

# How To Live As A Disciple

By Rev. Wallace Shea

## Preface

Jesus ministered to the multitudes, but He built His church on His disciples. Jesus has called you to be His disciple. There is a big difference between a student and a disciple. A student sits in a class and learns information, but a disciple learns from being with and following the master. The crowd may just be spectators, but disciples are in the game. They make the kingdom happen here on earth. Souls will be saved and blessed if you are faithful to follow Him and become what Jesus wants you to become. Students are listeners, but disciples are doers!

The purpose of this study is to help you know how to be a disciple in your character and ministry. Our Goal is not only for you to know for yourself what you need to know, but to know things so well, that you can minister to others as well.

Some think that only those called to “full-time Christian ministry” are those who are true disciples, but that is not true at all! The reality is Jesus asks everyone to follow Him. He may call you to be a business man, or a teacher, or a homemaker, or a minister. But Jesus still demands complete obedience and following where He leads.

While our other studies have focused on doctrines and relationships, this study focuses particularly on your character, attitudes and ministry as a disciple. The question is not if Jesus has called you to be His disciple, the question is: are you going to be obedient and responsive to His call. Yes Lord, let us live out the full potential you have for us in being your disciples!

Each lesson in this study is designed to address a principle which will help you become a strong, healthy, stable and effective disciple of Jesus Christ! These are not designed to be merely information, but to become resolves applied to your life. If these lessons become a part of your life, you will avoid issues that keep many people ineffective and will instead find wholeness in life and effectiveness in ministry.

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Everything we do or think in our lives and faith will be founded on this question: "Does God Really Love Me?" We must become assured of this fact if we are going to be strong and effective in our faith.

### **2. Forgiven in the Cross** **Page 8**

God wants us freed up and released to walk in a powerful and effective life. Jesus has done every thing He can do through the cross to free us from our sins and bondages, yet some people have problems letting go of their sins and guilt. Thus they still remain bound, out of grace and ineffective. We must learn to fully appropriate all that Jesus has done for us.

### **3. Getting Cross-Ways With People** **Page 13**

"Ministry would be great if it were not for people!" In order to be a disciple of the Lord we need to make sure we have a right attitude adjustment. We must see people through the Redeemer's eyes. If we are going to be powerful Disciple makers we must learn to take our getting cross with people to the cross, so they can be redeemed.

### **4. Who We Are In Christ** **Page 17**

If we are ever going to be able to stand in spiritual battles, we must understand who we are in Christ. If we look to ourselves to see if we have been good enough or have done things right we will fall, but if we are convinced of our standing in Christ, we will never come short.

### **5. The Greatest Disciple** **Page 20**

This lesson reveals a necessary element in our having spiritual power. True power only comes from the Lord and His grace. If we take pride and arrogance in ourselves and think it is through our efforts and that we are greater than others, we will be spiritually hampered. By understanding this and coming into true humility and servant-hood we will began to see the power of God working through us.

### **6. Faithful in a Little** **Page 24**

Many of us are frustrated with all the little things we have to do; we would rather get on with the big exciting things of God. But we will see that God likes to use the little things and gauges our faith how we handle in faithfulness in the small things.

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It is a revelation to realize that all thoughts are not from us but can be from God, demons or our own flesh. We are shown in scripture that we are to control and establish the right thoughts in our lives. Our thoughts direct our actions or can bind us up or limit us.

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We are not accustomed to thinking of curses and may not think of them as very real; but they are central to Bible teaching and understanding them will help us know how to be more effective in spiritual warfare.

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A great part of Jesus' ministry included dealing with demons. We have been given authority over them. We need to know how to discern their activity and know how to break their power over peoples lives.

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As Charismatic people who put a lot of emphasis on the spiritual we may not be balanced in understanding how we are also to be wise; these are not opposed to each other but actually compliment each other. We are to be no body's fool. We are to be wise in all that we do and say.

**11. Witness **Page 49****

You are always a witness to people by your life as to what you believe, but are you then a good witness. There is a witness of character, there is friendship evangelism, servant evangelism, power evangelism, verbal evangelism and results when we witness in a correct way.

**12. Attitude **Page 55****

Attitude is everything. It will make your break your faith, ministry and witness. Here are some guidelines to help keep us right and effective.

## **Lesson 1**

### **Assured of God's Love**

The basis of our relationship with God is Faith; God has chosen that method. Faith is the most important thing that we are to have in being a disciple. It is core to everything we are and do as a Disciple. Yet what is faith? Hebrews 11:1 says it is the “assurance” of things hoped for. But how do we get that assurance. We get it by knowing, believing, being assured of God’s love for us – you, me!

Now this sounds like an easy thing – and it is supposed to be, But when troubles and doubts hit will we maintain our faith or will we vacillate? The very core of faith is – do you trust God – deeper yet – do you believe God loves you and is always working for your best, regardless of your current circumstances?

Some people think if they experience miracles this will keep them in their faith. Yet the Israelites failed in their trust in God, even after God worked so many miracles on their behalf. They came back at Him with the attitude – maybe you have just brought us out of Egypt to kill us off. Now wouldn’t that make you royally mad – to constantly be doing good things for people only to have them come back at you with the accusation you are just trying to harm them?

Faith is very simple, but many people fail at this very point. It doesn’t matter what you know or believe, how much knowledge you have assessed; if you can not come to the personal assurance of God’s love for you. That is what we are going to work on in this lesson. If we can not lay this foundational issue securely in the very core of our being, everything else will give way in our Christian life.

So are you fully, unequivocally convinced of God’s love? You may say so now – but what happens when things get rough and you don’t see by any outward circumstances that God loves you. Will your heart give way in doubt and criticism of God? Will your anchor hold? Now is the time to get this settled forever in your life! You can not be effective in your walk with the Lord if you are not settled in this.

Some people may have a harder time with this than others. Some have had bad experiences in life and can not trust people – or God. Some people may feel that they are just too bad; God could not love or forgive them. But whatever the issue is, this is what we all need to secure within us – the steadfast assurance that God loves us – personally!

### **Paul's Belief**

The Apostle Paul was mighty in faith and accomplishments. Underlying all this was a core belief. Read Romans 8:37, 38 & 39 then answer:

Because God loves us what can happen for us? (V. 37)

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Paul was absolutely assured, regardless of any and all circumstances, about what?

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But why would we believe God loves us? Read Romans 5:8-11.

What is a proof that God loves us? (V. 8)

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What were we like when He did this for us (V. 8)?

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Take a few moments to meditate on the reality that Jesus who was safe in Heaven would come and go through all this for us – for you when he didn't have to. Personalize this verse and read it out loud with your name in it.

Did Jesus take the easy way out? Would you suffer on a cross for your pet? Would you suffer for an ant?

Not to believe Jesus did this for you is to call God a liar. We need to solidify this experience into our conscience to become thoroughly convinced of it. Worse yet it will mean that Jesus did this all for you and it has gone to waste because you are not making use of it.

