to us our man-made religious thinking and replaces it with His Word and ways for our life. Satan does not want us to step into the pure religion of God. He wants us to continue to live by the rules and regulations of religious "works" (Romans 8:1-4; Colossians 1:26-27; John 17:20-23). Satan would like nothing better than for us to continue to operate through empty, impotent personal and corporate religion. He knows that once we hear God's Word and become a doer of it, then personal and corporate religion will no longer rule us and keep us powerless.

NOT OUR RELIGIOUS WORKS

Christian corporate religious thinking and the rules and regulations of our personal religious thinking are all "works based." They require that we do something to get something. If we want God to answer a prayer, religion says we must pray hard and long and violently, so that we can stir God to hear us and attend to our needs. But God lives in us and hears our every thought. He already knows what we need and said that all our needs are already met by Him through Jesus (Philippians 4:19). Our Holy Ghost stirred faith filled prayer

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is simply us coming into peaceful agreement with Father and in the authority of Jesus' name acknowledging our receipt of Father's provision for us in any and all situations of life. The human mind can't comprehend that something can be totally free. It thinks that if we want something from God we have to earn it. We have to do something so that God can pay us with something.

Well, God's ways are higher than our ways. When He said free He meant free. Jesus paid the price for everything. We don't have to do anything to get everything. No matter how good we are, or how much we give, or do, or pray, or fast, or beat ourselves for our sins – we can't do what only Jesus did for us. Through Jesus' life, death, burial and resurrection He became sin for us so that we could become the righteousness of God. He paid the price for our sins so we don't have to.

Romans 4:25

Who was delivered (to hell by God) ***for our offences*** (all our sins and sickness that Jesus took upon His cross), ***and was raised again*** (resurrected by the Holy Ghost from the death of hell with power over Satan) ***for our justification*** (so God would see us just as if we had never sinned).

We have been justified by Jesus so through the faith of the Son of God within us we can stand in the forgiveness and favor of God's agape love generated grace and rejoice in our new creation life freed from Satan, self, sin, sickness, and lack.

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

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Ephesians 1:6-7

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;

Ephesians 2:5

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

We are not saved by our works; we are saved by grace. Grace is God's undeserved and unmerited favor. Despite what we have done and who we are, God loves us and has given us His favor. Because of God's grace, Jesus was sent to earth to free us from Satan's sin and grow us up into daughters and sons of God.

As new creations in Christ we daily experience the ongoing goodness of God's grace. It is the goodness of God that leads us to repent (turn around and reject) the words and ways of sin. Through grace and faith in God's Word we are progressively conformed into the fullness of Jesus' Spiritual, mental and emotional image (Mark 12:30-31).

The Bible says we can frustrate the grace of God by trying to interfere with it (Galatians 2:21). Think about that. We can block God's grace by "religiously" begging or beating on God's door for a blessing, rather than, in Jesus name, calmly speaking and receiving the blessing into our life through faith.

The last part of Romans 5 talks about Jesus and His grace being a free gift. Have you ever wanted to give somebody something "just because." No reason, no expectation of anything in return. Have you ever received a gift you weren't expecting and maybe didn't even deserve? How much more did we sinners NOT DESERVE God's free gift of grace?

God's grace enters into our life when God sees we are sincere about asking Jesus to save us. The moment we sincerely seek Jesus to save us God instantly provides us with

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His love, His faith to believe, speak and activate the promise of His Word into our life, the forgiveness of our sin and His undeserved, unmerited favor (Romans 12:3). Receiving all this into our heart, we are Spirit-born and adopted by Father God into His heavenly family. The forgiveness and favor of God's grace that we receive and activate through faith not only ushers us into God's family, but blesses us in all our ways in all the moments of our new life in Christ.

God's love, faith and grace – not our works – are what God's operates through. God's love wants to create children in God's image and likeness with whom God can share in the glory of Godhood. God's faith believes God's Word is true and will activate, when we believe, speak and do it. God's grace forgives and favors God's Spirit-born children by continually blessing us in all that we do through our love fellowship with God and our faith in His Word.

Instead of listening to what man says we need to do in order to know God, let's do what the Bible says to do. Let's 24/7 love on, listen to and obey what Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost tell us and lead us to do.

1 Samuel 15:22

Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken (hear and do) than the fat of rams.

Romans 6:16

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?

Revelation 3:21

To him that (obeys and) overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also (obeyed and) overcame, and am set down with my Father in

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his throne.

We who have been Spirit-born and overcome Satan through obeying Jesus, now live in heavenly Spiritual places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6). As Jesus' bride, we sit upon His Throne of Grace to the right of Father God's Throne of Grace in the presence of the Holy Ghost (Revelation 3:21). At any time day or night we can turn and praise Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. We can sing love songs to Them, hug Them, kiss Them, talk to Them, play and have fun with Them. In Jesus' name, we pray and ask Father to provide what Jesus stirs us to pray and ask for our self and for others. We enjoy all the riches and glory of God.

THE GOSPEL MEANS VERY GOOD NEWS

Adam and Eve began their life blessed by Father God in all their ways on earth. This is good.

Genesis 1:28

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Adam and Eve turned their life over to Satan and forfeited God's blessed (empowered to succeed) life for Satan's cursed (empowered to fail) life. This is bad.

Because Adam and Eve are our natural parents, through natural birth we inherit Satan's cursed life on earth. This is very bad.

Jesus' death, burial and resurrection delivers us from Satan's cursed life (Galatians 3:13). This is good.

All that Adam and Eve forfeited to Satan plus all God's mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social,

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Spiritual, natural and supernatural riches in glory are what Jesus provides to us. This is very good.

Through Spirit-birth God crucifies (kills) our old natural minded man of sin and creates us His new creatures in Christ who are His children and joint-heirs with Jesus to all Father God is and has (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 8:17). All Father God's riches in glory are provided to us by Jesus living in us (Philippians 4:19). God's goodness is what manifests in our life when we act through faith in God and His Word.

The very good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that when we believe, speak and do God's Word through the Spirit and faith of the Son of God within us – the Word of God then does what it is talking about. It either destroys the evil we need destroyed, creates the good we need created, or confirms the truth of God we need confirmed. When we bring all our thoughts to Jesus Christ and then believe, speak and do what Jesus leads us to believe, speak and do – we succeed (prosper) in all areas of our supernatural-natural life on earth.

Our life in Jesus is all GOOD NEWS! What better news could there be than to know that God has provided us with exceedingly abundantly more than we will ever need? Through rejecting the manly thinking of religious works and, instead, faithfully believing, speaking and doing God's Word, we become mentally sound, emotionally stable, physically healthy, Spiritually solid, financially solvent and socially secure. We live the divinely empowered, supernatural-natural life of a daughter or son of God. We are Jesus' bride, an eternal citizen of heaven, who now lives with his/her husband and Father in the temple of the Holy Ghost in heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon the earth. This is VERY GOOD NEWS! By activating our faith in Jesus and His Living Word within us, we can 24/7/365 be blessed by the riches and glory of God's VERY GOOD NEWS (Ephesians 3:19-20; Philippians 1:6, 4:13, 19; Matthew 6:33; 16:19, 18:18-20; Mark 11:22-23; John 15:4-8; Genesis 1:28; Deuteronomy 8:18; Proverbs 10:22; Luke 6:38; 2 Corinthians 8:9; etc.).

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Now onto Part 2 “Our New Testament Tools,” in which we will continue to learn how to successfully build and maintain our life in Christ with God’s Word, Faith, Prayer, Praise, Worship, The Holy Ghost and more.

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Part 2

Our New Testament Tools:

**Word, Faith,
Prayer, Praise,
Worship, The Holy
Ghost and More.**

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

Chapter 10

THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

John 8:31-32

Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, 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.

James 1:25

Whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer (of God's Word), but a doer of the work (of the Word), this man shall be blessed in his deed.

JOINED WITH GOD IN LIBERTY

When we begin to work out our salvation and start to mature into the image of Jesus, we become vessels through whom Holy Ghost can perform God's perfect will. God's perfect will is found in the Word of God. When, through faith, we believe, speak and do God's biblical Word, then the perfect Law of Liberty contained in God's Word destroys Satan's evil and creates God's good for our lives. This frees us from the cursed thinking and acting of Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack and conforms us into the blessed thinking and acting of Jesus. The more we renew our mind with God's Word to think and act like Jesus, the more the Spirit of the Son of God within us rules and runs our life through God's will (Galatians 4:6; Romans 7:23).

God can only manifest His life through us onto the earth if we freely obey and do God's will. As James 1:25 tells us, if we, looking into that perfect Law of Liberty, become a doer

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of God's Word, we will be blessed and empowered to prosper in all areas of life. The more we are conformed into the image of Jesus, by believing, speaking and doing God's Word in faith and then thanking and praising God until His Word comes forth in our life, the more we will prosper in all our ways upon this earth.

God's liberty is the freedom for us to become all we can through Jesus. In order for us to do this, we must join in intimate, 24/7, agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and never forget that the avowed enemy of God's perfect Law of Liberty is our self-will (Matthew 6:10).

SELF-WILL IS THE AUTHOR OF SIN

Self-will is the author of sin. It keeps God from being in charge of our life. Unless we are Spirit-born and have the life of Christ living within us to talk to Jesus and ask Him for guidance, it is very hard for us to hear God's voice. Instead, we hear Satan, self and the natural world of men who urge us to pursue our own words and ways in order to dominate others and rule our own little worlds. To the natural minded, godless man or woman, free will is the excuse for self-will to run riot.

Ever since Satan seduced Adam and Eve to choose self-will over God's will, the free will of man has been Satan's playground. A man is always right in his own eyes (Proverbs 21:2). Therefore, whatever he chooses to do is "good" to do. However, since only God is good (Luke 18:19), then only thoughts or things given by God to a man can ultimately prove to be good.

If a man does not first counsel with God about a supposed "good" thought or thing, then how can he know it's from God? Some thoughts, such as those of anger or rebellion or retaliation, are easy to recognize as being from Satan or self and not from God. Other thoughts, though, are not so obvious. By capturing all our thoughts and processing them through Jesus Christ in us, we can always be sure if the

The Perfect Law Of Liberty

thoughts come from God, Satan or self. If from Satan or self, the thoughts are evil and will curse us and others with suffering and failure. If from God, the thoughts are good and will bless us and others with joy and success.

God's good serves God and others without demanding payment in return. Man's good serves self and seldom gives, but rather takes from others. Even if it appears to give, manly good explicitly or implicitly demands return payment of some sort. Our manly thinking can invade God's good by trying to take credit for what God is doing through us. Say God leads us to do a good act, but instead of giving God the credit, we seek praise and recognition for our "good" deed. Ask yourself what happens if you do something good for someone and you are not recognized or thanked for it. If you are in the flesh then your flesh is going to get pricked because it wanted that "payment of thanks" for your "good" act.

In the world of man nothing is free. In the world of God all things are freely given through agape love and it doesn't matter if man does not recognize your good actions. God does and it is for God that you act good, not your fellow man. God's Spirit and man's flesh lust against one another.

Galatians 5:17

For the flesh lusteth against (seeks to destroy) the Spirit, and the Spirit (lusteth) against the flesh: and these are contrary (adversaries) the one to the other.

Adversaries are driven to destroy each other. The Hebrew word "satan" literally means the arch-enemy and adversary to good. The Satan-infected "satisfy my flesh" thinking of soul-led man is totally dedicated to destroying the good "love and serve God" thinking of Spirit-led man. Likewise, the good thinking of God's Spirit in a man is totally dedicated to destroying the evil thinking of Satan's flesh in a man.

Romans 8:5-9

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things

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of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit For to be carnally (fleshly: me, myself and I) minded is (Spiritual) death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity (adversary) against God: for it is not subject (obedient) to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh 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.

That man is “none of His” because without the Spirit of Christ, that man cannot live through God’s love, Spirit, Word and faith. That man cannot please God. In order to please God and benefit from all God has to give him, that man must get Spirit-born and change from being “none of His” to becoming “one with God” from the inside out.

GOD’S CREATION BEGINS ON THE INSIDE

God’s plan of creation begins on the inside with Spirit-birth, which establishes our righteous relationship with God. We become His child who now lives in heavenly places in the Spiritual Kingdom of God and heaven upon earth. Jesus teaches us how to filter our thoughts through the agape love, Spirit, Word, faith and obedience of God so that the abundant life of Christ manifests in our life (John 1:12-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 6:1-23; Matthew 6:33).

The Spirit of Jesus Christ within us trains us to believe, speak and walk in God’s creative Word and ways rather than continue to operate through the destructive lies and emotions of our soul and body. From the inside out we gradually change as Jesus monitors and guides all our reasoning, feelings, imaginations, attitudes and physical appetites. As we change on the inside, we begin to manifest that change on the

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outside. This progressively transforms our mind to think and our will to act like Jesus, who even at His most trying moment of earth-bound life declared to Father God, “***Thy will be done***” (Matthew 26:42).

Jesus, as He walked the face of this earth, showed us how to step back into the glory of God that Adam and Eve walked out of. All we have to do is rest in the assurance of our righteous relationship with God, freely choose to die to self-will, thought by thought walk and talk with Jesus and do God’s will, as it is plainly written in the Bible, most especially in the New Testament (Galatians 2:20, 4:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

God’s liberty frees us from worldly concerns. By living through the Kingdom of God within us and bringing all our thoughts to Jesus, we allow Jesus to take care of all our natural needs. That doesn’t mean we quit going to work and wait for Jesus to make money mysteriously appear. It does mean we quit going to work for the sole purpose of making money. At work we stand up in our callings as ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ. No matter where we are, including at work, we are not ashamed of who we are in Christ. We manifest Jesus Christ in us by willingly and excellently doing whatever we do. Instead of engaging in the gossip and trash talk of soul-led life, we lovingly listen to people and offer them the solutions to life we’ve found in Jesus.

There is no liberty in the pursuit of soul-led self. Manly self cannot fulfill us. It cannot make us what we’ve been designed to become, which is God’s mature daughters and sons. There is no greater liberty than to be perfectly (completely) joined as one in heart, soul, mind and body with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

Living in God’s perfect liberty means living life in abundance and destroying the works that Satan and self daily set against us (Hebrews 13:8). Don’t let the thieves of Satan and self steal the agape love, Spirit, Word, faith and power of God away from you. Don’t let Satan and your man-centered

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self kill your hope of enjoying the abundant life that God has prepared for you. Don't let Satan and self destroy the glory and goodness of daily growing in the peace and prosperity of the life of Christ within you (John 10:10).

THE LIFE OF CHRIST IS LIBERTY

The life of Christ is the new creation Spirit of the Son of God living in a Spirit-born believer (Galatians 4:6).

The life of Christ empowers us to speak the Word of God and create God's good with which to enjoy the abundant life of God upon earth (Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20; Ephesians 2:6, 10).

The life of Christ is at war with sin. It empowers us to speak God's Word and destroy the evil that our Satan-infected, soul-led (*me, myself and I*) thinking daily tempts us to engage in.

In all ways, large and small, every *me, myself and I* is at war with God and every other self-serving *me, myself and I* on the planet. Soul-led self believes that neither God nor others can be trusted to serve our selfish needs. Instead, we must control every moment of our life by rejecting God and manipulating others to serve us.

Self-promotion mandates we get others to think and act as we want them to. Self-survival compels us to provide the appearance of cooperation to those who are more powerful than we are. This is why we create systems of behavior, whether they are called ranks, castes, pecking orders, protocols, contracts, codes of conduct or whether they operate through the raw power of money, muscles or munitions. We first recognize who has the most power in a situation. We then negotiate the best deal we can. However, once the greater power departs and the appearance of cooperation is no longer necessary, we return to manipulating the people, places and things of the world to conform to our ways of thinking and acting.

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This is the world and this is how human beings conformed to this world think and act. This is why, without Spirit-birth and purposefully living through Jesus in us, we are at odds with God and others and our lives are a wreck on the inside. Even if we believe in God and think we are following Him, we can still be in bondage to manly thinking. We can entertain all sorts of destructive thoughts and emotions such as doubt, debate, depression, worry, weariness, anger, resentment, revenge, low self esteem and other negative ways of thinking and acting that constantly steal, kill and destroy the love, peace, joy and goodness of God's life in us.

Evil's desire is to steal God's Word from our mind, kill God's hope in our heart and destroy God's love in our life. If we don't daily fellowship with God and discover who we are in Jesus, deploy the Word of God to destroy the evil that attacks us and create the good of God we need for our life, it won't get done.

The Bible admonishes us not to conform ourselves to the world, but to transform our life and circumstances by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:1-3). We renew our mind through our new creation Spirit. Only through the Spirit can we overcome Satan's evil and not sin through our lusts and pride. Thought by thought our Spirit captures and brings to Jesus the lusts and pride our Satan-infected soul and body tempt us with (Romans 7:14-25; 2 Corinthians 10:5). Jesus shows us which thoughts to keep and which thoughts to cast out. Our moment by moment fellowship with Jesus strengthens our love and trust in Jesus and God's Word and transforms us to more and more think and act like Jesus. As we do, we increasingly love and trust God and treat others like we would like to be treated. Our life progressively prospers in all ways as Jesus works out our salvation with us.

Through fellowship, reading, studying and applying to our life the perfect law of God's liberty found in the Bible, we put on the mind of Jesus Christ and work out our salvation. The New Testament is where we find most of the promises and benefits that come from living the life of Christ.

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We activate God's promises and benefits into our life by becoming a doer of God's Word. First we read or hear what God's Word says. Then, in Jesus' name, through faith, we believe, speak and ask Father to manifest His Word in the hope/expectation that what it says will sooner or later come forth into our life. After that, we thank and praise God until His Word manifests in our life (Luke 4:4; John 14:21; Hebrews 11:1, 6; James 1:22; Romans 10:17; Matthew 7:24-27).

GOD'S WORD IS GOD

God's Word comes in two forms: written and spoken. God's written Word is His Bible. His spoken Word is God's peace filled voice heard both within our new creation Spirit and through other men and women of God. God's spoken Word will always agree with God's written Word. If it doesn't, then it is not God who is speaking to us. This is why we must daily read, study, think about and believe the words of the Bible. They program our new creation with the thinking and acting of God. That programming recognizes when a voice is of God and when it is not of God.

We become easily able to recognize the voice of the thief, Satan, who only comes to steal God's Word from our mind, kill God's hope in our heart and destroy our life with doubt, debate, fear, worry, confusion, anger and depression. We become easily able to recognize the voice of God who only comes to bring us the love, joy, peace and prosperity of life and life in abundance (John 10:10).

If you remain ignorant of the Bible, then you cannot benefit from all the good God has provided for you in His Word. You have to read, study and listen to the preaching and teaching of God's Word. No one can do it for you. God needs you to put His Word in you so that you are conformed into Jesus' thinking and acting and enjoy all the good things of God. Just because God has forgiven and forgotten all our past sin doesn't mean we've forgotten how to think and act

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through our manly mind and sin. We must purposefully work with Jesus to renew and transform our mind with the Word of God or we will continue to flip back and forth between thinking and acting through God and thinking and acting through man (Romans 12:1-2). This robs us of God's blessings and makes us unstable in all our ways (James 1:8).

Instead, we need to *only* think and act through the Word of God. The hallmark of a mature son or daughter of God is that he or she is dedicated to thinking, speaking, and acting through the Word of God rather than the words of man. *Only God's Word* can destroy evil and create good. *Only God's Word* can conform us into the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ. *Only God's Word* can fulfill us and make our life on earth worthwhile and complete.

As we train ourselves to think and act through God's Word and ways, we become increasingly successful in all areas of our life. No longer are we tossed to and fro between the demonic thinking and acting of our soul and the divine thinking and acting of our new creation Spirit. Our life is Spirit-led, steady, peaceful and productive. We are freed from fear and failure. We become financially solvent. We are healed and made whole mentally, emotionally, physically and Spiritually. The bad old things of Satan are behind us and we press towards the good new things of God for our life. We no longer live in the prison of self but rather we live in the liberty of God's perfect Word and will for our life.

All of what we just talked about happens when we do like our forefathers and become hearers and doers of God's Word. The many promises God has provided for us in His Word become ours as we read, believe, speak, do and receive them into our life through the faith of the Son of God within us, as discussed in our next chapter.

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Chapter 11

TOTALLY LIVING THROUGH FAITH

We are Spirit-birthed by God's love, which blesses us with God's faith and grace. God's grace continually forgives and forgets all our confessed sin, as well as causes God to favor us in every moment of our life.

Ephesians 2:4

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened (Spirit-birthed) us (and joined us) together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

God's love guides God's faith within us to think, believe, speak and do God's written and spoken Word. As we renew and transform our mind with God's Word, we begin to live, minister and enjoy the good of God's heaven on earth rather than suffer from the evil thinking and actions of Satan's hell on earth.

Galatians 5:3

... faith works by (God's agape) love.

THE MEASURE OF FAITH

The last part of Romans 12:3 says that, "*God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*" It does not say "a" measure; it says "the" measure of faith. God gives His children "*the measure of faith.*" It is definite. It is complete. It is the same measure of faith that Jesus has (Galatians 2:20). It is all the faith you'll ever need.

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God birthed you into His family with the Spirit of His Son, Jesus Christ, Who is the Living (biblical) Word of God within you. When you enter into fellowship with God and begin to trust in God's love, forgiveness and favor (grace) for you, you will begin to operate through God's faith, by thinking, believing, speaking and doing God's Word. You will increasingly receive the reality that through Spirit-birth you now live in the Spirit of the Son of God, which contains the love, faith and grace of the Son of God through which you are joined as one with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost (see Chapter 6). When you operate through Jesus' love, faith and grace within you, it is Father, Jesus, Holy Ghost and you joined as one in thinking, believing, speaking, doing and bringing forth the good results of the Word of God into your life and the life of those Jesus ministers to through you.

John 15:7

If ye abide (Spiritually live) ***in me*** (Jesus), ***and my words abide*** (Spiritually live) ***in you***, (in My name through faith) ***ye shall ask what ye will*** (that is in accord with God's Word) ***and it shall be done unto you.***

In an even greater way Jesus now carries on His work of salvation through us, when, in Jesus' name, we ask for what He commands us to ask for and then receive it into our life or the lives of those He's ministering to through us.

John 14:12-14

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 any thing in my name, I will do it.

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Father is glorified when, in Jesus' name, we ask Father to bear forth the fruit of salvation through the manifestation of His Word.

John 15:16

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

If you want to cast out and destroy the works of the devil that come against you, then, in Jesus' name, bind them up and cast them out when they attack you and loose (release) the Holy Ghost to bring you victory and peace.

Mark 16:17

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils.

Matthew 16:19

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt (in Jesus' name) bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt (in Jesus' name) loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Jesus' name contains His character and authority. When we ask (speak or pray) in Jesus' name, it's actually Jesus, the God of Creation and destroyer of the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), Who is speaking through us. When we speak/pray in Jesus' name, Jesus commands Holy Ghost to send God's angels to confirm God's Word, destroy Satan's evil and create God's good for us or those we are interceding for. If we turn our backs upon the deadly words of Satan and soul-led self and trust in Jesus Christ, then the measure of the faith of the Son of God within us will lead us to believe and, in

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Jesus' name, speak and do God's biblical Word. Once believed and spoken God's Word will instantly – or over a course of time – destroy Satan's evil and create God's good for us and those we've prayed for.

Through Paul, Jesus admonishes us not to think more highly than we ought (Romans 12:3). In other words, we determine how much we use the faith God gives us. When we think more highly than God and run our life through our manly soul, we don't operate through God's faith. When we fellowship with God and believe, speak and do what God's Word says, we join with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost to activate the measure of the faith of the Son of God within us.

The degree to which we fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and live through the love, faith and grace of God is up to us. We can go as far as Jesus and totally operate through faith in God's Word. This will continually release the blessing of God into our life, which empowers us to succeed. Or we can turn our back on God's faith and operate through our faithless, manly thinking and continually release the curse of Satan into our life, which empowers us to fail. Just because we are Spirit-born doesn't mean we yet think and act like Jesus. That comes as we transform our mind through our love for and faith in God and His Word.

Our 24/7 agape love conversation with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost activates our faith to totally believe and completely receive God's Word into our life. We come to absolutely trust in God and His Word. When Jesus leads us to speak God's Word and release the Holy Ghost to go destroy Satan's evil or create God's good for us or others, we know that is what will happen.

The opposite of faith is faithlessness. Faithlessness operates through our manly soul. It doesn't believe God's Word and rejects it in favor of the words and ways of our self-centered manhood. Romans 14:23 says, “...*whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*” Faithlessness is sin. Sin curses our life to fail. Through sin, Satan and soul-led self steal, kill and destroy the blessing (success) of God in our life. It is important that we

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learn to recognize the difference between the thinking and acting of faith and the thinking and acting of sin so that we will benefit from God's blessing rather than get beat-up by Satan's curse.

Faith manifests itself through obedience. Obedience releases the Genesis 1:28 parental blessing of God upon our life. Through faith filled obedience we bear the *fruit* of success in all our endeavors, *multiply* our ministry to God and others, *replenish* (fill) the earth with the good thinking and things of God, *subdue* (take power over) all evil that attacks us, and *take dominion* (rule) over our personal life. Now let's intimately explore faith beginning with how our obedience and disobedience effect it.

OBEDIENCE RELEASES GOD'S WORD

2 Corinthians 10:5

... bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

We are obedient when we attentively listen to and release the faith of God within us to think, believe, speak, do and receive the blessing of God's written and spoken Word and Spiritual prompting. Disobedience destroys faith's blessing by us putting Self IN charge and acting upon Satan's words of spiritual death rather than God's words of Spiritual life. Jesus took all our disobedience and sin upon His cross. If we don't reject Jesus' salvation, God's love and grace will forgive us for any new disobedience and sin, once we admit to it and, in Jesus' name, ask Father to forgive and cleanse us of the consequences of its ungodly (unrighteous) behavior (1 John 1:9). Once forgiven and cleansed, we ask God to reveal to us the evil thinking that tempted us to sin, so God can renew our mind to reject such temptation in the future.

God is not looking for Christians who get Spirit-born but continue to operate through the cursed thinking and acting of their personal religion of disobedience and sin. God is look-

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ing for Christians who are willing to live the totally blessed life of Christ by faithfully obeying what they hear God speak or show them.

The Bible says that to obey is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22). You can do all sorts of seemingly righteous religious works (sacrifices) but if you don't seek, submit to and in faith do God's bidding, everything you do is cursed and doomed to fail. It is through obedience that you are blessed and bound for success (1 Corinthians 13:1-2; Hebrews 4:2). This is why God tells us to bring all our thoughts to Him and when we do disobey and sin to immediately ask Father to forgive us.

Adam and Eve failed to faithfully obey God. Instead they disobeyed Him by rejecting His holy thinking and acting and accepting Satan's unholy thinking and acting. They followed Satan's evil, destructive words, will and ways rather than God's good, creative Word, will and ways. Satan's evil disobedience and sin replaced God's good in their lives and the lives of all men who are born upon the earth. But remember, God unconditionally loved Adam and Eve. He immediately demonstrated this by creating a blood covenant that covered their disobedience and sin and permitted Him to bless Adam and Eve when they faithfully obeyed the commandments of His covenant.

For 4,000 years God created various blood covenants between Him and men. Through Jesus He created the ultimate and final New Testament Blood Covenant. This covenant doesn't merely cover our sin. Jesus' sacrificial blood kills our old man of sin by first Spirit-birthing us with the Spirit, love, faith and grace of the Son of God. Next, we work out our salvation with Jesus by thought by thought renewing our mind with the Word of God (Romans 5:8-6:18, 12:1-2; Galatians 4:6; 2:20). Through Jesus Christ in us, we activate the power of God's Word into our life by thinking, believing and obeying (speaking and doing) what it says. This releases the blessing of God's salvation into our life. God's faith-released blessing either destroys Satan's evil, creates God's

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good or confirms who we are in Christ. Nothing else can do that, only hearing and obeying God's Word and releasing the power of God's blessing through the words and action of the faith of the Son of God in us can do that.

Hebrews 5:8-9

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.

GOD OPERATES THROUGH FAITH

1 Corinthians 2:5

... your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

2 Corinthians 5:7

... for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Romans 1:17

... therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Romans 5:1

... being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

James 2:22

... by works was faith made perfect.

Matthew 21:21

Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith, and doubt not, . . . ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and it shall be done.

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What do all these scriptures mean? They mean that God operates through faith. It is faith that activates the power of God's Word to move the mountains of evil out of our way. Faith pleases God. When we obediently speak and do His Word through faith God's blessing is released to destroy the evil that attacks us or to create the good we need. Jesus defeated Satan by standing in faith and obediently speaking and doing God's Word. Jesus has given us His Spirit and voice (God's Word) to obediently speak through faith and enforce Jesus' victory over Satan in our life (Galatians 4:6, 2:20; Hebrews 11:6).

Faith matures us into who we are – the sons and daughters of God conformed into Jesus' image. It shows us what we have – which is everything that Jesus has. It tells us how to live like Jesus and obediently do what God wants us to do. Faith teaches us how to talk, teach, preach, pray and proceed in all areas of our life. Faith raises us up from religious weaklings into strong sons and daughters of God who minister the Word of God with signs, wonders and miracles.

All things in the Kingdom of God are activated by faith.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Faith diligently seeks God by first believing and then, in Jesus' name, speaking and doing God's Word with the unrelenting expectation and total trust that the Word will sooner or later manifest its power and truth into our life.

The first act of faith we experience is Spirit-birth. As a sinner, we either don't know or don't have faith in God's Word. When we get to the point that we truly want to believe and receive Jesus as our Lord, then God provides us with the faith necessary to call upon Jesus to save us (Romans 10:8-13). As soon as we obediently activate God's Word, by

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asking Jesus to come into our heart and save us, God's grace flows out of His Word. God's grace releases God's forgiveness and glory. Instantly, we receive the perfect love, Spirit and faith of the Son of God and become new God-Spirited creations in Christ. All the stinking thinking and acting of our old life, all the sin that separated us from God is taken from us by Jesus and replaced with the righteousness of God in Christ (Galatians 4:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21). We may not feel much different, or we might feel at peace and that all is well in the world. But no matter what we feel or don't feel, because we believed and obeyed God's Word, by asking Jesus to save us, we are sure what the Bible has promised has come to pass. We are new creations in Christ, who are blessed with all God is and has through Jesus living in us (Romans 8:17). We are now seen by God as His Spiritually complete, sinless, righteous, eternal daughter or son.

The power of faith that first brought us to God is the same power of faith that eternally joins us with God. Through faith every blessing of God is brought forth in our life. By studying the Bible and, in Jesus' name, daily applying the preached and taught Word of God to our life, we more and more operate through faith. The more we operate through faith the more we walk like Jesus and release the blessings of God into our life and the lives of those Jesus ministers to through us.

THE NEW TESTAMENT ORDER

Jesus believed, trusted and, through faith and obedience, applied all of God's Word to His life. This paved the way for all of us who will follow His example to mature into faith-led, miracle-manifesting daughters and sons of God.

Jesus upgraded the two love commandments of the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18). Instead of loving God and our neighbor with our natural manly affections, we can agape love God and others as God agape loves us.

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John 13:34

A new commandment I give unto you, That you (agape) love one another; as I have (agape) loved you, that you also (agape) love one another.

Mark 12:30-31

And you shall (agape) love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like it, namely this, you shall (agape) love your neighbor as yourself.

Through Jesus we act by faith in God and His Word. God's Word says that we are born of God and receive all Jesus is and has so that we are eternally righteous and in right relationship with God. Through the faith of the Son of God within our new creation Spirit we accept the reality that God unconditionally loves us. No matter how Spiritually immature we may act, God is our loving parent who will always forgive and forget any new sin, once we ask Him to (1 John 1:9).

A simple yet powerful Spiritual exercise we can do to help renew our mind with how good God is and how much He loves us is to constantly say this: "Father God, though I am Spirit-born and Spiritually perfect and complete in your eyes, mentally and emotionally, I'm still a work in progress. Yet, no matter how many times I might still think and act through Satan and my soul-led self, You forgive me my confessed sin. Thank you for loving me at all times. Thank you for thought by thought working with me to renew my mind until it one day rejects all Satan-infected manly thinking and only operates through Jesus' thinking and faith. You love me and I love You for now and forever. Amen."

Faith works through the surety and security of our knowledge that God loves us and only wants to do good for us. If we can't believe God unconditionally loves us, we will be unable to experience all God has in store for us. We will

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always think in the back of our mind that God will punish us or reject us for something we might do. That is not faith. Faith believes that we are God's Spirit-born child who God will instantly forgive, once we ask Him to. When we operate through our new creation agape love heart, we believe that God's righteous Word will come forth unto salvation when we speak and do it in faith.

Romans 10:10

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Salvation doesn't merely mean that we will go to heaven when we expire from the face of the earth; it also means "to be made whole," to receive all the blessings God wants to provide us with. We receive all of God's blessings when we believe and with faith speak God's Word. Conversely, if we don't believe that God's Word is able to provide us with all the blessings the first Christians enjoyed, then we limit our self to what we or our corporate religion is willing to believe and receive. We, in effect, sell God short and short change our self.

Hebrews 4:2

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

BOLD ACTION REQUIRED

In order to drive your car you need to turn it on with your key. Faith is the key that turns on the power in God's Word. In order to drive the Word of God, you need to turn it on with faith, so you can drive it to where God wants you to go.

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Just hearing the Word won't work. Wishing or hoping for it to work won't make it so. Begging or pleading with God won't cause God to act. What does God want us to do? He wants us to do as Hebrews 4:16 commands.

Hebrews 4:16

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

We have to boldly, with total trust in God, proclaim God's Word through faith in order to get the good results we are believing to receive. As noted earlier, we do so by stepping into God's presence within us and in the surety of our agape love relationship with God then we ask Father to bring forth His Word and, in Jesus' name, we boldly declare and do what God's Word requires of us. In other words, we must not merely be a hearer but also a speaker and doer of God's Word in order to be blessed by it (James 1:23-25).

Faith is not passive. Faith must first believe and then obediently declare and do God's Word in order to release God's grace and receive what the Word of God has to provide. Without these works, faith is dead. Anything that is dead will not produce. Faith requires the action of living and ministering through the love, Spirit and faith of the Son of God within us. In Jesus' name, we activate the faith of God by believing, speaking and doing God's Word with the full expectation that sooner or later it will in some way bless us or those Jesus has ministered to through us.

WE LIVE BY THE FAITH OF THE SON OF GOD

As Paul the apostle writes in Galatians 2:20:

Galatians 2:20

Christ lives in me: and the life which we now live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us.

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Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). He encourages us to live by the faith of the Son of God within us through which we believe, speak, do and receive the blessings in God's Word (Colossians 1:26-27; Romans 8:29, 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:5). The more we do so the more we destroy the evil Satan sends against us and enjoy the good God wants to give us.

It's Satan's job to constantly attack us with evil. It's our choice whether we receive it or not. By speaking God's Word in faith and – no matter what – holding onto our faith in God and His Word, then sooner or later not only do things get better, but they turn out for the best. Bad things constantly attack the people of God. When we love and trust God and immovably stand upon our faith in God and His Word, eventually all things work out for the good (Romans 8:28).