### **Faith Exercise!**

Take time to sear this into your heart – that Jesus proved His character of love to you and that He loves you and say, “I settle this in my heart forever, that I will always believe and hold to this basic fact that God Loves Me!”

### **A Logical Reason Also:**

The more science looks at the creation the more complex and amazing it is becoming. Contrary to the idea that we are just blobs that happened to come to life, instead we see tremendous design and thought went into creation.

The small tail (by which it swims) on a bacteria has been shown to actually be a complex spinning motor with many parts. Every cell in your body contains complex genetic code that contains over 3 million bits of information. That is computer code of a great designer. Each cell of the body contains 60,000 different types of proteins that all have their own purpose and “zip code” in order to find the right place to where they belong in the cell.

We are uniquely and wonderfully made with great thought and attention. As David said in Psalm 149:14:

*I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Wonderful are Your works,  
And my soul knows it very well.*

So, if God has taken tremendous thought in creation and his creation of you, does it even make any sense to think God would carelessly toss out his work. If you perfected a work that took all your time, thought and attention over your life, would you just cast it aside or would you value it? This is a line of reason which Jesus uses.

Read Luke 12:22-32.

Meditate on this reason and what the scriptures are saying.

Discuss with others how this reason affects our trust in God's love.

What else do you see in these verses about our subject?

### **He Meets You At The Cross**

The Bible shows that God's love in the cross was for more than just making penalty for our sins. What else was Jesus doing for us?

Look up Hebrews 2:14-18 and answer these things:

How did God in Christ make identity with us? (V. 14)

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What affect would this have over the devil in our lives? (V. 14)

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What was Jesus' purpose in doing all this? (V.15)

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Who is God concerned about even more than the angels? (V. 16)

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In verse 17 with whom is he making identity?

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Secondly in verse 17 what position and character was he developing?

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Thirdly in verse 17 what was he going to do with our sins?

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And how else now is Jesus able to help us? (V. 18)

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### **God Demonstrates His Character**

Not only does God demonstrate the kind of character that He is, but He wants us to become of like character with Him.

Read John 15:12 and answer this – in what way are we to love others?

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How did Jesus demonstrate the greatest love to us?

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Jesus drove home the point that He loves us -  
by the nails driven into His Hands!

### **Bringing it to a Resolve**

Understanding from this lesson that nothing will happen in our faith unless we solidify our resolve to believe God Loves Me, we need to settle this forever in our hearts and character.

In II Timothy 1:12 it says, “I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.”

Think about what reasons pop up at times as to why you don’t believe God loves you. Then, come against these with every scripture and reason you can think of to annihilate such doubts. Resolve this issue with all the assurance of God’s word in order to be a strong, stable disciple of Jesus Christ.

### **I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I will always trust the Lord believing without vacillating that He loves me!

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## **Lesson 2**

### **Forgiven in the Cross**

In John 12:32, speaking of the cross, Jesus said, “But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.” God has done an amazing thing through the cross, which has great ramifications.

In the first lesson we saw that God’s love is what assures us. We stand amazed that the sovereign of the universe would come into our flesh and blood, live with us, teach us, and die for us.

This love is demonstrated in no greater way than in the cross. The Christian life here on earth begins and stays at the cross. In the cross we see something very powerful that transforms us in many ways. We will be looking at these effects it causes in our lives in these next lessons:

It demonstrates and convinces us of God’s love for us.

Because Jesus bore our sins, we no longer need to carry them.

Because Jesus has allowed for the payment and forgiveness of sins, it frees us in our relationship with other people -in short, we too can give grace, just as we have received it.

It frees us to be who God really wants us to be, because we no longer need to worry about pleasing anyone but the Lord.

It removes selfishness from us, and purifies our motives. If Jesus lived and died in such a way how can we do less. We learn to find the character and joy of being like Jesus in righteous self-less service to God and others.

The cross is a powerful weapon against the wicked spiritual forces. The fact that the Lord of glory would die for mankind, who are even lower than angels, is such a powerful demonstration of God’s love and character that the demons can not even bear to mention it.

Through the cross Jesus won the right to rule and as His loyal subjects he has commissioned us to go out and make disciples of all nations.

#### **Because Jesus Carried Our Sins We Do Not Need To**

As one coming to Jesus we meet Him at the cross, for it is here we first realize the love and the sacrifice God has given to us. We realize it was our sins that put Him on the cross.

I like the way Colossians 2:13-15 explains the cross:

*<sup>13</sup>When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, <sup>14</sup>having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. - NASV*

Look at verse 13, it explains that we were dead in our sins, (we were “dead meat” before God) yet He has made us alive with Christ and has forgiven our trespasses / sins.

Look at verse 14; this is explaining that every time we violated the law of God it would cry out against us, it is like a person constantly getting traffic tickets, but of course much more serious. Every time a criminal breaks the law there is a new count against them in the law. Explain here and discuss what God did with all those “tickets” of the law against us?

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The way God got rid of our tickets was not by excusing them but paying for them by taking on the just penalty of all those convictions. That’s why II Corinthians 5:21 says what?

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Some people never really can let go of their sins. They may give some head knowledge to them, but do not live in freedom from them. They may feel that God couldn’t really forgive them, or their sins are just too great, or they are not worth God’s interest.

My wife’s grandmother was a wonderful person, but you would be in for a fight if you ever tried to pay for her meal or give her a gift, she insisted in paying her own way. Now while we understand the premise that each person should work and pay their own way, yet we also see that this misses another principle of accepting grace. We need to learn in our lives how to accept grace and simply say, “Thank You!”, and receive and use what someone wants to give us.

None of us like to be vulnerable or needy, yet it is better to be rescued than to perish. God does not want people to be drugged down or destroyed by their sins, but to be freed from them.

Discuss and come up with a parable showing how it would be such a waste to not make full use of the great gift Jesus suffered and died to get to us. Write the basic idea of the story down here:

**Faith Exercise! Are You Still Holding On To Your Sins?**

Dwell on the concept that Jesus did all this to get your sins totally away from you and totally paid; yet you are still carrying them? All He did for you was a waste if you do not full make use of it, totally. The Scriptures are full of these declarations; here are some:

*Christ, ... gave himself for our sins to rescue us  
from the present evil age,  
Galatians 1:4*

*But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was  
promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who be-  
lieve.  
Galatians 3:22*

*<sup>18</sup>For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring  
us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:  
1 Peter 3:18*

Read Isaiah chapter 53 and meditate on this prophetic picture of Jesus coming and dying on our behalf. Make some notes on what you see.

Did He come in royal pomp and splendor? (V. 2)

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Was He handsome and appealing to people? How did he come? (V. 2)

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Why would He understand if people don't accept us? (V. 3)

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In verses 4 & 5 list all what happened to Him and why:

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In verse 6 who did He do this for, some or everyone?

Who is Romans 3:23 talking about?

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Which of your sins were included in payment on the cross?

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Is Christ's death considered complete and final payment for all? What does I Peter 3:18 say:

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Read John 3:16 and answer:

Does God love everyone?

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Is there a condition to receiving the benefit from what He has done?

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What is necessary to benefit from what God has done for us?

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The cross frees us to get past sins – Ours and other's.

We do not need to beat up on ourselves. God isn't wanting to judge and condemn us, he would rather forgive us help us and cleans us. He Himself has dealt with the dirty work of getting paying for sins inorder to clean you up!

If You See the "Analogy of the Coin", from the class leader, write down the analogy to use it on others:

Have you released yourself from your sins? To hold on to them is to void the work of Christ. Jesus took all our sin so we would be freed from it. To hold on to our guilt and sin is to have had Jesus suffer needlessly.

Question yourself- Are you really free from your sins or are you still holding on to the guilt, shame, rejection?

According to Galatians 5:1 What was the purpose of Christ dying on the cross?

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Therefore what are we to do?

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Often times, after receiving God's grace, people start thinking they need to do something to be worthy, but don't fall for that line. God has made us worthy, nothing we do will make us acceptable to God because He already loves us and has provided the payment for sin and the freedom from it. **Nothing you ever do will qualify you more than the cross!**

Read Galatians 3:1-5 and explain what is happening here.

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According to Romans 8:1 what do we no longer have to deal with?

If you have sincerely accepted what Jesus has done for you and entrust yourself to Him, He only wishes to bless and help you. You are valuable and precious to Him and He only wants to lift you up.

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I will no longer hold on to any sins or allow condemnation to be in my life since I have repented and accepted what Christ has done for me on the cross. I will now live by God's good grace and freedom!

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Chapter 3

## Getting Cross-Ways With People

*“To live up above with the Saints that we Love  
That will be Glory?  
But to live here below with the people we know,  
That’s another Story!”  
-Unknown*

As a disciple we are called to disciple and minister to others, we are in the “people business”. To see people come into salvation and then to watch them bloom in their transformation into a new life is one of the great blessings of being a Christian. But sometimes we have been very surprised by the faithlessness and betrayal of people who we thought were Christians. I call this the Young Ministers surprise! But also on the other hand, we have been wonderfully surprised by the great goodness and faithfulness of those who are Christians. People surprise you. I have heard some ministers say, “Ministry would be *Great*, if it weren’t for the *People!*” Ah—but that is what it is all about, isn’t it.

The Greatest commandment is love, but to love everybody, even when they are bad? We are to still love people as God loves them. ***We are to look at people through our heavenly Father’s eyes.***

The parable of the Prodigal Son really has two parts:

Luke 15:11-24. Read this and explain the Father’s Attitude:

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Luke 15:25-32 Read this and explain the Father’s love in contrast to the Brother’s love:

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Often times we see things only from our selfish perspective. In I Corinthians 8 Paul is responding to a question the Corinthians asked. He explains we have great freedom, yet we should be careful not to make people stumble through our freedoms. Read I Corinthians 8:9 through 12. In reference to verse 11, explain how through our careless attitude towards others we can undo what Christ has done on the cross?

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Although we may go through a lot on earth and may even be wronged what do these verses say about any trials we go through now:

II Corinthians 4:17?

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In Hebrews 10:32-34 it talks about the loss Christians may experience, but what is our consolation according to verse 34?

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Summarize what the lesson is in the parable Jesus gives us in Matthew 18:21-35:

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People will sin against us. But no amount of injustice, suffering or loss in this life will compare to the blessings God brings to us for eternity. But for those who do not repent, the wrath of God abides and will abide on them forever in hell.

What does Jude 1:23 tell us to do?

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### **Let's Not Confuse Some Issues**

When we talk about having love, compassion and forgiveness towards sinners (remember we too were sinners), people have a hard time accepting this. I believe this is because they are confusing some issues. For instance, I think they are presuming forgiveness means they must now immediately trust them and act as if nothing has happened. Forgiving someone does not mean we have to accept their actions and again entrust ourselves to them. There is a difference.

As a Pastor Friend of our said, "*Gullibility is not a Christian Virtue*". Jesus said we are to be as wise as serpents, but as innocent as doves. Trust levels are a real and valid thing. Because we forgive someone does not mean that we should foolishly trust them where they have proven themselves to be untrustworthy.

Jesus loved mankind but still what does John 2:24 say:

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Now Jesus said that the hearts of men are deceitful and he knew men were sinners, yet he still loved us and came to die for us to save us.

In what way are we too to love sinners as Jesus said in John 15:12:

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Yet, Jesus did work with people who proved themselves by being faithful and following him. Now think about this, ***Jesus entrusted the entire future of His church and work to His Disciples.*** When He left He entrusted His work to His friends His disciples; if they had been unfaithful you would never have known the Gospel and the church would not be in existence today.

Yes, people will hurt you, betray you, disappoint you, but that is their loss! Because God has forgiven you your terrible sins and will bless you for all of eternity we too can now have a heart of compassion and mercy for them, hoping they will come to repentance and salvation.

We are not called upon to foolishly trust people and overlook what they have done; we are called upon to see things from God's perspective and have the same heart that seeks to win them for salvation.

***A note about the consequence of sin:***

One day I was called upon to visit an elderly lady in her home. You could hear the pain and bitterness in her as she started talking about why she rejected the idea that God would forgive sins. Obviously she had really been victimized by people in her life. She was saying that it would not be fair for God to say, "That's all right, you have done terrible things, we'll just forget about it."

As I listened to her, I realized she was right, and this is what I explain to her: She is right! A god of justice could never overlook the terrible things people do, that would be a travesty of justice, very unfair, very unholy. But that is why in fact God did not just excuse sin – he demanded a full punishment. That is why the cross was such a brutal capital punishment. God couldn't overlook sin, he had to in justice deal out complete retribution and punishment on it. He didn't let it go. He stepped into the guilty persons spot and became our sin. He knew no sin. He did nothing to deserve this, but he took our place so that the weight of the law and justice would be measured out. Jesus wasn't just a lamb or a bull, nor was he just another person, He was God himself! Truly it was a complete payment for our sins.

So God didn't just "forgive" your sin by overlooking it. It cost Him dearly; and while our salvation is given to us freely, it did not come at a cheap cost. Yes, God didn't overlook your sin, he "atoned" (paid) for it by His own tremendous, innocent, substituted suffering and dying.

You put Christ on the cross for your sins! If you were the only sinner on earth he would have done this only for you. So now, who are you to hold unforgiveness towards others? Are you a perfect person who has never sinned? If you have so received the love of God, God expects you as one who has understood His love, to love others in the same way!

Christ paid a terrible price for our terrible sins, the judgment that was due us fell on Christ. If he would have had an attitude of intolerance and unforgiveness towards us where would we be? Praise God He loved us valued us in spite of our attitudes and sins. Now we too are to see people through His heart. We don't love them for their sin, we love them for what they can be apart from their sin, when Christ can remake and save them too.