Since 1978, I've operated a small emergency service company. Before seeking God's counsel about how to advertise, I spent a lot of money on advertising with little return. Once I began seeking God's counsel and faithfully following God's advice, I began to receive a very good return on my advertising dollar. Sometimes God has me do things contrary to conventional wisdom, but God's wisdom always works. I am now spending less and getting more. Gayle and I always seek God's Word and follow God's leading on how to multiply our finances. Through faithfully following Jesus' leading about what to give to our church and others, not only are our everyday business and personal bills always paid, but our debts are progressively retired and we have extra left over to save, invest and help our children and others with.

We have hundreds of other daily examples we could share with you about living through faith, but having God provide money to pay bills and live a blessed life is probably something everyone can relate to. You may not own a business, but by living through faith, you can get promoted and provided with raises, even when no one else is. Remember, God rewards those who diligently seek Him through fellowship and faith in Him and His Word. Believe it; act

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upon it by doing what God tells you to do. Faith-created Spiritual stability leads to faith-created economic stability. Spiritual and economic stability provide us the safe harbor out from which we set sail with Jesus into the sea of ministry to our family, friends and those others God has ordained for us to carry His love, Spirit and Word to.

Through the faith of the Son of God in us, we have total power and authority over Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack, but we must thought by thought enforce our power and authority through faith. Evil will flee when, in Jesus' name, the Word of God is spoken or prayed by us in faith. However, when evil thinks we're no longer paying attention to it, evil tries to sneak back into our life. That's why we must capture each thought and through Jesus examine its source. Is it of self or Satan or is it of God? Do we keep it and follow its leading or do we cast it out? This is what Jesus faithfully did when He walked the face of the earth and what He expects us to faithfully do today.

Jesus said, "***The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do,***" (John 5:19).

Jesus told Satan in Luke 4:13, "***Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God,***" and Satan departed.

Father God wants us to fellowship with Him and love Him with our all. When we do so, we enjoy God's love, benefit from His provision and take our rightful place as joint-heirs with Jesus living in heavenly places upon earth in the abundant faith-life of Christ.

Ephesians 2:6

God hath raised us up together from the death of our trespasses and sin , and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:16-17

The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ;

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1 Corinthians 6:17

He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit.

FAITH IS NOT MANLY HOPE

Faith is not positive thinking nor soul-led envisioning. Those things might ease the mind a bit, but seldom do they produce more than marginal improvement in a life situation. They have a form of godliness, but they operate through the mind of man rather than the power of God.

Man's mind weakly wishes that something will happen in the future. Faith does not wish. It stands upon the strength of God's Word. It knows that, once spoken, *God's Word will come to pass.*

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Let's break down this scripture so we can gain further insight into what faith is and how it works.

Now faith is . . .

Faith is now. It lives in the present moment. Faith sees your situation and Jesus provides you with the appropriate biblical Word to believe, and, in Jesus' name, speak, do and ask Father to manifest and deal with the situation.

. . . the substance of things hoped for . . .

Substance means "sub," that which is under you upon which you take your "stance." Faith is that which you Spiritually stand upon in the unrelenting expectation (hope) that the Word of God you are believing, speaking and doing will come forth into your life or into the lives of those Jesus prays for or ministers to through you.

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... the evidence of things not seen.

Evidence is that which is obvious to the ear or the eye of the beholder. Faith activates the power of God's Word to create and make obvious in the natural that which is obvious in your Spirit.

Mark 11:24

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever you desire, when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them.

Faith flows out of your fellowship with God. Through your 24/7 conversation of love with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost you increasingly believe that God's biblical Word is true and is to be trusted to do what it says in your life.

Earlier in this chapter we mentioned that we take our first foray into faith when we finally decide to get saved. Once God sees you sincerely seek His salvation, He gifts you with enough faith with which to speak and activate Romans 10:8-13. You open your mouth and ask Jesus to save you and become the Lord of your life. Instantly you receive the love, Spirit and full measure of "the" faith of the Son and Living Word of God, Jesus Christ, with which to live and operate through the Kingdom of God within you.

The Romans 10:8-13 scriptures encapsulate the process of faith, not just for Spirit-birth, but for all acts of faith. We hear, believe, speak and do what God's Word says and then instantly or gradually over a course of time and circumstances we finally receive the good results of God's Word into our life or the life of those Jesus ministers to through us.

Romans 10:8-13

But what saith it? The word is near thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 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,

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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. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This is the way of faith. It was the way that first saved us from Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack through our calling upon Jesus to save us. By believing in our heart and, in Jesus' name, confessing God's Word with our mouth – God Word by Word blesses us with all the great and glorious promises, powers and provision contained in His Word.

When we dedicate ourselves to fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and read, study, hear, see, think, believe, speak and act through the Word of God, then through Jesus, we become the faith-powered love, Spirit and Word of God made flesh. No weapon (word) of fear, doubt, debate, worry, disbelief of any sort has the power to successfully stand against the faith-powered Word of God within us. God's perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18).

2 Timothy 1:7

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 2:15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

HEARING GOD'S WORD GENERATES FAITH

Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by

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the word of God.

Jesus performed signs, wonders and miracles in various ways. Sometimes Holy Ghost would have Jesus pray for a person. Other times Jesus would lay hands upon a person. Often times, especially when there were many people in attendance, Jesus would simply preach God's Word. Holy Ghost would reveal to the people what God's Word was saying. Through faith, the people would believe, speak or do what God's Word was telling them to do and then receive the healing or whatever else it was they were believing for.

Luke 5:15

But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

Today, we can likewise attentively read or listen to God's Word, let the Holy Ghost reveal what it's saying to us, and through the Spirit-born faith of God within us, believe and, in Jesus' name, speak, do and receive its benefit into our life (Mark 16:15-20).

GREAT FAITH IS SIMPLE

We have been discussing what faith is, how it works and how we can obtain *the measure of faith*. It really boils down to this: believe and obey. Satan will try to convince you that it's more complicated than that, that parts of God's Word might not apply to you, or isn't for this time. He will come up with anything he can to convince you that it is impossible for you to release and activate God's Word in certain areas or certain situations. Remember Satan's whole purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. Don't let him confuse you or have you doubt how simple faith is. Paul warns us of how subtle Satan can be.

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2 Corinthians 11:3

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

There are many scriptures in the Bible that talk about faith. We've looked at quite a few in this chapter. Now here is the simplicity, here is what Jesus calls "great faith":

A centurion sent his servants to ask Jesus to heal a servant. When Jesus came, the centurion told Jesus to just say a word and the servant would be healed. Then he explained:

Luke 7:8-9

For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel

That centurion knew authority. He knew how authority worked. When he commanded, he expected results to follow. Recognizing the authority of Jesus, he likewise expected Jesus to speak and have what was spoken come to pass. This is what Jesus called "great faith." Great faith is understanding authority. When we submit to and obey Jesus' authority we know we will have good results. When we believe and understand that by praying in Jesus' name Jesus empowers us with His authority over Satan, then we know our prayers, in Jesus' name, will release God's good to overcome Satan's evil.

Luke 9:1-2

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and

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gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them forth to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

Titus 2:15

These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority.

It isn't hard; it's simple. Jesus speaks and expects us to obey. When, in Jesus name, we speak with that same authority, we expect what we've spoken to come to pass. No doubt or debate, we just believe. As we walk more and more in great faith, we will increasingly live in, and minister, the goodness of God's glory.

FROM GLORY TO GLORY

Faith is not supposed to stand still. It's supposed to daily increase the glory of God's presence in our life.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

God first reveals the truth of His Word into our Spirit and then stirs His faith within us to believe, speak and do what His Word says. Our faith filled voice and actions release the Holy Ghost to bring forth God's Word onto the earth. Seeing invisible faith manifest in the visible world encourages us to continue to conduct our life through God's faith so that we are constantly blessed by the glory (manifested presence) and goodness of God and ...*"press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,"* (Philippians 3:14).

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God's glory and goodness progressively press us into the image of Jesus Christ, so that we fully live in and minister through the faith of the Son of God in the power of the Holy Ghost (Galatians 2:20).

Romans 1:17

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by (the) faith (of the Son of God).

By continually putting on the new thinking and acting of faith, we successfully grow beyond a Spiritually weak, soul-minded child of God, into a Spiritually strong God-minded son or daughter of God, who is blessed in all our ways.

Remember, Satan does not want you to grow into God's mature son or daughter, who knows how to overcome Satan's evil and release God's good into your life. He will do anything to stop that from happening. You must never give up. Press forward no matter what. Forcibly push out thinking and acting which is not in line with the Word of God and replace it with the thinking and acting of God's Word.

Live one in love with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and the Word and faith of God will become who you are and how you think, speak and act. The more you meditate in your mind, believe in your heart and declare with your mouth, who the Word of God says you are in Jesus and what you can do through Jesus in you, the more you will think, act and become a God-conscious, Spirit-led, Word-speaking, faith-activating, glory-manifesting, miracle-working, totally blessed son or daughter of God.

Each step of faith you take stirs you to take your next step of faith. Step by step, you are conformed into Jesus' image. Let's reject self-image and put on Jesus' image by recognizing and through faith removing the anger, the pride of life and the lusts of our eyes and flesh that hinder God's Word from manifesting in our life, as noted in our next chapter.

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Chapter 12

BEWARE OF ANGER, PRIDE AND LUSTS

Earlier we showed how Satan misled Adam and Eve to disobey God's Word. Let's now look more fully at how he was able to accomplish this.

Genesis 3:6

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

Satan stirred the lusts and pride of life in Eve's manly soul. Her flesh lusted after the food of forbidden knowledge. Her eyes lusted to see what God didn't want her to see. Her pride longed for the wisdom of both God's good and Satan's evil with which she could rule as god over her life. Adam followed her leading. The sinless glory of God that had covered their lives and provided for all their needs lifted off them. They found themselves physically naked and in the fallen state of Satan-infected, Spiritually-dead men. They were full of fear, anger and blame. Remember how they ran and hid from God and were ashamed? Remember how Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the serpent and neither took responsibility for their actions nor asked God for forgiveness? Instead, Adam and Eve freely chose to operate through the pride of life, the lust of the eyes, and the lust of the flesh.

Their actions set the precedent. We sin and then either deny we have sinned or we blame God, Satan, others, the situation or the circumstances for our sin. Remember, sin comes from us putting our Satan-infected, soul-led manly

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Self **IN** charge of our thoughts and actions, rather than putting God in charge of them (1 John 3:8, 5:7; Romans 14:23). When we are still of the world and not yet Spirit-born all we can do is sin. Even after we are Spirit-born, our soul-led manly self and Satan want to continue to enslave us with anger, pride and the lusts of life.

1 John 2:16

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.

In order to renew our manly mind with the mind of Christ and become fully conformed into the thinking, acting and image of Jesus Christ, we must overcome the temptations to give into anger, pride and the lusts of life.

SELF-IMAGE OR JESUS' IMAGE, OUR CHOICE

We are physically born with a soul and body that drive us to fulfill our natural selves through food, shelter, comfort, sex and the words and ways of man. Yet we are also born with the Spiritual desire to be conformed into the image of God, our creator (Genesis 1:26). Because Adam and Eve traded God's presence for Satan's presence within them, we are naturally born without the Spirit of God living in us to guide us. This means that Satan can easily seduce us to try and fulfill our Spiritual needs through our natural appetites and the thinking and acting of the world that promises, yet never quite delivers, total fulfillment. Total fulfillment can only come through Jesus.

As natural men it is possible for us to hear from God. However, we are usually so caught up in becoming whatever our soul, body, natural spirit, Satan and society are driving us to become that God's still small voice can't be heard over the roar of the other voices in our head. This is why most of us don't hear God's voice until we face our personal hell on

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earth. In our fear, we turn our ears away from the roar of the many and desperately call out to Jesus to hear us, help us and save us from our worry and woes.

Through Spirit-birth, Jesus instantly puts His Spirit into our heart and sends His help into our life. What we do from then on determines how we live. We can continue to do things our way and live in the evil of hell on earth, waiting until we die, never sure if we will go to heaven. Or we can continue our conversation with God and live in heavenly places on earth pressing towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. If we choose to purposefully seek God's high calling and thought by thought conform ourselves into Jesus' image, then it is important for us to recognize and reject Satan's attempts to ignite our anger or get us to act through the pride of life and the lust of our eyes and flesh.

SELF-CENTERED EVIL OR GOD-CENTERED GOOD

Luke 6:45

A good man out of the good treasure in his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Our Satan-infected soul and our God-led Spirit both filter what we see, touch, taste, smell, hear, reason, feel and imagine. Whichever one we operate through will bring forth what it is designed to bring forth, either Satan's evil or God's good.

Natural man realizes the power and effect of thoughts, as evidenced by man's desire to influence and control thoughts. Psychology is the study of the way we think and what motivates us to think in certain ways. Advertising capitalizes upon psychology's discoveries by manipulating the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life contained

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within our self-centered natural spirit to entice us to buy its products.

Advertisers study and manipulate the thinking and acting of our manly body and soul. But they cannot manipulate the leading of God's Spirit and Word within our new creation woman or man. The creative Spirit and Word of God's truth expose the destructive spirit and words of man's lies.

This is why Paul wrote that we must capture every thought and obediently bring it to Jesus for evaluation and recommendation as to whether to keep it or cast it out (2 Corinthians 10:5). If we will do this, then Jesus will reveal to us if the thought is from God, Satan or soul-led self.

The more we capture our thoughts and examine them through Christ in us, the more we are provided the opportunity to act through God's good rather than Satan's evil. If we purposefully dedicate ourselves to 24/7 fellowshiping with God, we will increasingly be able to discriminate between Satan's temptations and Jesus' leadings. The less we will foolishly buy things because an advertiser taps into a manly desire. The less we will make a mess of things because we failed to capture and cast out an evil thought.

Here is an everyday example of the consequences of not capturing and casting out an evil thought.

I get up in the morning and the toothpaste is missing. Satan instantly stirs me to get angry. I hear Gayle move in the bed. Satan whispers, "She knows." Jesus tells me, "Don't yell at her." Satan says, "She hid it from you." Jesus says, "Be sweet to her." I ignore Jesus, don't capture Satan's temptation and yell, "Where's the toothpaste?"

Gayle groggily replies, "What?"

With increasing anger I reply, "Where is it? I need to brush my teeth!"

She sweetly responds, "Why you yelling at me, honey?"

I step into the bedroom and yell, "The toothpaste! You used it all up!"

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Her volume increases with, “No, remember, yesterday, I told you we were running out and you said you would go to the store and get some. Didn’t you do that?”

I suddenly remember. That’s right. I said I’d buy some.

Now sitting up on the bed, with eyes squinted and a finger pointing at me, Gayle rightfully accuses me with, “I said, didn’t you do that?”

Wishing I’d followed Jesus’ suggestion to be sweet and not yell at her all I can do is respond, “I, uh.”

“I, uh, nothing!” she proclaims and then continues on with, “So you yell at me and wake me up because you forgot to get what you said you would get. That’s right, isn’t it? You forgot – again!”

With no way to excuse myself again I blubber, “I, uh.”

Then she finishes me off with, “Why do I even bother to ask you for help? I can never count on you!” and stomps out into the kitchen. And a perfectly good morning is ruined.

It all could have been avoided if, instead of giving into Satan’s temptation to get angry with Gayle, I had listened to Jesus’ peaceful voice. Once I gave into my flesh (anger and blame), then Jesus’ voice was hard to hear. He didn’t even have time to remind me that I had promised to pick up toothpaste. Had I rejected Satan’s lies and captured my thoughts and followed Jesus’ leading, I could have cast out the anger and blame and lovingly apologized to Gayle for inconveniencing her by forgetting to get toothpaste. If I had started the day in love then Gayle would have been far more likely to forgive me for forgetting the toothpaste. Throughout the course of our day, we all have numerous opportunities to act through God and get good results, or act through Satan and make a mess of things. Remember, Satan will do and say anything to put us at odds with our spouse, our children and just about everyone else.

It is vitally important that we see what Satan uses to mislead our manly self so that our life becomes a mess and we end up living in hell on earth. Satan began with Adam and Eve and still today wrecks our life with sin through self-

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centered anger, the pride of life and the lust of our eyes and flesh.

ANGER

Anger can erupt when we think someone is messing with us, like I wrongly thought Gayle was messing with me by hiding the toothpaste. Also, anger can erupt when people don't do things our way. Our soul-led emotions get defensive or aggressive when we perceive people think or feel or want to act differently than we do. As soon as we perceive a difference between us and another, often we will either verbally begin to build a case to defend our position or aggressively begin to yell and attack the other's position. Occasionally, instead of speaking out, we suppress our desire to verbally express our anger. We don't get rid of it, we simply wind it up like a clock spring until one day it snaps and we severely lash out at someone, often times someone we have no reason to be angry with.

Satan is the angriest being in existence. God won't do anything Satan's way, so Satan does all he can to keep us from doing anything God's way. All of us have preconceived ideas about how we should feel about certain situations, how to best handle a situation, or just generally what we like and what we don't like. If someone else doesn't think, say or do what we think should be done or said, Satan will press our anger button. If we don't instantly capture the thought, we will soon become angry or frustrated with the person.

Gayle, when talking to couples about marriage, often tells what she has labeled "our Mississippi story." We were driving back from her sister's wedding, traveling on Interstate 55 through Mississippi. It was about 2:00 in the morning and I had been giving her tips on her driving. She finally asked me if I would like to drive. I said something to the effect that I could probably do better than what she was doing. Can you husbands relate to this? Can you also see that I really wasn't operating through agape love at that moment?

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She pulled over. I got out and began to walk around the back of the car. Next thing I know she hits the accelerator, screeches the tires and takes off. My jaw dropped in shock. She left me. Then it suddenly dawned on me that I was standing in a t-shirt and swim trunks 550 miles from home, with no cell phone, no wallet, no nothing.

I'll let Gayle continue the story.

"Despite the fact that I had been driving for more than 30 years and had an excellent driving record, Michael always had *helpful suggestions* about my driving. I had finally had enough and something snapped as he got out of the car, so I gunned the engine and took off amongst cries of 'Mom!' from the back seat. I went a few hundred yards when the Lord quietly asked: 'Is this what you want to do?' I said, 'No, Lord, but he . . . ' I couldn't even finish the thought. What could I have said when I knew the Lord was dealing with me. I wasn't going to do like Adam and say, 'Oh, Lord, the man you gave me, he did . . . '

You see at that point it didn't matter what Michael had done, I knew the Lord was dealing with my response. I stopped the car and in the time it took Michael to arrive out of breath at the side of the car, I had had a revelation. (If you let the Lord deal with you in a situation, He will always reveal something to you on how you can change.)

Satan had been whispering: 'Had enough, tired of this, leave him.' But I knew I really didn't want to do that. Then the Lord showed me that Michael wasn't trying to be critical of me, rather he was trying to help me. It didn't matter that I didn't need help at the time, or that I don't drive the way he thinks I should drive. He was trying to help me because he loves me.

If I concentrate on that fact – his love for me – then I see that everything he does is an extension of that love. Now I no longer take it as a personal affront or attack when he does something that annoys me or frustrates me. Instead of responding to Satan's pokes at my peace of mind, I say 'my husband loves me; he doesn't mean to upset me; he's not

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doing it on purpose’ and then I react to the situation through agape love. When Michael operates the same way with me, we can work through any situation that before would have resulted in yelling and crying and blaming. Working through love instead of anger always works.”

THE PRIDE OF LIFE

Satan takes our primal drive to be conformed into the image and likeness of the Son of God and perverts it to pursue the godhood of *me, myself and I* (Genesis 1:26; Romans 8:29).

If we don’t actively pursue Jesus’ Spirit, Word and vision for our life, we will wind up being manipulated by Satan to conjure up what we think will fulfill us through the pride of our natural thoughts, emotions and imaginations.

Pride turns us away from God. We arrogantly step out on our own and tell God to get out of our life. We replace Jesus’ leading for our life with our total control of our life. Yet, no matter how good we might manufacture our self to look on the outside, our inside is always a mess. As with anger, we combat the pride of life by 24/7 capturing every thought, emotion and imagination and obediently bringing it to Jesus to discover its source and purpose.

Let’s return to the Mississippi night noted above. By nature, I’m a perpetual student and teacher. I constantly look for ways to do things in a simpler, safer or more efficient way. I will often try to help people by suggesting another way of doing something. What I hadn’t considered until Gayle left me alone in the dark on I-55, was that my suggestions might not merely be unappreciated but they might actually be offensive and thereby wrong for me to make. So after the Lord got Gayle to stop and let me back in the car, He turned His attention to me. For the next nine hours Jesus and I quietly sat in the car and examined what had happened not only that night but throughout my marriage to Gayle.

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I had to eat a lot of pride that night before Jesus could reveal to me a simple truth that has helped our marriage grow. It's the truth that, though Gayle may not think or act like I think or act, if her thinking or acting is not illegal, unethical or immoral I will best serve both of us by not trying to help her think or act in the way I would think or act. In other words, there are ways she proceeds that are not better or worse, nor are they wrong – they are just different than how I would proceed in the same situation. I had to stop trying to force her to operate through my way of thinking. She likewise had to stop trying to force me to operate through her way of thinking. Since we've both dedicated ourselves to serving one another, we've been able to increase the depth of our love and communication with one another.

The pride of life is designed by Satan to keep us ignorant and isolated. It is driven by our fear of forfeiting our freedom to think or do things our way. The pride of life defends itself with self-righteous arrogance and anger that devour God's agape love, Spirit, Word, faith, peace, power and prosperity in our life.

THE LUST OF OUR EYES AND FLESH

The eyes of our souls and the flesh of our bodies assist the pride of life to steal, kill and destroy our life through their incessant lusting to have every little thing they see, feel, touch, smell, hear and imagine would make us happy. Happiness is a fleeting commodity. Once we have what makes us happy, we feel fulfilled only until another thought or another desire crosses our mind. Suddenly what we have doesn't make us happy any more. We feel empty again and so we lust after the next thing we think will make us happy. Whether it is jobs, relationships, or personal possessions, we will never be fully filled until we are filled with the joy of the Lord.

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THE JOY OF THE LORD

Nehemiah 8:10 says, “ ... *the joy of the Lord is your strength.*” It’s one of the fruits we receive through Spirit-birth (Galatians 5:22). It flows out of our fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Joy knows that through Jesus we have victory over all things. It makes us happy that our life is sure and secure in God. No matter Satan’s trial, temptation or persecution against us, we rejoice in the fact that we can ask Father to protect us and then, in Jesus’ name, pray for Satan’s evil to be bound and God’s good released into the situation. Then in joy-filled patience we endure the attack, until Holy Ghost provides us with Jesus’ victory (1 Peter 2:19, 4:12-14; John 15:20; Romans 12:14; James 1:2-8).

Joy rejoices that all things are possible through Jesus, Who strengthens us so that there never has to be any confusion, delusion or disaster in our life (Philippians 4:13; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

Joy smiles even though the natural world around us is full of the chaos and confusion of hell, for joy knows we live in the peace and provision of the Spirit of God within us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6).

Sensual pleasures and the material things of man cannot compare to the joy of being thought by thought one with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. The joy of the Lord overcomes our constant seeking for momentary manly delight through the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh. The Bible promises that if we delight ourselves in the Lord, then He will bring us the desires of our heart (Psalms 37:4). Such knowledge strengthens our faith and frees us from the stress and strain of greed and financial insecurity.

The joy of the Lord stands upon the solid foundation of its faith in the Word of God to be and do what it says. Joy knows that as righteous saints of God we are never abandoned and always taken care of by God through our faith in God and His Word (Psalms 37:25; Romans 1:17; Hebrews 10:38). God’s Word says that He is willing and able to provide for us

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exceedingly, abundantly beyond all we can ask or think. By always seeking first the righteousness, peace and joy of the words and ways of the Kingdom of God, we receive all the things of natural and supernatural life we need (Ephesians 3:20; Romans 4:21; Matthew 6:33; Romans 14:17; Philipians 4:19).

The joy of the Lord is sure and secure and forever. Once entered into, it progressively destroys all fear and the power of the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh that make a mess of our life. It keeps us focused on following Jesus' vision for our life and overcomes the pride of life's attempts to fulfill ourselves through pursuing man made dreams.

WE GET THE BEST TO GIVE THE BEST

Jesus wants to give you His best so that you can give His best to others. Do not let anger or the pride of life or the lusts of the flesh keep you separated from God. When you thought by thought live one with God, your mind is transformed to think and act like Jesus. Through Jesus' thinking and acting, the temptations of the flesh get easier and easier to cast out. The things of man grow dim. The light of God grows bright in your head and your heart and your life. God continually blesses you with such things as peace of mind, better health, natural provisions, a wonderful spouse and great well-behaved responsible children. When others see how blessed you are, chances are they will inquire about why you are so blessed. That's the perfect opportunity for you to show and tell people how good God is and how He only wants the best for them.

There are hundreds of different life scenarios we can be involved in. The bottom line is that God needs us to live among and minister to the people of the world. If that means He needs to make us the head of a fortune 500 company to reach others, then He does so. If we need to be a military man or woman on a base or in a war zone, then that's where we wind up. A farmer, a factory worker, a politician, an artist, a

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sales person, a secretary, a teacher, a mom, a pop, you plug in whatever a natural man or woman can be. As ministers of Gods' reconciliation, we can wind up working or doing most anything. Even if we accept Jesus in jail or prison, we can be used by God to live in and minister out the good news of Jesus Christ to our fellow inmates.

By capturing our thoughts and overcoming the pride of life and the lusts of the eyes and the flesh, our life becomes a living example of Jesus Christ to those around us. The more we think and act like Jesus rather than soul-led men, the stronger we build the foundation of our life in Christ and can help others likewise build the foundation of their life in Christ, as noted in our next chapter.

Chapter 13

BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

We fulfill God's plan to conform us into Jesus' image and likeness by entering into 24/7 agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. If we won't build a strong foundation of faith flowing fellowship with God, though we are Spirit-born, we won't be able to fulfill Fathers' will for us to additionally get mind-transformed to think, act and minister like Jesus. Instead, we will continue to wallow in the slop of Self IN charge thinking and acting.

In Matthew 7:21 Jesus cautions us that:

Matthew 7:21

Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven.

A GODLY FOUNDATION

Matthew 7:24-27

Therefore, whosoever hears these words of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that hears these sayings of mine, and does them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

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Jesus doesn't want us to build our life upon the shifting sand of the weak and worrisome religious ways of man. If we do, we will be wrecked with each storm of life that comes our way. Instead, we are to build our foundation of life upon the rock of divine revelation, truth and wisdom contained within the living Word of God. If we build ourselves on the Word of God, then we will be able to withstand any storm Satan will send our way. Jesus calls that being a wise man.

Our First Century forefathers built the foundations of their miraculous, successful lives in Christ with the basic building blocks below. Today, we can do likewise.

GOD'S BASIC BUILDING BLOCKS

- 1) We believe that Jesus took all our sin upon His cross, died, went to hell in our place and rose from hell with total power over Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack (John 3:16; Ephesians 4:8; 1 Peter 2:24).
- 2) We ask Jesus to be our Lord, accept that He redeems us from Satan, forgives us our sin and Spirit-births us as God's beloved child, who takes power over Satan, soul-led self, sin, sickness and lack by believing, speaking and doing God's Word through faith (Romans 10:8-13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).
- 3) We repent and turn our back upon our self-centered sin-filled thinking and acting, and turn our face towards the Word and ways of God. As we hear, read, study, believe, receive as our own, speak out and act in faith upon God's Word, our mind is progressively renewed and transformed to think and act like Jesus. This enables us to fully activate all that God has made us and given us through Jesus

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(Romans 12:1-3).

- 4) We daily fellowship with God and grow in God's faith, glory (the manifestation of Jesus through us) and our intimate oneness with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost (John 17:20-23). We bring all the desires of our body, the thoughts of our mind, the feelings of our emotions and the imaginations of our natural spirit to Jesus in us for evaluation and recommendation as to what to do with each one. Kick it out, or keep it and act upon it (2 Corinthians 10:5; Matthew 16:19).
- 5) We seek God for the revelation of His specific vision for our life. We enter into God's specific vision and activate our ministries of reconciliation as ambassadors for Christ to those around us (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; see Chapters 20-25).
- 6) We ask God to release the full anointing of the Holy Ghost into our life, by baptizing us with ministry fire and the tongues of God (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:1-3, 10:44-46; 1 Corinthians 14:2,4; see Chapters 15 and 16).
- 7) We minister through the Word of God and the nine gifts and six empowerments of the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:4; see Chapters 15 and 16).

BUILD DEEP, BUILD HIGH

The deeper and stronger a foundation is, the higher and more stable the building will be that is built upon it. This is true both in the natural and supernatural.

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1 Corinthians 3:10-15

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and others build thereon. But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 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 abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Ephesians 2:19-22

Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are built to be an habitation of God through the Spirit.

In these scriptures, we plainly see that God is cautioning us to make sure our foundation is built upon Jesus. If we build the foundation of our Christianity upon the dogma and doctrine of man-made religion rather than the pure truth of Jesus' Word, our foundation will be built with weak man-made promises rather than the strength of God's blessings. In order to support the supernatural structure of God's plan for man to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ, our

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foundation must be built upon the biblical teachings and experiences of Jesus and His First Century followers.

God's Word is the blueprint for building the life of Christ in us. It tells us what our foundation in Christ is to be built with so that it will support the building of our life through the ministry of Jesus to us and through us. The deeper and stronger our foundation, the higher and more stable our life and ministry will be. I don't mean higher in the sense of having the most noticeable ministry in the world, but higher in the sense that our life and ministry lives up on Mount Faith with God rather than down in the Valley of Doubt with man.

LOVE, SPIRIT, WORD AND FAITH

We build our supernatural foundation with God's agape love, Spirit, Word and faith through which God manifests His grace, goodness, power and glory.

Remember, agape love is who God is and what drives God to create human children, who can be Spirit-born, mind-transformed and fully conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Genesis 1:26; Romans 8:29).

God's agape love casts Satan's evil and our sin out of us when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior and God births us with the Spirit of His Son (Galatians 4:6). Once Spirit-born, God sees us as His Spiritually perfect new creation. Just like our natural born man can't get naturally born a second time neither can our supernatural Spirit. We shouldn't keep going back to the altar to get Spirit-born once we ask Jesus to be our Lord. Instead, we need to put on the Mind of Christ and grow beyond an unlearned, powerless child of God into a powerful daughter or son of God who thinks and acts like Jesus.

As earlier noted, we do this by capturing and bringing all our thoughts – all our intellectual reasoning, emotional feelings, physical appetites, imaginations and self-willed desires – to Jesus for evaluation and recommendation as to whether to keep them or cast them out. By casting out the evil

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and keeping the good, we supernaturally program our bodies to reject mental, emotional and physical obsessions, compulsions and addictions. We transform our souls from responding to the thinking of the words of man to only responding to the thinking of the Word of God so that we increasingly think and act like Jesus (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

On earth Jesus believed with His whole heart, soul, mind and strength that God's Word contained the living presence and power of God. Jesus conformed Himself into the image of God's Son, into the "anointed living Word of God" made flesh, by only doing what Father showed Jesus to think, speak and do (John 5:19). Jesus fulfilled God's plan for man to be made in God's image and likeness by Jesus exclusively thinking, speaking and acting through God's written and spoken Word. In the wilderness, Jesus clearly showed the importance of God's Word when He responded to Satan's temptation.

Luke 4:4

... Jesus answered Satan, saying, It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

On earth, Jesus was called the "Word of God made flesh" (John 1:14). Jesus expressed the Word of God to others through preaching, teaching and performing signs, wonders and miracles. We, who are being conformed into the image of Jesus Christ, likewise do as Jesus and, through faith, possess the divine life of God contained within God's written Word. The Word of God spoken through God's Spirit in faith is what strengthens the walls of our supernatural foundation.

When we don't believe and do God's Word, our foundation in Christ is weakened. Some men doubt God's Word because they are either not Spirit-born or they haven't studied and applied the Word of God to their lives enough to have faith in it. Some men don't doubt God's Word, they simply

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refuse to apply it to their lives because it would interfere with the fleshly or religious way they want to think and act.

However, if we do not proceed in accord with God's Word we cannot activate its provisions, positions or promises. If we doubt or refuse to abide by God's Word, we can't even build a Spiritual foundation to stand upon. God's Word is the cement of our New Testament foundation in Christ. No Word, no foundation. Once we set our foundation and stand strong upon God's Word, then we can build our life in Christ.

PROVISIONS, POSITIONS AND PROMISES

There are many provisions, positions and promises God blesses us with. Provisions are what Jesus freely gives us when we make Him our Lord and get Spirit-born as a child of God. We are redeemed from our sins; they are taken away. We stand in the righteousness of God, as His Spiritually perfect, anointed, beloved daughter or son. We become the Temple of the Holy Ghost. Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost live in us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Through 24/7 love fellowship with Them we work out our salvation.

Positions are levels of Spiritual maturity that we progressively grow-up into through daily working out our salvation. We begin as a child of God. Though we are Spirit-born and our sins are forgiven, we still think and act through the corrupt mind of man. As we fellowship with Jesus and He ministers God's Word and ways to us, we put away the thinking of the carnal child and put on the mind of Christ with which Jesus begins to minister through us to others. Eventually, Jesus grows us into a father or mother in the Lord through whom Jesus raises others into His image (John 1:12-13; 1 John 2:12-14).

Promises are the many practical yet wonderful things we inherit from Father God that help us live the abundant life of Christ on earth. Promises include divine healing and health, financial solvency, fruits of the Spirit, wisdom, the ability to bind and destroy evil and loose the creative good of God.

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God has also promised us baptism in the Holy Ghost and the nine gifts and six empowerments of the Holy Ghost with which Jesus ministers the Word of God through us with signs, wonders and miracles following.

We see a promise in God's Word and, in Jesus' name, we ask Father to provide it to us. Then, in Jesus' name, we declare and do God's Word. Through faith, we receive the promise into our Spirit and continually praise and thank Father for His promise until it comes forth in our natural life.

Whereas provisions are freely given to all Christians at Spirit-birth, God's positions and promises are only fully obtained and completely activated as we mature in Christ through our mind-transforming love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. In fact, our mind-matured Spiritual position usually determines whether or not we can recognize and receive a promise of God.

For instance, the flesh centered soul of an immature child of God is a Spiritually weak position. A child of God will defeat faith with doubt and debate. God wants us to mature beyond being children tossed to and fro with every fleshly or religious thought that comes to our mind (Ephesians 4:14). When we begin to bring our thoughts to Jesus, we begin to take power over evil by operating through faith. It is faith that activates the promises of God. No faith, no promises. In order to activate the promises of God into our life we must mature beyond the Spiritually weak position of a child of God into a Spiritually strong son or daughter of God.

3 John 1:1-6 points out the direct correlation between Spiritual position and promise activation. It is the story of Gaius, an everyday member of the Body of Christ. The apostle John has watched Gaius grow up in Jesus. Gaius has matured from a child of God into a son of God, who takes power over the temptations of his self-willed soul, body and Satan and well serves his pastor, local church and visiting Christians. As a result, John prays this prophetic prayer of prosperity to Gaius.

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3 John 1:2

Beloved, I wish (pray to God) ***above all things that thou may prosper*** (succeed at everything) ***and be in*** (physical, mental and emotional) ***health, even*** (in the same way) ***as thy soul*** (obeys the leading of Jesus' Spirit in you and) ***prosper*** (succeeds at loving and serving God rather than religion).

John knew, as a son of God, Gaius' would reject Satan's words and that Gaius' soul, body and self-will were under the supervision of Gaius' new creation Spirit of Jesus Christ. Gaius would not turn away from receiving the good God wanted to give him. Gaius' soul would prosper because it was in agreement with Jesus' Spirit and faith within him. Gaius would rebuke Satan's lies that Gaius was not worthy to receive what God wanted to give him and instead Gaius would joyfully receive God's promises of health and prosperity in all his ways.