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I will have a heart now for everyone, looking at them with the eyes and heart of God the Father. In spite of how they may treat me, I will seek to win them for their salvation's sake!

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 4

### Who We Are In Christ

*In the town of Stepanavan, Armenia, I met a woman whom everyone called "Palasan's wife." She had her own name, of course, but townspeople called her by her husband's name to show her great honor. When the devastating 1988 earthquake struck Armenia, it was nearly noon, and Palasan was at work. He rushed to the elementary school where his son was a student.*

*The facade was already crumbling, but he entered the building and began pushing children outside to safety. After Palasan had managed to help twenty-eight children out, an aftershock hit that completely collapsed the school building and killed him. So the people of Stepanavan honor his memory and his young widow by calling her Palasan's wife. Sometimes a person's greatest honor is not who they are but to whom they are related. The highest honor of any believer is to be called a disciple of Jesus Christ, who laid down his life for all people.*

*L. Nishan Bakalian*

We too have our identity now with greatness, not by what we have done, but by what Jesus has done. We are "The Bride of Christ".

The Bible makes amazing declarations about who we have now become in Christ! This is so important for us to grasp, for through these lessons we are laying a foundation of faith so that we will be powerful in spiritual warfare and in witness. We have seen the amazing love that God has for us; we have seen how he has totally forgiven us. We have seen how we too are to take on His character and heart to love and win the lost. Now, if we can grasp who we are in Christ, we will have no fear in taking authority over demons or be cast into doubt when we consider our future and the plans God has for us.

Indeed we are called with an awesome high calling, through these verses we hope you will begin to realize your status and standing through Jesus!

Who are you now in God's eyes? Read these verses and declare who you are!

John 1:12-13

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II Corinthians 5:20

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Therefore, as one representing the kingdom of God, tell about all the power, authority, armies that back us up.

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Sometimes people can change their countries, what does the Bible say has happen to us?

Colossians 1:13-14

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Philippians 3:20-21.

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Ephesians 2:19

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What is another role you will be called upon to do according to I Corinthians 6:3?

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### **Just How Righteous Are We?**

What is now our standard of righteousness according to II Corinthians 5:21?

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Our unity with Jesus is very close. How close according to I Corinthians 6:17?

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How much sin do you think resides in the Spirit of Jesus?

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The Bible shows we are Spirit, Soul, and Body (I Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 4:12). It further teaches that when we accept Christ we are “born again” (John 3:3-6) and our spirit becomes one with Him and in *complete* righteousness, as shown in the verses above. Yet it shows that our soul (mind, emotions, will, etc. make up the soul) is being saved and still while on earth has to struggle with being transformed into all God wants us to be (I Peter 2:11 and Roman 12:1-2). So our spirit is perfect and one with God, and our soul is being transformed into the likeness of Jesus. But in our flesh nothing good dwells and is not redeemable, but will perish and we will be given a new glorified body, one without corruption (Romans 7:21-88).

But now, our spiritual, justified status, is that we are children of God and in the righteousness of God. That explains how we can be pure before God, yet still have old issues that hang around in our lives.

A new birth has taken place in our lives. God's Spirit has joined with ours to now make us Sons and Daughters of God. The old nature is still hanging on, but the new nature that is developing within us is eternal and Christ is growing in us. Sometimes having the old thoughts and struggles within Christians confuses young Christians, but that is why we see a mixture of old and new within a persons life. It is as a friend our ours says:

*You either are or are not a Christian.  
It is like being pregnant, you can't be "sort of pregnant".  
It's just that it shows more on some than others.*

### **The Authority of Christ Through Us**

Now because of our standing: we are adopted, King's kids, Sons of God, ambassadors, heirs of the kingdom, God's authority is given to and through us.

What does Ephesians 1:20-2:6 about what position Jesus Christ has been raised to:

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And what position have we been raised to (present tense) in verse 6?

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What authority does Jesus give to His disciples in Luke 10:19?

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And finally, in what is called Jesus "Great Commission" to his disciples in Matthew 28:18-20, why, on what basis, is Jesus able to give us this commission according to verse 18?

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### **I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

Because of who I am in Christ, I will go with boldness and authority into spiritual warfare and witness!

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

## Lesson 5

### The Greatest Disciple

I learned a valuable lesson one time when I was sick and was not getting my healing. I had come to believe that it was God's will to heal but I was very sick for three days with the flu. After three days of claiming and demanding my healing, I finally decided to ask Him why I wasn't getting an answer to my prayers. The Holy Spirit brought a verse to my mind. This will be the first scripture we will look up. I had the attitude that since God promised me something in the scriptures, He had to answer me. I had a tiger by the tail.

What attitude will God work with and what attitude will God work against according to I Peter 5:5?

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If you really want true spiritual power with God, learn this lesson we are studying in this chapter.

Did you hear about the man that was given an award in his church for being the most humble person, but they took it away because he wore it?

Isaiah 66:2 <sup>(NASB)</sup> says,

*"But to this one I will look,  
To him who is humble and contrite of spirit,  
and who trembles at My word.*

I believe I have found a reason why sometimes our prayers are not answered. I believe this is the reason why I have seen some Charismatic churches not receive answers to their prayers. We can start developing an attitude that we are so great because we know God and God is working with us. We began to develop an attitude contrary to the character of God, an attitude God has to start standing against rather than blessing.

The Apostle Paul discovered the proper attitude to have. Rather than taking pride in himself, he said he would rather boast about his weaknesses. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9 and answer why he would do this?

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Are we seeking our own self importance and glory or are we sincerely seeking God's will? Are we dying to ourselves and living only for the Lord. The apostle Paul found the approach that worked. What was his life about as He said in Galatians 2:20?

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**Who do You REALLY serve?**

If God called you to faithfully and effectively serve Him all your life, but in such a way that no one would ever know about it, would you be content with that?

According to Colossians 3:23-24 in all our work who are we really serving?

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What will we get?

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In Luke 16:13 Jesus makes an important clarification for our lives. How many people, masters, things can we serve?

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What happens if we try to accommodate both?

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We must really examine ourselves; do you really serve Jesus, or do you try to serve yourself, riches, glory, others, popularity, fame, tradition, the fear of man? What or How do you really serve?

If we are going to be servants of the Lord we must truly, sincerely love and listen to and serve only Jesus Christ. This is something we must thoroughly work through our being. Of course, as we think about it this also is greatly freeing for us in our lives. We do not need to worry any more about what others think. It simplifies our lives.

I have seen too often in ministry, people who like to be in ministry for the glory of standing up front, looking important. I have seen worship leaders who lead because they like to sing and get their “high” on the feelings and music, but are really exalting themselves instead?

Read James 3:14-16 and settle it within yourself forever if these negative things referred to here are in you. What are the negative things in God’s eyes (verse 14)?