When you and I operate in the Spiritual maturity and authority of a son or daughter of God, who overcomes the wicked one, then our soul can also prosper and receive whatever promise God's Word provides for us. There is neither time nor distance in the Spirit. God's Word spoken two thousand years ago is as alive today as it was then. All the provisions, positions and promises that God empowered His first disciples to operate through are likewise ours today, when we believe, speak and do the Word of God in faith (Galatians 4:6, 2:20; John 17:20-23; Hebrews 13:8; 1 John 2:14).

Without faith it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6). We please God when we, in faith, declare and stand upon His Word no matter what. When we do this, then God can give us all we are believing Him for and calling upon Him to supply, because, as the rest of Hebrews 11:6 says, God rewards us when we diligently, without stop, 24/7 seek Him and His Word through our agape love fellowship with Him.

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God's business is our business. We are to be about the business of our Father. His business is to win souls and make disciples, who then win souls and make disciples. (Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16; 1 John 3:16). When we dedicate ourselves to doing the work of our Father, then we bless others and Father God blesses us with all our needs (Matthew 6:33).

Look at the First Century Saints. Despite the constant persecution by the Jews and Gentiles against them, their families, businesses and ministries, God successfully provided for all their Spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social and ministry needs. Through the power of faith they sought first the Spiritual Kingdom of God within them and God took care of the rest. They were soul winners and disciple makers. They daily duplicated themselves by loving (being one with) God with their whole heart, soul, mind and strength. This gave them the heart, soul, mind and strength of God to love and bless others as God loved and blessed them (Genesis 1:28; Ephesians 1:3).

Once we solidly set our foundation upon Jesus Christ and God's Word, through Jesus in us, we will begin to do the good works that God has ordained for us to do (Ephesians 2:10). We will joyfully live in the provisions, mature into the positions and minister through the promises of God. We will fully enter into the power and joy of prayer, praise and worship, as talked about in our next chapter.

Chapter 14

PRAYER, PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Although God is the creator, owner and manager of the universe, because of Adam's and Eve's sin, Satan owns the soul and manages the mind and body of all natural born women and men. Thankfully, Jesus' Spirit-birth redeems (buys back) Satan's ownership of our soul and management of our mind and body. One of the major ways Jesus manages our mind and body and transforms them to think and act like He does is through Holy Ghost empowered, Word based prayer, praise and worship.

In Psalms 22:3, God tells us that He inhabits our praise and worship. As we bring forth praise and worship, we bring forth God, not only *in* our life, but *upon* our life. The Bible constantly urges us in all things and in all ways to praise and thank God (1 Chronicles 16:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:18).

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17, God tells us to pray (talk to and obey God) without ceasing. Prayer becomes who we are and what we do. With that in mind, let's explore what prayer, praise and worship are and how we employ them in our life.

ABIDE IN JESUS AND HIS WORD AND ASK/PRAY

John 15:4-7

Abide (live) in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and

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they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Jesus is the Living Word of God. He lives in the body of Spirit-born women and men (Romans 7:4). Despite that fact, if we Spirit-born women and men do not get transformed by the renewing of our mind with God's written Word through entering into intimate agape love fellowship with Jesus and letting Him turn God's written Word into God's living Word within us, our prayers will bear no fruit.

2 Timothy 2:15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We need to study the written Word of God under the tutelage of Jesus Who is the Living Word of God. The Living Word will rightly divide (clearly reveal to us) what the written Word is telling us about who we are in Jesus Christ and what we are to do through Jesus Christ in us. One of the things Jesus wants us to know is that through Him in us, we are now the strong man who has power over Satan.

WE ARE NOW THE STRONG MAN OVER SATAN

Because Adam and Eve rejected God, we began our lives on earth overcome by the sin and sickness of Satan, who is the prince of the power of the air we breathe.

Ephesians 2:2

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:

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Satan was the strong man who we could never bind (tie-up). How could we ever regain what Adam and Eve lost if we couldn't get past Satan's rule over our life?

Mark 3:27

No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

God sent Jesus to bind and spoil (destroy) the house (the evil works) of the devil.

John 3:8; Luke 11:20

... For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.... if I (Jesus) with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

So now, when we ask Jesus to save us, God destroys Satan's rule over our life. Our old man of sin, that was dominated and controlled by Satan, is bound and removed (destroyed and passed away) from us, so that all things of our life in Christ are now new and from God.

2 Corinthians 5:17-18

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;

Through agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost we are progressively mind-transformed and character-conformed into Jesus' image, as mentally, emotionally and Spiritually complete, God-empowered, miracle-manifesting ministers of reconciliation.

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John 14:12-14

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.

Through Christ in us, we are now the strong man who Satan must obey when, in Jesus' name, we bind and cast his stinking demonic thinking out of our head and back into hell.

Mark 16:17

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my (Jesus) name shall they cast out devils;

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. (In Jesus' name) resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

The only way Satan can bind us and spoil our life is if we do not thought by thought agape love fellowship with God, and follow His leading as to which thoughts to keep and which thoughts to cast out. This keeps us strong in the power of God's love, Spirit, Word and might. When Satan or soul-led, fleshly self tempt us to sin, in Jesus' name, we pray, bind-up their tempting words and cast them into hell.

IN JESUS' NAME

Since Jesus defeated Satan, and through Spirit-birth we received Jesus into us and are being conformed into His image, all that Jesus is and has lives in us and is accessible to us by we praying in His name. When we pray the words, "*In Jesus' name*," what we are saying is this, "In the authority of the God of Creation, my Lord, Savior and husband, Jesus Christ, Who has redeemed me (bought me back) from Satan, destroyed all Satan's power and works against my life, and provided me with all the goodness and glory of God, I now

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pray/ask/declare...” These three simple words, “*In Jesus’ name*,” carry the overcoming power and authority of heaven to bind and destroy Satan’s evil and loose and create God’s good for you or for those you are praying for.”

Matthew 16:19

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

John 14:14

If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

John 16:23

... whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Luke 4:4

And Jesus answered him (Satan), saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God (that man believes, speaks, prays and does in My name).

James 1:22

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

We cannot receive the blessings of God’s Word or effectively pray God’s Word without first faithfully following and applying God’s Word to our life. Once we read, hear, study and trust God’s Word enough to apply it to our life, then God can begin to supply us with what He knows we really need.

Matthew 6:8

... Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

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By fellowshiping and daily reading the Word with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, we discover the scripture(s) that tell us how to think and act like God and reveal to us what God has blessed us with. We apply God's thinking and acting to our life and, in Jesus' name, pray to Father to release His scriptural promises and blessings into our life.

Since our Word-based prayer puts Father God and Jesus, rather than our self in charge of bringing it to pass, once we, in Jesus' name, pray/ask Father for what we need, then through faith we relax and continually thank Him for hearing our request and meeting the need. Sooner or later, what we asked for our self or another will be received in the way God desires it to be delivered.

Isaiah 43:25

I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance (remind Me of My Word to you so that I may perform it): ***let us plead*** (talk) ***together: declare thou*** (My Word), ***that thou mayest be justified*** (by Me providing to you that which I've already said is yours and you now ask me for).

DON'T BEG FAITHFULLY PRAY AND RECEIVE

You don't have to beg for or cry out to God to meet your need. Through your prayer, Father and Jesus send the Holy Ghost to bring forth that which God has already provided for you in His Word. Philippians 4:19 says that God shall supply all your need. You simply believe when you ask Father to intercede in your behalf and then, in Jesus' name, pray the Word of God, that the Word of God will be activated by the Holy Ghost to destroy Satan's evil or create God's good.

For example, let's say Satan and self attack me with some stinking thinking about how I've always been a failure at everything I've done and am nothing but a big loser, who God and everyone else hates. As soon as I hear these stinking

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lies come into my head, I grab 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, John 17:20-23 and Philippians 4:19 and pray, “Father, I ask you to manifest this prayer and destroy the works of Satan against me in this moment. In Jesus’ name, I declare I am a new creation in Christ, that all things of my old life of failure and worthlessness have come to pass and all things in my life are now new and of God. I am joined in agape love with my heavenly Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, Who love me just the way I am and provide me with all that I need. So stinking, lying thinking get out of me and go to hell where you belong!” And the stinking thinking departs. If it tries to return, I simply re-command, “In Jesus’ name, be gone.” And it leaves. I thank Father for casting it out of my head and returning me to His peace.

If I want some evil destroyed and some good created to takes its place I employ Matthew 16:19 and pray, “Father, in Jesus’ name, I ask you to bind and cast out of my life this evil (thing, place, situation, circumstance, pain, disease, etc.) and loose (send forth) the Holy Ghost to create the good (thing, place, situation, circumstance, peace, health, etc.) I need at this time.” Once prayed, I thank Father for bringing forth that which I’ve prayed for and then patiently await its arrival no matter how many times Satan and self tell me my prayer has been forgotten or won’t be answered. Each time Satan or self lie to me that God has forgotten my prayer, in Jesus’ name, I first ask Father to send the Holy Ghost to bind up their lies and send them to hell where they belong. Next I thank Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost for answering my prayer and then continue to patiently wait for its answer to arrive. Sooner or later it always does.

When Gayle prays for someone or about a situation, she always speaks a relevant scripture, sometimes several. In Jesus’ name, she asks Father to fulfill His Word and thanks Him that His Word does not return void but it accomplishes what pleases Him and is prosperous in where it is sent (Isaiah 55:11). In Jesus’ name, she releases, through her mouth, God’s Word into the air so that it can do battle with the

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prince of the power of the air (Satan – Ephesians 2:2), knowing for a certainty that God’s Word will prevail. She thanks Father for casting out Satan’s evil and calling forth God’s good into her life or the life of the person or situation she is praying for.

If you need something good created in a life situation, but you don’t know exactly what it is you need created, in Jesus’ name, you can employ Philippians 4:19, which states that all your needs are met through Father by Jesus. All means all. So if you have a need, but don’t know all you need in the situation, since Father is all knowing, He knows exactly what you need created in your life at the time. Therefore, through your faith in Father’s knowledge about “all”, in Jesus’ name, ask Father to loose (send) the Holy Ghost to create “all” that is needed to take care of the situation you are praying for. Then thank Father for taking care of the situation.

If you need mental, emotional or physical healing, use 1 Peter 2:24 with Mark 16:18. Lay your hands upon yourself. In Jesus’ name, ask Father to heal you. In Jesus’ name, then command the pain or sickness to depart. Then thank Father for your healing.

No matter what you pray for, in Jesus’ name, you can always ask Father to provide you with what His Word says it will. Then rest in the faith that Father through Jesus has sent the Holy Ghost and angels to meet the need of your prayer, so that it will sooner or later manifest in your life. This is simply an application of God’s universal Law of Sowing and Reaping (Galatians 6:7-9). What we give (sow) we get in return (reap). When we sow God’s Word through the love and faith of Christ in us, we reap the wonderful harvest of God’s good in our life. Conversely, when we sow man’s words through the intellect and selfishness of Satan in us, we reap the worthless harvest of man’s bad in our life.

SOW AND REAP THROUGH FAITH

It takes sowing (praying God’s Word in faith) to release God’s blessing and reap God’s reward (Hebrews 11:6). If we

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believe all of God's Word is true for everyone (including us) all the time, then we can always faithfully pray it and receive what it says. If we don't know or doubt any of God's Word, then we can't pray it and have the good results of that Word.

Christians who are ignorant of the biblical Word or don't believe that all the New Testament promises and provisions are for today, limit Father's ability to answer their prayers. Both the ignorant and the "*It's not for us today*" believers are never sure if Father will answer their prayers. Instead of in faith asking Father to bring forth that which He has already given to them in His written Word, these Christians weakly beg God or try to make a deal with God to get what they already have for the asking.

If you don't know that Jesus has come to destroy the works of the devil against you and bring you life and life in abundance or you don't believe you've inherited all Jesus is and has, then you won't pray and receive all God's given you through Spirit-birth (Romans 8:17; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 2:14; John 10:10)). You won't believe for such blessings as divine healing and health, a sound mind and emotions, a stable marriage and Spirit-born children, successful business endeavors, financial solvency, miraculous ministry and success in all areas of your life. You won't believe that Father has already given you these things for the taking and instead you will continue to long for them. Imagine someone saying to you "Here's the key to that car. It's yours. Take it and drive the car." But you keep replying, "I need a car. I wish I could get a car." The key is there – just take it! Your inheritance in Jesus is there – just take it! Believe all of God's Word is true and for you. In Jesus' name, boldly ask Father for what His Word already declares you are and have in Christ. Ask Him. Thank Him for meeting your current need. Thank Him that He will meet your every need through His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20; Romans 8:17; Philippians 4:19).

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PRAY FOR SPECIFIC RESULTS **OR GOD'S PERFECT WILL**

Sometimes God reveals to us what exactly needs to be done and has us pray for those specific results. Sometimes we don't know the specific results that would best meet our need. In such cases we pray that God's perfect will be sent forth to provide us with the best possible results to our prayer.

For instance, say you are led to specifically pray to get a new job. Soon you are provided with three job opportunities. But when you look at them, you have no specific leading as to which job to take. At that point, in Jesus' name, you ask Father to bind Satan and self out of the decision and loose (send) the Holy Ghost to provide you God's perfect will for you in the situation (Matthew 16:19). Once prayed, you then thank Father and wait upon Holy Ghost to provide you with God's Word and other signs and manifestations that confirm the job He wants you to take.

Gayle and I had friends who were in this exact situation. The husband was no longer satisfied with his job, plus there were rumors of impending layoffs at his place of employment. The husband and wife prayed for another job to come along. Within a few weeks, the husband was offered two different jobs. After he prayed about them, he told his wife that Jesus had told him to take Job B. His wife did not believe he had heard from the Lord because Job A offered almost double the money, was closer to their home and more in line with what her husband enjoyed doing. The husband listened to the Lord and took Job B despite his wife's arguments. I suspect that if our friends had once again come together in prayer that the wife would also have heard from the Lord for her husband to take Job B. About three months later, not only did the company where our friend had formerly worked announce massive layoffs, but the other company (Job A) proclaimed bankruptcy and closed unexpectedly. If our friend had taken Job A, he would have been out of work. Within a year, the company he was now working for (Job B) promoted

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him to a different position with a huge increase in salary. He ended up making more money than Job A had offered him. You see, Father knew which job was the job for our friend. All our friend had to do was pray, hear, believe and act on what he heard – despite any natural circumstances. Sadly, we have also had friends who took jobs they thought were the best, without truly listening to what God had to say, and ended up being miserable.

James 5:16

***The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man
(or woman) avails much.***

Effectual means with power, or with a good result. Fervent is our faith filled firm conviction that as soon as we speak or pray God's Word, Holy Ghost releases its power to destroy evil, create good or confirm who we are in Christ. We fervently (stubbornly without giving up in disbelief) thank and praise God for our answered prayer until we see it fully manifest.

FEAR FAILS BUT BOLD FAITH BRINGS GOOD RESULTS

By daily studying and applying the Word of God to our life while constantly praying and destroying evil and creating good, we transform our mind from thinking and acting like a Satan-infected sinner to thinking and acting like a Jesus-led saint. We should not pray out of fear. Fear is from Satan. Faith is from God. It takes faith to destroy evil or create good. Faith prays with the overcoming power, perfect love and sound mind of Christ contained within us. That is why, in Jesus' name, we boldly come before the throne of our beloved Father and fearlessly pray our prayers of faith to Him and through Him (2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18; Hebrews 4:16).

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Spiritual boldness doesn't mean we yell and shout at Satan or beat our hands in the air in an attempt to punch the devil in the nose. Spiritual boldness means we have total confidence in who we are in Christ. We know without a shadow of a doubt that we are the righteous, anointed sons and daughters of God. We know that we are one with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost with total power to destroy evil or create good by simply opening our mouths and faithfully praying. Prayer requires the act of faith. Faith believes that the Word of God we speak and do will come forth as God's Word declares it will (2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20; Isaiah 55:11). The only thing that can block bold, faith-filled, scripturally-based prayer is disobedience.

DISOBEDIENCE DEFEATS PRAYER

Obedience puts God in charge of our life. We give God all our thoughts and only act upon those thoughts God authorizes us to act upon. Disobedience puts us in charge of our life. We act upon the thoughts we decide to act upon. God will neither compete with us nor will He get involved with what we want to do on our own. In short, disobedience releases Satan-infected, **Self IN** charge thinking and acting into our life, which blocks faith-filled prayer from having any effect, until we ask God to forgive and remove the sin from us. Sin is authored by us, so we must admit to its authorship in order to give it to God and have Him rid us of its damaging effects to our life. God will not share His life with sin, but He wants to share His life with us, even though we still occasionally sin. So let's obey God, sin less, instantly ask for forgiveness when we do sin, and enjoy Jesus answering our faith filled prayers to destroy the evil that attacks us and create the good we need for our life (see pages 136-137).

THE INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS OF PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13 is what men traditionally call the *Our Father* prayer. Within it are several components of prayer

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that Jesus provided for you to consider. Let's look at what you are really declaring when you pray the *Our Father*.

- 1) **Our Father who art in Heaven:** For prayer to have any effect, God must be your father through Spirit-birth by Jesus.
- 2) **Hallowed** (holy) **be thy name:** You continually love and honor Father through praise, worship and thanks throughout your day.
- 3) **Thy Kingdom come:** The Kingdom of God is what Jesus' death, burial and resurrection brought back down out of heaven and onto earth for you to live in. It is what Adam and Eve lived in before they sinned. It is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17). It's what you seek first, and then all your natural needs are provided (Matthew 6:33). It's the heavenly Spiritual places you live in through Christ in you (Ephesians 2:6). You are to daily pray for its increase and share with others God's Word and your testimony about its goodness in your life.
- 4) **Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven:** God's will, which is found in God's Word, is your new way of thinking and acting.
- 5) **Give us this day our daily bread:** Daily thank God for providing you your natural needs and, in Jesus' name, call upon God to increase your provision, so that you can provide for and do more of the work of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

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- 6) *Forgive us our debts* (sin and trespasses) *as we forgive our debtors* (those who have sinned and trespassed against us). *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:* Forgive yourself for your past sin and forgive everyone who has ever sinned against you. Give God all your anger and resentments toward people, places, things and ideas. Anger and resentments interfere with your ability to clearly communicate with God and hear what He would have you pray. Peace permits you to clearly hear God's still, small voice and follow God's leading to speak, act or pray.
- 7) *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.:* Jesus has already delivered you from Satan's evil, so you've personally won the war of heaven against hell on earth. However, you must remember that Satan and the *me, myself and I* of your manly soul, body and self-will are thieves, liars and cheats who will daily tempt you to give them power over you. You defeat them by keeping the eyes and ears of your Spirit man open for their subtle to gross evil temptations. When you see, feel or hear one, in Jesus' name, you bind it and cast it out of you and then turn back to talking to, loving on, and having a good time with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

Understanding the elements of the Lord's Prayer will help you believe that God and His Word are true and reliable.

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When you know that then you will have faith in the fact that whether you are led by God to pray for yourself, or for your family and friends, or for sinners to get saved, or for saints to grow in God, or for ministers to manifest more of God, or for the sick to get healed, or for anything else – when, in Jesus’ name, you ask Father for your heart’s desire, God will answer that prayer in His time and way.

RELEASE HOLY GHOST EMPOWERMENTS

In Jesus’ name, we also preach, pray and release the Great Commission empowerments of the Holy Ghost to manifest the good news Gospel of Jesus Christ with signs, wonders and miracles following. God’s Word releases God’s signs to destroy the evil works of Satan’s devil and serpent and provide the good of God for our life and the lives of those we preach to and pray for.

Mark 16:15-20

And he 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 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. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.

In Chapter 16 we will explore these empowerments in detail.

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PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Our prayer is the business side of God through which God does the work of destroying evil and creating good. Our praise and worship are the beautiful, wondrous, walking in love side of God. It is where we, Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost join together to smile, cry in joy and gratitude, laugh, hold hands, hug, kiss, sing, dance and generally enjoy one another's company.

Praise means to celebrate, to enthusiastically proclaim and continually thank God from the depths of our heart for the wonderfulness of God and His blessings in our life. Worship means to Spiritually hold, hug and kiss on Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

God inhabits our praises and worship (Psalm 22:3). That means as we praise and worship Him, God's glory comes upon us in addition to His presence living in us. His glory carries His power, which miraculously makes things better without us even praying and asking Him to do so.

Praise and worship require nothing but a heart full of love for God. Psalmists and song writers in the Body of Christ, who love God, create anointed songs for us to praise and worship with. If sung from our heart to God, these songs help stir the unity of our Spirit and faith. With our hearts and voices joined as one reaching out to God, the glory of God will often manifest itself within our midst and miraculously work in our behalfs to heal and deliver, to reveal and anoint, to prophesy and inspire, to do whatever God desires to do or gift us with.

Praise and worship are not restricted to church services. At home and elsewhere, with or without music and song, God will likewise inhabit our heartfelt praise and worship. The perceivable presence and glory of God will often manifest when we praise and worship God in English or in the tongues of the Spirit in our home or car, at work, and any other place we are led to do so.

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God's plan for man is to teach man to love God as God loves man with His whole heart, soul, mind and strength. Through Spirit-birth and intimate thought by thought fellowship with one another, God and man no longer remain separated but rather are Spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically joined as one. A big part of our fellowship with God is making love to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost through praise and worship. The more we do so, the easier it becomes for us to believe and receive the fact that we are truly one with Them.

WHIP SATAN AND SELF WITH PRAISE AND WORSHIP

Praise and worship chase the negative thinking of Satan and self away. This is why it's a great idea to call out to Father and through Jesus enter into praise and worship any time some stinking thinking tries to get you angry or depressed. Jesus is the life and light of men. When you ask Him to do so, He will shine His holy light at the evil darkness that comes upon you and destroy it (John 1:4-5). He will give you the garment of praise when the evil spirit of heaviness comes upon you (Isaiah 61:3). In Jesus' name, bind and cast out the stinking thinking and call upon Father to fill you with the Spirit of praise. Give the Holy Ghost your heart and tongue. Open your mouth and let the Holy Ghost praise, worship and thank Father for taking care of the stinking situation the thinking comes from. What was whipping you, will be whipped.

PRAISE AND WORSHIP SUPPORT OUR PRAYERS

Prayer keeps our head in conscious contact with God, so we can clearly hear God's voice and conduct God's business of creation. Praise and worship join our heart with God's heart, so we can support our prayer with God's agape love. Without the heart of praise and worship energizing our

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prayers with the love, Spirit, Word and faith of God within us, our prayers will be dead, dry and dogmatic.

Prayer, praise and worship stir the presence of God in us. They release the joy and faith of God through us. They provide us with the mental and emotional assurance of our secure place in God's head, heart and Spiritual family, as His beloved, eternal daughter or son.

The power of prayer, praise and worship is the power of the life and the light of men, of the Word of God made flesh, of Jesus Christ the God of Creation living in us and through us.

A steady diet of Spirit led prayer, praise and worship enables us to minister the Word of God through Jesus and the righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Ghost, with authority and the demonstration of signs, wonders and miracles, like the First Century Christians did. We'll talk about this in the next chapter.

For more on the power of biblically derived, Word based, miracle-manifesting First Century type prayer, praise and worship we recommend Kenneth E. Hagin's book, *The Art Of Prayer*.

Now onto learning about some of the wonder filled ways the Holy Ghost helps us pray, praise, worship, minister and live the abundant life of Christ.

Chapter 15

HOLY GHOST MINISTRY PART 1

Jesus is the first New Testament man, the first person to be Spiritually born of God and naturally born of man. Holy Ghost impregnated Jesus in Mary's womb and lived within Him. Jesus lived in the righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Ghost, through which He took power over the thinking and acting of His manhood. Jesus brought all His thoughts and feelings to Father God for evaluation and recommendation as to what to do with them. He did only what the Father told Him to do (John 3:34, 5:19). Jesus fulfilled God's plan to create man in the image and likeness of God.

Old Testament men and women did not live in the righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Ghost. It took Jesus dying on the cross, going to hell with our sins and Holy Ghost resurrecting Jesus from hell for that to happen. Once resurrected, Jesus appeared to His followers and made them Spiritually like Himself by birthing them with the Holy Ghost (John 20:22). Jesus then intermittently showed Himself to them for forty days teaching them how to live in the New Testament order of Spirit-born, Spirit-led women and men. Before He finally ascended into heaven, Jesus commanded His followers to remain in Jerusalem and await the promise of the Father.

Acts 1:4, 5, 8, 9

And (Jesus) being assembled together with them (His followers), commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many

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days hence... ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

Jesus' followers obediently remained in Jerusalem and a few days later, when 120 of them were gathered to celebrate the holy day of Pentecost...

Acts 2:3-4

... 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.

After that morning, Jesus' followers were able to flow in the fullness of the Holy Ghost and witness their experiences and God's Word to others with miracles, signs and wonders. They were the first male and female Jews to be baptized with the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues. A few years later Peter Spirit-birthed the first male and female non-Jewish Gentiles and they were likewise filled with the fire of the Holy Ghost and His tongues of witness.

Acts 10:44-46

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision (the Jews) which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles (non-Jews) also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.

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Since that time, all Spirit-born Christians have been able to receive the fullness of the infilling of the Holy Ghost through His baptism of fire with tongues of witness. All we have to do is ask and we will receive (Luke 11:13).

Holy Ghost baptism with the fire and tongues of God builds up our Spiritual strength, stirs us to share God's good news with others, and helps us mature into Jesus' image.

Ephesians 4:14-15

So that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

The life of Jesus Christ was one of obedience to Father God through the Holy Ghost of God living within Him. Holy Ghost taught Jesus to see, hear and follow only the Word of Father God (John 5:19). Holy Ghost grounded Jesus in the Old Testament law. By twelve years of age Jesus was able to hold His own with, and immensely impress, the greatest rabbis in Israel with His knowledge of the Law of Moses (Luke 2:46-47). Eighteen years later those same rabbis' blood boiled when, through the revelation and anointing of the Holy Ghost, Jesus stepped beyond their understanding of the law and expounded upon God's Plan of love, faith and grace. This is the same Holy Ghost revelation and anointing we live in and minister through.

1 John 2:27

But the anointing (power of the Holy Ghost) which ye have received of God abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide (live) in him (the Holy Ghost).

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Luke 4:18-19

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 of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

John 14:25-26

These things have I (Jesus) spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Jesus said that He had to go to the Father, but the Holy Ghost would come and continue to do Jesus' ministry on earth. Beginning with the first Christians, Holy Ghost now comforts, guides and empowers us, as Jesus comforted, guided and empowered His followers when He was alive upon the earth. We are now the temple of God's Holy Ghost Spirit of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19). Within us live the Spirits of Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost with whom we 24/7 fellowship with and grow up in the Word and ways of God.

MINISTRY OF THE HOLY GHOST

The Holy Ghost Spirit of God empowers God's spoken Word to create God's good, destroy Satan's evil, fulfill prophecy, answer our prayers and confirm who we are in Christ. We first see Holy Ghost operate in Genesis when He empowers the spoken Word of God and creates the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1-31). An example of Him fulfilling prophecy is when He impregnated the Word of God into the virgin Mary and birthed Jesus (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-4, 14). He continually activates our Word based prayers

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to create the good of God we need, destroy the evil Satan sets against us and reassure us of who we are in Jesus.

Holy Ghost is a supernatural person, a heavenly offspring of Father God. Like Jesus, Holy Ghost lives in the bosom of Father God, Who sends Holy Ghost to minister to us and through us (John 1:18). His New Testament ministry is to live in Spirit-born believers as a faithful teacher and friend. He comforts, guides, encourages, strengthens and raises us from floundering in the sin-filled thinking of man to flourishing in the glory of God's Word and ways. Holy Ghost tells us the truth of God and those things which are yet to come (John 16:8-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19). Holy Ghost fills us with His fire of witness, tongues and the power to preach, teach and minister the Word of God through the "Living Word of God," Jesus Christ in us.

Holy Ghost ministers to us and through us in several powerful ways. We will discuss two of them in this chapter: speaking in tongues and the nine gifted manifestations of the Holy Ghost. The First Century sons and daughters of God daily benefited from the Holy Ghost's tongues and, through His revelation and anointing, ministered His manifestations to others.

OUR PERSONAL HOLY GHOST TONGUES

Through baptism in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues, the Holy Ghost adds many things to your Spirit-born life in Christ. He anoints you with increased revelation of God's Word and ways. He opens your Spiritual eyes and ears to clearly see, hear and successfully live in the Spiritual Kingdom of God upon earth. He enables you to minister through Jesus and preach and teach God's Word with signs, wonders and miracles following. He provides you the privilege of allowing Him to use your tongue to daily pray, sing and speak in non-native languages of God.

Our personal private praying, singing or speaking in tongues, should not be confused with the gift of diverse kinds

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of tongues. This gift is one of the nine manifestations of the Holy Ghost and is always accompanied by another manifestation called interpretation of tongues. Our personal, private praying, speaking and singing in tongues does not require interpretation. Of course, you can always ask Jesus what Holy Ghost speaks, prays or sings through you and Jesus will usually tell you.

Sometimes Holy Ghost will put a person, place or situation into our Spirit and mentally lead or emotionally prompt us to pray in tongues without telling us what we are praying for. Since it's His business, which He wants us to help Him complete, then it's not our business to ask Him what we are praying for. Instead, we just let Him pray what He wants through us until He tells us to stop praying. If you suddenly see a person in your Spirit and you feel led to pray for him/her but don't know what to pray, then pray in the tongues of the Holy Ghost until you feel His release to stop praying.

Holy Ghost-guided prayer can help you or others clearly hear God's voice, leading, wisdom and guidance in all areas of life. Tongues can cover a person with Holy Ghost protection. We have friends who one night were woken with a strong sense to pray in tongues for their son, who was 1200 miles from them. They did so and later received a call from their son. He had been in a terrible car accident that should have killed him. It had occurred just about the time our friends were led to pray for their son. Miraculously, their son walked away from it with minor bruises. In certain Christian groups in Africa, when a member of their group dies, they ask God if it's the person's time to pass on into heaven. If so, they bury the dead. If not, they pray and praise God in Holy Ghost tongues until the person raises from the dead. Tongues can do most anything, since they are actually prayed, spoken or sung by the all powerful Holy Ghost Spirit of God in you.

Ephesians 5:17-19 encourages us to be filled with God's Holy Ghost Spirit and speak to the Lord in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts

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to the Lord. This covers not only the praise and worship we discussed in the previous chapter but also singing, talking to and worshipping God in the Holy Ghost tongues of God. I do this throughout my day and it builds up my strength and clears my mind to do what I need to do. Before ministering, I always try to spend a half hour or more praying in tongues. This heightens my awareness of the presence of the Holy Ghost so that I will flow through Jesus' Word and Holy Ghost's power during ministry.

Speaking in tongues allows us to pray to Father in the groanings/prayers of God, when we are in a situation that requires prayer but we don't know exactly how or what to pray.

Romans 8:26-28

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities (our mental, emotional and physical limitations and weaknesses): ***for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession*** (speaks to Father) ***for us with groanings*** (prayers) ***which cannot be uttered*** (by the natural mind). ***And he*** (Father God) ***that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he*** (Holy Ghost) ***maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that*** (through Holy Ghost's intercession) ***all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.***

By speaking and praying in tongues throughout our day, we destroy the attacks of evil against us and build-up the strength and sensitivity of our Spirits. Just like long distance radar, speaking in tongues helps us recognize an impending attack of evil so that we can destroy the evil before it overwhelms us. Tongues also charge-up our bodies with the divine health and vitality of God so if a germ or pain hits us, we are able to instantly recognize and destroy it with the faith

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spoken Word of God upon our lips. This way Holy Ghost insures that all things will work together for the good of us who love God and have answered God's call upon our lives.

Jude 1:20

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

Speaking, praying and singing in tongues builds up our faith by keeping us focused on God's goodness and glory, rather than focused on the badness and worry of our manly soul. As soon as you encounter a problem or a potentially dangerous or troublesome situation, don't hesitate. Immediately begin praying in tongues. Whatever was happening will instantly stop or stop sooner than it would have had you not prayed. Also the consequences, if any, will always be less severe with the intervention of the Holy Ghost.

Praying, praising, singing and speaking in tongues will also ignite the fire of God's Holy Ghost Spirit within us to boldly minister God's Word through the nine Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

THE NINE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

Holy Ghost gifts us with nine supernatural manifestations to help us minister through the faith of the Son of God within us. We are to be aware of and earnestly desire these nine Spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, 31). They activate when we minister to our self or others. If we permit Him to do so, Holy Ghost will move upon our heart, speak through our mouth and minister through our hands, whether we are informally ministering on the street, or with friends or family, or formally ministering in a church service or outside meeting.

You need do nothing but follow His leading. He will provide you with the appropriate scriptures, their explanations and applications to the people's lives. He will point

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you to people and show you how He wants to specifically gift them through you. Don't be afraid to follow His leading. He will never embarrass you. You will be able to easily minister any of His nine manifestations to those He sends you to.

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

But the manifestation (gift) of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; all these work by the same (Holy) Spirit, who divides to every man severally as he will.

Holy Ghost will provide you with whichever manifestations you need to “profit withal.” Profit withal means that through the Holy Ghost, each person you minister to will be gifted by the Holy Ghost with the miraculous manifestation he/she needs. All you do is obey the prompting of the Holy Ghost and He will minister to the person what he/she needs to receive. Don't try to figure anything out. Just let Him use you. Using your manly mind to try and figure out or analyze what God wants to do will stop the flow of the Holy Ghost through you. Instead, maintain conscious contact with Holy Ghost through the eyes and ears of your Spirit man, so that He can direct Jesus' ministry through you.

These are the nine gifted manifestations of the Holy Ghost.

- 1) **A word of wisdom** provides divine guidance to help a person deal with a situation. The wisdom of God is not always in line with the common sense of man. As for instance, say

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God uses you to tell a man that forgiving and blessing a person he hates will heal his emotions and enable him to clearly hear God's voice for himself. This makes no sense to his manly mind, but it is the wisdom of God that will heal and help him grow in Christ, if he will hear it and apply it to his life.

- 2) **A word of knowledge** is information about a person's past or present life that you could not have known and signifies to the person that God is speaking through you. This is not information which you may have overheard or could in any way have received before God reveals it to you. But once you've spoken it, the person will realize that it is God speaking to them through you about the situation.
- 3) **Faith** in this instance means to fully believe for a miracle. This is extraordinary divine faith that comes upon you and can't be shaken.
- 4) **The working of miracles** is God's divine intervention into the ordinary course of nature to change whatever has to be changed in order to meet the need of a person.
- 5) **Gifts of healing** heal the mind, emotions or body of a person often in an immediate, obvious way.
- 6) **Prophecy** are God directed words of encouragement and comfort that build up a person's or congregation's Spirit as well as occasionally reveal things about the future.

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- 7) **Discerning of spirits** reveals to you the spirits that are moving a person to speak and act.
- 8) **Divers kinds of tongues** is Holy Ghost directed speaking in tongues during a service by a presiding minister for the divine purpose of ministering a prophetic word to the congregation. This is always immediately followed by the interpretation of the tongues.
- 9) **Interpretation of tongues** is the interpretation of the tongues a presiding minister in a service spoke. The interpretation is provided by the same or another presiding minister and reveals the prophetic Word of God that was spoken in the tongue.

Spirit-birth saves us from Satan; Holy Ghost baptism with tongues enables us to easily grow and flow in God. Through the Holy Ghost we quickly recognize and destroy attacks of evil, successfully create the good of God and miraculously minister God's Word with the signs and wonders of both 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 and Mark 16:15-18, which we will talk about next.

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

Chapter 16

HOLY GHOST MINISTRY PART 2

John 17:20-24

Neither pray I (Jesus) for these alone, (My current followers) but for them also which shall believe on me through their word (future believers); that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

In this scripture, Jesus is saying that He wants all believers – from those who walked with Him then to those who walk with Him today – to live in Spirit, soul and body oneness with God and manifest the goodness and glory of God upon the earth.

It is God's hope that each generation of Christians, beginning with the First Century Saints, will work with the Holy Ghost to fully conform them into Jesus' image and become living testimonies of God's love and power. In the last chapter we discussed the nine gifts the Holy Ghost gives us to further our roles as ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ. In this chapter we'll explore additional manifestations that the Holy Ghost provides for Jesus to miraculously minister through us with. The first ones are found in Mark 16:15-18, which is commonly called Jesus' Great Commission.

GROWING BEYOND A CHILD OF GOD

OUR SIX GREAT COMMISSION EMPOWERMENTS

Mark 16:15-18

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes 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.

First, we are empowered to preach and teach the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to anyone, any place, any time Jesus, through the Holy Ghost, leads us to. It is not our responsibility to make non-believers believe, receive the gospel and get Spirit-born. Neither can we force Christians to Spiritually grow beyond where they are. It is simply our commission to live and carry God's good news to those who God sends us to and sends to us.

The second thing Jesus commissions us to do is cast out devils. Satan's devil first appeared when Jesus went into the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13). Satan's serpent, who had deceived Eve and Adam to give into their manly flesh, had no effect on Jesus. Jesus wouldn't give into temptations to His flesh. Satan's devil tempted Jesus by twisting the written Word of God. Jesus overcame the devil's twisted scriptures with the true meaning of God's Word and drove the devil away.

Today, devils continue to twist scriptures in order to confuse and mislead Christians into believing things about God that are not scripturally true. A classic example is the thinking that God gets the Christian's attention by putting pain or sickness or storms into his life. However, John 10:10 clearly states that it's the thief, Satan, who constantly tries to steal the joy, kill the hope and destroy the life of a Christian. The scripture says Jesus brings us life and life in abundance.

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By knowing and sharing the scripturally accurate gospel of Jesus Christ with others, we cast devils of wrong thinking about God out of people's minds and hearts. Occasionally, when given permission by a person to do so, we will directly confront a long time wrong way of thinking and, in Jesus' name, command it to leave the person. We don't shout or jump up and down in order to force it to leave. Instead, through Jesus in us, we look the devil in the eye and, in Jesus' name, calmly command it to get out of the person and go back to hell where it belongs.

Most of the time simply sharing the Word of God will drive devils out of people. Once the person sees the truth in God's Word, then the person can apply the truth to his life and free himself from his demonic thinking. It almost never works to simply tell a person he is wrong; let him determine that for himself by showing him scripture.

Jesus also commissions us to speak in new tongues. As noted earlier, the new tongues we speak are what the Old Testament calls the stammering lips of the Holy Ghost (Isaiah 28:11). In the New Testament they are called the "unknown" tongues of God (1 Corinthians 14:2, 4). But they are only unknown to us because we haven't heard them before. They are the tongues of other languages that Holy Ghost elects to speak through our mouth.

Sometimes that language coming out of our mouth is the native language of a person in front of us who God wants to speak to through us. This is what happened on Pentecost morning to the first 120 followers of Jesus, who were baptized by the Holy Ghost and began to speak in unknown tongues.

In the second chapter of Acts, we see the Holy Ghost come down and fill them with His presence and power. Once filled, the 120 entered onto the crowded streets of Jerusalem where they preached to foreign Jews from all over the world in each Jew's own native tongue. Three thousand of those foreign Jews were so impressed by what Holy Ghost spoke that they accepted Jesus as their Messiah, Lord and Savior.

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The 3,000 Jews were Spirit-born and filled with the Holy Ghost and His tongues of witness fire (Acts 1:4, 5, 2:1-47).

What happened on Pentecost morning was not an event exclusive to First Century Christians. One time our pastor spoke a prophetic word in tongues that was not only interpreted by our co-pastor but also recognized as a native African tongue by one of our congregation members. Another prophet friend, who often ministered to a Spanish speaking church through a translator, one time was led by the Holy Ghost to start out His message by speaking through the Holy Ghost in tongues. The Holy Ghost had him speak in tongues for about forty minutes and then stop. When He stopped, the pastor of the church jumped up and applauded and quickly walked up to our friend and thanked him for the superb Word of God. Our friend had spoken an entire message in Spanish through the Holy Ghost. There are other incidents of the Holy Ghost speaking through a minister in the native tongues of a person or persons in front of him, tongues the minister had never learned to speak. However, this is the rare exception rather than the rule. Usually Holy Ghost speaks through us in an unknown tongue in order to rest us, refresh us and reward us with the many benefits of letting Him speak, pray or sing through us (Isaiah 22:12; 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 14, 15, 18).

The next thing Jesus commissioned us to do is to take up serpents. No, this does not mean that we are to handle snakes. Serpents are brothers to devils. Serpents bite our flesh rather than twist God's scriptures. In Genesis 3 we saw the serpent bite Eve with the pride of life and poison her with the evil of self-centered, fleshly thinking and acting. This cost her and then Adam their right standing with God. Since then all natural born men have been manipulated by Satan's serpent to serve their flesh rather than serve God. The serpent constantly whispers into our ear and tells us how wrong everyone else is and how right we are to think what we think and do what we want no matter what God or others think. Once Spirit-born, though, we have the divine ability to handle, to pick up, to take power over and cast the whispering

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of the flesh-centered serpents out of our life when they try to bite us with their stinking thinking and sickness. As ministers of reconciliation, we also have the ability not only to cast out the devils in others but also to handle the serpents in others through preaching, teaching and prayer.

Jesus additionally said if we drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt us. There is a literal meaning to this, which is to quickly call upon Jesus to heal us if we accidentally drink something poisonous. There is a significant Spiritual interpretation, as well.

Our mind and Spirit are constantly drinking in thoughts. Thoughts come from soul-led self, others, Satan, our new creation Spirit and God. Soul-led self and others are seldom, and Satan is never, thinking nor acting in accord with God. God is the only reliable creator of good for man. Therefore, if a thought is not filtered through Christ in us it is not good for us to think or act upon it. Instead of being healthful and helpful, it will prove to be a deadly thing that kills rather than brings life to our mind, emotions, body or Spirit. The only way to insure against drinking in and acting upon deadly thoughts is to 24/7 walk and talk with God and filter all thoughts, including emotions, attitudes of the will, physical feelings and bodily appetites through God's Word and Christ in us. No matter what thought, emotion or attitude we drink, if we will filter it through God and His Word before acting upon it, then it will not harm us (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Finally Jesus commissions us to lay hands on the sick and they shall recover, which means just what it says. Every time we are attacked by Satan with pain or sickness we should instantly lay hands upon ourselves and, in Jesus' name, cast it out. From that point on we praise and thank Father for our healing until it fully manifests. We are called to lay healing hands on our spouse and children and also teach them to do the same for themselves. As Holy Ghost leads us, in Jesus' name, we pray to Father and lay our hands of healing upon people in front of us or, through the Spirit, we touch others who are not in our physical presence.

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When I minister in hospitals, I often hold hands with the patient when praying. However, sometimes a patient is so frail I don't touch him. Instead, through my prayer, Holy Ghost lays His Spiritual hands directly upon the patient. In prison, Holy Ghost has me administer healing by the laying on of my hands, or by all of us holding hands and praying Mark 16:18 together, or by me praying and Holy Ghost laying His Spiritual hands directly upon the men. In the street, I usually hold the person's hand and pray. When I pray a healing for someone not in my presence, I simply raise my hands and, in Jesus' name, I pray to Father to heal the person. Because I was obedient to pray for the person, then the Holy Ghost can lay His Spiritual hands upon the person and heal him/her.

In addition to what we've talked about, Jesus also gives us two prayer keys with which to unlock and loose the power of the Kingdom of Heaven to destroy evil or create good upon the earth.

THE TWO KEYS TO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Matthew 16:19

And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind (tie up and cast out) on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose (send forth) on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 18:18-20

Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

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As noted earlier, the binding and loosing prayers are simple to pray and they do almost everything we need done as far as destroying a work of evil or creating the good of God for our life. Through these prayers Father sends the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels to bind Satan's evil and loose God's good.

Hebrews 1:13-14

But to which of the angels said God at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

We are the Spirit-born heirs of Jesus' salvation (Romans 8:17). At Spirit-birth the Holy Ghost assigns His angels to watch over us and minister to our needs. Through Jesus, we have been given power to send forth the angels to bind evil and create good for our life. To loose and create good we pray, "Father, in Jesus' name, I/we ask You to loose the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels into this situation to go and (name what Holy Ghost has shown you needs to happen)." If you haven't been shown what needs to happen then ask Father to loose them to bring forth the best possible results. To bind and cast out evil, we pray, "In Jesus' name, Father, I/we ask You to send the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels to bind (name the evil) and cast it into hell where it belongs."

When attacked by evil thoughts or temptations we can shorten the above prayer and simply declare, "In Jesus' name, shut up and get out of me." I employ this prayer whenever an ungodly thought or temptation pops into my head so I can instantly kick it out of my head and send it back to hell where it belongs.

Often times we use both prayers of binding to destroy and loosing to create in conjunction with each other. First, in Jesus' name, we bind Satan and whatever evil he is attacking

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with. Then, in Jesus' name, we ask Father to loose (release) the creative good of God into the situation. For example, God may lead us to pray for a sick person to get well. In Jesus' name, we ask Father to first release the Holy Ghost and His angels to bind and cast the sickness out of the person and then loose healing into the person.

Remember, it's not up to us to make things happen. All we have to do is believe that things will happen when, in Jesus' name, we pray God's Word the way God leads us to pray it.

RECEIVE HOLY GHOST BAPTISM

Though Jesus was conceived by, daily lived in and operated through the power of the Holy Ghost, Jesus' required increased Holy Ghost power in order to effectively minister the Word of God with miracles, signs and wonders following. At the Jordan River Jesus received that increased power through Holy Ghost baptism. After being baptized by water Jesus was then baptized by Holy Ghost landing upon Him, like Holy Ghost later landed upon Jesus' first followers in Acts 2:1-4. When Holy Ghost landed upon Jesus, Father God spoke and further anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost Spirit of God without measure.

Mark 1:9-12

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was (water) baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Acts 10:38

...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.

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Through Holy Ghost baptism Jesus was provided with the additional power He needed to fulfill his messianic ministry (Mark 1:8-13; John 1:29-34). Today, we need that same power of the Holy Ghost for Jesus to effectively minister through us.

Gayle and I started out as Spirit-born Christians who were not baptized in the Holy Ghost with the evidence of His tongues. Later, we received Holy Ghost baptism and tongues. The difference to us is clear. Beforehand we had no desire to minister to anyone about anything concerning Jesus. The evidence of God's life, love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, prayer and provision in our lives was little. Today we love God with our all and know we are "The Blessed of God." We 24/7 talk to God and consciously live in the Spirit in heavenly places upon earth. We operate in the Word of God in faith through continual prayer, praise and worship. We have all our needs provided for and we can't help but bless others by giving away the good news of Jesus Christ to them.

ASK AND RECEIVE

Luke 11:9, 13

And I (Jesus) say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. . . . how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him?

Father God forces nothing upon us. If He did, He would force Spirit-birth upon everyone so we would all become one with Him forever. Instead, Father works through faith. When we voluntarily believe and ask/pray for what the Word of God says and then do what it takes to receive it into our life Father provides us with the promise of that Word. We had to ask that Jesus become our Lord before Father could birth the Spirit of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, into us and forgive us our sins and save us from Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack

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(Romans 10:8-13; Galatians 4:6). Unless we also receive the Holy Ghost and His tongues at Spirit-birth, we will have to ask Father for the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Luke 11:9,13; Acts 1:8, 2:1-47).

Holy Ghost speaks in the tongues of angels and all the known and unknown languages of men from throughout history (1 Corinthians 13:1). Even if you wanted to get to know most of these languages you couldn't. It is impossible for you to learn, much less speak, in all these tongues. Yet Holy Ghost can speak any tongue there has ever been through your tongue. This is about as pure an act of faith and obedience as there is. Yet it's so simple to do anyone can do it, even me, whose whole life before coming to Christ was devoted to fully figuring everything out and taking control over it.

Everyone's Holy Ghost baptism story is similar but different. Here's my story. I'd been Spirit-born for a few years and reading and studying the Word and trying to figure out everything about God and Christianity. My church at that time was not strong in teaching the Word of God, so I sought out Bible teachers on the radio and TV. One night I heard a TV Bible teacher talking about getting baptized in the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. I'd heard such teaching before, but hadn't paid it much heed. This night was different. God got my attention and stirred me. I turned the TV off, walked into the back yard and looked up at the star studded sky. I raised my hands and said, "Okay, Father, in Jesus' name, I'm asking for the Holy Ghost to baptize me and fill me to overflowing with the evidence of speaking in tongues."

I stood there for about three minutes with nothing happening. Satan and my soul were by then laughing at me and telling me what foolishness this was. I told them to shut up and turned my ear back to Jesus, who told me to focus on Him, open my mouth, loosen my tongue and let whatever sound came out come out. I followed orders. When I loos-

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ened my tongue I felt a small push up from my belly and out of my mouth came the sound “lochmon.” That was it. I smiled at Jesus and said, “How appropriate: an Irish Celtic word.” I’m Irish-American. Lochmon sounded Celtic to me. Of course, since I don’t speak Celtic, how was I to really know what language it was. I try to figure things out, remember?

Jesus told me to practice my new tongue and by the next day I was speaking many words. Today, I speak in many different Holy Ghost languages. I just open my mouth, loose my tongue, move my lips and let Holy Ghost speak, pray or sing through me as He will when He wants to or when I want Him to.

If you haven’t received the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the evidence of tongues and you want to, then do the following.

First, in Jesus’ name, pray to Father to baptize and fill you with His Holy Ghost and tongues. Then believe you have received the fullness of the Holy Ghost within you.

Next, raise your hands, close your eyes and shut your mind to anything but loving Jesus.

Then open your mouth and out loud pray, “I love you, Jesus,” over and over again. Stay focused upon Jesus and cast everything else out of your mind.

After a while keep your tongue and lips moving and making sounds but stop thinking and praying in English. Keep making sounds, relax and give your tongue and lips over to God’s Holy Ghost. Let Him control them and continue the sounds in the language of prayer, praise and worship He elects to speak through you.

Like me, you may get one word to begin with. Like many others you may get many words to begin with. No matter how the tongues may first come daily pray, praise, worship, speak and sing in your tongues of the Spirit. Not only will your language increase and flow, but your whole life will begin to grow and glow in the glory of God.

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When you speak or sing in tongues, since it is actually Holy Ghost speaking or singing through you, your mind of Christ is still able to do whatever you need to do, such as drive your car or work or go about your daily business or even read the Bible and talk to Father and Jesus through the voice of your Spirit.

Daily praying, speaking and singing in tongues heightens our awareness of God's presence, stirs our Spirit, renews our energy, and rewards us with the witness of God in us and through us to others. It enables us to clearly hear God's voice and apply the two keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to our life to destroy Satan's evil and create God's good. Through our Holy Ghost strengthened Spirits we can minister and manifest His nine gifts and six empowerments and live in the fullness of heaven upon earth.

Chapter 17

HEAVEN UPON EARTH

Ephesians 1:3-5

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,

Ephesians 2:4-10

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love through which he loves us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace you are saved;) and has 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 you 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 God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

These scriptures and others like them declare that through Jesus God provides us His Genesis 1:28 parental blessing of heaven upon earth. Through Jesus, God adopts us, forgives us our sin, redeems us from Satan, and supplies us with all our need. Through Jesus, we work out our salvation and mature into a son or daughter of God who lives and ministers the

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abundant life of Christ. Through Jesus we are successful at all we do and have more than enough to meet our need and – as guided by Jesus – help meet the mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social, Spiritual and ministerial needs of others.

TO THE RELIGIOUS MIND IT IS FOOLISHNESS

1 Corinthians 1:20

...hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

Beginning with our personal, intimate, 24/7 agape love communication and fellowship with God, living in heavenly places in Christ Jesus provides us with many powers and pleasures that the minds of personal and corporate religion do not know about much less conceive as being real and attainable.

It's foolishness to the religious mind that God does not require us to do religious works to get our sins forgiven. The religious mind refuses to accept the simple fact that on the cross of Calvary Jesus substituted (sacrificed) Himself in our place for our sin. All the judgment and condemnation for our sin that we are cursed with Jesus took upon Himself and gifted us with redemption and eternal salvation.

But the religious mind doesn't want to accept Jesus' gift. It wants to somehow in some way do some sort of self-concocted religious work that it can pay God with and obligate God to forgive the religious person's sin and provide him with a ticket to heaven when he dies. However, Ephesians 2:1-10 repeatedly says Spirit-birth is a gift of grace freely given to us by God through Jesus. Therefore, no self-centered religious man can ever say he earned his way into heaven by doing a work that God then had to pay him for. That would make the man greater in wisdom, knowledge and power than God, if God were forced to pay the man for the man's religious work. NO! NO! NO! God will never share

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His glory with a manipulating, religious minded man. But God will gladly give the glory of His Son's resurrection to the man, if the man sincerely sees the need for Jesus to redeem him from his sin and in faith asks Jesus to Spirit-birth and save him.

Spirit-birth is a gift from God, which cannot be earned by religious works. It can only be had by asking Jesus to become our lord and savior. Once we ask Jesus, then Father God instantly redeems us from Satan, forgives us all sin, Spirit-births us into His heavenly family and encourages us to enter into intimate agape love fellowship with Him, Jesus and Holy Ghost, so They can progressively transform our mind and conform our character to think, act and minister like Jesus (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5, 20:12,15, 21:27).

If your parents or your spouse were to give you a gift, would they expect you to do something to receive it? That's silly, you say. Well, so is thinking that God expects us to jump through hoops and do all sorts of ritualistic things to get Spirit-born, mind-transformed and character-conformed into Jesus' image. Manufactured, sacrificial works of man in which we try to do something "good" or "religious" or "sacrificial" in order to impress God and obligate Him to do something for us are vanity and an abomination to God. As God said in 1 Samuel 15:22:

1 Samuel 15:22

And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

Remember, to obey means to say or do what God's Word says to say or do. As noted above, faith first hears and believes what God's Word is saying. Then through obedience faith speaks and does God's Word. We can't do anything in God's universe except through faith. There is no human work of any sort we can do to get Spirit-born or earn any other

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blessing of our salvation. We believe and receive everything Jesus provides us with through faith. “Everything” includes redemption from Satan and hell, righteous relationship with God, the Spiritual perfection of Christ in us, the transformation of our mind and character, the parental blessings of God, and God’s holiness and sanctification, which sets us apart to do God’s work. We also walk in divine wholeness and prosperity (success in all areas of our life) and in the miraculous “anointed” power of God, through which Jesus releases the grace of God into our life and through our life to others. All of this is absolute foolishness to religious minded men, but to those living in the mind of Christ it is a reality.

Through faith in God’s Word we cast pain and sickness out of ourselves and others. This is foolishness to the religious mind. Through faith we walk and talk with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and live stress and strain free lives of peace and abundance. Again, this is foolishness to religious minded men. Not that they don’t desire healing, stress free lives, peace, abundance, etc., but religious minded men have no idea how to consistently capture and keep these things. When they do extraordinarily exert themselves and obtain what they desire victory soon gives way to another battle. Brutal experience has taught religious minded men that the good things of life are a struggle to obtain even for a short time.

Yet we know all these good things are already ours through Jesus. They are what Father blessed the first man and woman with in Genesis 1:28. When Adam and Eve forfeited them to sin, Father sent Jesus to retrieve and reinstate them into our lives. Through Spirit-birth, Father daily provides His Spirit-born, Spirit-filled, faithful, obedient daughters and sons with all the good things of natural and supernatural life. Father gives them to us because He loves us. When we love and trust Him enough to through faith believe that our Father wants to freely provide us with these good things, then through faith we can receive them. It is not a maybe He will and maybe He won’t proposition. It is a done deal.

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God fully blessing and freely rewarding us with all the good things of life is foolishness to the religious mind. Religious minded men are taught from childhood they can't get something for nothing. But the religious mind doesn't comprehend that Jesus' resurrection paid for all the good that Father now provides us with to live the abundant life of Christ. The incredible, simple truth that empowered the First Century Saints to freely receive all the glory and goodness of God is: JESUS HAS ALREADY PAID FOR ALL OUR SIN AND ALL OUR SALVATION. All we have to do is believe, activate through faith and then receive Jesus' ALL, one blessing at a time. ALL we receive from Jesus we then bless others with.

RAISED TO SIT IN PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Everything about God's plan has to do with our personal relationship with Him through Jesus and agape love. Only through agape love could God permit His Son, Jesus, to be butchered on the cross of Calvary and go to hell in our place. Only through agape love could Jesus willingly die in our place so we could live through Him forever.

Some people think I'm crazy to always want to walk and talk with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. My answer is that it's better than the crazy I used to be always walking and talking with my soul, body and Satan. My new kind of crazy brings me peace and prosperity, whereas my old kind of crazy brought me upset and poverty.

Poverty isn't limited to financial lack. It's a lack of success: a lack of things working out for the best in any area of life. If poverty is a lack of success, then prosperity is total success in all areas of life. Another word for prosperity is abundance. The Bible says Jesus came to give us life and life in abundance (John 10:10b).

Provision is one of the first promises of God we see in the Bible. God provided a garden for Adam and Eve to live in. When they sinned and had to leave it, God provided them

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with a sin covering covenant through which He would meet their natural needs when they obeyed His commandments. God also provided them with the promise of a redeemer (His Son, Jesus) to take back what Adam and Eve had forfeited to Satan. Later God provided an arc to keep Noah and his family safe through the flood. In Genesis 17:1-2 God appeared to Abram as the Almighty God, the God who provides us with more than enough.

Genesis 17:1-2

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said unto him: I am the Almighty God; walk before me and be thou perfect (live by total faith in Me and My Word). And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

The Bible says that God covenanted with Abram and made Abram very rich in cattle, silver, gold and, over the course of many generations, in offspring, as well (Genesis 13:2, 22:17). What God started providing in Genesis He will still provide to those of us who covenant with Him and, in perfect, complete faith in God and His Word, allow God to minister to us and through us. ***“For I am the LORD, I change not,”*** (Malachi 3:6).

Provision is a promise of God. As we fellowship with God, Jesus gradually mind-transforms us by our faith filled application of God’s Word to our life, so that we progressively prosper until we prosper in all our ways. No matter what type of need we have, whether mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, Spiritual or in our personal or ministerial relationships with others, we speak and do God’s Word in the belief that the need will be met by God through Jesus, Who provides us with exceedingly better and abundantly more than we can ask or think (Philippians 4:19; Ephesians 3:20).

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Almighty God is not stingy. He's the Creator of The Universe. He owns everything and withholds nothing from His children who love Him. The Almighty's love and prosperity destroy Satan's hate and poverty. Walk and talk with the Almighty One and see what He has in store for you. Start to enjoy the great results of living one with God in the exceedingly abundant provision of heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

PUTTING ON THE MIND OF CHRIST

Just because we are Spirit-born doesn't mean that we instantly think and act through Jesus' mind of Christ. If that were true, then there would have been no need for Paul to write, “. . . *be transformed by the renewing of your mind*” (Romans 12:1-3). As noted earlier, we grow to think and act like Jesus through fellowshiping with God and increasingly thinking and acting through the Word of God in faith. This is why Paul exhorts us to put on the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5).

We need to put on the mind of Christ and conform ourselves to the Word and world of God, not the words and world of man. In God's Holy Word, the Bible, there are all the promises and plans of God. The Old Testament tells us about God's plan to make man into God's image and likeness and His promise of a Messiah (Jesus) to save man from Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack. The New Testament is simply that plan and that promise fulfilled by Jesus in us and through us to others.

It is not enough to just read and study God's Word. As Jesus became the Word made flesh, we are called to become the flesh made Word. We must through love and faith believe, speak and do what the Word of God says in order to activate and experience the mind of Christ's knowledge, understanding and wisdom, as well as the miraculous power of its anointing in our life and through our life to others.

Remember, Jesus did not merely study God's Word and think about who He was and what He could do. He *became*

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the walking, talking, living Word of God made flesh. He *demonstrated* the truth of God's Word by activating its supernatural power through faithfully believing, speaking and doing the Word (John 1:14).

Though there are many Spirit-born Christians upon the earth, there are very few of us who in faith activate the Word of God we read and hear. Very few of us know, or maybe it's more accurate to say that few of us actually love and trust God enough to believe that we can operate through the mind of Christ in all the righteousness and power of the First Century Saints. What our forefathers did in the Acts of the Apostles and the 22 epistles of the New Testament Church of Jesus Christ has not passed away. The Church is Christ in us. Christ is the agape love, Spirit, Word and faith of Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost in Whom we live and through Whom we minister.

Two thousand years ago Jesus rose from the dead and provided us with the everlasting Day of Salvation in which God is finally fully able to live, move and have His being in man. Now is the Day of Salvation. Now is the time to believe and receive the truth, way and life of Christ in us and through us to others and live in heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon earth with power over Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack.

FREED FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

By thinking and acting through the mind of Christ, Jesus fulfilled Moses' Law of Sin and Death which operated through the keeping of carnal commandments. Jesus replaced it with the Law of The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus which operates through our agape love fellowship and friendship with God.

Romans 8:1-2, 10-16

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit

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of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death....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. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

The Bible says that the agape love of God fulfilled the Old Testament Law of Moses.

Romans 13:10

*Love (God's agape love) **worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore (God's agape) love is the fulfilling of the law.***

This is why there are only two commandments in the New Testament. God's Spirit-born agape love in us enables us to love God and our neighbors as God loves us.

Mark 12:30-31

*And thou shalt (agape) **love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt (agape) love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than***

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these.

We must never forget that agape love is who Father God is and who we are through Spirit-birth. This is why God's love is the first and foremost building block of our life in Christ. It brings heaven down to earth. It evidences itself in our life through God's acts of love to us and our acts of love to God and others.

By living through God's love, we learn how to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. By learning how to love God, we learn how to love our self and our neighbor. We are to love as God loves. By bringing every thought to Jesus in us, we can cast out Satan-infected, souled thinking and no longer operate through the carnal mind of man which harms others.

Most Christians know John 3:16 which is how much God loved us. 1 John 3:16 is the corollary scripture which explains how much we should love our brethren.

John 3:16-17

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.

1 John 3:16

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our life for the brethren.

God first loved the world of unsaved men through Jesus and He now loves the world of unsaved men through Jesus in us.

Our love relationship, fellowship and friendship with God gets us to trust (have faith in) God and His Word. Our faith in

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God and His Word gets us to increasingly think and act through His Word. This transforms our mind to be led by the Spirit of God rather than the soul of man. The stress and strain of our self-will run riot life of incessant self-promotion decreases as we grow in Jesus and begin to serve others through Christ in us rather than demanding that we be served by others. Through God's love, Spirit, Word and faith we become sure of who we are in Jesus and become steady, stable and successful in all our ways.

To fully live in the provision of heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon earth, we must make it our mission to love God and others with our all. We love God by putting on the mind of Christ through personal intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, which includes reading, studying, believing and in faith obediently speaking, doing, activating and receiving the blessings of the Word of God into our life. We love others by activating the Word and blessings of God into their lives. We even love our enemies who we forgive and, when led by Jesus, ask them to forgive us. The more we think and act through the mind of Christ, the easier it becomes to overcome Satan and self and live the abundant life of Christ through loving God with our all and loving all others as God loves us.

LIVING IN THE REST OF GOD

The Bible says, “***God rested on the seventh day from all the work He had made***” (Genesis 2:2). In this scripture, the English word *rest* is translated from the Hebrew word *shabath* from which we get our English word Sabbath. Shabath literally means to cease from ones own works, to celebrate.

“***Jesus said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man***” (Mark 2:27). In other words, God wants us to rest in Him by ceasing from our works and celebrating His life within us.

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Hebrews 4:3, 10

For we which have believed do enter into rest...For he that is entered into God's rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

Living in heavenly places in Christ Jesus is living in the rest of God. Once we are Spirit-born, we must train ourselves to cease from our own works and enter into God's rest by continually celebrating the fact that Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost live in us and will meet all our needs. This is the key to living in the abundance of heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon earth, today.

Jesus has already done the work. He has already provided us Father God's parental blessing, rest, protection and provision (Genesis 1:28; Ephesians 1:3; Romans 8:17). If we follow God's leading we will live in peace and prosper. However if we do our own thing instead of relying upon God to guide our life, the evil of life overcomes us. We will be unable to enter into God's mental, emotional, physical, financial and Spiritual rest. Proverbs 3:5-6 advises us not to lean on our own understanding but in all our ways acknowledge God and He will direct our paths. As we thought by thought fellowship with Jesus, He will show us how to proceed. Since God is good, Jesus cannot show us how to proceed badly. It is against His very nature. The key is to trust in the Lord with ALL your heart, mind, soul and strength.

Just knowing that you are a citizen of heaven on earth doesn't automatically bring the peace and prosperity of God into your life. Ceasing from your own works and living one with God in agape love fellowship and friendship is the only way to generate the faith of God needed to believe and speak the Word of God into your life. God's Word spoken in love through faith will cause you to succeed (prosper) in all areas of your life and provide you with peace (the Sabbath rest of God). If you don't operate through faith, then you operate through unbelief. You don't believe God's Word is true. The

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Bible says through unbelief Israel turned their backs upon God's love, provision and rest. They grieved God and wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all those who refused to believe God died (Hebrews 3:7-19).

We don't want to die in our wilderness without the glory, goodness and provision of God for our life. We must kill the unbelieving words and ways of our manhood in order to live in the provision and peace filled rest of the Word and ways of God. This does not mean we use our human will to religiously force ourselves to be good or holy. Instead, we kill our unbelief and release our faith by resting in our love relationship with God. We walk and talk with Jesus and He loves on us and we love on Him and, together, we love on others. There are people that in the natural I would never talk to or hang out with, but I have found over the years that as I have come to more and more rest in God's love for me, He has changed my heart. I no longer feel inferior or superior to anyone. I try to love all people, including myself, as God loves them. This enables Jesus to minister to me and through me to whomever God puts in my path. Because I rest in the faith of God's love for me, then the love of God can be shed abroad in my heart to whomsoever He wills.

Prayer, praise, worship, reading, studying, fellowshiping and resting in our friendship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost fills us with joy. It matures and prepares us to minister to others. We become convinced that our true purpose in life REALLY IS to love on and be one with God and serve our neighbor through the love of God in us. The more we love on and rest in God, the more we discover that the things we've tried to fulfill our self with through our manhood pale in comparison to the simple act of sharing a comforting word or laying a healing hand upon a person in need.

Such ministry is not possible until we relax and let God be God. We have to cease from our own works. We have to die to self and let the love, Spirit, Word and faith of God overtake and overwhelm us. Only in God's rest can we hear His voice and faithfully follow His lead for our life.

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FISHERS OF MEN

The main reason we minister God's love, Spirit and Word to others is to provide them with the living truth of God in Christ. We are fishers of men. Our heavenly place in Christ Jesus is our safe harbor out from which we sail into the sea of humanity to fish for the souls of lost men. We catch them with God's love, Spirit and Word. Once they accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior, we help raise them to also become fishers of men.

All Spirit-born believers can fish. No fish is too big nor too small to catch. Sometimes we fish by offering a kind word or a helping hand. Sometimes we offer a Word of God or a healing hand. Sometimes we say nothing with our mouth, but rather let Jesus speak through our life to others.

We also fish by carrying church cards and giving them to people we meet. If we attend or lead a weekly church home group, we invite lost people or people without a home church to it. We pray any time, any place, for anyone who asks for prayer. Occasionally God leads us to ask a person if we can pray with them to invite Jesus into their heart to save them.

Leading a person to Jesus is one of the greatest joys in life. There is nothing we can accomplish for our self, as a human, that is more significant or more fun than leading people to get Spirit-born and helping Christians get mind-transformed and fully conformed into Jesus' image and ministry for them.

Remember, in Mark 16:15-20, Jesus commissioned us to continue to do His work upon the earth through His presence within us. When His first followers did this God's Spirit stirred them to believe, speak and minister God's Word through His faith within them, so that He could work with them and confirm His Word with physical miracles and other signs of His love, grace and glory.

Mark 16:15, 17, 20

***And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world,
and preach the gospel to every creature . . . And***

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signs shall follow them that believe; . . . And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

2 Corinthians 3:6 declares that God has “***made us able ministers of the new testament.***” With Jesus Christ living in us, we can likewise minister the Word of God through the Spirit of God just like Jesus’ first followers did. How is this possible? Because it’s Jesus, not us, Who is doing the ministering. All we have to do is first believe this is so. Then, in faith, we obediently take the first step or say the first word and the anointing of the Holy Ghost comes upon us to speak and minister *The Living Word of God* (Jesus Christ in us) with physical miracles and other signs of God’s love, grace and glory following.

LEARN GOD’S LANGUAGE AND WAYS

So how do we accomplish all this? How do we bring heaven down to earth and live here in God’s rest? How do we become God’s fishers of men who operate through God’s ministerial anointing? The answer brings us back to the Word. We must learn and live the language of God’s Bible, most especially its New Testament. It teaches us how to think and act through the mind of Christ and become progressively conformed into the image of God’s Son, Jesus. The more we learn, live and minister God’s Word through faith, the more we know who we are, what we can do and how we can do it through Jesus in us.

Learn God’s language and ways. *Live* God’s language and ways. *Become* God’s language and ways. When you do, all your thoughts and ways will be of God and, like Jesus, you will be the living love, Spirit, Word and faith of God made flesh (Romans 8:29; John 1:14).

Purposefully living in heavenly places in Christ Jesus keeps us from being corrupted by the idols, lusts, affections

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and infections of the world. Our feet stand upon the earth but our true substance, that which we Spiritually stand upon, is faith through God's love, Spirit and Word living in us. Like Jesus, we live in the love, Spirit, Word and faith of the Son of God within us (Galatians 2:20, 4:6). Through Jesus, we destroy all the thoughts and actions of Satan and man that come against us. We don't give into temptations to doubt or debate God. Rather, in Jesus' name, we reject those thoughts and do what the Bible reveals and Jesus leads us to do. We encourage you to 24/7 fellowship with God and enjoy the exceeding great rewards God provides those of us who will purposefully live in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In our next chapter we'll look at some of those rewards beginning with "Financial Freedom God's Way."

Chapter 18

FINANCIAL FREEDOM GOD'S WAY

In this chapter we'll specifically explore how by us loving and obeying God and His Word regarding our finances, God can bless us with financial solvency. We will have enough money to pay our bills and financially support the work of establishing Jesus' New Testament covenant at home, work, church and elsewhere.