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What happens therefore, even through Christians in ministry, when these things are really in their hearts:

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### **Who is the Greatest?**

Jesus wants to take us to the heights, but we must first put on the character of Jesus Christ. God watched the angels and mankind take on the sin of pride and arrogance and He knows this only brings destruction. Therefore He Himself gave us an example of the kind of character He is looking for in His kingdom. Although Jesus reigned on High, He came to earth and humbled Himself to serve us and save us. He lived a humble life on earth, He died a humiliating death and went to the depths of Hades out of love and service for us.

Some seek the gold of Heaven, but in God's eyes the value of gold is only worth pavement to walk on; what really counts is a wonderful, loving character that thinks of others - that is the real glory! It's the character of the citizens of heaven that makes heaven so wonderful!

Who will be the greatest in Heaven? Who is now the greatest disciple? Who does God look on now as the one He can use?

Read Matthew 23:11-12 and answer the following questions:

Who will be considered the greatest Christian?

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If someone wants to exalt himself, what is going to happen to him?

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How is someone going to be exalted by God

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Twice in the Gospel of Luke it records that Jesus had to deal with a dispute that came up between the disciples.

In Luke 9:46-49 what was the dispute about?

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Who did Jesus say was going to be the greatest?

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Even at the Last Supper, when Jesus was explaining that He was going to the cross to become the Passover lamb for us, what did the disciples start arguing about in Luke 22:24?

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What kind of attitude adjustment was going to be needed for someone to be considered a great Christian, in verse 26?

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Read and give answer/discuss why II Corinthians 10:12 is correct in what it says:

*[when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.]*

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One of the reasons, we as disciples can be servants and not be struggling for our own needs and self-importance is because we have security; we know it is God who is our provider and who justifies us and loves us.

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I resolve forever in my life that I will not seek my own self-importance. Rather, I will be a servant who is only concerned about what the Lord thinks of me. So also I will not compare myself with others, since I know I am uniquely His and serving Him and Him only!

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Lesson 6**

### **Faithful in a Little**

One of the figures that looms largest in world history is Abraham. In Romans 4:16 the scriptures calls him the “Father of us all” for it is through Abraham that the promise of God came. In Genesis 15:6 it says God was so pleased that Abraham believed Him that “He reckoned it to him as righteousness.”

But what did Abraham really do? He didn’t build a city, raise a temple, or establish a country. What did he do? All he did to be great in God’s eyes was just simply to believe God and go about his daily life.

Sometimes, when we began to hear all the wonderful stories of Christians doing wonderful things we can get discontent in just doing the daily little details of life. But being faithful, moment by moment, day by day, living our lives in faith and faithfulness is greatly pleasing to God.

In John 6:28 the people asked Jesus, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” In the next verse 29 what did Jesus tell us was the work of God we are to do?

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Sometimes Christians can get so wrapped up in the super spiritual things they neglect to do the simple necessary things in life. The Bible says all have gifts, yet sometimes when something needs to be done people will say, “I don’t want to do that because I don’t have a gift in that area.” But as we showed in the last lesson, the greatest Christian is one who is a servant. If someone is needed to clean the church or teach a children’s class, we need to do whatever we can. Whatever needs to be done, needs to be done. In our house we don’t say, I don’t have a gift of vacuuming; we just do it. We don’t say, I don’t feel led to take out the garbage we just do it. God is looking for people who will fill in the gap and do what needs to be done.

What is a main requirement for us as God’s servants, God’s workers according to 1 Corinthians 4:2?

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Allow me to let you in on a little secret. If you want to be used in ministry, the church is going to look for those who are faithful. Sometimes people want to only be involved in the most important part of ministry, yet they never help out with basic things around the church. But, the person that is simply faithfully there and with a servant’s heart doing the things that need to be done, this is the one that the leadership looks to when more important ministry needs to be done. After all the greatest Christian is the one who is a servant.

In fact this has become a rule for the church to follow, according to I Timothy 3:10, before anyone can be selected for an important position in the church, what is one thing that is required first?

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Imagine you are a church leader and a project needs to be done so you ask Joe to help with it. He shows up late, doesn't really find out what needs to specifically be done, horses around and leaves without seeing if anything else needs to be done before the project is considered complete. Will you want to entrust him with any other ministry?

God looks at it in the same way. Are you faithful to Him? Do you "sort of do" some of the things He says, or do you just do some of the things some of the time?

Faithfulness means we are consistent and reliable; we can be counted on to do something and do it faithfully and completely. I have heard of a number of instances where a mechanic was fixing someone's car but never got around to finishing the job totally, or not putting all the parts back. Can you imagine that? But that is how we approach things in life and ministry if we are not faithful to fully do every responsibility. It is required of us as servants of the Lord to be faithful in ALL things!

### **The Small Stuff**

Sometimes people just don't want to mess with "the small stuff". But here too let me give you a big clue. God likes the small stuff, He came as a humble baby in a little barn. He starts things with just a word until they become large manifested things. He came up with the idea of the seed. Think about that. The whole of an Oak tree, a whale, a person is all coded into the little seed of what is to be.

What do the scriptures ask about small things in Zechariah 4:10?

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Also God loves to take nothing (and no ones) and make it into something. That's just the kind of character God is. Read I Corinthians 1:26-29 and tell what God likes to do:

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God will constantly surprise us with what He can do with the little we give him. Remember the story of the little boy who offered his lunch and Jesus used it to feed 5,000.

Years ago our bible study group decided to start a Christian Book store, but when we pooled our money we only had \$1000. Every person who knew about bookstores said we needed at least \$10,000. So we appropriately named it The Mustard Seed and it prospered and had a great effect on the community.

In Matthew 13:31-32 is this parable; notice how God will not only use the small things, but in fact says this is what the kingdom of heaven is like:

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.”*

Do you think God is trying to make a point with us??? Yes, the small things count!

In fact He makes it a rule in His Kingdom. How is little and much related in Luke 16:10?

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James S. Hewett relays this story: Mother Teresa of Calcutta once was asked, "How do you measure the success of your work?" She looked puzzled for a moment and then replied, "I don't remember that the Lord ever spoke of success. He spoke only of faithfulness in love. This is the only success that really counts."

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I understand the importance in God's eyes of being faithful in all things, including all the little things, for they are very important and can have great consequences. Therefore I will not despise small things, but rather, be faithful each day to do everything God has called me to do.

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## Chapter 7

### Winning the Battle for The Mind

We are engaged in spiritual warfare and most of that is fought in the mind. That's because it is our thoughts that move us into our actions. As one man said *Be careful of your thoughts; they may break into actions at any time.*

The fall of man started with the thoughts presented to Adam and Eve. Satan couldn't force them to sin against God but he said, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" and "You will not surely die."

Now within our spirit we have been made righteous and one with the Lord. Within our soul there is another process happening. Our soul contains our mind, will, and emotions; these are the things that make us unique and our own living soul. So now, although we are connected and right in the spirit, yet our mind and thoughts are still in the fallen world.