God rewards those who, through intimate agape love fellowship, thought by thought diligently (without stop) seek to communicate with and worship Him.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

It is God we seek, not His blessings. Many Christians get this wrong – they seek God's blessings instead of seeking Him. But it is only by knowing God and fellowshiping with Him that God can transform our thinking and then reward us with His blessings.

Matthew 6:33

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

MOTIVATED BY AGAPE LOVE

Deuteronomy 8:18

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it

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is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant.

Everything God does is motivated by His everlasting agape love for us. This includes blessing us with the finances we need to establish Jesus' New Testament Covenant in our life and the lives of others (Philippians 4:19; Ephesians 1:3, 2:10, 3:20). God's hope is that we will come to love and trust Him enough to quit trying to think and do things our way. God can't make us love Him or help Him establish His New Testament Covenant. We have to decide to love and help God by seeking His thinking and acting rather than our manly religious thinking and acting in all areas of our life. When we do, then God can move in our finances and cause financial blessings to flow to us and through us to others.

Galatians 5:6

For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision (following manly religious practices) ***availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision*** (not following man-made religious practices); ***but faith which worketh by love.***

FOLLOW JESUS' EXAMPLE

Jesus intimately fellowshiped with Father and Holy Ghost and lived through the power, love and sound mind of God. Jesus simultaneously obeyed and fulfilled the covenant of the Law of Moses and established the New Testament Covenant of the Kingdom of God within us (Mark 1:14). God blessed Jesus in every area of Jesus' life including finances. Jesus did not exploit God's loving nature in order to gain worldly wealth and waste it upon the lusts of life. We are not to exploit God's loving nature in order to gain worldly wealth and waste it upon the lusts of life.

That is not to say that God does not want us to have good things. He does. He wants us to prosper in all our ways and to be a testament for others. He wants to bless us so that we can be a blessing to others. As we've said before, the ways of

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God often confound the mind of religious men. By putting God's need to financially provide money to establish Jesus' Church and God's Kingdom *before* our need to financially provide money to establish our life – all the finances needed for our life plus more are provided by God to us. When we put God first in all we think and do, God provides us with all we need through Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

If we will love, serve and give God our all, including all our finances to do with as He wants, then all our life, including our money, becomes God's. When we put God in charge of our all, we no longer have to worry at all. This is what our First Century forefathers did and God rewarded them with on-going increase in all areas of their life. They always had an abundance to meet their personal need and the need of others Jesus led them to.

Luke 6:38

Give and it shall be given (back) unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom (life). For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

2 Corinthians 9:7

Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

The above two scriptures say that the way we give God our time and money shall be multiplied back to us by God. In other words, God will cause men to give unto us in the same fashion that we follow God's leading to give to the people and works of the Kingdom of God on earth. Since God wants us to be cheerful givers, if we freely, cheerfully give what God leads us to give His people and works, in due season God will cause others to freely and cheerfully give to us. This can manifest in all sorts of ways such as jobs we do for

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others, or jobs others do for us at great discounts, or promotions, raises and bonuses at work, or we going into business for our self and succeeding at it, or people forgiving us debts, paying off our bills, and giving us gifts. At the end of God's cycle of increase, we wind-up with yet more time and money to cheerfully give to the people and works God leads us to give to. God's cheerfully giving and gratefully receiving cycle of increase is the primary way God finances us – His ministers of the New Testament.

IT TAKES MONEY TO LIVE AND MINISTER

Jesus often talked about money because it takes money to live and minister to people. Jesus lived under the Law of Moses in which God blessed those believers who gave a tithe (10% of their income) to their home storehouse/synagogue (church). By freely and cheerfully giving God their tithe, God removed the curse of Satan off their money, blessed their businesses to prosper and insured that their families maintained good Spiritual, mental, emotional and physical health.

Malachi 3:10-12

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 (businesses); neither shall your vine (any member of your immediate family) cast her fruit before the time in the field (and get sick and die before their time), saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts.

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This demonstrated to the Old Testament Israelites God's love, power and faithfulness to them in the area of finances. All they had to do was obey God's Word by financially and otherwise supporting their local home synagogue (church) and God would financially bless them and insure the good health of their families. Today, we too can enjoy the blessings of God's tithe by voluntarily supporting our home church with 10% of our income plus enjoy the additional blessings of Luke 6:38 and 3 John 1:2 through cheerfully giving of our time and money to those other works of the Kingdom of God and the people God leads us to provide for.

3 John 1:2

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth (by loving God through cheerfully obeying God's leading to give of your time and money to His good works upon the earth).

GOD GROWS US FROM POVERTY TO PROSPERTY

Many of us come to Jesus in poor financial shape. Once Spirit-born it is necessary for God to transform our mind from worrying about where we're going to get the money to pay our bills to believing that through Him all things are possible. Our 24/7 fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost transforms our mind and releases Jesus' faith within us to believe, speak and do what God's Word says to think, speak and do regarding our finances. We begin to speak, think and do God's Word and here a little, there a little, things start to change for the better. Our monthly bills begin to get paid on time. Our debt begins to dwindle. Our worry over making money and having enough to get by changes to thanking God that He is supplying all our need through His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19). The weekly dollar we cheerfully give to our home church becomes \$2, then \$10, then \$20, then more and more, as we follow God's

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lead to give, and our finances increase. The more God gives us, the more we have available to cheerfully give to support Jesus' work.

No matter how financially poor a person may be when he/she first comes to Jesus, whatever they give, if given in agape love, it fulfills Luke 6:38. God looks at the heart of the person. He knows when we follow His leading to cheerfully give our time, ministry and money to our home church and those others God leads us to give to. Over time God provides the faithful, agape love led believer with more and more ministry, time and money to give to God's work. But no matter the type of ministry or sum of money given, it is to be given through the agape love heart and leading of God rather than some religious obligation or the desire to impress other men.

God loves and honors those who wholly love and honor God in their life. He honors them by daily providing them with increase in all areas of their life (Philippians 4:19; Ephesians 3:20). Though He still loves them, God can't honor those Christians who avoid Him rather than love Him. When we choose to love, honor and fellowship with the world system and man-made religion rather than loving, honoring and fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, we put our self rather than God in charge of our life and finances. Whatever God's not in charge of He can't influence, honor and bless.

CHEERFULLY GIVE TO JESUS' MINISTRY

Spreading the good news of Jesus takes money. For the New Testament Church to have money, its members must have money and a cheerful spirit of giving to God in all ways. Cheerful giving is motivated by our love for God and His work upon the earth. Gayle and I belong to a love filled giving church that strongly encourages us to support the establishment of God's New Testament Covenant at home and throughout the earth. We support ministries worldwide,

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sending money to help build churches, orphanages, feeding programs, and whatever else is needed to promote the gospel. Locally, we help feed, house and minister to the homeless and incarcerated.

Our pastor cultivates the spirit of cheerfully giving to God and cheerfully receiving from God His blessing in all areas of our life, including finances. This results in frequent testimonies of financial increase. Jobless people in our church have been provided with employment. Employed people have had debts cancelled, secured Godly promotions, and obtained raises where the company had said there would be no raises. God has helped others start successful new businesses, as well as increased the earnings of old businesses. Our God is a good God. When we cheerfully support the work of spreading His gospel through our local church and our personal ministries, God cheerfully supports us.

A few years ago, when Gayle got laid off from her job of 24 years, her first thought was not "Lord, what are we going to do? How are we going to pay our bills?" No, the first thing out of her mouth was, "Well, Lord, you'll have to provide." Almost instantly her cell phone rang. It was the principal of our daughter's school wanting to know if she'd consider subbing for one of the teachers. That year, she picked up odd jobs, free lance and temporary work and actually made more than what she would have made from her old job. We could have fretted and worried and stewed and debated like a lot of her co-workers were doing. But we didn't. We knew God was in control and He would provide. Did God cause her to lose her job? No, but we understood that her job wasn't the source of our supply. God was. So it was God Who we sought to meet our supply. Never once did we lose faith that God would take care of our finances and never once did we stop cheerfully giving. What a testimony! That's freedom from the fear of not having enough finances.

As one kernel of corn sown into good ground will reap numerous kernels of corn, the time, money and ministry God leads you to give to your church, family, friends and others

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will open God's door to Spiritual and financial abundance in your own life (Galatians 6:7-8). When we cheerfully give Jesus our money in the faith that Jesus will provide all our need, no matter what, we increase the intimacy and intensity of our personal love for and fellowship with Jesus, Father and Holy Ghost. As your joy and thanksgiving for God's financial abundance in your life increases, your concern about money will decrease until it one day disappears altogether. For, "***The blessing of the Lord, it makes us rich*** (in all ways, including finances), ***and he adds no sorrow with it,***" (Proverbs 10:22). This means it will not be a hardship to give. You won't have to strive to receive God's blessing.

GOD KEEPS SATAN'S HANDS OFF YOUR MONEY

An added benefit of giving God charge over our finances, is that Satan can't touch our money. Have you ever felt that no matter what you do you never get ahead? Does it seem that every time you get some extra money something goes wrong with the car or an appliance or you have to waste your money straightening out a mess that all of a sudden popped-up out of nowhere? Satan can run riot with your finances. But if you make your money God's money and cheerfully give it to God's work, God will rebuke the devourer, so that Satan's hands are kept off your money (Malachi 3:10-11).

Believe it – it is true. Gayle substitute teaches in our local school district. One day she was teaching a second grade class. It was time for the class to go to the gym for PE. Two girls stayed behind to tie their gym shoes; Gayle passed them in the hall as she walked back to the classroom. Instantly she heard a familiar voice within her Spirit say, "Check your wallet." She didn't hesitate; she did as the Holy Ghost prompted her. All her money was gone. She immediately went to the office and reported it. The principal said Gayle was "lucky" that she had checked her wallet instead of waiting until the end of the school day.

"Luck" had nothing to do with it. Gayle and I freely give through agape love. We believe what God says about Him

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rebuking the devourer off our money. The Holy Ghost alerted Gayle to Satan's attack and Gayle listened to and did what the Holy Ghost told her to do. She knew that she was in a spiritual battle and that God would honor His Word.

While the principal went to find the two girls, Gayle prayed, reminding God of His Word and asking for a chance to minister to the young girls. Both those prayers were answered. The girls returned the money with a tearful apology and Gayle hugged them and reminded them what she had told the class earlier about thinking good thoughts and refusing to listen to bad thoughts. The principal, by the way, who was both embarrassed and angry that this had happened in her school, didn't understand how Gayle could be so calm and understanding. What the principal didn't know was that Gayle wasn't operating through the flesh and blood of her manly mind but rather through the Spirit of Christ in her. The spiritual forces of evil that had misled the children were overcome by the love, Spirit, Word and faith of Jesus Christ in Gayle.

So we see how important freely and cheerfully giving through agape love is to our financial well-being. We must step out in faith, hear God's leading and then freely and cheerfully honor God with our money so that God can freely and cheerfully honor our giving with His increase in all areas of our life (Proverbs 3:5, 6, 9, 10; Luke 6:38; Leviticus 27:30, 32; Philippians 4:19).

LOVE GOD NOT MONEY

The one thing that can hold us back from totally loving, freely serving and cheerfully giving to God and His work is loving, serving and giving heed to some other way of thinking and acting. Money is one thing that we can easily love, serve and give our time.

Money is the god of natural minded manly thinking. Souled men see money as power. It can purchase naturally created things and services as well as the favor of people to

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whom money is given. The Bible says that the love of money is the root of all evil (1 Timothy 6:10). Please note that it didn't say money was evil, but the love of it. Since our love of money is the root of all our evil, our love of Jesus is the root of all our good. When we love God more than we love money, then our money becomes God's money which He can use to create rather than destroy our life.

In order for money to become a creative tool rather than a destructive weapon in our life, we must acknowledge that God is our provider. Otherwise we will fear letting go of our money. Our soul tells us we need money to pay our bills and buy things we need. That is true, but do we give money power over our life, or do we look on it as merely a tool to help us live God's good life? Our love (attachment) to money is expressed through our personal greed and fear of not having enough money to meet our perceived needs. Greed and fear keep us from loving and faithfully trusting God to financially provide for us.

WORK GOD'S EASY WAY NOT YOUR HARD WAY

If you don't give God your finances, you might still make money, but it will be harder to make than if you had let God pave the way for you. Making money through your soul-led self rather than the leading of Christ in you will often bring regret rather than joy to your life. Remember Proverbs 10:22, ***"The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."*** Instead of toiling and striving to increase your finances, let God direct you in the area of finances and you will find everything provided for, rather than you having to struggle just to make ends meet. The Bible calls that a curse, which we first see mentioned in Genesis.

Genesis 3:17-19

And unto Adam God said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou

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shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy (sin's) sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Adam's sin cursed the good ground of God's earth which had easily produced bountiful crops and provided Adam and Eve with natural riches. Because of Adam's disobedience, men have to work long and hard to plant and harvest. No longer are the earth's riches easily accessed. Instead, we have to incessantly seek and discover, laboriously dig and uncover, and do whatever else it takes to produce what we need in order to make our livings. However, through the blessings of the tithe, Luke 6:38 and 2 Corinthians 9:7, God provides us with work we are good at, like to do and do well. God also blesses us with ways to make more with less work, which frees-up time to give to God through other types of ministry.

God can also open our eyes to ways to work more efficiently, so that we increase our productivity and pay. Or God may open our eyes to a whole new way to do something or a whole new something to do which will generate yet more income. Financial increase, like all other God generated increase, comes from us putting Jesus in charge, following His lead and no matter what comes against us, not giving up what Jesus has us doing until Jesus leads us to do something else. It all starts with you trusting God to take care of you, and with you willing to do what God instructs you to do with the finances He provides you with.

WE ARE BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

By cheerfully giving God whatever He wants from us in any area of our life and freely receiving from God what we

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need from Him in every area of our life, we are not only blessed by God but can be a blessing to others. This frees us from worrying about money or anything else that Satan tries to beat us with. For our God is *The Good God* Who blesses us with all Spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). In all areas of our life He exceedingly, abundantly blesses and rewards us with more than we can ask or think, when we agape love fellowship with and honor Him with all we think and have (Ephesians 2:6, 3:20; Mark 12:30). Turn the page and we'll look at some of the other blessings, besides financial freedom, that God rewards us with.

Chapter 19

MORE REWARDS OF GOD

Now we'll see how by loving God and faithfully obeying God's Word in the other areas of our life, God rewards us with the rest of His abundant life in Christ.

SPIRITUAL SECURITY

Spiritual security is our total acceptance that we are righteous and in right relationship with God. Spiritual security starts to manifest and progressively grow in our heart when we begin to fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and put on the mind of Christ so that we increasingly think and act like Jesus (Romans 12:1-2, 8:29).

It takes time to learn how to walk and talk with God and effectively apply the Word of God to our life. As we increasingly believe who we truly are in Jesus, we become more Spiritually secure. Instead of continually being destroyed by Satan's evil because we're not sure God would help us if we spoke or prayed His Word, we know, no matter what, we are God's righteous, anointed daughter or son. This is what Paul talks about in the book of Philippians when he says he is confident that God has begun a good work in us and will bring it to perfection as we take on the mind of Christ (Philippians 1:6, 2:5). Spiritual security understands this and accepts it. Faith gives us the confidence that God is constantly conforming us into Jesus' image and blessing us in every area of life. We know that all our petitions and prayers are not only heard by God, but are answered by God (Hebrews 10:35; 1 John 3:21-22). This is Spiritual security. Once that happens, we no longer *intellectually say* we are God's righteous, anointed daughter or son, instead we *experientially know* we are God's righteous, anointed son or daughter.

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MENTAL STABILITY AND EMOTIONAL PEACE

2 Timothy 1:7

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Matthew 15:18

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart.

Luke 6:45

A good (God Spirited) man out of the good treasure in his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil (Satan, soul, body, self-will driven) man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

Our intellectual thoughts and emotional feelings are closely connected. Both come out of the heart (our spiritual core). We determine our degree of mental stability and emotional peace by how much we let the Spirit of God, rather than the soul of man, guide our thoughts and actions.

In John 14:27, Jesus tells the disciples that He is giving them peace and then adds, “***Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.***” The peace He is talking about is the Holy Ghost, the comforter, the one Jesus just told them He would send in His name. The Holy Ghost, once He comes and lives inside a person, will bring peace.

Romans 5:5 says the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. Think about “shed abroad.” It’s like the Holy Ghost takes God’s love and sprinkles it or scatters it all over us so that it falls on every part of us. Once we have that in us, we need never be afraid again. One of the greatest treasures of living the life of Christ is being freed from the mental oppression and emotional upset that is caused by fear.

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The Bible says that perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18). Once we know, believe, and accept God's love for us we will no longer fear anything man or Satan can put upon us. We will instead live in power, love and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Nothing will be able to stand against the peace and power of God in our life.

Through Christ in us all things are possible and all our need is met by Jesus (Philippians 4:13, 19). No matter what comes against us, we will be victorious over it through Jesus when we take power over it with the Word of God upon our lips.

2 Corinthians 2:14

Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.

1 John 5:4

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

PHYSICAL HEALING AND PERSONAL SAFETY

Before being Spirit-born, Satan seduced us to think that such things as genetic corruption, sickness, devastating natural phenomena and evil of all sorts are authored by God. Since we were not Spirit-born and able to see that Satan is the real author of evil, we blamed God for the lousiness of life.

Remember what we've begun to comprehend. God loves us. He wants what is best for us and will never harm us. It is the devil who comes to steal, kill and destroy. Jesus came so we could have life and life in abundance (John 10:10).

Because Adam and Eve gave Satan dominion over all the earth, God shows men ways to combat the theft, death and destruction that the devil daily attacks us with. For example, God shows men how to recognize and treat the symptoms of sickness with herbs, chemicals, machines, devices, pros-

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thetics, surgery and treatments that attempt to remove or replace physical corruption and alleviate pain. God shows men how to construct means by which destructive natural phenomena are able to be withstood, such as levies to withstand rising river water and prevent flooding, or bridges and buildings built to bend in the wind and sustain tremors in the earth.

Medical doctors, however, do not heal the body, nor do civil engineers keep a hurricane from coming onto land or an earthquake from happening. It is God who heals our bodies and keeps natural disasters from ruining our lives. We have victory in everything when we are led by Jesus to pray through the Spirit and Word of God in faith. Until we get Spirit-born and allow Jesus to become the Lord of our life, we can't see it's Satan rather than God wrecking our spirit, mind, emotions, body and world.

Jesus reinstates our citizenship in heaven and our access to heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon the earth. Through the love, Spirit, Word and faith of God within us, we learn how to take power over temptations to sin, attacks of pain and sickness and even natural phenomena when necessary.

Man's faith in medicine and engineering can be used by God to help a person step up into faith in God. I do a lot of hospital ministry where the sick are occasionally not Christians or often immature Christians. At best, their faith is in doctors and medicine. At worse, they don't believe in anything. They feel desperate and doomed to suffer, maybe even die. God has me meet them where they are and then lead them beyond their ignorance and doubt into faith in God's spoken Word.

I do this by first introducing myself in a friendly, often mildly humorous, personal way. I identify myself as a representative of the Chaplain's Office. I ask the patient how he's feeling and how he's being treated by the doctors and nurses. Once we speak a bit, I ask him if it's okay to pray for him. Most patients not only say it's okay but they are grateful someone has come to pray.

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In Jesus' name, I ask Father to heal the patient. Then, I leave the patient with a tract, which tells him how to get all God's good stuff including Spirit-birth and healing and encourage the patient to believe and receive Jesus' healing for him. All this stirs the patient's faith and releases his hope (his expectation) that God is healing him.

God does not require you to turn your back on doctors and medicine in order to be healed. He simply provides you with scriptures such as 1 Peter 2:24, Mark 16:18 and the gifts of the Holy Ghost (see Chapters 15 and 16) with which to activate your healing. Doctors and medicine tend to your symptoms until God's faith-spoken Word heals your body, mind or emotions.

Mark 16:18

They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

1 Peter 2:24

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 you are healed.

Just as you keep your inner Spiritual ears and eyes open for negative, destructive, evil thoughts or feelings that try to enter into your mind or emotions, also keep your body sensitive to pain or sickness that tries to attack you. As soon as you perceive pain in your body immediately pray, "Father, in Jesus' name, according to Your Word, by Jesus' stripes I am healed. In Jesus' name, Father, I ask you to remove this pain and insure that nothing is broken, nothing is wrong, I am whole and well. Thank you, Father, for making me whole and well."

When you feel a cold or fever or other such thing attack you, immediately go after it the same way and cast it out of you. Don't wait and unnecessarily suffer. When it attacks you then, in Jesus' name, you ask Father to attack and destroy it

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and bring forth your healing through the Word of God you then speak.

Believe, pray and receive God's healing into your body, mind and emotions. Then ask Jesus what you should do. See a doctor? Take medications? Alter a habit? Go to bed and get some rest? When you hear Jesus answer, then do what He tells you to do and continually praise and thank Jesus for your healing until your healing fully comes forth.

Gayle and I saw a big difference in the health of our family once we got hold of this. We hadn't yet learned about divine healing when our two eldest sons were young. They had a lot of ear infections and colds as children. Then we learned and began to practice divine healing. Our youngest son and daughter have virtually never had to go to the doctor due to disease. The proof is in the pudding or in this case the healing and ongoing good health of our family.

When some sort of natural phenomenon or severe weather is threatening you or your loved ones, employ Matthew 16:19 or 18:18-20 and alone or together pray, "In Jesus' name, Father I/we ask You to bind this (hurricane, tornado, hail storm, ice storm, mud slide, volcano, drought, infestation of locust, ... you name it). I/we ask You to loose the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels to destroy its power and remove its threat to us. Thank You, Father, for doing this." Through such prayers made by Gayle and I, God has diverted, diminished and destroyed many natural phenomenon and severe weather conditions that have threatened us and our loved ones.

Once during a severe thunderstorm the tornado sirens went off. I stood by our bedroom window and was led by Jesus to pray and bind Satan and his bad weather and loose the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels to protect us from harm. Within the hour the neighborhood next to ours was destroyed by a tornado. Our house, which stood but five hundred feet away, went untouched and never ever lost power, as did several of our neighbors.

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During Hurricane Katrina, Gayle's mother, who lived in New Orleans, had to evacuate. Once evacuated she began to worry that her house would flood. Gayle was led by Jesus to get her to come into agreement with us and pray "to the door but no more!" And that is exactly what happened. The flood water came up to her door and no further.

One of the many purposes for praying in tongues is to loose the Holy Ghost and His ministering angels upon the earth to destroy Satan's evil and create God's good. We have no idea of what Satan is sending to reek havoc upon others, but God does. As the Holy Ghost stirs us to pray, God can intercede and remove the danger Satan is trying to cause. We don't have to know why, or even who or what. We just need to stay open to the Holy Ghost's prompting. We live with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost in the Spiritual Kingdom of God within us upon the corrupted earth of Satan. Through God's love, Spirit, Word and faith, in Jesus' name, we can take power over Satan and his corruptions of sickness, disease, debilitation and destructive natural phenomena. So through Jesus in you, believe, speak and receive the victory over Satan He's provided you with.

FULFILLED LIFE, MINISTRY AND RELATIONSHIPS

Self-will run riot wrecks a lot of relationships. When we get Spirit-born we receive a new will, the will of God, as seen in the scriptures. By renewing our mind with God's Word and ways we get progressively transformed from self-centered thinking and acting to God-centered thinking and acting.

This matures and secures us. We have no need to impress anyone; we no longer need the approval of men to insure our success in life. Through Christ in us we are eternally successful and freed from the tyranny of Satan and natural-minded, self-serving men. Through Jesus we are dead to the world of men and alive to the world of God. No one or no thing can separate us from God. No weapon formed against

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us can prosper since God is for us. No evil can successfully come against us once we recognize its attack and defeat it in the name of Jesus (Isaiah 54:17; Romans 8:38-39).

By working out our salvation and increasingly thinking and acting through the Word of God, we change for the better. We become more and more likeable as we learn to love rather than manipulate others. Jesus' personality becomes our personality. Love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control evidence themselves in us (Galatians 5:22-23). Seldom do we take offense at the rudeness, slights and verbal attacks of others. Rarely do we mentally, emotionally or physically retaliate. We are quick to forgive and even quicker to ask for forgiveness when we sin. Our new way of God thinking and acting not only personally helps us to love ourselves, as God loves us, but to love others, as God loves them, even unsaved disagreeable others.

Jesus died that all men might live through Him in the Spirit of God. God loves us all. But God can only provide His love, protection and prosperity to those who love Him through Jesus. We are God's fishermen who use the bait of God's good news in our lives to attract other men and women to Jesus. Our changed life impresses our relatives that we are the "real deal" and maybe worth listening to now that we are doing so well. Others we come in contact with are either attracted to Jesus in us or put off by Jesus in us. Those who positively respond we share God's good news with them. The others we stay open and friendly to in case they ever decide to give Jesus a try. Our life is fulfilled, our ministries prosper and we have good relationships with our family and others.

All we have to do to fulfill God's plan for us is to keep His two New Testament commandments of agape love. We do this by fellowshiping with God and letting Jesus train us in God's Word, will and ways. This gradually grows us up from weak children of God into strong daughters and sons of God who are prepared to pursue God's vision for our life. We then learn how to powerfully minister through God's vision and

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voice within us, with signs, wonders and miracles, as noted in Part 3 of this book.

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PART 3

Vision

And

Ministry

We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do the good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10).

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Chapter 20

GOD'S DAUGHTERS AND SONS

God calls His Spirit-born, New Testament daughters and sons to become conformed into Jesus' image and fulfill the specific vision and ministries God has ordained for our lives. Satan does not want that to happen. If we are not aware of how subtly Satan operates then it becomes difficult to discern and reject his attempts to keep us from seeing and doing what God has in mind for us. For the final third of this book, we will expose how Satan tries to rob us of God's gifts and reveal how we receive God's vision and activate God's ministries. In this chapter we will discuss the roles of males and females in the Body of Christ.

SATAN'S WAR BETWEEN THE SEXES

Satan knows if he can divide us, he can keep us from fully carrying out God's plan for us to agape love God, self and others. To that end, he whispers to us that we know what is best, he encourages us to try to win over others to our way of thinking, he plants in us a desire to be in control. This is what happened with Adam and Eve. When they replaced God's Word with their words, not only did they break their agape love fellowship with God, they broke their agape love fellowship with one another.

No longer were they thought by thought joined as co-equal partners with the strengths of their male and female thinking adding together and manifesting the fullness of God within them. Instead, their Satan-infected male and female thinking separated them into two distinct self-centered warring individuals who began to subtly to grossly try to take control over and rule the other's life. Since then, this ungodly war between the sexes has infected every culture of man. Only

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through Spirit-birth can this curse be broken. Therefore, it is vitally important that we correctly comprehend how Jesus views redeemed women and men with relationship to Himself, to one another, and as participants in and ministers of the New Testament gospel of Jesus Christ.

ADAM AND HIS WIFE BEFORE SATAN

Genesis 1:26-28

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over. . .all the earth . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them.

Genesis 1:26-28 declares how God first saw His children: full of the presence of Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, blessed in all ways, each other's help meets/mates (Genesis 2:18), who work together to wait upon and serve God and one another. The unique male and female gifts and talents God gives His sons and daughters are designed to add to one another and help each other succeed in all areas of life. God's children are bone of each other's bone, flesh of each other's flesh (Genesis 2:23).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the word "woman" in Genesis 2:23 means plural of man. God used His earth man's rib (that which covered and protected the man's heart/core being) to form His earth woman. God named them both Adam (Genesis 5:2). In His eyes they were equal.

All children of God are equal to one another in the eyes of their Father, God Almighty, and in the eyes of their Spiritual husband, Jesus Christ. Jesus sees each Christian as His body and His bride in whom Jesus' Spirit lives, moves and has His being upon the earth.

Romans 7:4

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead

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to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

1Corinthians 12:27

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

SIN COST THEM EVERYTHING

Had male and female Adam obeyed God by rejecting Satan and not eating of the tree of the knowledge of both good and evil, they would have passed God's final exam to become fully conformed into the image and likeness of God. God would have then fed them from the tree of life. This would have eternally sealed them in God's image and likeness, as God's immortal son and daughter. Instead, they turned their backs upon God and followed Satan's leading to put **Self IN** charge rather than God in charge of their lives.

They no longer loved and trusted God nor one another. Rather, they loved and sought their own words and ways to provide them with what they needed to survive on a corrupted earth now ruled by Satan. Adam blamed God for putting the woman in Adam's life. The woman blamed Satan's serpent for leading her the wrong way. Neither one of them sought God's forgiveness. Each stood in his/her own pride and anger, separated from God and the other. The two were totally infected with Satan's soul-led *me, myself and I* thinking and acting. They traded God's blessed life on earth for Satan's cursed life on earth. No longer would they enjoy living in God's agape love filled paradise of total provision upon earth. Instead, each would suffer the pain of the constant struggle to live life his/her way rather than God's way. In Genesis 3:16-20 God defines their life without Him.

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Genesis 3:16-17

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

Eve would desire for her husband to continue to mentally, emotionally and physically serve her but Adam's Satan-infected "*don't blame me*" thinking blamed Eve for costing him God's good life in the Garden of Eden (verse 12). And thus began the war between the sexes. Satan encourages the female to use her emotions and charm to attract and hold the male while he whispers to the male that the male is in charge and knows what is best for the female. Only God knows what is best for both of them. Without God to guide their lives men and women – including Christian men and women – try to find fault with and rule over one another.

An obvious example of a scripture being distorted to fit this narrative is 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 in which Jesus used Paul and Timothy to correct the misbehavior of various male and female members of the church at Corinth. For 2,000 years what Paul wrote has been used by religious minded male Christians to rigorously rule over female Christians, by forbidding them to preach or teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ or prophesy or minister the gifts of the Spirit.

WOMEN TO KEEP SILENT IN THE CHURCH

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the

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law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

At face value, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 seems to tell Christian men to rule over Christian women by commanding them to shut their mouths at church. This then keeps the women from ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ to fellow Christians. But did God really mean for Paul to command that no Christian woman is ever to minister?

If God meant for Paul to command that all Christian women of all time are forbidden to minister the gospel of Jesus Christ, then why would God have Paul, in a later letter to the Corinthians say the following?

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Therefore if any man be (Spirit-born) 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.

Genesis 1:27 states, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” If those words still hold true today, then the word “man” in 2 Corinthians 5:17 includes both male and female Christians. If so, then Spirit-born women, as well as Spirit-born men, are ambassadors for Christ who God

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sends to the secular and church worlds to minister the good news gospel of our reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ. Many such male and female ministers are mentioned throughout the New Testament.

Though most New Testament scriptures clearly say what they mean when scriptures seem to contradict one another, it is necessary to thoroughly study the exact meaning of the words spoken and the situation surrounding a scripture to get the clear understanding of what God is telling us. This is why in 2 Timothy 2:15 God has Paul tell us to:

2 Timothy 2:15

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth no to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

RIGHTLY DIVIDING GOD’S WORD

Dividing is the Greek word “orthotomeo” (Strong’s #3718). It means: to make a straight cut, i.e. (figuratively) to dissect (expound) correctly (the divine message). It is imperative that we correctly divine (comprehend) what God is saying to us through His written Word.

Hermeneutics is the methodical, scripturally-based, Spirit-led process by which we properly divide God’s Word so that we can correctly interpret the meaning of the words of the Bible. The three simple steps hermeneutics employs to do that are to: first, seek the precise English interpretation of the Hebrew or Greek words contained within the scripture; second, gain an understanding of the circumstances surrounding the speaking of a specific scripture; third, find scriptures that help clarify the full intent and meaning of the scripture being investigated.

1 Corinthians 2:13

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

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teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

2 Corinthians 13:1

.... In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

In other words, we are to examine the meaning of each word within a scripture, look at the circumstances that prompted the scripture to be spoken, and seek other scriptures which help clarify what God is actually saying in any specific scripture. Now, let's apply these three steps to 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 and see what we come up with.

Upon examining the meaning of the words within the scripture we discover that the Greek word "gune" (Strong's #1135), which is translated "women," when used in connection with the word "husband" (verse 35) is more properly translated as the word "wives." Through Paul, God was then actually addressing, or more precisely reprimanding, the Corinthian wives to keep quiet in church. Since Paul never commands the single Christian women to not speak during church, it may well have been that the newly converted, formerly pagan now Spirit-born Christian wives were disturbing the service by asking their husbands questions about what was going on during the service. This is why Paul also commanded the husbands to go home and tutor and train their ignorant wives in the Word and ways of God, so their wives could learn both who they were in Christ and how to behave at church.

A second scripture that continues this teaching is 1 Timothy 2:11-12. Paul had originally sent Timothy to deliver the letter of reprimand to the Corinthians and then re-teach them how to conduct themselves as Christians (1 Corinthians 4:17). In Paul's later letter to Timothy, Paul also adds that Timothy needed to additionally instruct the Corinthian and all other formerly pagan, unlearned Christian wives not to usurp (take authority over) their husbands by trying to teach their husbands instead of letting their husbands teach them.

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Why God had Paul reprimand the Corinthian husbands and wives becomes clearly understood when we look at the circumstances that led to the writing and delivering of the first letter to the Corinthians.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT PROMPTED **1 CORINTHIANS 14:34-35**

God commissioned Paul to minister to the non-Jewish gentiles who were much more loose and liberal in their dealings with life and their women than the Jews. Paul founded the church at Corinth. In it, as in the Jewish synagogues Paul had come from, the women sat in one section of the sanctuary and the men sat in another section of the sanctuary. From their segregated sections the women and men got to listen to and when appropriate participate, whether that was by singing or praise and worship or preaching, teaching, prophesying and administering the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Paul spent 18 months birthing and raising the first members and ministers of the Corinthian Church before he went off to minister elsewhere. Without Paul there to guide their study and interpretation of God's Word, or to demonstrate to the ministers how to decently and in order conduct a public church service, the Corinthian congregation and ministers got way out of line. The church became more like going to a circus in which many of the performers were drunk and chaotic rather than attending a devout celebration of God in which the sober ministers and silent congregation conducted themselves in decency and order.

This stirred Chloe, who was one of the female church leaders, to contact Paul and inform him about the mess the church was in (1 Corinthians 1:11). Paul then wrote the Corinthian Church a letter of reprimand and re-teaching, which we now call "The First Epistle To The Corinthians." In it, Paul points out their immaturity.

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1 Corinthians 3:1

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

Paul points out the depravity that persists and no minister nor member will address and correct.

1 Corinthians 5:1-6

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

Paul points out their divisions and debauchery.

1 Corinthians 11:17-22

..... I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat

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the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

Paul points out their incorrect ministerial procedures.

1 Corinthians 14:26-33

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Paul points out the inappropriate behavior of the wives, which added yet more confusion to the service when the wives yelled questions from the women's section of the church to their husbands in the men's section of the church.

1 Corinthians 14:34-35

Let your women (wives, Strong's #1135) keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under

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obedience (and not speak in church unless their husbands give them permission to do so), ***as also saith the law*** (of Genesis 3:16). ***And if they will learn any thing*** (about Christianity, including how to appropriately conduct themselves in church), ***let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women*** (wives, #1135) ***to speak*** (aloud to their husbands in the men's section from the women's section) ***in the church***.

Paul's reprimand of the wives can be clearly seen as inappropriate behavior that could not be tolerated then nor today. Paul's later comments to Timothy about such behavior suggests that this may have been a common type of behavior that pagan women participated in at pagan temple worship that then continued during Christian church services. There seems to be no indication that the silence commanded of the wives during Church service was other than they maintain silence when others are ministering the Word and gifts of God, as the following scriptures clarify.

CLARIFYING SCRIPTURES

In his epistles Paul mentions many God-called, Spirit-led, Word-wise female ministers who helped him establish New Testament churches (Acts 16:13-15, 40, 17:4, 12). In Romans Chapter 16, Paul identifies seven women as "fellow workers." One of them was Phebe.

Romans 16:1-2

I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

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Paul identifies Phebe as a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea. Servant is the Greek word “diakonos” (Strong’s #1249). It means, “...a Christian teacher and pastor.” If one of Paul’s seven female “fellow workers” was a pastor and teacher, it’s highly likely the other six were at least believer and possibly even ascension gifted ministers, as well.

Remember Chloe, who told Paul about the mess in the Corinthian church? Considering she knew how to find and contact the traveling apostle and felt confident enough to believe he would pay her heed, it is highly likely she was a servant to the church at Corinth just as Phebe was a servant to the church at Cenechrea. Chloe was definitely married and Phebe was also probably married.

Philip the evangelist had four young, unmarried daughters, whom he had raised in the Word and ways of God, “***which did prophesy***” (Acts 21:9-10). Prophecy is the Greek word “propheteuo” (Strong’s #4395). It means: to foretell events, interpret the Word of God, speak under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, exercise the prophetic office. Philip’s daughters were fully manifested New Testament prophetesses who lived under his authority and in all likelihood travelled and ministered with their father at church and elsewhere. If one was to eventually marry, do you think it would be God’s desire to stop her from ministering prophecy to Christians at church?

Prior to telling the Corinthians wives to be silent, in 1 Corinthians 11:5 Paul talks about the Corinthian women who already did pray and prophesy in the church, “... ***every woman that prayeth or prophesieth.***” Since the Corinthians had no microphones, public prayer and prophesy needed to be loudly spoken so that all the members in the church could hear what was being prayed or prophesied.

In Acts 2:1-47, on the day of Pentecost, 120 Spirit-born men and women received the tongues and witness fire of the Holy Ghost and then evangelized on the streets of Jerusalem and 3,000 Jews were saved. Peter, in verses 2:16-18, also spoke through the Holy Ghost and declared that the day of

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the people of the New Testament prophesied in Joel 2:28-29 had come to pass. “... ***your daughters shall prophesy...on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.***” Neither Joel nor Peter differentiated between married and single; all daughters shall prophesy. Prophecy, in accord with 1 Corinthians 14:3, means to edify (build-up by teaching) and exhort (encourage) and comfort people with God’s spoken Word spoken through the mouth out loud at home, church and elsewhere.

There are various motivational ministry gifts that any male or female believer can be gifted with including prophecy, teaching, helps and administration, all of which take place in church. The Holy Ghost does not discriminate. He gifts and empowers both males and females alike with His nine gifts and six empowerments (1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Mark 16:15-20). All require the believer to speak out loud when ministering God’s gifts.

Aquila and Priscilla were a married couple who spent many years being trained-up by and working and ministering with Paul until the Holy Ghost led them to co-pastor a church in their home (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Romans 16:3; 1 Corinthians 16:19).

God is not a respecter of persons. He does not put one believer above or below another (Acts 10:34). “***There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for we are all one in Christ Jesus*** (Galatians 3:28).”

Jesus is the Spiritual husband of all male and female believers (Romans 7:4). Thought by thought, through the Holy Ghost within them, Jesus teaches His male and female wives in Christ to think, act and minister like Him (Romans 8:29).

Mary, Jesus’ mother, was used by God to birth and then for 30 years teach Jesus to receive, believe and become what the Word of God said He was: the Messiah-Christ-Savior of man. At the wedding feast in Cana, God used Mary to stir Jesus to minister His first miracle and launch His messianic

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ministry to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (John 2:1-11; Matthew 15:24).

Mary Magdalene was the first person who saw Jesus raised from the dead. She became the first minister of the New Testament gospel of Jesus Christ when she ran from Jesus' tomb to evangelize the others with the good news of Jesus' resurrection from the dead (John 20:11-18).

In the Old Testament, the fear-filled, religious-minded Jewish men purposefully kept their women ignorant and unempowered. But despite the men's efforts, God made women rulers over Israel, as well as ministers of God's Word in the temple at Jerusalem. Deborah, the prophetess, was the Judge (head) of Israel. Various other female prophetesses ministered throughout the Old Testament right up until the day Jesus was circumcised, when ancient Anna, the prophetess who never left the Temple in Jerusalem, saw Jesus and spoke of him to all those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem (Luke 2:38).

GOD'S DAUGHTERS AND SONS TODAY

Jesus' death, burial and resurrection destroyed all the curses that Satan poisoned humanity with including the curse of the war between the sexes. Christian women and men are God's daughters and sons, His new creations in Christ, who are led by the Spirit of the Son of God rather than the soul of Satan-infected, self-serving, religious man. God sees each one as He first saw Adam the man and Adam the woman in Genesis. God formed those two to become one with Him in love, Spirit, Word and faith and manifest His presence upon the earth. Today, Jesus has made this possible for all of us. Through Christ in us we can get Spirit-born, mind-transformed and character-conformed into God's sons and daughters who continue Jesus' ministry of reconciliation as ambassadors for Christ to the World of lost sinners and saved saints. Through agape love fellowship, Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost equip each daughter and son of God with the

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Spiritual gifts and vision of ministry she/he needs to successfully complete her/his God ordained life fulfilling work upon this earth today (Galatians 3:28; Romans 7:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 8:29).

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Chapter 21

DILIGENTLY PURSUE GOD'S VISION

All of Christianity is spent living in, talking to, hearing from and loving on Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost within us. Much of Christianity is spent talking to, praying for and ministering the miraculous to others through Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost within us. Such ministry is referred to as God's vision and calling upon our life. God sees – has vision of – what He wants to minister through us and calls upon us to obey (hear and follow His instructions) to do so. When our only desire is to engage in thought by thought love fellowship with God and love Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength, God will reveal to us His vision for our life.

God's vision for our life is both general and specific. His general vision for all men is for us to be conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. His specific vision of what He wants to accomplish through each of us is unique.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works (to those specific others), which God hath before (we were Spirit-born) ordained (called us to minister to) that we should walk in them.

As we progressively put on the mind of Christ and more and more think and act like Jesus, we become better able to see and minister in the particular way God wants us to let Jesus minister through us. To begin to fulfill both of these visions for our life, we must first believe that God's Romans 8:29 plan for us to become conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus, is true. Once that truth gets inside us, we will seek

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God's Word and ways for us by entering into intimate fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. We will start to grow beyond a self-centered child of God into a God-centered son or daughter of God who thought by thought fellowships with God (John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

Immature children of God do not thought by thought communicate with God. They do not – indeed cannot – distinguish between the voice of their soul and the voice of God's Spirit (Hebrews 4:9-12, 5:13-14). God is unable to reveal to them His specific vision for their lives much less guide them on how to accomplish each task and step of that vision. Instead, God's immature children remain self-centered religious turtles who hide out in themselves and do little to advance Jesus' work on earth. Or they pursue what they think (or others tell them) is God's specific vision for their lives. If what they pursue, however, is not God's true vision for their lives, they will not be successful at it.

Numerous pastors end up quitting their ministry because it was what they or others wanted, not what God wanted. Numerous believers walk out on ministries that they or others chose instead of God leading them into those ministries. Some believers know the vision God has for them but do not consciously thought by thought allow God to direct that vision. They try to do it themselves and it all comes to naught.

God's plan is for us to fellowship with Him and be led by Him in everything we do. This is how God grows us up from ignorant, unreliable children to sons and daughters who He can trust to fulfill the good works of the specific vision He has ordained for each of us (Ephesians 2:10).

Jesus spent thirty years studying God's Word, praying, praising, worshipping and bringing His every thought to God. For thirty years, God prepared Jesus for His short 42 months of specific ministry to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matthew 15:24).

Just like we are, Jesus was tempted both by Satan and by the "*me*" of His body (lust of the flesh), the "*myself*" of His

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soul (lust of the eyes), and the “I” of His self-will (pride of life) (Hebrews 4:15). He could have rejected His Father’s Word and let Himself be seduced by His body, soul, self-will or Satan. But Jesus had the vision. He knew His purpose. Jesus never did anything unless He was first shown by His Father what to do. He knew that to let his body, soul, self-will or Satan rule His life, even for one thought, would separate Him from the power, love and sound mind of God. He was dedicated to bringing every thought, emotion, appetite and imagination to the Spirit of Father God within Him. By doing this, Jesus never sinned (John 5:19). When we do like Jesus and process our thoughts through Christ in us we don’t sin.

1 John 3:9

Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

We Spirit-born believers have Jesus to guide us in all our thoughts and actions. When we bring all our intellectual reasoning, memories, emotions, bodily appetites, willful dispositions, personal beliefs, cultural traditions, habits, imaginations – any and everything that tries to move us to think, speak and act – to the Spirit of Christ in us and do what Jesus tells us to do with them, we do not sin. Instead, we obey God’s Word/will for us and fulfill His specific vision for our life (2 Corinthians 10:5).

VISION FOR MINISTRY

God’s specific vision for our life is always ministry. For the most part ministry means working with people, not preaching God’s Word from behind a church pulpit. A minister is simply a vessel, a conduit, an outlet for God to reach out to others. Ministry mandates that we are in fellowship with God. Ministry is not us deciding what we should minister but rather it’s us allowing Jesus to minister to

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us and through us to whom He wants, when He wants, where He wants.

Part of God's vision includes the people He wants to touch through us, whether they are people we greet in the parking lot, toddlers we train in Sunday School, pastors we talk to in a conference, or family members, friends, fellow workers, church members, neighbors and the people of our community (2 Corinthians 5:20).

As already noted, God's general vision for Jesus was to become the Word of God made flesh, God's Son on earth. For thirty years Jesus fulfilled His general vision of Sonship. This step by step process led Him into His specific vision. At 30 years of age, He finally entered into the fullness of His specific vision as God's Messiah, the Christ and Savior of men.

Through fulfilling God's general vision for Him, Jesus was able to fulfill God's specific vision for Him. Jesus let Father God and Holy Ghost reveal, lead and empower all Jesus' thoughts and actions, so that neither Satan nor Jesus' manly body, soul nor self-will could mislead Jesus to sin.

This is the same thing God has planned for us. We are to thought by thought work with Jesus and let Him conform us into His image (Philippians 1:6). As we fellowship with Jesus and progressively think and act more like Jesus, God begins to lead us into various ministries, both in and out of the church. These teach us how to minister and lead us towards God's specific vision for us (2 Corinthians 10:5; John 5:19).

Peter was a rough and tough fisherman when Jesus called him to become His disciple. For 42 months Peter was at Jesus' side learning how to think, act and minister as Jesus did. When Jesus ascended for the last time into heaven, He commanded Peter and the others to go to Jerusalem to await the promise of the Father.

On Pentecost morning, Peter and 119 others obeyed Jesus' command. They nervously gathered in an upper room. They were worried about being discovered by the Romans or the Jews and being beaten, maybe even killed, for being

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followers of Jesus. Yet when Father's promise arrived, their worry turned into wonder, as the sound of a rushing mighty wind filled the room. The wind of the Holy Ghost brought in heavenly tongues of fire, which sat upon the head of each of the 120 disciples. The Holy Ghost baptized every man and woman in the room with the same fire of witness that Jesus had received at the Jordan when the Holy Ghost descended upon and filled Him to the brim (Mark 1:10-15).

Once baptized, the 120 forgot their fears and followed Peter out into the streets of Jerusalem. They witnessed to the Jews in the streets who'd come from all over the earth to celebrate the holy day of Pentecost. They witnessed the good news of Jesus to each Jew in that Jew's native tongue. Peter and the 119 entered into and began to fulfill God's specific vision and ministry for them to the Jews. On that first day of their ministry, 3,000 Jews were Spirit-born and Holy Ghost baptized with the fire and tongues of witness. Each returned to his/her home country, where they began to live and share the good news of Jesus Christ with others (Acts 2:1-47).

Saul of Tarsus was a religious zealot, who tortured, imprisoned and killed Jesus' followers. While on his way to capture Christians in Damascus, Jesus appeared to Saul as a brilliant light. Jesus told Saul to quit killing Christians and serve Jesus. Saul converted to Christianity and Jesus changed his name from Saul to Paul. For three years Jesus kept Paul in Damascus and raised him in the New Testament ways of Jesus Christ. Then Paul went to Jerusalem to meet with Peter and the other Christian leaders. Through the leading of the Holy Ghost Paul went into Asia, where he began to fulfill his specific vision and ministry as Jesus' apostle to the non-Jews (Acts 26:1-20).

God wants us all to first enter into His general vision for us to be conformed into the image of Jesus. We dedicate ourselves to working out our salvation through thought by thought fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, prayer, praise, worship, study and application of God's Word to our life. This progressively renews our mind to think, act

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and minister through Christ in us. God gradually reveals His specific vision for our life and leads us into it.

OUR MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

There are many different ministries that need to be done in order for the local and world-wide Body of Christ to successfully function. All members of the Body of Christ do not all do the same ministry. We are each specifically appointed, anointed and gifted by the Holy Ghost to minister in the particular way(s) that will enable us to contribute our part to the whole of the Body of Christ.

Jesus is the head of the Body of Christ. We are the members of the Body of Christ. We are Jesus' arms, legs, eyes, ears, hands, fingers, feet, toes, etc. Each of us has a very important specific task or tasks to do. If we don't do what Jesus calls and motivates us to do, we hinder ourselves, our local church and the world Body of Christ from growing and going about God's business of saving the lost and raising the Spirit-born to become ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ.

God gives us glimpses of what He has in mind for us to specifically do through our motivational gifts. If you examine yourself, you will usually discover you are motivated to think and act in ways that draw you to specific activities. In Christianity, that translates into your being drawn to specific types of ministries.

Romans 12:6-8 lists the seven common categories of motivational gifts. All believers, not just the five ascension gifted leaders of the church, have some sort of major or minor gifting in one or more of these categories.

Romans 12:6-8

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that

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teaches, on teaching; or he that exhorts, on exhortation: he that gives, let him do it with simplicity; he that rules, with diligence; he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let's look at each one and see if you can recognize a motivational gift God has provided you with. We'll also look at how our manly soul can misuse or dilute these gifts.

- 1) **PROPHECY:** Drawn to personal intimacy with God. Has insight into people and situations. Frank and direct. Spiritually impelled to speak the truth of God. Recalls and quotes scriptures. Hates evil. Does not compromise. Abhors incompetence and poor leadership whether someone else's or his own. Recognizes when others are out of line. Knows when he has been out of line and allows Jesus to correct him.

Do not let this gift turn you into a bully. Those with a motivational gift of prophecy can minister hurt rather than help if they employ soul led criticism rather than building up, encouraging and comforting people with the love, Spirit and Word of God. It is only the love, Spirit and Word of God, not the mind of man, which has the power to convict and convert Christians from thinking and acting like sinners to thinking and acting like saints. Use your gift to be a beacon of light and lovingly lead people out of the darkness of their sin and self-delusion into the marvelous light of God's dear Son.

- 2) **HELPS MINISTRY:** The quiet worker who Does not need a human command to step in and do what needs to be done in order to

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keep the church physically neat and in good running order. Males will tend to maintain the inside and outside of the physical church, usher, or engage in ministries that require technical or craft skills. Females will tend to cook, clean, do secretarial or odd jobs, work with the children and coordinate the physical setup of social functions. These are not exclusive, however. A female could become an usher or a male might make a great cook. Those in helps ministry should understand that not everyone will have this motivational gift and shouldn't get upset if someone else does not "help" as much as they do.

Because many helpers are dedicated to insuring things stay in order during a service, they often can't fully participate in prayer, praise, worship and listening to the Word of God during the service. This can hinder their Spiritual growth. Therefore, helps ministers must insure themselves that they are growing in God through daily personal prayer, praise, worship, Word study and ongoing fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

- 3) **TEACHING:** Driven to study and understand God's Word. Likes to share what he has learned. Can annoy others by providing all sorts of small details rather than quickly sharing the heart or point of a matter.

Those with a teacher gift can injure others with a legalistic religious spirit that pushes rather than leads people to God's will and way for their lives.

A God-led teacher does not beat people over the head with God's Word in an attempt to get them to submit to it. Rather, he lovingly

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provides people with the truth of God's Word. Even when a person outright rejects God's truth, the teacher does not reject the person, but rather remains ever ready to reveal God's truth to the person, once the person decides the truth of God is what he wants to hear.

- 4) **EXHORTATION (ENCOURAGER):** Is impelled by the Spirit to lift people up. Always finds something good, positive or creative about any person or situation. Likes to encourage, instruct, comfort and urge people to press on.

Encouragers can annoy others by stepping beyond the bounds of Godly encouragement and pushing them rather than letting God provoke them to think and act in a positive, creative new way of Godly thought and action.

- 5) **GIVER (CONTRIBUTOR):** Often a business minded person who is Spiritually guided to make money in order to help support the operation of his local church and the world Body of Christ through his church. Also may like to provide other resources to support church operation.

Can sometimes cross over from being Spirit-led to becoming soul-obsessed with making and providing money and resources. This can cause friction with others.

A giver must be sure only to give that which God leads him to give to whom God leads him to give it to. A giver should be sure he's only giving out of agape love without any need to be recognized and applauded by

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others, or to gain some sort of influence with the pastor or a position in the church.

- 6) **RULER (LEADER):** Organizer, administrator type who is led to solve problems and create order and efficiency. Must be securely led by the love of God to love others, otherwise he can easily become frustrated when others do not see or agree with what he sees or thinks needs to be done. Problems can also arise if he becomes too bossy and dictates what to do rather than leading and encouraging others to act.
- 7) **MERCY:** Has a heart for the hurting. Willing to listen and offer insight and help. However, unless securely grounded in his love relationship with God, the mercy heart can be emotionally hurt when others do not positively respond to his offer of help, understanding and aid. He can easily reject those who he thinks are rejecting him.

Unless led by the Spirit and wisdom of God, those with the gift of mercy can also become easy marks for phonies who put on an act in order to get money and aid from an immature Christian. If you are gifted with mercy, you need to make sure you hear from God before doing more than listening and talking to a person. Otherwise, in your eagerness to help, you could inadvertently hinder a person from bottoming out and reaching out to Jesus.

Examine yourself. See which categories of motivational gifting ring a bell in your heart. Then ask God to reveal to you the specific motivational gift(s) you have. Sometimes a gift will draw from two or three categories of gifting. For

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example, say you realize God has gifted you to minister emotional healing to people who have been emotionally brutalized. More than likely it is because you identify with them, but you have been healed by God's Word and agape love. Though that is the specific gift God has given you, you will have to draw on other Spiritual gifts as you begin to minister to those God brings to you. You will need a heart of mercy to reach out to others, who are often strangers to you. You will also need to draw upon the gift of teaching to provide them with the Word of God. You may need to draw upon the gift of prophesy to provide them with a word of knowledge or word of wisdom, or you might need to be able to discern a particular evil spirit that is making them emotionally sick. But know this: God is forever faithful to provide you with whatever you need to minister your gift to people.

Many artistic gifts, such as music, painting, writing, etc., may have been in evidence in your life as a talent before you came to the Lord. He will sometimes convert them into a divine gift. The difference between a natural talent and a divine gift is that a natural talent is soul-led and self-centered. It elevates the person. A divine gift is Spirit-led and God-centered. It elevates God and His good news for man.

Divine gifts come in all sizes and varieties. Those who minister in jail, prison, nursing homes, hospitals, soup kitchens, on the street or to specialized groups of people struggling with addictions to alcohol, drugs, sex, gambling, work, etc. all require motivational gifts from God to be effective. Divine gifts are a testament to the power and goodness of God. He wants everyone saved and raised into Jesus' image so He blesses people with gifts that both help lead others to Jesus and raise others into Jesus' image.

Gifts of God will speak to you. They will urge you to step out in faith and do what they are calling you to do. If you do, you will have positive results. If it is a gift of God, you will find it easy to do, enjoy what you are doing and creatively affect the lives of others with it. Your gift will grow in

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precision and power as you more and more operate through it. The time and effort you devote to developing your gift will be full of joy and well spent.

If God is calling you into church leadership as an ascension gifted apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher, this will eventually become evident to you. Ascension gift ministers, as all other ministers, must first willingly enter into their believer ministries and partake of God's on-the-job training. God trains us both directly from within and through providing us with mature believer and ascension gift ministers to learn from. We submit to those ministers' experience and authority, apply their teaching and guidance to our life, and grow in God and ministry. Once we mature in God and ministry enough that God can trust us to teach and tutor others, God then provides us with others to teach and tutor, as well as increases the anointing in our life and upon our ministry.

No matter how mature and anointed we may get, God always provides us with others to learn from and be supported by as well as others we will teach and support. Through our personal fellowship with God and other mature Spirit-led believer and ascension gifted ministers, we are able to hear what we need to hear and do what we need to do to continually grow in God and ministry throughout our life.

If you haphazardly jump into a ministry or name and claim a ministry as your own without first seeking God as to whether it is His will for you or not, you will not be successful at it. You will eventually burn out in the ministry and maybe even get turned off from ministry of any sort. This can also happen in ministries you are actually being called by God to enter into. If you get ahead of God and His step by step mind transformation and Spiritual training then you will not be able to grow into the fullness of the ministry God has specifically chosen for you. Remember, we grow from faith to faith, glory to glory and strength to strength. You can't expect to win, much less complete, a marathon, if you haven't learned to first walk and then progressively run

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harder and longer. Let Jesus train you and direct your steps and you will progressively become the minister God intends for you to become.

You can't discover and enter into the power and glory of God's specific vision for you if you do not first dedicate yourself to growing beyond a child into a daughter or son of God. A sign of Spiritual growth is that your focus comes off you and onto God. You begin to love and serve God for who He is to you rather than what God can do for you. A good question to ask yourself is: "Does it matter if anyone sees me do this, or knows that I do it?" If the answer is no, then Jesus can trust you to let Him minister through you as He needs to rather than as you want to. If the answer is yes, then you must die to yourself and come to the realization that ministry is not about showing you off to others. It's only about pleasing God by letting Jesus continue His 2,000 year old agape love motivated ministry of reconciliation to you and through you.

AGAPE LOVE MAKES US EQUAL WITH GOD

As noted earlier, the agape love of God is not the sexual, emotional or intellectual bonding men know as love. Agape love bonds stronger and is more fulfilling than human love. It does what human love cannot do. Agape love joins us with God, as His Spiritually perfect child, who is equal with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost (Philippians 2:5).

Equal means to see eye to eye. I can meet and guide my children at any age and stage of their human development because they are my offspring and I was once where they are and know what they are going through. Similarly, through agape love, Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost can meet us eye to eye at any age and stage of our Spiritual, mental and emotional development and guide us through it.

This is the key to fulfilling God's general and specific visions for us. Agape love is who God and we are. The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life within our human nature are the enemies of God's love. Satan's job is to

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stimulate our human nature to reject the agape love nature of God in us. We can only grow in God and fulfill God's vision for our life by rejecting that which rejects God in us. If we will love and trust God enough to bring every thought to Christ in us, then we can eye to eye examine each thought with Jesus, Father and Holy Ghost. In Jesus' name, we can then cast out the evil thoughts and activate the good thoughts into our life. This enables us to live in the peace and prosperity of God no matter how miserable or messy life may be around us (2 Corinthians 10:5).

GOD'S SPECIFIC VISION BRINGS PEACE

God's specific vision for our life will always agree with God's Word and bring peace to our heart. It is usually simple in its understanding, though it may eventually require many different parts to bring it to completion. You should be able to plainly write down your vision so that you can read, understand and run with it (Habakkuk 2:2).

If you can't find a scripture, principle or concept of God's Word to support what you are envisioning to do then it's not of God. Even when you do discover Word to support your vision, you still have to thoroughly check out with God if it is His vision for you or your vision for you.

If it is of God, you will be able to press on even when nothing seems to be happening. If not of God, you will let go of your vision when it seems to be going nowhere. Don't waste your time with a vision that is not supported by God's Word and God's voice within your heart. Once you know your vision, you won't seek to do what others do but rather focus upon what God has for you to do.

Your vision will inspire you to press on toward the prize of its high calling of God in Christ Jesus for you no matter what comes against you. You must actively work your vision or it will never be more than a wish. Wishes don't fulfill God's specific vision for you. Working out your vision through fellowship with God and following His leading is the

Diligently Pursue God's Vision

only thing that can bring you the peace and prosperity Jesus has in mind for you.

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths
(into His good, acceptable and perfect will for your life, Romans 12:2).

Love on God and fellowship with God. Listen to God and hear what God is saying to you. Then do only what God directs you to do, one step at a time. God's not in a rush. Your maturation in the ways of Jesus is what counts most to God. Once you prove yourself truly dedicated to God, then He can begin to have faith in you to do what His specific vision for you will require you to do.

Your vision should bring you peace. No matter how impossible it appears for you to fulfill your specific vision or even complete the current step your vision requires, you should always be at peace. Remember, it's not your vision. It's God's vision and the Word says that God is faithful to perform it through you (Philippians 1:6). Just let Him. You are not responsible for anything but bringing your next thought to Jesus and letting Him tell you what to do with it. Simply do what He says and let the Holy Ghost work things out.

We're not responsible for originating or empowering ideas into creation. We are responsible for staying in sin free fellowship with the originator and empowerer of the ideas, so those ideas can pass through our mind and mouth.

Faith works by agape love (Galatians 5:6). God's Kingdom in heaven and on earth only works through faith (Hebrews 11:6). Faith speaks God's Word and kills Satan's evil or creates God's good for us and others. Our job is to speak the Word of God in faith and kill Satan's evil or create God's good. No matter what specific vision God gives us, we

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will grow and help others grow in Christ if we dedicate ourselves to fulfilling that vision.

For instance, my specific vision is to reach out in love and connect with both sinner and saint. I encourage them to fulfill their lives by getting Spirit-born and then mind-transformed into Jesus' agape love image. This is what drives my life in Christ. I know that by doing what God wants me to do, Jesus is able to work through me to help others, so they in turn can help still others work out their salvation.

All things work for the good for those who love God and respond to His call to live the life of Christ and fulfill His vision. All of us are to become the New Testament minister of reconciliation and ambassador for Christ that God has uniquely purposed for each of us to become. We do this by totally loving God through our New Creation Spirit, heart, soul, mind and strength and loving others through God's unconditional agape love within us (Romans 8:28; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Mark 12:30-31).

We don't turn our backs upon the sinners God sets before us; instead, we minister to them through the patience, prayer and words God gives us, meeting and loving them where they are. We don't hide out in our churches and keep Christ to ourselves; instead, we share our love for God and one another and use our churches as places to tutor and train us on how to see and pursue God's vision for our life. We help each other step into our believer or ascension gift ministry to our local church, the Body of Christ and the world around us, just like the first New Testament Ministers of Reconciliation and Ambassadors for Christ did over 2,000 years ago.

Chapter 22

MINISTERS OF RECONCILIATION, AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST

Jesus was the first man made fully in the image and likeness of God. He was the first minister of reconciliation and ambassador for Christ who blessed and empowered people to prosper in all areas of their lives. Through us Jesus continues His work upon earth. He does so by constantly renewing and transforming our mind to think, feel and act like Him. The more we think, feel and act like Him the more He is able to manifest God's blessings, release God's power, and minister God's Word and ways to us and through us to others (Romans 8:29; Genesis 1:28; Ephesians 1:3-5, 2:6, 10).

At any time in our Christian life, Jesus-led ministry is simply us letting our intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost flow out through us to our family, friends and others. There are stages of development and levels of maturation that God progresses us through as we are conformed into the image of Jesus and minister with ever increasing power and effect. In Chapter 21 we talked about discovering and entering into the specific vision and ministry God has for our life. In order to discover and succeed at what God has for us, we must first believe that, through Jesus Christ in us, God makes us able ministers of the New Testament (2 Corinthians 3:6). Once we believe, then step by step Jesus conforms us into the specific minister

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of reconciliation and ambassador for Christ that God has in mind for us to become (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

MINISTERING THROUGH HOLY GHOST ANOINTING

There is nothing more rewarding than to live in Jesus and let Him minister through us in the supernatural power of Holy Ghost anointing. Holy Ghost ministerial anointing is neither human enthusiasm nor theological discourse, though a Jesus-led, Holy Ghost powered Christian will often minister with enthusiasm, quote scriptures and make theological points when ministering to an individual or group. It is not the person, however, but rather Jesus through the Spirit of God within and upon the person, who is stirring the enthusiasm and pointedly piercing the hearer(s). The difference between soul-of-man initiated and Spirit-of-God activated ministry is in the fruit it produces. Only the Spirit of God, not the soul of man, has the power to miraculously illuminate people's minds, move people's hearts, and heal people's bodies and life situations.

1 Corinthians 4:19-20

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

In this scripture, Paul recognizes that it is the faith released power of Jesus' anointed Holy Ghost spoken Word, not the impotent word of men's religious minds, that brings forth the Kingdom of God.

Before I learned to let Jesus minister through me in the anointing and leading of the Holy Ghost, I would try and do what I saw all the other ministers of religion do and I would preach what I thought people needed to hear. Though I based my teaching upon scriptures and what would be considered

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academically sound, religiously appropriate and denominationally approved dogma and doctrine, my teaching and preaching seldom did more than bore people and put them to sleep. I was unable to reach them where they truly needed to be reached and provide them with the power of God that could begin to benefit their lives. Once I began to let Jesus minister through me in the anointing and leading of the Holy Ghost things changed for the better. Holy Ghost began to come upon me with the same Spirit of Ministry that Jesus spoke about in Luke 4:18-19. People were stirred. Miracles manifested. Ministry became fruitful and fun. By giving Jesus free reign to minister through me any time He wants, any way He wants, to whomever He wants – then the Holy Ghost can anoint and lead me to preach or teach and minister His gifts and empowerments 24/7 anywhere He wants (2 Timothy 4:2). This holds true whether I'm ministering in a service or to someone at the grocery store.

Through 24/7 fellowship, I simply remain ready to say or do whatever Jesus and Holy Ghost want to say or do. It makes no difference to me if the message we spent days preparing gets put aside and Holy Ghost leads me to speak on something else. Instead of a prepared message, Holy Ghost might lead me to minister prophesy, words of wisdom and knowledge, healing and encouragement that stir the people to step beyond where they are in Christ. All I have to do is show up and simply open my mouth, say the first words and then Jesus, through the Holy Ghost, takes over and we are on our way.

Does that mean if you do pulpit ministry you should never prepare a message or a sermon? No, as you study and prepare you are filling yourself with God's Word and will have that Word to give out as needed. But you must stay tuned into what the Holy Ghost wants to do and say. He might go a completely different way than you had thought. You might start talking about a totally different topic than you had prepared. If you are truly listening to the Holy Ghost and have built yourself up in the Word, then what you minister

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will be effective. When we stay connected to Jesus, then Holy Ghost can connect through us to whomever Jesus wants to connect to.

Effectively ministering through the Holy Ghost, whether behind a pulpit, in a store, at work, home or anywhere else, requires you to freely give God your whole heart, soul, mind and strength for Him to minister through. Doing this then Father, Jesus, Holy Ghost and you are absolutely in one accord mentally, emotionally, physically and Spiritually. There is no human way to adequately describe the clarity, power and presence of God that comes upon us when we minister through the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Not only is it enjoyable, it is effective. It reaches people where they need to be reached in the moment. Though people may reject the Holy Ghost anointed Word that Jesus has for them through us, seldom do they get bored or fall asleep when ministered to through Christ in us.

You may be wondering how you can become a Holy Ghost anointed Christian, and through Jesus minister God's Word with power to your spouse, child, co-workers, fellow Christians and others. I used to wonder that myself. I learned that if I dedicate myself to being one with God by fellowshiping and actively working out my salvation with God, then the Holy Ghost can activate His anointing in me or upon me any time He elects. If I purposely stay tuned to how Holy Ghost wants to operate, and let Jesus say and do what He wants through me, then I can minister in the power and might of Holy Ghost anointing. The only way a Christian can fail to minister through the anointing of the Holy Ghost is for the Christian not to live in intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, as noted by Jesus through Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

1Corinthians 13:1-3

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity (intimate agape love fellowship with God), ***I am become as sounding***

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brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

God is agape love. The agape love of God is what we thrive on, are fulfilled by, and minister through. All the marvelous words and miraculous gifts of God that we manifest amount to nothing if they aren't motivated by our love for God and others. God doesn't gift us so we can impress our self and others with our ministry gifts. He gifts us to love others as He loves them, by us obeying His leading to serve His gifts to others where He wants, when He wants, how He wants.

Jesus gave us a new commandment to agape love others as He agape loves us (John 13:34). In 1 John 4:12 and 21, God's Word says, ***"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us....And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."***

We are the sons and daughters of God who are designed and ordained by God to live the abundant supernatural life of agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. All ministry we receive from Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and all ministry They minister through us to others flows out of our intimacy and oneness with Them.

Going to Bible College or getting a degree in theology does not automatically make us God's minister. True ministry is living in God's presence and letting Jesus minister to us and through us wherever, whenever and to whomever He wants. Anything less is less than God has in mind. As we learn to love, think, speak and act as Jesus does, we learn to

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minister to others beginning with our spouse, family and friends (Chapter 9; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11; Mark 15:15-20).

MINISTERING TO YOUR SPOUSE

In the New Testament the husband and wife live in agape love fellowship with God, which marries them to Jesus and one another. Through their oneness in Jesus, the husband and wife learn to submit to the Spirit of Christ in each other so that Jesus can successfully lead them in all they think, say and do.

Ephesians 5:21-33

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Jesus-led) wives, submit yourselves unto your own (Jesus-led) husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in

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particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence (love and honor) her husband (in the same way her husband loves and honors her).

Until Gayle and I each fully entered into agape love fellowship with God and began to bring Jesus all our thoughts about everything – including our marriage – we sometimes struggled with one another because of our very different ways of thinking. Not only were we challenged by my male mind and her female mind, but we come from very different backgrounds, and are polarized opposites in many of our natural characteristics. She is introverted, quiet, conservative, Southern by birth and temperament, a lady of manners who is patient. I am extroverted, loud, liberal, a New Yorker by birth and temperament, a man of the street who, in the natural, waits for no one. Jesus had to make us both very aware of the things with which we could be irked by and with which we could irk the other.

By fellowshiping with God, we have learned how to identify and capture those thoughts that will wreck our communication with one another. When the thoughts come, in Jesus' name, we cast them out of our head so the peace of heaven reigns, instead of speaking them out of our mouth and loosing the harassment of hell into our life. This enables us to reconcile our differences, even if that means we have to occasionally walk away from one another for a while. We have learned to pray, forgive, forget, give it all over to God and then return to one another renewed in the Spirit and able to once again lovingly communicate with each other.

Jesus has taught us to serve one another rather than rule and reign over one another. We daily do what we can to bless one another in things large and small. Throughout the day we bind Satan's evil out of and loose God's good into one another's life. If one of us sees that the other is being attacked with upset, we know that to speak out loud will only turn the upset upon the one speaking. Instead, with our inner mouth

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Gayle or I pray, “In Jesus’ name, I bind all evil spirits and thoughts out of my husband/wife! I loose the Holy Ghost to cast them into hell and bring peace to my spouse, right now!” If Gayle or I then continue to keep our outside mouth closed and faithfully wait, soon the evil that was attacking the other departs and peace returns to both of our lives.