Read Romans 12:2 and answer these questions:

What now should be happening with our minds?

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If we do this what will this show?

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There is another area of attack. According to I Peter 2:11 what is being attacked and what is doing the attacking?

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Our body is made of flesh and of course very close to us. What does Romans 8:7 say about the influence of the flesh on us?

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You can not convert your flesh; you can not change it. Romans 8:10 says: "*though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness*". Contrary to our spirit which is made new by joining to the Lord, and our minds which are being renewed, the flesh is not even able to abide by the laws of God, it is a fallen nature. God will redeem our body and give us new bodies, but for now we have a battle for the control of our lives.

According to Romans 8:13 – 14 it shows we can not through natural means control the flesh; the only way we can is by what agency?

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II Corinthians 10:3-4 in the NASV more correctly translates this verse saying “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup>for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.”

According to the next verse, II Corinthians 10:5 what do you think these fortresses are?

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Something I have discovered is that often times when people have thoughts, they think they are their thoughts, but not necessarily so. I used to pray for God to let me know what I should preach on. Then thoughts would start coming and I would say “No, Lord, I don’t want my thoughts, I want your thoughts.” Then it started dawning on me, where are these thoughts coming from? I realized that they were coming from God in the Holy Spirit. As I have learned to trust the thoughts that come as I have prayed for them that sermons are developed. I have often seen how God has put sermons together. Often times in remarkable ways that just worked out like I could not have planned.

So I have learned that the spiritual connects to the soul realm, to the mind. God designed us to be lead by the spirit, not by the flesh or the soul. Some people think the body and pleasure is where it is at. Some people think education and educating the mind is everything. Some people realize it is the spirit that is most important, but do not know how to properly hook up to God, because they are spiritually cut off.

But Jesus said in John 4:23 “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.”

So we need to know and know how to get our thought from the Holy Spirit. Now some people may run in fear and say – how do you know you are not getting a wrong spirit?

What does Luke 11:10-13 answer to that question?

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We now have access by the Holy Spirit in our spirit prompting and speaking to our minds.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:2-16 to see how and why we now have the thoughts of God. What is the conclusion of this scripture in verse 16?

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One source thoughts can also come from is from Satan's evil spirits. What does the bible teach about trusting different spirits in I John 4:1?

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What is one test we need to ask of spirits according to I John 4:2?

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What is another important and basic test Jesus gives us in Matthew 7:15-20?

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We have come to see and understand that Satan's strategy upon people is to speak so much into people minds false ideas and thoughts that people think these are their thoughts so their lives become bound by these wrong and dominating ideas. An example of this would be such as Anorexia. A person affected by anorexia will believe they are fat yet they are skin and bones and their lives are in danger of starvation. They will tell you, when they finally open up to what is really happening within them, they feel great condemnation telling them they don't deserve to eat or live etc.

From this extreme example down to the smallest seemingly insignificant thought, we need to understand that thoughts are used in spiritual warfare.

The way we fight in this is to understand we need to take every thought captive to Christ and the knowledge of God. We need to understand we have been given authority by Christ over the power of the enemy. So we can command the enemy to be quiet, to leave and use the sword of the spirit which is the word of God to establish what is really true and what is the will of God.

This has been a very important lesson to understand and apply. Continue to develop a full understanding how the battle for the mind applies in spiritual warfare.

### **I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I understand now that thoughts are not just insignificant matters, but can be strategies of the enemy. I will therefore fight against and take fortresses of the mind and thoughts to destroy them and take the minds and thoughts captive to the knowledge and will of God, whether in my minds or in other people's minds.

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## Chapter 8

### Breaking Curses

We like to think on the blessings of God, but the Bible also shows that curses are real. Curses are spiritual assignments of bad things towards people. Now coming from the Christian perspective of wanting blessings, this concept seems like an affront to us; yet the spiritual reality is that there are blessings and curses. God must stand against evil and in His righteousness issue declarations against people and things. And we certainly do not want to fall under condemnation because our actions are wicked. Understanding curses and blessings will help us to be wise to spiritual things and bring a healthy fear of God into our lives.

There are up to 184 references to curses in the Bible. God cursed the serpent when he enticed Adam and Eve into sin. As a punishment to Adam and Eve He cursed the ground so that mankind would have to work by the sweat of their brow. He cursed Cain when he killed his brother Abel saying the ground that received Abel's blood would not return any good to him though he worked it. Even apart from direct references to the word, 'curse' is the whole concept that God as judge and ruler of the universe has to issue declarations for or against people, nations, and things. We want to walk in His favor. Not because we fear God because He is big, but because He is good, just, and righteous and His judgments are true and just. We don't want to be evil people, nor do we want God to have to issue decrees against us.

God made this concept very clear to the people of Israel. Before they entered the Promised Land He had the people stand on two mountains opposite of each other and declare blessings and curses. Read this in Deuteronomy 28.

According to verses 1-14 what are some of the Blessings if we follow the Lord:

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From verse 15 on what are some of the Curses?

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Talk about quality of life! Some times we see nations in complete poverty with everything going wrong and sometimes we see nations like ours which are blessed. We know we do not want a life which God stands against and brings judgment against. We would rather have His favor and assistance.

### **Strategies for Curses**

In the story of Balaam we see how this concept of blessing and cursing comes into play in spiritual warfare: The country of Moab was on the path to the entrance of the Promised Land and the Israelites needed to pass through it. But the Moabites were in great dread of Israel and appealed to their king Balak to do something. So Balak hired the Seer called Balaam to curse Israel. Balaam sees into the spiritual realm. King Balak says he will give him great riches if he will come and curse Israel. But each time Balaam goes to the top of a mountain where he can see the Israelis camped and tries to curse them, God reveals to him that He, God has blessed them, therefore they are blessed and will conquer.

So the King is furious and Balaam is out his reward. So Balaam counsels the king, which greatly angers God. He basically tells him this. We can't curse them, because God has blessed them; so what you have to do is get them to sin and get God angry with them. So what the Moabites do is to send lots of prostitutes to visit the people Israel and get them into sinning not only sexually but also by worshipping some of their heathen Gods. The wrath of God comes upon Israel and many lives are lost. Balaam got his gold, but later God gets his head. Israel still gets to the promise land but at a great loss. So the New Testament warns of evil people:

*They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.  
2 Peter 2:15*

*(2 Peter 2:13-16, Numbers 22-24, 31:8, Joshua 13:22, Rev. 2:14)*

Not only do curses bring God's disfavor on us, but it opens us up to the wrath of demons, since our defenses are down. We can become vulnerable in our lives to bad, tormenting spirits which torment us and put bondages on us.