Sometimes, though, when aggravation raises its ugly head, we fail to kick out Satan’s temptation to accuse, blame or argue and we start to fight with each other. Once we see it for what it is: Satan’s attempt to destroy our relationship with each other and hence our relationship with God, then one of us will say, “Hold it! Time out! Let’s come into prayer on this.” All it usually takes is a reminder that we are in the midst of spiritual warfare for us to come together and destroy Satan’s attack against us.

Ephesians 6:12 says, “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world.*” Never is this truer than in a marriage. If your spouse loves Jesus, then, as Gayle often counsels other women, don’t take anything your spouse does personally. You have to believe in your heart that your spouse will not hurt you on purpose. Look beyond the natural and see what is going on in the spirit. Recognize that Satan will do anything to destroy your marriage or break up your family. Go after Satan, not your spouse.

It is amazing – better yet, it is miraculous – how blessed a marriage can be when Jesus is at its core. Putting Jesus in charge of our marriage is the good common sense thing to do. However, the self-centered mind of man does not agree with God’s good common sense. It wants attention and recognition. It wants our mate to respect and support us just the way we are. There is nothing wrong with that, but only through Jesus is that truly possible. By Jesus guiding our thoughts and emotions through the love of God rather than the longings of man, we can get to know, serve and enjoy our

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mate, as God would have us do. This will grow us in God both as individuals and as a couple.

Gayle and I had to first commit ourselves to working out our marriage. Like all other mind transformation, we had to put on the supernatural agape love led thinking and acting of God. We had to purposefully think and act like Jesus. Now – for the most part – that is how we think and act towards one another. Only through Jesus can we successfully recognize, pay attention to, respect, support and bless one another.

This is a very real issue in most marriages. One of the simplest ways we can love, respect, support and bless our spouse is to pay attention to what our spouse says to us. Listen to your spouse. Ask him/her questions to clarify that you understand what your spouse is saying to you. Sometimes you have to say: “What I think you means is . . .” By summing up and rephrasing words, you open up more dialogue to insure you and your spouse are on the same page instead of you thinking you know what your spouse is saying only to find out you haven’t a clue. If you’ve ever had a long conversation with your spouse, you’ve probably discovered that men and women think and process thoughts differently.

Men tend to want to get right to the point of a matter and solve it. Women often simply want to talk about things that may not actually be leading to a point that needs to be solved. By lovingly responding to what is being said through comments and questions, we can clearly comprehend one another. This enables us to have two way conversations which join us together. If you’ve ever been part of a conversation that has degenerated to a lecture, or worse to something akin to a cop telling a criminal what to do, you know what I mean. Through paying attention to our spouse and preferring her/him before our self, we not only keep the peace but prosper from the love and joy that is generated by talking “*with*” rather than “*to*” each other.

Look what happened to the first marriage in the Bible. God made the woman to be the man’s loving help mate, yet when they did their own things, disobeyed God, sinned and

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ran away from God, their marriage changed from an agape love fest into a carnal contest. The man blamed the woman, the woman blamed the devil, both turned their backs on God and one another. No longer did they willingly submit to and co-operate with one another but rather through their Satan-infected, self-centered souls they tried to control one another.

What is impossible for us to see, until we get Spirit-born and growing in God, is that God made man and woman equal in His eyes, so they could love God and then love one another (Genesis 1:26-27). God's plan is that when a man and woman marry, they become co-equal partners who are each gifted by God to creatively add to each other's life (Genesis 2:18). Sin and Satan separated the first man and woman from God and turned their marriage into a self-willed, soul-led contest to see who was going to get the best of and rule over the other. This is why over 50% of marriages, including Christian marriages, end in divorce. Without the love, Spirit, Word and faith of God being put first in a marriage, the marriage is susceptible to the attacks of Satan and our self-centered, soul led manly self.

God did not make men and women to marry and make a mess of one another by trying to force each other to do things a certain way. God made husbands and wives to live in God's love, Spirit, Word and faith. Through such they become each other's best friend, partner and ally in Christ. They add to rather than take from one another and together become more than either can become alone.

A husband and wife are led by Jesus to minister over themselves and their children. They are Spiritually designed to work with Jesus as a team to bind the attacks of the enemy against them and loose the good of God into their lives. In Jesus' name, mothers and fathers heal, build up, encourage, comfort, speak words of wisdom and knowledge, prophesy and proclaim all the good things of God's Word for themselves and their children (Matthew 16:19, 18:18-20).

One thing we can do with our spouse is at day's end before we go to bed, we put the children to bed and then take

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out the Bible and read to one another. We might even discuss what we've read. Then we pray for one another, our children, our family, our friends, our church and those others we are led to pray for. We thank Father God for continually manifesting in our lives.

MINISTERING TO YOUR CHILDREN

Proverbs 22:6

Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

The way your children should go is the way of Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. But they will not go there unless they see you go there. They will not go there unless the church you are going to goes there and helps your children get there. They will not go there unless you day by day raise them up in the Spirit and Word of God. Teach them what you know and how to apply it to their lives. Start them talking to Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost from the moment they can talk. Read God's Word to them and have them read God's Word to you out of children's bibles and bible story books. Get them filled with the Spirit, speaking in the tongues of God and ministering to themselves, you and others through the gifts and empowerments of the Holy Ghost. Do this and you will have great young men and women of God rather than raggedy kids and tumultuous teens.

You may have come to Jesus with older children or teens who, like you, have never had a relationship with God. No problem. Just change the way you think about them and the way you deal with them. Change from thinking they are the enemy and you must guard against them and keep them under your control through harsh words and anger. Step right into the ministry of the parent and overseer of your house.

Minister through Jesus to your children. Employ binding and loosing prayer, agape love, and friendly straight talk based upon the Word and principles of the Word of God

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rather than angry commandments based upon the force and fury of man. Your God changed thinking and behavior, once seen and believed by your children, will set the example for them to likewise change for the better through the Spirit and Word of God in them.

This is a miraculous process that is no less a miracle than having cancerous cells destroyed and eliminated from a person. The mental and emotional cancer of the thinking and acting of the world that was eating away at and killing your relationship with you and your children will be destroyed by God. It will be replaced by His agape love. You will truly begin to love and care for one another when you faithfully live and minister the good news of Jesus to yourself and your children.

Let Holy Ghost operate in your relationship with your children. Daily pray in Holy Ghost tongues for you and them to come together and live through the love and peace of God. Believe this is so. Open your mouth and declare it is so. Say, "Thank You, Father, that my children and I are one in Christ. We love and respect each other. No weapon formed against us will prosper. We live in health and are successful in all our ways through the love of God in us, in Jesus' name, amen!"

Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might, not your might, but His might, His ability to open doors that need opening and close doors that need closing in the lives of you and your children. Love and encourage your children no matter what. Speak the Word over them and encourage them to repeat what you say. Do not give into your feelings, or your fear that you might somehow lose your child if you correct her/him. You are not called to be friends with your children, you are called to be a parent. Do your job right and the friendship comes later. We have a wonderful relationship with our adult children and are great friends with them because we were first good parents to them and raised them to love the Lord.

When you have to discipline your children do so through the authority of Christ in you rather than the rage of man in

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you. After disciplining a child minister God's love and Word. Don't beat them over the head with the Bible or condemn them in any way, rather always let them know how much God loves them and wants to work with them. Tell them how much you love them and want all that is good for them. Do this and they will succeed in all things through Christ in them no matter what age they may be, whether two or seventy-two.

Just as Satan aims to destroy marriages by coming between husband and wife, he employs the same tactic with families by coming between parents and children. Think about this. Children are your most precious fruit. They are the ones who will continue the news of God's glorious gospel of redemption, salvation and prosperity. Why wouldn't Satan want to nip your fruit in its bud?

Don't let your children divide you and your spouse. Don't play "good cop, bad cop." Don't say things like, "Go ask your mother" or "Wait until your father comes home." Your children need to see that you and your spouse are in one accord and will support each other when it comes to decisions, discipline, etc. Children learn the ways of the world early on. Don't let them manipulate you by playing you one against the other. Teach them and show them you operate only in the Lord. This also, by the way, includes apologizing to them when you have made a mistake or have acted out of your manhood when dealing with them.

There is one other thing that is vitally important. Daily pray for the Godly man or woman God has already ordained to become your child's spouse. Let your children know that their bodies belong to God. Encourage them to respect themselves and to expect others to respect them also.

MINISTERING TO SINGLE CHRISTIANS

Are you a single Christian? If you are, it's highly likely that other singles will seek you out for ministry with regard to the single Christian and his/her relationship to the opposite sex. Since natural minded fleshly society is consumed with

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sexual satiation and the mating game, it's wise to have God's mind on the matter. Here are a few ideas from the Word of God, some of which we've already talked about and a couple of new ones that may prove beneficial.

First, as with all other Christians, it is vital for single men and women in Christ to completely give their hearts to Jesus. Your relationship with Jesus should be more important to you than your relationship with the opposite sex. That way no weapon formed against you can prosper. By guarding your mind and keeping your body undefiled by others and holy unto the Lord, you can faithfully pray for and await the spouse Jesus may one day provide you with. The spouse you will love, cherish and never divorce. If you leave it in Jesus' hands you won't buy into pulp fiction romance or emotion driven dating with on demand sex. You will live wholly and holy unto the Lord.

Sexual intimacy does not a marriage make. Only the agape love of God first joining a man and woman Spiritually, mentally and emotionally makes a marriage. Sexual intimacy then flows from that union. That's why God admonishes us not to engage in sex outside of His Spiritually ordained and blessed marriage. Without God first joining a man and woman in Spirit and soul, then sex is mere sex and sex without God's blessed Spirit and soul union is prostitution. We barter our body to buy the favor of another. Don't prostitute yourself. If you've prostituted yourself then pray 1 John 1:9, accept God's forgiveness, and from now on continually walk and talk with and remain faithful to Jesus, Who we are Spiritually married to (Romans 7:4). Single Christians should honor their marriage to Jesus and make that the focal point of their lives. This committed, holy lifestyle will minister to other single people seeking God.

MINISTERING TO YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Don't shove Jesus down the throats of your non-Christian relatives or friends. Instead, minister to them by living the life

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of Christ. When they reveal a need in their lives offer to pray for it. If they are sick or in pain, offer to pray for them. In Jesus' name, ask Father to take Satan's hands off their need, body, mind or emotions and loose the Holy Ghost to meet their need or heal their body, mind or emotions. What you have prayed in accord with God's Word (Matthew 16:19) will instantly or gradually come forth. When it does, your relative or friend will be unable to deny it and will begin to take a closer look at your God, Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

With Christian relatives or friends, who do not believe everything you believe or walk in the Spirit and Word like you do, focus upon areas of agreement. Talk about the good news of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection to save us from sin, Satan and hell. Let them speak to you about their needs and ailments. When they do, offer to pray for their needs to be met and healing to be had. If they accept, then pray for them and Jesus will meet their needs and heal them. They will be unable to deny that Jesus answered your prayer for them. Watching you live the life of Christ will increase their curiosity about being baptized in the Holy Ghost and ministering through His gifts and empowerments. Your living witness and demonstration of the power and might of Holy Ghost ministry through the prophetic words, prayers and healing hands of Jesus can help a lot of fellow Christians step into the more God has for them. In our next chapter, we will continue on to talk about ministering outside our family and church.

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Chapter 23

MINISTERING OUTSIDE OUR CHURCH

Everyone who is a Spirit-born believer carries the good news of Jesus Christ not only to his family, friends and fellow believers, but to the world in which he lives. A challenge many new believers face is that they are so excited about Jesus they want to tell everyone and get them Spirit-born. While this is what God wants to happen, we must do everything decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). Remember, Satan is subtle. He wants to destroy any creative impact your testimony will have by encouraging you to step beyond being excited, to becoming loud, or even pushy or obnoxious.

Chances are you won't realize you are acting like that and driving people away from rather than drawing them to Jesus. It takes us all awhile to discern that Christianity is a gospel of attraction. People have to want to become Christians – either because they are desperate, or they see something Christianity has that can change their lives in some positive way.

STAY BUILT UP IN THE HOLY GHOST

As we have noted in previous chapters, daily speaking, praying and singing in the tongues of God builds us up in the Holy Ghost and enables us to witness in the power and might of God's Spirit and Word. Ministering through our soul rather than the Holy Ghost empowered Word of God produces limited results. Daily charge yourself up by praying, speaking and singing in God's tongues, so you can minister with maximum power and effect whether behind a pulpit or at home, at work or in your community. Jesus' plan is for Him

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to minister God's Word through us with Holy Ghost signs, wonders and miracles reinforcing our sharing of God's Word.

Jesus said that when He is seen through our life, then He is lifted up from the earth for others to see.

John 12:32 and John 6:44

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me ... No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Because Father draws men to Jesus through your life in Christ, you never have to force Jesus on anyone. All you have to do is stay in fellowship with Father and He will send you to – or send to you – the people He wants Jesus to minister to through you. The demonstration of Jesus in you to others through love, prayer, Word, signs, wonders and miracles is what will impress them that your God is the God of love, power and might.

Romans 2:4

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance
(to totally turning your back on your old life of sin and fully fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost)?

Beating people over the head with the prospect of hell won't get you anywhere because it's not good news. It's not the gospel of Jesus Christ, Who came to save us from – not beat us over the head with – our sin.

Everyone knows they are a sinner, even if they don't know what sin means. They know they make a mess of things and that their lives are difficult at best and without hope much of the time. When you come along and pray a simple prayer to help someone succeed, or, in Jesus' name, ask Father to touch

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a person and he feels better, then the person takes notice and will give you his ear. Once he does that, Jesus can begin to work on the person's heart. Sometimes it will be you who will lead the person to Christ; sometimes you will just plant the seed and someone else will be the one who leads the person to Jesus when the person is finally ready.

If the person you are witnessing to wants to accept Jesus as their Lord, then have him call upon Jesus to save him (Romans 10:8-13). Or you can invite him to come to church with you and then take him up to the altar when your pastor gives the altar call for salvation.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

There are a lot of things in our community which the Holy Ghost can lead us to get involved in so the love of God can show-up and connect to others through us. Most of Jesus' ministry was not spent at the temple but rather meeting and greeting people where they lived, shopped, played, worked or gathered to talk with one another. Jesus met with people and imparted the love, knowledge, understanding, wisdom and healing of God into their lives. This drew many people to Jesus and His New Testament agape love empowered Kingdom of God message. By venturing out into our communities and engaging in community activities, we will meet, love and plant good seed into the lives of neighbors we would otherwise never have crossed paths with.

MINISTERING TO CO-WORKERS OR EMPLOYEES

We are called to be ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ wherever we are. This includes at our work place. If a fellow worker takes an interest in hearing your testimony about how Jesus has positively impacted your life or wants to know something about the Word of God, and it is not against policy to talk about Jesus in your work place, then share your testimony or God's Word with the person. Also

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realize that all day long, while you work, you can effectively minister the good news of Jesus Christ without even opening your mouth, by simply conducting your work through the excellence of Christ in you.

If you are an employee make sure you do above and beyond what you are expected to do. Be the one who shows up a little early and stays a little late. Pitch in and help others when possible. Speak highly of your employer no matter how much others bad mouth him. Daily pray for your employer and co-workers and the business. At work quietly pray in the Spirit. In Jesus' name, ask Father to bind Satan and loose the Holy Ghost and take power over all the stinking thinking and demonic activity that comes against your work place.

Those of us with jobs in law enforcement really need the fire of the Holy Ghost to succeed at our work. Police and their counterparts, Correctional Officers in jails and prisons, work in environments in which Satan severely infects the confronted public with self-will run riot anger and the rebellious convict with an "I'm right and you're wrong" attitude.

Public school teachers likewise work in intensely self-centered, emotionally charged environments. Satan keeps kids and especially teens crazy with trying to impress each other in order to gain attention and be accepted by certain groups. Common sense has yet to be found and sanity is turned inward in youth who are not Spirit-born and walking in the ways of God.

We have a friend who teaches in an alternate high school. His students are the ones who usually can't make it in a traditional setting. Most of them have been in trouble with the law. The students could be described as a "rough bunch." Our friend prays constantly for his students. He takes power daily over anything that would attack his classroom, praying and speaking in the Spirit to himself throughout the day. He rarely has any trouble with his students and has upon occasion been able to speak into their lives. Other teachers have taken notice. They wonder why they have so much trouble with the same students.

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A few of the teachers have become open to our friend's suggestions: to pray for the students, not curse them. Cursing doesn't mean to use foul language; it means to declare how bad the students are, how it is expected that there will be trouble. It is declaring the negative instead of standing on the positive knowledge that God is in control and can change any situation.

This is a great example of not pushing or shoving Jesus down peoples' throats. By simply living the life of Christ, not only does our friend have Godly results, but others have become interested and open to what he has to say.

Police, public school teachers and all of us who are filled with and empowered by the Holy Ghost can invoke Matthew 16:19 and bind and cast Satan and his evil out of our work environments and loose the Holy Ghost into our work environments to provide us with peace and order while we are there.

Gayle and I have worked or ministered in many environments including penal institutions and public schools. We can attest that such binding and loosing works.

My job requires me to answer a lot of distress type calls. On the way to a call, in Jesus' name, I pray and ask Father to bind Satan out of the call and loose the Holy Ghost into it to bring peace and clarity of sight. This works very well. The spirit of upset is cast out of the people and Holy Ghost shows me what to do to get the job done quickly and efficiently. While there I also minister Word, prayer, healing or other Holy Ghost gifts and empowerments, as led by Jesus to do so.

If you work in an emergency or stress type job invoke Matthew 16:19 and bind Satan out and loose Holy Ghost into it all the time. You will notice the difference.

If you own a business and employ others, make sure you pray for your business and stay in fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost so you can ask Them about how to run your business. Don't be ashamed of your Christianity, but don't shove it down anyone's throat. Let Jesus show you how to minister to your employees.

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MINISTERING WHEREVER WE ARE

No matter where we are or what we might be doing, we need to stay tuned into Jesus. Sometimes we might be casually shopping at the grocery store, or quietly getting gas, or attending our daughter's dance recital, or cheering at our son's ball game, or even getting something to eat at our favorite eatery. Wherever we are, if Jesus points out a person He wants us to quietly pray for we do so. If He leads us to start a conversation with a person, we do so.

When we speak to people, sooner or later they usually reveal a need. We can even ask them straight out if they have needs they'd like us to pray for. Few people say no. When they tell us what their needs are then we minister to them as Jesus leads us through God's Word, prayer and hands of healing.

Occasionally, Jesus offers a person Spirit-birth or Holy Ghost infilling with tongues. If the person accepts, then we minister such to them. After ministering, if the person doesn't already have a home church, we can invite them to attend ours. If led by Jesus to do so, we can also encourage them to contact us if they ever want to through email or by phone.

STREET MINISTRY

Street ministry is similar to ministry in our community, except we will usually carry a Bible, teaching tracts and church cards. Street ministry is great training for learning how to stay focused through our Spirit to hear and see who Jesus wants to minister to in a free flowing, semi-chaotic environment.

No one on the street is expecting to run into a church service. People are moving to and fro preoccupied with what is on their mind. Without Jesus to guide us, we can cause a lot of confusion sticking Bible tracts into people's faces or jumping in front of them and telling them how much Jesus loves them. Instead, we should stand still or walk and pray in

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tongues while keenly listening for Jesus to tell us who to approach and what to say or do when we do so.

We can even hold a tract in one hand offering it to people while saying, “Jesus loves and heals you. Read all about it!,” like the old time newsboys used to hawk their papers. Some people will smile and take our tract. Others will frown and possibly curse us. Most will look straight ahead and ignore us. Nevertheless, we keep listening for instructions from Jesus. Someone may all of a sudden stop in front of us and ask a question. We answer the person with what Jesus tells us to say to the person. If the person wants prayer for something, such as healing, in Jesus’ name, we ask Father to send the Holy Ghost to initiate the healing (1 Peter 2:24; Mark 16:18).

Jesus may tell us to approach a certain person. We step up to the person and in faith open our mouth, say the first word and let Jesus take over our tongue. When we sense that Jesus is finished ministering to the person, we stop, hand the person a tract and church card, and then move on.

We don’t have to shrink back and slink away in shame just because someone rejects us or curses at us or spits at us or does some other negative thing towards us. When that happens, we kill our flesh, smile and *silently* pray for them. Do not say something like, “Well, brother, I will pray for your misguided soul” and then launch into what amounts to an attack on the person’s beliefs or lifestyle to try and manipulate the person into feeling condemned. We don’t manipulate or condemn. That action doesn’t bring a person to Jesus, and usually *drives them away from* Jesus. Remember, Father God is drawing people to Jesus. He reveals to them the mess they are inside and then shows them the solution, using us as an example. This lets the person judge their own life and decide whether to continue to live in the hell of their life or seek relief through Jesus.

If there is a place in the community set aside for people to share their ideas in public with others, such as a public square or park or speakers platform, we can ask the Lord if that is a place He wants us to go to share His gospel.

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Some of us are called and specially anointed to minister in the street. If you are, you will soon know because people will positively respond to you and you will feel at home ministering in the street. Now I didn't say everybody would positively respond to you, but more often than not when you street minister a few folks will be helped in some way. If possible, minister with a partner. Our First Century forefathers tried to always send pairs of ministers into the street. The Acts of the Apostles is filled with stories of ministry teams ministering in the streets. This is usually where the members of the First Century church began their ministries, as street and house-to-house ministers (Acts 2:42-47).

HOUSE TO HOUSE MINISTRY

House to house ministry is used to invite people to church. One way to go about it is to stick church cards in house and apartment doors. Another way is to knock on the door and introduce yourself or your team with "Hi, I'm/we are (say your name[s]). I'm/we're from (name your church). I'm/we're here to invite you to church." Then hand them a church card. If they have any questions answer them and then go knock on the next door. We're not there to preach sermons or minister healing or prayer for life issues. Of course, if a person asks for prayer, pray for them. Or if Jesus stirs you to ask if they need prayer and they request such, then do so. Otherwise we're simply there to invite them to church where our pastor will minister to them.

If we knock on the door of a person who identifies himself as a backslidden Christian who wants to reestablish his relationship with Jesus, then we simply pray 1 John 1:9 with him and, in Jesus' name, have him ask Father to forgive him of his sins and cleanse him from all unrighteousness. Give him a church card and tell him he's welcome to come to church. If he has no transportation to get to church and your church has no ministry of transportation, then if you feel led to offer him a ride, do so. Take his phone number and call

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him the night before service to see if he still wants to come to church. Call him again in the morning just before picking him up to see if he is ready. Bring him to church and let Jesus lead you from there as to how to disciple him.

All ministry is activated by faith and obedience. We first have to in faith hear and believe where we are to go and what we are to say or do. Next, we then obediently go to and say and do what Jesus tells us to go, say and do. The moment we begin to go and say and do the Holy Ghost comes upon us and begins His ministry through Jesus in us (Luke 4:18).

INTERNET MINISTRY

Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, email, personal websites and other avenues of ministry are available on the Internet. No matter where you live you can reach people all over the globe with your testimony and the message of Jesus Christ. I know numerous believers who effectively minister God's Word and miracles through the Internet. It costs little and can reach a lot of people. Don't belittle the fact you may not minister to multitudes but rather only to a few. In God's mind, each one of us is who He sent Jesus to save and raise in God's Word and ways. Often times, only one on one personally sharing the love and Word of God with a person over an extended length of time is what will lead that person to Jesus or stir a fellow Christian to enter into intimate fellowship with Jesus and grow up into his ministry of reconciliation. The Internet provides you the means to enter into and develop this type of personal, on-going ministry.

INSTITUTIONAL MINISTRY

An institution is a place where a specific type of person temporarily or permanently resides. Examples are jails, prisons, nursing homes, hospitals, hospices, half way houses, shelters, etc. In order to minister in an institution, we must first obtain permission from the people in charge of the institution. Often this requires us to go through screening and

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training by the institution. Once we are certified and qualified by the institution, then its overseer and coordinator of volunteers or ministers will work out our ministry schedule with us.

For instance, when I entered into jail ministry in our local jail, I first contacted the officer in charge and told him the group I represented and asked him if there was a time members of our group could come to the jail and minister. He provided me with available times and told me that each member of our ministry team would first have to submit himself to a local police background check before being allowed into the jail.

When Gayle and I later got involved in prison ministry, a national police background check and eight hours of training were required to certify us as unpaid staff members of the Department of Corrections for our state. Once certified, we could then approach the chaplains of the prisons we were led to minister in. Then each chaplain interviewed us. Once the chaplain was satisfied we were legitimate and could help him fulfill his ministry mission at the prison, then he provided us with a time and place to conduct ministry.

I first got into prison ministry by being mentored by a married couple from our church who engaged in prison ministry. When they later went on to do other things and stepped down from prison ministry, I took the lead and Gayle joined me. We both got into nursing home ministry by training up under another church couple who led that ministry. Being led into and trained up by fellow church members who are already involved in an outside ministry is often the way Christians enter into ministry. Of course, if the Lord calls us and there's no one already ministering then we follow the lead of the Holy Ghost and begin the ministry from scratch. This was how I got involved in TV and hospital ministry.

Our church began experimenting with TV ministry by paying a local TV station to tape the Sunday church service and create a half hour show for broadcast. However, the

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cameramen unintentionally intruded upon the service and the cost was high with no discernible results. Then a public access television station was started in our town, allowing citizens to produce TV shows and have them broadcast at little cost. Gayle and I have TV production backgrounds, so using the equipment from the community access station, we began to create and broadcast a weekly hour TV show of the Sunday church service. Local people viewed the show and responded positively to the church. A few years later, the church hired an associate pastor, who took over the TV ministry.

The church also had no hospital ministry. But I felt the Lord leading me to go minister through Him in hospitals. Prior to becoming pastors, the pastors had been involved in hospital ministry. I received counsel from the senior pastor about what hospital ministry entailed, but had yet to act upon it when one day I went to see a man in a local hospital. After my visit, as I was making my way out through the crowded waiting area where patients were being screened and admitted into the hospital, Jesus told me to stop and look around at the suffering people in the crowded waiting area. My heart broke as I looked at them. Jesus had died not only to forgive all their sin but to heal all their sickness. Jesus told me to volunteer as a Chaplain. Three weeks later, after attending volunteer training, I began to visit patients, talking to them and leading them in prayers of Spirit-birth and healing.

When God puts a ministry calling into your heart, He seldom has you immediately step into it. Instead, He takes the time necessary to prepare your heart to both accept and become able to do what He intends for you to do. Once God is sure you are ready to enter into His ministry then God will let you know it's time to step into what He has prepared you to do through Him. This is not only true with new ministry; at each new level of on-going ministry God in some way prepares you to step up into it, as well.

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WE PLANT AND WATER

Ministry freely gives God's love to others. We don't jam ministry down people's throats who don't want to receive it. We don't yell at them that without prayer they will needlessly suffer or that by refusing Jesus' salvation they will go to hell when they die. If they are not ready to kill their pride and seek help with changing their sick and sorrowful lives, we can't do it for them. Mental, emotional and spiritual change can only begin when a person honestly faces his fear, looks at the mess he is inside and becomes willing to do what it takes to mentally, emotionally and spiritually change for the better.

Beating a person over the head with the fact he is a wreck is not ministering the good news of Jesus Christ to him. Instead, when you are led to minister to a non-Christian or backslid Christian, it is best to share some of your personal testimony about the messed up life you used to have. Once the person sees that you know where he's coming from, you can then mention how things began to get better when you asked Jesus into your life.

Leading people to Jesus or ministering to them in some way can happen to you at any time. You might be just minding your own business and all of a sudden Jesus points you to a person to start a conversation with. Soon the person begins to talk to you about the challenges he is faced with and you are led to talk about the solution you found through Jesus. As 1 Corinthians 3:6 tells us, our job is to either plant a Spiritual seed in a person or water a Spiritual plant that is already growing-up in the person. We seed or water and then we let God bear forth the increase, even in the case of a person who has asked us to one on one disciple them in the ways of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:5-10).

DISCIPLESHIP

A Christian disciple is a person who seeks out a fellow Christian to help him/her learn how to live the Christ life.

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Some churches have a discipleship program through which a seeker is matched-up with a mature church member of the same sex. For the most part, however, Jesus disciplines us through meeting and sharing with a Christian friend.

Since the day I began seeking Jesus as my best friend, Jesus has continually blessed me with more mature and less mature Christian friends, who He's used to carry His message to me and through me to them. This book is a perfect example of two Christians, Gayle and I, led to share with you, our new friend, what we've learned and profited from by 24/7 applying Jesus' love, Spirit, Word and faith to our life.

As you grow in the Word and ways of Christ, Jesus will send to you Christian friends He wants you to be disciplined by as well as those He sends for you to disciple. Though, at times, it's a great challenge, discipling and being disciplined will grow you in ways that only one-on-one working with another can grow you. The more we receive Jesus' Word and character into us, the more we can plant Jesus' Word and character into others, so that through Christ they and we both grow yet more into Jesus' image. Remember, whether in the natural or supernatural, what we plant we grow.

GOD IS A FARMER

John 15:1 proclaims that God is the husbandman, which is another name for farmer. There are husbandry references throughout the Bible. The one that instantly comes to mind is Luke 8:11-15. God's Word is likened to a seed; our mind likened to the ground where the seed is planted. Hosea 10:12 says we must break up our fallow (hard headed) ground, for it is time to seek the Lord. The Holy Ghost must prepare our head and heart to receive and bring forth the new Spirit-born life of Christ that is in us, just as the farmer must prepare the ground to receive and bring forth the new life in a seed.

Farmers plant seeds knowing the seeds won't spring up into plants overnight. Farmers know that the shell of the seed must first die and decay before its new life within can sprout

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forth out of the seed and make its way up through the dark of the soil to the light of the sun. It will take a while for the sprout to burst through the ground. Farmers understand they need to help this process by feeding and watering the ground where the seed was planted.

As ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we must likewise continually feed ourselves and those we minister to with the food of God's Word and the water of God's love. This will destroy the evil shell of our Satan-infected manhood, so the new born Spirit of God in us can sprout forth out of the darkness of our souls and grow up into the light and life of Christ. We must stand in the faith that God's food and water are good. Even though we don't see results yet, we know results will come. As we continue to feed on God's love and Word, we know that we will grow to the next level in Christ.

It makes no difference if it's level "A" in which we finally break through the dark ground of our sin and get Spirit-born into the light and life of Jesus, or level "Z" in which we live in continual harvest by capturing every thought and only operate through the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, goodness, obedience, power and glory of Jesus in us. No matter what level of Spiritual growth we are currently at, we are no longer men and women dedicated to sin and subject to the limitations of our manhood. We are new creations in Christ, dedicated to God with Whom all things are possible. All that counts is that we are willing to do whatever it takes to insure that Jesus can effectively minister to us and through us to others.

We are the ministers of reconciliation, the ambassadors for Christ, who God uses to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the world in which we live. From the moment we break through the darkness of our soul into the light of Jesus' Spirit until the day we leave earth, through Jesus, we seed and water our self and others with the love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, goodness, obedience, power and glory of Jesus Christ in us. Let us fully accept and walk in who we are in Jesus

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Christ. Let us enjoy our agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Let us thrive through our ministries of reconciliation as ambassadors for Christ to our family, friends and all others we come in contact with.

Loving God as God loves us and loving self and others through God in us fulfills God's love plan for man. Let us unceasingly press towards this mark of God's high calling in Christ by 24/7 fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. With Them we can work out our salvation and help our pastor minister the good news of Jesus Christ to us and others, as noted in our next chapter.

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Chapter 24

CHURCH MINISTRY

The First Century gatherings of the members of Jesus' Body/Church were not for the purpose of creating social or political clubs, or to see which group could get the most members. Rather, Jesus' followers informally gathered with each other to praise, worship, pray, testify, preach, teach and manifest the miracles of God. They loved, supported and helped each other to live the life of Christ by educating and encouraging each other how to become transformed by the renewing of the mind to think, act and minister like Jesus to their families, friends and others.

Jesus' Church began on Pentecost morning when its first 120 Spirit-born members were filled with the Holy Ghost and tongues of ministry fire. These first Christians then preached the good news of Jesus Christ on the streets of Jerusalem and 3,000 Jews came to the Lord. The first congregations met daily in members' houses to pray, praise, worship, share God's Word and testify about how Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost were guiding their lives. Out of their midst rose the ascension gift apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, who Jesus began to call and equip to serve the members of His New Testament Church.

1 Peter 5:1-3

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

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Unlike man-made religion, there is no high priest nor minister of any sort who stands between Jesus and His believers. Ascension gifted ministers are servants – not overlords – of God’s people. They neither rule, reign over or take advantage of believers. Rather, they love and help God’s people grow into the fullness of Christ in them.

Ephesians 4:8, 11-13; Romans 8:29

When Jesus ascended up on high, he led captivity (Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack) captive, and gave gifts unto men... He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...(By us getting Spirit-born, mind-transformed and fully) conformed to the image of His (God’s) Son, that He (God’s Son, Jesus Christ) might be the first born among many brethren (many brothers and sisters, like Himself).

Nowhere in the Word of God does it say that God eliminated any of the five ascension gift ministries after the First Century. How could He since each one manifests a different part of Jesus’ Messiah-Christ ministry? All five are necessary for the total training of the believers to live in agape love oneness with God and grow into the fullness of Jesus’ image, as ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ to their families, friends and others.

APOSTLES, PROPHETS, EVANGELISTS, PASTORS AND TEACHERS

No one can decide they want to be an ascension gifted apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher. Jesus calls His

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ascension gift ministries out of the ranks of the believer ministers. It takes many years for Jesus to totally mind-transform and character-conform a believer into an ascension gift minister. Ascension gift ministers: love God and others with their all, humbly serve and never lord over nor take advantage of fellow Christians, preach and teach only God's Word not men's words, and minister the gifts and empowerments of the Holy Ghost without fanfare or calling attention to themselves. Their total focus is on Jesus and His ministry to them and through them to others.

Each of the five ministries uniquely adds to the other four ministries so that the fullness of Jesus' ministry can be provided to His saints. Apostles reveal the direction Jesus wants His church to go, help establish local churches and their leadership ministries and stimulate the ministries of the saints. Prophets teach the proper order and conduct of holy God-led life, prophesy to the world church, local church and individuals, work with the apostles to develop ascension gift ministers and stimulate the ministries of the saints. Evangelists stir non-Christians to become Christians and Christians to fellowship with God so they will grow beyond where they currently are in Christ. Teachers clarify the Word of God that supports the messages of God's apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors. Pastors teach God's people how to intimately fellowship with God so Jesus can renew their mind to think, act, live, love and minister like Jesus through studying God's Word and – in faith – applying it to their life.

The pastor gathers Christians into congregations. The apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers join with the pastor to help the pastor raise the saints in God's love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, goodness, obedience, power, glory and the believer or ascension gift ministry of each saint. We only have to look at the many churches that the apostle Paul and his fellow apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers and pastors worked with to understand how Jesus wanted His church to operate.

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God's original plan in which the five ascension gift ministries daily encouraged and supported one another nourished both the saints and their pastors. The most successful pastors Gayle and I have known have had apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers who were either in their congregations or they personally knew and occasionally invited them to come and minister to their congregation. Not only did this help the saints grow, but it helped those pastors maintain vital, vibrant, lengthy ministries. Pastors who try to bear the weight of fulfilling all five offices of Jesus' ministry often become burdened and crushed. Many eventually abandon their ministries. Simply put pastors cannot perfect the saints by themselves.