We see an example in the story of King Saul. He didn't obey God, thinking he had a better way. So God sent the prophet Samuel to him telling him:

*"For rebellion is as the sin of divination,  
And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry.  
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,  
He has also rejected you from being king."  
1 Samuel 15:23*

As a result God, pulled away His Holy Spirit and an evil spirit came in which plagued Him. I Sam. 16:14 says: *"Now the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD tormented him."*

The Bible is full of instances where people sin and God brings a judgment on them. The Following example is one instance where we can see behind the spiritual scene to understand why the town of Shechem became plagued with robbers and ambushes. Read Judges 9:22-25 and tell what was the spiritual cause of this:

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We must understand how curses work so we can understand how to break these bondages by removing their legal rights to get at us. Now in Christ we can take authority over these things to free our lives from these curses. Later in this lesson we will study this how to break curses, but first let's see how curses can come to us.

### **What Brings Curses**

The Bible says: "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." I Peter 1:15-16. So we are to walk in Holiness. If we sin, God has to stand against us, even though He loves us. The following are some categories of sin which will cause God to stand against us rather than blessing us. We will use the 10 commandments (Exodus 10:3-17) as a reference point and give at least one other example in each category to look up as well:

#### **Idolatry**

Read Exodus 20:3-5 Anything that takes the priority in our lives over God brings a curse. This can be idols, money, fame, your own life and agenda. Séances, Quija boards, talking to the dead, other religions, philosophies etc. Even if you dabbled in these things and you didn't think there was anything serious about it, God does. You may have opened some doors or windows into your life.

Read Exodus 20:5-6 and tell how our sin may affect our lineage:

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See also Deuteronomy 18:10-14

Why did God mark some houses for destruction in the fall of Israel according to Jeremiah 32:9

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### **Taking God's Name in Vain**

Exodus 20:7 It is a great offense to treat God's Holy name as nothing – to cast it around as nothing, to say “Oh, God, that dress is just great!” or, to use His name as a swear word.

What promise is given after this commandment in verse 7?

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### **Sabbath Rest**

Exodus 20:8-11 We must get a regular Sabbath rest. While we now are free from the law and as it shows in Colossians 2:16-18, yet the principle applies that we need to honor the Lord in faith in getting our rest and worshipping Him.

### **Honoring Your Parents**

Exodus 20:12 This is so important God adds a promise is we do it. What is that promise in this verse?

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What did the law say should be done to someone who cursed their parents:

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Many of the violations of the law demanded a capital punishment indicating the seriousness of these things.

### **Murder**

Exodus 20:13 Murder cries out for justice, life for life the Law taught.

God was bringing judgment on the nation of Israel because they became filled with the violation of all these commandments. So Hosea 4:2 says:

*There is only cursing, lying and murder,  
stealing and adultery;  
they break all bounds,  
and bloodshed follows bloodshed.*

### **Sexual Sins**

Exodus 20:14 Adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lust, lewdness is all condemned in the bible.

What happens to the people that practice all these things according to I Corinthians 6:9-10?

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According to Romans 1:26-27 says there will come to people within themselves a penalty if they are involved in what activity:

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### **Stealing**

Exodus 20:15 Stealing is more than just stealing, it is cheating on your taxes. It is not giving people their due. It is not giving God his due.

Read Malachi 3:5 and notice all the sins God is angry at but answer here what God said they were wrong in regards to the laborers:

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As Israel came into the land they were stopped in their tracks after the great victory at Jericho; the cause, was a man who stole things of value which God said was to be destroyed. He took things that were “under the ban”. When we sin, it stops us in our spiritual tracks until we confess and remove anything “under the ban” that should not be in our lives!

Why did God say the whole nation was under a curse in Malachi 3:9-10?

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### **Lying**

Exodus 20:16 This speaks about giving false testimony in court, and also speaks to telling false tales. All liars will go to hell the bible teaches.

Why did God say His hand was against some prophets in Ezekiel 13:9?

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### **Wrong Desires**

Exodus 20:17 This really covers evil desires we have for things that are not ours. Even letting our thoughts entice us is a sin to God, even though we have not yet actually stolen anything. Our mind and thoughts are to be kept pure.

Read Romans 6:12 and answer this; what are we not to let control us?

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In Ezekiel 23:9-10 God says that Israel lusted after being like the heathen nation of the Assyrians, so how did God respond?

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### **Speaking Curses**

Since all men have sinned they are vulnerable to curses. When somebody cries out against someone and curses them it calls for an attention of judgment to be upon them.

What power do we have with our tongues according to Proverbs 18:21?

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Voodoo uses the power of curses. Since we can call down attention to men's sins, voodoo can have some power.

What are we Christians commanded not to do in Romans 12:14:

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Now we might say, some deserve a curse. That is true, but so did we; those who live in straw houses should not be throwing fire around. Rather we are to respond as God did; did he want our destruction or what according to John 3:17?

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God has made it so that there is power in what is spoken. So, the words we speak have power; we are to watch our tongues and only speak positive good things to people, not to bring curses but blessings rather into people's lives. (Psalm 34:13, James 3:10, etc.) But some people bring curses all the time on themselves, others and things, they will say, "Damn ....." By the very existence of this type of speech being so common displays the spiritual significance of the reality of curses and blessings.

People constantly speak things into people's lives: "You are so stupid," "You will never amount to anything," "this country is going to hell," "I can't do anything," Watch what you say, it can have far reaching impact.

### **Breaking Curses**

God has provided a way for all curses to be removed from us. Read Galatians 3:13-14 and explain how curses are removed from us and the blessing of God can come instead:

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Now if we follow Jesus Christ we pass from judgment into life, (John 5:24) but what happens to those who do not respond to Jesus according to John 3:36?

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So we can break all curses through Jesus Christ. A part of this process is by repenting. Acts 3:10 says:

*Repent, then, and turn to God,  
so that your sins may be wiped out,  
that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,*

**So now, to break curses over ourselves or others we must:**

1. Repent of the sin, whether we sinned, our parents or our nation!
2. Renounce such practice and no longer engage in them.
3. Take the sin and the curses and leave them at the cross. The cross has legally removed all curses from us.
4. Take authority over Satan and his demons to command them to leave, because they no longer have any legal right.
5. Annul all words that have been spoken by you or others as a curse.
6. Sanctify yourself to the Lord to not give Satan any more opportunity to enter through your sin or disbelief.
7. Remain strong in the spiritual knowledge of the word and standing you have. Note Colossians 2:14:

*having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. <sup>15</sup>When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.*

Now as Christians walking with the Lord, we have no fear of curses, for as it says in Proverbs 26:2

*Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a swallow in its flying,  
So a curse without cause does not alight.*

And finally as it says in Revelation 22:3 the day will come when:

*No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.*

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

In the fear of God I will keep my life pure before the Lord. I will break all curses and walk in freedom. I will not curse others, but rather help bring other out of the bondages of curses.

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## **Chapter 9**

### **Dealing With Demons**

Jesus often dealt with demons in His ministry and He told His disciples to do the same, they were to cast them out of people. Demons can be the cause of illnesses, handicaps, mental illness and troubles of various types that plague humans.