THE PASTORAL MINISTRY

God is the author of pure First Century Christian Religion. Jesus is the good shepherd Who God has sent to provide us with His religion of agape love. He preaches the good news of God's Spiritual and natural provision to us, who are Spiritually and often naturally poor. He also heals our broken hearts, delivers us from our captivity to sin, recovers our Spiritual sight so we are no longer blind to God's goodness, sets us free from the stinking thinking that mentally and emotionally bruises us, and preaches the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19). The acceptable year of the Lord is the New Testament order in which Jesus reconciles us to God and renews our mind to recognize and receive His Spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social and ministerial blessings for our new lives in Christ (Philippians 4:19).

Jesus ministers the New Testament life to us both directly and through others, the most visible and vocal of which are our pastors. True New Testament ascension gifted pastors are Jesus' under-shepherds. They are dead to self, alive in Christ, wholly with and holy unto God. God's Word/will is their Word/will for their lives. They are full of Father, Jesus and

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Holy Ghost. This enables them to effectively pray, study, preach, teach and minister the miraculous gifts and empowerments of the Holy Ghost (Acts 6:4, 20:28; Mark 6:34; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

A pastor wants to raise up his flock and get them Spirit-born and conformed into Jesus' image. The pastor leads people into the same intimate 24/7 agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost that the pastor has. Agape love fellowship gradually transforms Jesus' followers to think and act like Him so that through faith in God and His Word they can effectively live and minister the life of Christ (Philippians 1:6, 1:19; Psalm 23).

GOD SETS US WHERE WE WILL GROW

1 Corinthians 12:18

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

At all times in our life, God sets us into the place in the Body of Christ that will most effectively conform us into Jesus' image. Sometimes we like where God sets us and sometimes we don't like where God sets us. Many of the mental, emotional, physical, financial, social, Spiritual and ministerial struggles we go through are a result of us fighting God's decision to renew our mind by setting us in a place we don't want to be in. Hebrews 12: 11 says, ***“Now no chastening (correction) for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness (the renewed right thinking of God) unto them which are exercised (transformed) thereby.”*** One of the places God often sets us in, in order to help renew and transform our mind to think and act like Jesus, is what we commonly call a Christian church overseen by a facilitating pastor.

If Jesus wants to send us to a particular church and we won't go to it, then we hamper our growth in God. If Jesus

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wants us to leave a church and we won't leave it, we hamper our growth in God. If Jesus wants us to start a church in our living room and we refuse to do so, we hamper our growth in God. It's better to find out what Jesus wants us to do and then do it, no matter what. By letting Him decide whether or not to become a member of an ongoing congregation of Christians, we will better fulfill His plan for us to become mind-transformed and fully conformed into His image.

PASTORS ARE TO HELP US RENEW OUR MIND

All Christians have been Spirit-born by making Jesus Christ their Lord. Beyond that it is up to each of us, pastors included, to daily decide how much more of the good news gospel of Jesus Christ we want to partake of. The degree to which a pastor fellowships with God and thinks and acts through the love, Spirit, Word and faith of God is the degree to which he can raise up his congregation to do likewise.

As noted back in Chapter 1 being schooled in the ways of God is an on-going process that begins in the kindergarten of Spirit-birth. Through Christ in us and our pastor's guidance, God gradually renews our mind to think, act and minister like Jesus. We progressively mature into God's Word-speaking, miracle-manifesting, ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ to the world we live in.

Jesus, who is the superintendent of our Holy Ghost school system, expects each pastor and each Christian to daily renew their mind by doing their lessons and growing in God's faith and glory (Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 1:27). For various reasons, however, pastors and Christians often elect to stop and settle into a particular grade or level of faith and glory. As a result, growth is stopped and any move of God severely stymied. A Christian who wants to grow and is sitting under a pastor who has stopped growing, or a pastor who is pressing on in his growth and has members in his congregation who don't want to move to the next level are both signs of this happening. Pastors and their flocks must be

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willing to continue in their Christian education and Spiritual development by the daily renewing of their mind through 24/7 intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost.

Let's look at some of the common ways of thinking that can hinder a Christian from developing his/her full potential in Christ.

CAN'T SEE GOOD NEWS IN THE GOSPEL

There are those of us who don't seem to see a lot of good news in God's gospel. We don't believe the Word of God reveals anything more than Spirit-birth and going to heaven when we die. We continue to struggle through life as best we can. We believe we have to continue to put up with failure. Often we think failure is good for us because it keeps us humble by reminding us of our sinful manly nature. We believe we're just going to have to wait until we get to heaven to get out of the mess we've created on earth. We think it's impossible for us to actually change and be rid of all our doubt, debate, worry, fear, fury, depression, despondency and the other lousiness of life we are always walking in. We don't believe God's Word says that right now through God's love, faith and grace we can live sin free and enjoy the peace, power, presence and provision of God.

WANT TO DO RELIGIOUS WORKS

Others of us shudder in fear and condemnation. We think more like Old Testament Israelites who lived under the Law of Sin and Death, rather than New Testament children of God, who live through the grace of The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1-9). Like lost Israelites, and all other non-Christian religious people, we believe we must constantly beg God to forgive us and that we must perform many sacrifices to please God and earn our way into heaven. We hope, like all other manly minded religious men of the world, that our

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mechanical prayer and manly works will add up in our God account and pay the penalty for our sins so that we will go to heaven when we die. Despite the fact we have confessed that Jesus died for our sins and have made Him our Lord, we fail to fully make Jesus our Savior. We do not comprehend that Jesus, as He hung on the cross, took all of our sin, sickness and lack. Instead, we feel the need to beat ourselves with the sins of our life until somehow we "feel" that Jesus has accepted our acts of atonement. We don't understand that Jesus has already done EVERYTHING that was required by God to forgive us and make us righteous in His eyes. All we have to do is accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior and instantly we become sin free and righteous.

WANT TO DO THEIR OWN THING

Others of us don't think much about sin at all. We flip-pantly believe God's okay with us taking from His Word what works for us and leaving the rest of it alone. Drawing close to God and living a holy life doesn't really matter that much to us. We want to do our own thing and focus on what it takes to get ahead in life working hard and doing things our way. We twist the scriptures to equate our hard fought, personal battle for finances and success with successfully living for God. We fail to realize that if we will dedicate our heart, money and time to first establishing God's New Testament Covenant, God will open the doors, pave the way and bless us with "His" success in all our ways, more than we can think.

TOTALLY BELIEVE

All of the above attitudes, or ways of thinking, will hinder a Christian's development in God. In order to mature, a Christian must totally believe that God is God and what He says is true. Then he must act on that belief through faith.

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Faith operates through agape love (Galatians 5:6). When we agape love fellowship with God, we come to totally believe (have faith) that God is the one and only God Almighty, the great “I AM,” Who has always been and will always be.

Exodus 3:14

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Faith totally believes that Jesus is the express/exact image of His Father, “I AM” (Hebrews 1:3), and Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost Spirit of “I AM.” “I AM” lives in and operates through the RIGHT NOW. When “I AM” says something - it is done RIGHT THEN, not later on.

Genesis 1:3

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light (RIGHT THEN).

Faith totally believes that when Jesus declared that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him to minister as the Messiah-Christ and that the acceptable year of the Lord had finally come, Jesus really meant RIGHT THEN was the time.

The acceptable year of the Lord was also known in the Old Testament as the year of Jubilee. During the year of Jubilee, all natural things were restored to their original order (Leviticus 25:9-13). The year of Jubilee Spiritually represents New Testament salvation. RIGHT NOW Christians believe that mankind is provided a way back into the Spiritual Garden of Eden through Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection with power over Satan, self, sin, sickness and lack.

We believe RIGHT NOW by making Jesus our Lord, all sin is cast out of us and we become redeemed, righteous, sanctified, eternal love children of God living in heavenly places in Christ Jesus upon earth (1 Corinthians 1:30;

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Ephesians 2:6). RIGHT NOW we become joint-heirs with Jesus, and work out our salvation with Him so that we are progressively conformed into His image (Romans 8:17).

Faith totally believes God Loves us so much that when we speak God's Word, God RIGHT NOW rewards us with all Jesus is and all Jesus has, including divine healing and health, power, love, a sound mind and success in all our ways of life (Hebrews 11:6). RIGHT NOW we put on the Word of God and God transforms our mind from thinking and acting like negative, destructive man to thinking and acting like creative, productive Jesus (Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 1:6).

RIGHT NOW we are God's ministers of reconciliation and ambassadors for Christ, who are ordained by God to live the abundant life of Jesus on earth and share it with others (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). Through God's love, faith, grace, Spirit, Word, goodness, obedience, power and glory all things of God are ours to enjoy RIGHT NOW.

We can choose to curse the world of lost men, self-righteously hold ourselves above them, and live in the lousiness of life waiting for Jesus to come get us. Or, we can choose to do what our First Century forefathers did. We can thought by thought fellowship with God and totally believe God's written and spoken Word. Through faith, we can activate God's Word into our life and the lives of others. We can daily grow in God and progressively become conformed into the image of Jesus, as God's Spiritually, mentally and emotionally mature sons and daughters, who succeed in all our ways (Romans 8:29; Philippians 4:19).

When we are taught this from the pulpit and live this reality in our life, then we will want to help our pastor to win souls and stir Christians to grow in Christ.

HELPING OUR PASTOR

No matter what maturity level we or our pastor are on, we can work together to meet the needs of the sinners and saints God puts in our path. We can accept our Godly ordination to

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help our pastors save and raise-up the lost men and women of the world by serving the needs of our home church and entering into the ministries of reconciliation that God has specifically provided for each of us. We can engage in and complete the unique good works God has provided for us to accomplish (Ephesians 2:10).

We are all learning how to be properly led by God's Spirit rather than be misled by the spirit of Satan or self. God uses our pastor to guide us in our Spiritual development and mental and emotional maturation into sons and daughters of God. We can help our pastor effectively minister to us by listening to God's Spirit and Word within our pastor. When he preaches and teaches, we can keenly listen and hear what God is personally saying to us. Then we can apply that Word to our life and correct what needs to be corrected and grow where we need to grow in God. If our pastor ever calls us aside and personally corrects us, we shouldn't look at it as a parent scolding a child, but rather as God getting our attention so He can lovingly correct our course and get us back onto His good track for our life.

By discovering our motivational gifts and applying them to in-church and out-of-church ministries, we help our pastor minister to our home church members, as well as learn how to minister to people inside and outside of church.

Supporting our pastor by giving God-led financial gifts to our church and pastor, helps keep us, our church and pastor in good financial shape. Daily praying for our pastor and his family and always having a good word for our pastor will encourage our pastor to only minister in the way Jesus leads him to minister.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

Jesus is the head of His body, which is His church, which are His followers (Colossians 1:18). Jesus' New Testament Church is not a building. It is us, His living, breathing, Spirit-born followers who happen to gather in buildings.

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No physical building is of itself a house of God. Only when the true houses of God, namely the Spirit-born believers, enter a physical building does that building contain the presence of God. Too many Christians make idols of their physical buildings and their Christian group's personal dogma, doctrine and name. There are no sacred buildings nor sacred manly names in Christianity. Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost are the only sacred Christian names, and we, Their temple buildings, are the Body/Church of Christ who are set apart for Their residence and use upon the earth.

The buildings the first Jewish Christians in Jerusalem met in were people's homes and on the Jewish temple's porch (Acts 2:46). The first meeting of non-Jewish Christians was in the living room of Cornelius the Roman centurion (Acts 10). Today, we continue to meet both in little living rooms and big buildings. The quantitative size of the place Christians meet in makes no difference. The quality of the Christianity makes all the difference and the person responsible for the quality is the overseeing apostle, prophet, evangelist, teacher, believer or in the case of an on-going gathering of Christians, the pastor.

JESUS LEADS HIS PASTORS

Unlike today's rigidly ordered, Spiritually passive, pastor-centered services of manly religion, First Century Christian gatherings were Spiritually active, fluid expressions of the believers love for Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. They were more like family gatherings in which the pastor facilitated the flow of Spiritual interaction between God and the believers through praise, worship, testimonies, preaching, teaching and the miraculous manifestations of the gifts and empowerments of the Holy Ghost.

Through their intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, First Century pastors knew how Jesus wanted the meeting to flow and who Jesus wanted to flow through. Today, Jesus likewise expects His pastors to allow

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Him to minister to and through them in whatever manner Jesus deems fit. This is why it is vitally important that a pastor is joined in intimate 24/7 agape love fellowship with Jesus. Otherwise, the pastor will not be able to provide people with God ordained, Jesus-led, Holy Ghost empowered ministry at church or anywhere else.

Whether meeting in a living room or a large auditorium, Jesus' pastors are to feed and care for Jesus' sheep only in the way Jesus leads them to do so. Jesus tells His pastors what He wants to do, when He wants to do it and who He wants to do it through. Jesus might instruct the pastor to call upon praise, worship and music ministers or prayer partners or other preachers or teachers in the congregation. Jesus will also lead the pastor to call upon those members of the congregation, who the Holy Ghost stirs to testify, or in other ways contribute to the meeting. Churches operated in this fashion permit God's love and Spirit to freely flow with words, signs, wonders and miracles manifesting.

If the overseeing pastor fails to guide the Spiritual flow of a church meeting, chaos can easily erupt. Such happened in the church at Corinth, where the people spent the meeting aggressively competing with one another to praise, worship, pray, prophesy, preach, teach and speak about the good works of God in their life. The Corinthians had forgotten the pastor was the overseer through whom the Holy Spirit directed the flow of a church meeting. As earlier noted in Chapter 20, the apostle Paul finally had to send Timothy to set the Corinthians straight on how to conduct a meeting of Jesus' Church.

Like the other four ascension gift ministries, pastors are to continually pray and give themselves to the ministry of God's Word (Acts 6:4). In 1Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:7-9, Paul, using the term bishop (superintendent), provides us with some of the qualifications of a pastor.

Titus:1:7-9

For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to

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wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Pastors care for Jesus' sheep by providing them with the same sound doctrine and good news Jesus Christ first provided in Luke 4:18-19. Through Jesus in them, pastors teach us how to enter into intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. This transforms our mind to see and accept the good news of God's Spiritual and natural provision for us. Through our love fellowship with God and the teaching and Holy Ghost ministry of our pastor and others, our broken hearts are healed. We are delivered from our captivity to sin. We see and continually experience God's love, grace and goodness. The stinking thinking that mentally and emotionally bruised us is overcome. Our mind is renewed to recognize and receive God's Spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, financial, familial, social and ministerial blessings (Philippians 4:19). Our pastor instructs us how to faithfully obey God by thought by thought applying the Word of God to our life to destroy Satan's evil and release God's good into our life and the lives of those Jesus ministers to through us. Our pastor does all this through the decency and order of Jesus-led, Holy Ghost moved church meetings and his personal ministry to us.

IN DECENCY AND ORDER

Unless we are one of our pastor's designated ministers, or are specifically called by our pastor to contribute, we should not impulsively stand-up in the middle of the church meeting and pray, praise, preach, teach, worship, dance, sing or do whatever else we might think the Holy Ghost is prompting us to do. We are God's ministers of reconciliation, who are used by God to hear and carry His message to others, so we need

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to know how to – in decency and order – deliver God’s message to the person(s) it needs to be delivered to. For example, if we are sitting in a church meeting and we hear within us a prophetic message to all or any member of the congregation, we don’t jump up and blurt out the message. Since God spoke to us during a church meeting then the message should be delivered to the pastor of that meeting. If the pastor has provided a way for us to do so during the service, we can inform the pastor of the message. Otherwise, we wait until after the meeting to deliver the message to the pastor. No matter what the pastor does or doesn’t do with the message, once we deliver a message we dismiss the message from our mind and go on.

Though we are all God’s ministers of reconciliation who can minister God’s Word, prayer, Holy Ghost gifts and empowerments, unless the pastor authorizes us to personally or as a group do so, at church it is best to steer people to the pastor for ministry. This is part of submitting to God and doing everything decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Also, when we receive a prophetic message outside a church meeting and then deliver it to whom God sends us to deliver it to, we neither give the person(s) our interpretation of the message nor try to get the person(s) to comment or act upon the message. Instead, we simply deliver the message and then go on about our business.

Prophetic messages from God through us to others will edify (build-up), exhort (encourage) and comfort the person(s) they are delivered to (1 Corinthians 14:3).

1Corinthian 14:3

... he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

PREARRANGED MINISTRY

Prearranged ministry is reoccurring ministry that meets in a specific place at a specific time. Examples are weekly

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church services, church authorized home groups or bible studies at home or work, institutional ministry in jail, prison, nursing homes, Christian support groups, etc. In such meetings Jesus will provide an overseer. Through the overseer, Jesus will lead us to what He wants to happen such as: pray, praise and worship (with or without musical accompaniment or dancing), preach, teach, testify, prophesy, and administer the gifts and empowerments of the Holy Ghost. Sometimes the Holy Ghost changes around what He does from one meeting to the next. We need to stay open to how the Holy Ghost wants to minister and to who in particular the Holy Ghost is reaching out to.

We should always be open to the move of the Spirit. Occasionally, music might have to continue on past its scripted number of songs in order that praise and worship flow up to heaven and bring God down to inhabit the praises of His people. Preaching might have to pause for prophecy. Prayer might escalate into pulling down strongholds, casting out devils, healing the sick and working miracles. Prepared messages might need to be altered or scrapped all together in order to accommodate the move of God. Signs, wonders and miracles can manifest in both familiar and unfamiliar ways. The pastor and those who minister need to maintain an open mind in order to facilitate the flow of God's Spirit through themselves and the people in the ways Jesus has instructed the Holy Ghost to manifest in a meeting.

Remember, we are not in charge of the ministry God puts us in. God is. Just as God is in charge of every breath and thought of our life. If we don't submit to God in all things, then God's Spirit and Word cannot supernaturally empower all aspects of our life and ministries. God wants to totally empower us, but it's always up to us as to how much we will allow Jesus to do what He wants to in us and through us.

DON'T DILUTE OR POLUTE YOUR MINISTRY

Jesus will not give His anointing to our manhood. If we

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ever stop acknowledging our reliance upon Jesus to minister or pull back from fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and instead focus our eyes upon the flattery and recognition of our ministry by the world, Jesus will step back. His anointing will stop flowing through us and upon our ministry. We will Spiritually weaken. We will be unable to hold up the weight of our ministry. It will fall off us. This is when ministers get themselves into the type of trouble that trashes their ministry and makes a mess for the rest of the Body of Christ to clean up. It gives nonbelievers the escape of looking at a fallen minister and saying, “That’s why we don’t believe.”

Never forget your first loves: Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. Intimately fellowship with and constantly love on Them. Acknowledge your total dependence upon Them and Their written and spoken Word. Seek Their counsel in all things. Let Them guide your every thought. Continually pray through Father, in Jesus’ name, and bind Satan’s evil out of and loose God’s good into your life and the life of those Jesus ministers to through you with miracles, signs and wonders. This will keep your Spirit strong and God’s Word sharp within you. You will fulfill God’s love plan for your life. God will reward your diligence and faith with the prize of His high calling in Christ Jesus (Hebrews 11:6).

In our next and final chapter, we will put together all the parts of God’s glorious plan for us to grow beyond a child of God, who doesn’t know who we are in Christ, into a mature daughter or son of God manifesting the life and ministry of Jesus Christ in our home, work place, church and community.

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Chapter 25

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

In this chapter we will put all the parts together and briefly review God's heart and plan for you to totally operate through the love, blessings, ministry and life of Christ in you. The same life of Christ that Adam and Eve rejected. The same life of Christ that Jesus restored to His First Century followers. The same life of Christ that Jesus Spirit-births into you and then – with your cooperation – makes you into God's image and likeness by transforming your mind and conforming your character into Jesus' God in man image.

AGAPE LOVE

God is agape love. God's only desire is to share Himself with others. God Spirit-births and mind-transforms you into Jesus' image so He can share His love with you. God's love is not human love. Human love is conditional. It's based upon how things between two people are going in the moment. If good, then human love is turned on. If bad, then human love is turned off. God's love is unconditional. Even when we reject God He reaches out to us through Jesus. When we make Jesus our Lord, we get Spirit-born. God becomes our loving Father. Through intimate agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, we are raised into Jesus' God in man image.

OUR WAY VERSES GOD'S WAY

Our natural parents, Adam and Eve, were schooled by God to walk in God's image and likeness. But they failed to pass their final exam and flunked out of God School when they met Satan's serpent and he misled them to follow the desire of their souls, rather than the leading of God's Spirit. This

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stole, killed and destroyed their intimate agape love fellowship with God.

Since that time all of us have been naturally born without Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost living in and providing for us in the way They provided for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Instead, Satan convinces us to provide for ourselves so that we wreck our life with self-centered, soul-led, Satan-infected thinking and acting. However, no matter what we have done or how weird and wild we think and act, Jesus looks at it as simply us learning what it's like to run life on our own. He knows that our Satan-infected life won't bring us the love, peace and fulfillment we seek.

Jesus and Father God know who we are and what we are destined to become. With Godly love and patience They wait for us to realize that neither we nor any other human can fulfill our life. So, in desperation, we reach out to Jesus in the vague hope He may be the answer we seek. Since God's plan for us is to become like Jesus, once we seek Jesus and enter into agape love fellowship with God, we start to succeed at becoming who we are created to become.

God naturally conceived us by our human father and mother and then planted in us the need to complete our self by becoming Spirit-born and mind-transformed into Jesus' Spiritual, mental and emotional God in man image and likeness. This is our divine purpose, the heart of all our hopes and aspirations. It's what drives us to discover who we are and how to fulfill ourselves. It's what Father God sent Jesus to earth to reveal and return to us.

When we stop seeking to make ourselves into man's image and likeness and turn our will and life over to God, we can discover who we really are in Christ. We can fulfill our life by becoming God's love-motivated, faith-empowered, miracle-manifesting daughter or son, like Jesus

YOUR RATE OF GROWTH

Unlike the maturation of your natural body, which takes

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many years to fully develop, your rate of growth from a child of God into a mature son or daughter of God is solely up to you. Your attitude, obedience, diligence and devotion to God and His plan determine how long it takes you to transform your mind and become mentally and emotionally conformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

You mature through 24/7 agape love communication with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and coming to trust (have faith in) Them and Their biblical Word. All things in the Kingdom of God on earth and in heaven are accessed by hearing and doing God's Word through faith. We live by faith not by feelings or by sight. Natural men and immature children of God base their life upon how they feel and what they can see. Sons and daughters of God learn to operate through the agape love, Spirit, Word, faith and obedience of God which override the anger, worry, doubt, depression and rebellion of man. Mature sons and daughters of God do not need to see with natural eyes in order to believe. If the Word of God says they are something, have something, or can do something, the sons and daughters of God believe and receive what they are, have or can do through Christ in them.

The Word of God says that by asking Jesus Christ to become our Lord we get Spirit-born with His Spirit. This redeems us from Satan and hell, justifies and cleanses us from all sin, Spiritually completes us, marries us to Jesus and makes us righteous with God. We are joint-heirs with Jesus to all Father God is and has. We fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, work out our salvation and complete God's predestinated plan for us to be created in God's image and likeness by being conformed into the image of His Son, Jesus.

Since Spirit-birth provides us with the Spiritual perfection of Jesus Christ, all we have to do to get fully conformed into Jesus' image is to put on the mind of Christ, which is the Word of God filtered through the love and faith of God rather than the intellect and unbelief of man. God's love, grace and faith enable you to believe, speak and do God's Word. This

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releases the power in God's Word to destroy Satan's evil and create God's good for you and those Jesus ministers to through you.

When you ask Jesus to reveal to you a truth about who you are, what you have, what you can do and how you can do it through Him in you, He will do so through the Word of God. In that revelation, Jesus will also provide you direction. When you trust Jesus enough to apply His Word-based revelation and direction to your life, then you will experience good results.

Jesus' direction will always deal with your thinking and acting. Once Spirit-born, you are Spiritually perfect and complete, and can no longer get Spirit-born again. What you do get is progressively transformed to think and act like Jesus by renewing your mind with the Word of God and operating through the mind of Christ rather than the mind of man.

This is often a challenging and sometimes painful process, especially when you are just starting out and are scripturally ignorant of who you fully are in Christ. When you read a New Testament scripture which reveals your position in Christ, your soul, body and Satan will try to fill you with fear and unbelief. They don't want you to give up their strongholds in your life. They want you to continue to think you're unworthy and undeserving of all the blessings of God. However, you are God's Spirit-born child. Through the unmerited favor of God's grace, you have inherited all God is and has. Not only are you worthy to receive all Father God has for you, but it is an insult to Him for you not to receive His blessings of Spiritual abundance that provide you with mental stability, emotional peace, physical healing and health, financial solvency, familial steadfastness, social acceptance and fulfilling ministry at home, work, church and out in your community.

ONE THOUGHT AT A TIME

You live life one thought at a time. All victories are won

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by you capturing your thoughts and bringing them to Jesus. Living the life of Christ means it is no longer you alone against the world. It's you joined as one with Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost. You are never separated from Them. Father's thinking, Jesus' speaking and Holy Ghost's power live in you and progressively conform you into Jesus' image, as well as destroy evil and create good in your life.

Just hanging out with Jesus automatically renews our mind in many ways we might not even consciously think about. Before Spirit-birth, I used to constantly curse, as well as think, talk and joke about sex all the time. Once I got to know Jesus, my garbage mouth and garbage mind gradually got renewed to the point that I almost never speak a vulgar word or have a vulgar thought. Now I didn't say I'm not sometimes tempted to use a few foul words or fix my eyes in the wrong way upon a woman. I said I am now well trained to cast such temptations out of me because they don't produce any positive results in my head or my heart. Once you begin to purposefully fellowship with God you too will notice similar changes in your thinking and acting.

By 24/7 fellowshiping with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost, you will increasingly think and act like Jesus. Your Satan-infected manly mind will less and less be able to make a mess of things. Everything in your life will change for the better as you more and more think and act like God.

Once you are Spirit-born, consider your life. Are the things you think and do in life producing garbage or are they producing glory? Garbage is the soul-led, me first life, which no matter how you perfume it up with excuses or rationales, it stinks. Glory is the Spirit-led, God first life of Spiritual abundance in which you live in the sweet aroma of agape love.

Recognize your need. See your life garbage and do what it takes to dump it. Life garbage is what is produced by self-centered, soul-led thinking and acting. It is all of what life is before you get Spirit-born. Jesus wants you to share every thought, feeling, emotion and imagination with Him, so He

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can reveal to you whether it comes from God or from your Satan-infected, soul-led self. If from God, Jesus will urge you to keep, cultivate and grow it into a good thing for your life. If from Satan or self, Jesus will identify it as garbage and urge you to speak in His name and cast it out into the trash where it belongs.

Sometimes what you have to cast into the trash is the religious way you have been brought up. If you've had teaching that denies the truth of, limits the provisions of, or removes the present application of any of God's New Testament plan for us to have Spirit-birthed, Spirit-led, Spirit-empowered lives, then cast that wrong thinking into the garbage. In its place put on Jesus' agape love – *all things are possible through Christ in me* – thinking and acting.

Continually examine your life with Jesus. Really take a look at it. Don't make any excuses for it. Honestly evaluate where it's taking you. Ask Jesus to show you where you will wind-up if you keep thinking and acting as you do. Is that where you want to go? Work with Jesus to identify your personal and religious garbage. Trade it in for God's glory and goodness so you daily grow in God's Word and ways.

JESUS IS OUR MODEL FOR SUCCESS

Since there are billions of us, life provides us with billions of different models to pattern our life after. Despite all the apparent differences there is always a common theme to all natural spirited soul-led modeling. It is the theme of self-centered exclusiveness. We perceive others who do not think and act like us as not the same as us, and because they are "not of us," they are to greater and lesser degrees not to be trusted. The end result of this is conflict. We are constantly at odds with those who do not model themselves in our exact image and likeness.

This can be seen at all levels of relationship and fellowship. We are often in conflict with those closest to us, even though they share most of our personal, cultural and national

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self-interests. We are always in conflict with those who are distant from us, since they share none of our personal, cultural and national self-interests. Conflict large and small is a hallmark of soul-led life. When we live through our soul we will suffer the stress and strain of conflict. The only way out of this is to stop being soul-led and instead model ourselves after Jesus Christ Who is the first fully God-centered, Spirit-led man.

Jesus thinks and acts exactly opposite the way self-centered, soul-led men think and act. Soul-led men are constantly trying to make something of themselves, but Jesus knew He was already made in the image of God. He was born of God's Spirit, shaped by God's Word and received all Father is and has. When we become born of God's Spirit, shaped by God's Word and conformed into Jesus' image, we receive all Jesus is and has. We have more than enough in all areas of our life so that we no longer have to fret and fume and come into conflict with others in order to meet the needs of our life.

GOD'S WORD FREES US

We are the words we think, speak and act out. If we think, speak and act out manly words of anger, worry and woe, we become convicted by the Law of Sin and Death and imprisoned in negativity. By thinking, speaking and acting out of the love, faith and joy of God's biblical Word, we enforce God's perfect Law of Liberty to destroy evil and create good and live by the Law of The Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. This frees us from the prison of Satan, self and sin. This provides us the abundant, creative life of God on earth and in heaven.

God's Spiritual life is contained within His biblical Word. Spiritual death is the absence of God's life within us. Spiritual death steals the Word of God out of our mind, which kills the hope of God in our heart and destroys the life of God within us. The soul-led natural mind of man is filled with

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Satan's Spiritual death. If we do not purposefully hook up with Jesus and let Him monitor all our thoughts, we will ignorantly think, speak and act out Satan's words of Spiritual death rather than God's Word of Spiritual life. We will unnecessarily suffer when we could purposefully prosper in the love, peace and power of God.

This is why we willingly work out our salvation and bring every thought in captivity to the obedience of Christ in us. Through Jesus' guidance, our Spirit-led man can knowingly hear, faithfully speak and productively act through the Spiritually alive, creative Word of God instead of the Spiritually dead, destructive words of Satan.

Through reading, studying, speaking, doing and making God's Word your words of life, you do more than passively possess the life of Jesus within you. You actively live the abundant life of Jesus and give out His love, joy, peace, power, healing and prosperity to others. This reinforces the reality of your righteous life in Jesus as God's beloved, empowered son or daughter living in heavenly places upon earth. You are freed from the pains of your past and flourish in the Word and ways of God for your life.

When we fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost we come to see that the biblical Word of God is what They think and act upon. Everything They personally speak to us within our Spirit is either directly quoted from the Bible or is in keeping with an idea spoken through the words of the Bible, most especially its New Testament. In order to get to intimately know Them and our new way of Christ-led thinking and acting, the Bible must become our most cherished possession. No longer can it be a book that we begrudgingly read in order to please or impress others. We must see and hear it for what it truly is: the love, Spirit, Word, and faith of God speaking directly to us. The more we read, hear and believe God's biblical voice, the better we hear God speak to us and the better we speak through God's voice to others.

Putting It All Together

Fellowship creates friendship. Friendship creates trust and faith. Faith is the foundation upon which Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost stand. You fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost and get to know who They are. Once you know Them, you will know They truly love you and have already blessed you with everything Jesus is and has. All you have to do is believe and receive what is already yours in Jesus. You do this by obediently speaking and doing God's Word in faith. You become a Word-guided, Holy Ghost-empowered son or daughter of God: who helps rather than hinders, who freely gives rather than forcibly takes, who lives in the love, peace, power, prosperity and health of the good news life of Jesus Christ.

MINISTERS OF RECONCILIATION

We are not the authors of our salvation. Jesus is. Neither your "good" attitudes and actions nor any type of religious work makes you righteous in God's eyes. It's the Spirit-born presence of Jesus Christ within you that makes you righteous in the eyes of God. This is why once we get Spirit-born our whole Spiritual life centers around us putting on the Word of God and renewing our soul-led mind with the mind of Christ. When the mind of Christ in us matures to the point Jesus can trust us to faithfully follow His Word and obey His commands, then Jesus can begin to use us to speak to and pray for others.

Jesus Christ is the first minister of reconciliation. Reconciliation means to bring people back into the divine relationship of love, fellowship and friendship with God that Adam and Eve had before they disobeyed God and forfeited their lives and our lives to Satan. Our divine reconciliation with God comes through Spirit-birth, which makes us God's righteous, anointed, sin freed child. Through the example of our life, our testimony, our prayers and our sharing of God's Word, Jesus ministers to others His good news of love, health

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and provision. We become, as Paul said, epistles known and read of all men (2 Corinthians 3:2).

It takes sons and daughters of God, who are filled with the Holy Ghost and led by Jesus, to reach out to the specific people, in the precise places, at the exact times God has ordained. On the outside we may look like a doctor, lawyer, student, teacher, artist, journalist, factory worker, service technician or anything else, but on the inside we are God's son or daughter, His minister of reconciliation, His ambassador for Christ to the world we live in. Once we see that this is truly our calling in life, we can call out to God and commit ourselves to becoming conformed into the image of Jesus Christ so Jesus can minister to us and through us to those who are waiting for Christ to come into their lives.

LOVE GOD AND LIVE BLESSED

Always remember that God's plan is for us to become God's Spirit-born, mind-transformed daughters and sons, who operate through Christ (the Spiritual presence of Father God, Jesus and Holy Ghost) in us. Through Christ in us, we keep God's two New Testament commandments. First, we 24/7 agape love fellowship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. This trains us to reject all Satan-infected manly words and only listen to, think, believe, speak and do God's written and spoken Word for our life. Second, through God in us, we agape love our self and others (Mark 12:30-31; John 13:34).

Spirit-birth reconciles us to Father God and makes us His children. We are Jesus' bride and joint-heirs with Jesus to all God is and has and can do. We are citizens of heaven who temporarily live on earth. In the power and authority of Jesus' name we bind the evil that attacks us and loose the good of God into our life and the lives of others. No matter what happens, Jesus continually cares for us through His eternal ministry to us and through us. This provides us the blessings

Putting It All Together

of God we need to live God's life in abundance on earth and in heaven.

There is no greater joy than to live in love fellowship and intimate friendship with Father, Jesus and Holy Ghost. There is no greater fulfillment than to receive all They have to give us and then, through Jesus, minister it all to others. It's fun to do and easy to gradually mature into. All we have to do is do the two simple things our First Century forefathers did. First ask Jesus into our heart and then start talking to Him 24/7. Jesus will then thought by thought lead us into our new way of supernatural life in Christ on earth and in heaven.

IN CONCLUSION

We pray that *Growing Beyond A Child Of God* will prove useful to you in fulfilling your life and calling in Christ. The way to get the most out of this book is to read through it once. Then reread both it and the cited scriptures upon which its ideas are based. Talk to Jesus about what you've read. Then begin to apply the scriptures and the ideas of this book to your life. Keep repeating this process and you will progressively grow in Jesus and mature into your believer and ascension gifted ministries of reconciliation. Consider providing a copy of this book to your pastor to look at. He might find some ideas or insights he can use to further your growth in God.

If you'd like to download a free electronic copy of this book onto your computer, tablet or cell phone, or buy an inexpensive print copy of this book, then please visit our AgapeAliveMinistries.org website. If you'd like to talk to us, on the website we also provide our personal email address.

God has blessed you so you will become a blessing to others. In Jesus' name, we ask Father God to stir you to become all you are in Jesus so that through Jesus in you, you will live and minister to others God's miraculous, abundant life of love, faith, goodness, joy, peace, power, prosperity and fulfillment in Christ.

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