Jesus has given us authority over demons. One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the ability to discern demons. Not all illness or various problems are caused by demons so discernment is needed.

The previous chapters in this study helped lay a foundation in being strong to deal with demons, for when encountering the demonic the question can arise of your righteousness and authority to be able to cast them out, but if you have understood and applied these earlier teaching you will know that we stand on our identity and righteousness in Christ and are assured of His love, we also know Satan has no legal right over us since we are free from curses.

#### **Learning About Demons**

Let's learn some things from what the scriptures show about demons. Read Luke 13:10-16 and answer these questions

What was the effect of the demon on this woman's life; for how long?

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Was she a "church" going woman? Where did this deliverance happen?

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Did Jesus consider her an evil or righteous woman?

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Did Jesus lay hands on her?

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Did Jesus pray for her deliverance or speak it?

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In Verse 16 what terminology did Jesus use to describe what Satan had done to this woman.

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Read Luke 10:17:20 and answer these questions:

What were Jesus disciples realizing about demons in verse 17:

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What does Jesus say he gives us in verse 19?

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Jesus is sure to keep them balanced, so what does He say is greater?

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In Matthew 10:8 was telling His disciples the things He want them to do. What did he say disciples are to do in reference to demons?

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In reference to Mark 16:17 Jesus said various signs were to follow. What was to happen in reference to demons?

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There are many references to demons in the Bible, particularly with Jesus and the Disciples. They would cry out loudly when Jesus or the disciples came near, often within the synagogues. They would tear at people, throw them to the ground, cause epilepsy and various types of bondages. (Matt. 9: 33; 12:22 Mk 5:1-15) Whole books could and have been written on the subject so we can cover every thing here, just the basics.

Demons are malevolent spirits who have Satan as their ruler. There is hierarchical structure in the authority and strategies. But their loyalties are not like we would think, they are in order as dogs in a pact – the strongest rules, or as members of a gangster mob. So there are not loyalties or personal qualities, it's just a hellish rule.

See what Jesus says in Luke 11:20-26:

*if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. <sup>21</sup>“When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. <sup>22</sup>But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder. <sup>23</sup>“He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters.*

*<sup>24</sup>“When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and not finding any, it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’*

*<sup>25</sup>“And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. <sup>26</sup>“Then it goes and takes*

*along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.”*

We see here that it just takes the finger of God to cast them out. Some people think God and Satan are on equal planes, but that is not so at all. God is God and Satan is a small created being.

Jesus then gives us some principles. If a demon or demons have taken residence in a home (a person’s life) they can’t be removed unless someone stronger (Jesus) comes in, overpowers them, strips them of their covering and plunder.

He then says they will after being cast out go out and roam, after while they will check back to see if they can get back in. If a person does not accept Jesus as Lord of His life and allow Him to take up residency there, even though he may have been delivered temporarily, he becomes vulnerable and will become even worse off than before. A person must secure his house (his life).

We have seen and come to believe that if the person themselves do not want to be delivered, there is no sense to try it for this very reason, and if they have been delivered, unless they are serious about getting right with Jesus and accepting Him and following Him, they will become worse off, for they have known Him but refuse to love Him and righteousness.

### **Authority Over Demons**

As has already been show, Jesus gives us all power over demons. As we saw in earlier lessons, we are raised up and seated with Christ in heavenly places. Jesus has received all authority in heaven and earth and therefore he has commissioned us and given us authority to cast out demons and break their bondages over people’s lives.

Read the account in Acts 19:11-18 and answer these questions:

What was happening in Paul’s ministry in regards to demons (V. 11)?

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What did seven sons of a Jewish Priest name Sceva try to do?

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What happened?

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What did the evil spirit give as justification for not obeying these men?

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Driving out demons is not about rituals or incantations, it is about having an authoritative relationship with the King of kings and Ruler of rulers. It requires faith in that, it requires fullness of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. It requires a pure life whose relationship with the Lord is not broken or sullied. If you are involved in submarine warfare you don't want to leave any doors open.

### **How Are Demons Discerned**

Often times the demons cried out whether in a synagogue (church) setting or not. When Jesus or the disciples came around they would often cry out. When they are ordered out especially it is common for them to shriek out and convulse the people. Jesus often told them to be quiet.

The Apostle John tells us how to test the spirits in 1 John 4:1-3 *NASV*:

*<sup>1</sup>Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup>By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; <sup>3</sup>and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God;*

The NIV incorrectly leaves out the “in the flesh” in its translation thinking it is making it simpler, but here the NASV correctly translates this. It is an extremely important concept, because Demons can not accept and contemplate the fact that the Son of God would become flesh and become one of us in love to be a proper substitute for us on the cross.

From personal experience we have seen a demon exposed through this confession. A girl who appeared to be prophesying was asked to confess that Jesus came in the flesh. Immediately she was thrown into convulsions and attacked by an unseen force. She later had a number of demons cast out of her as she writhed and slumped each time.

Another way the Bible tells us demons can be discerned is by one of the nine gifts of the spirit mentioned in I Corinthians 12:10. This is not, as many wrongly presume the gift of discernment (like wisdom to discern), rather it says it is a gift of the discerning of spirits. This gift was in operation, for what led us to challenge the spirit in this girl was that we felt like we just walked into a witchdoctors hut, even though it was a modern college dorm room. Some describe this working of this gift to cause them to actually see into the spiritual realm to see the spirits.

Another basic way to discern the spirits are as Jesus said in Matthew 7:15-20. Good fruit comes from good trees, bad from bad trees. You have to understand that spirits are characters. They can not be anything but what their character is. Spirits speak through people, and you can tell by the character of what they are saying and doing what spirit

is driving them. One thing about this method is that it is not an instant method, since it takes time and observation to see what fruit is coming forth, to tell if this is a false prophet and false spirit behind it all.

Spirits are characters and usually seem to named according to their character, for instance they may be called Lust, Greed, Legion (many) etc. They can not hid their nature. Though they can put on a false front their character will start showing. A wolf in sheep's clothing though acting like a sheep will still not be able to resist the idea of taking a bite out of a sheep.

If they incite people into wickedness they are not the Holy Spirit Leading them. (See also the principles in Revelation 2:20-23, Deuteronomy 13.)

We have heard teachers, in regards to this subject, say that if the people have done everything in the natural to break the bondage they are under, they have gone to the doctors, they have tried to apply themselves in discipline etc, yet all this is to no avail, it may be indicative that it is a spiritual problem, a demon is involved.

### **Doctrine of Demons**

Read I Timothy 4:1 and answer where do some doctrines and ideas come from?

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According to I Corinthians 20:20-23 when other religions are worshipping and giving offerings, of what are they really partaking?

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### **Can a Christian Have a Demon**

It seems that those who have not been actively involved in casting out demons presume Christians can not have a Demon; they base this on the presumptions of their doctrines. But every one I know who has a ministry of casting out demons will say they certainly can and many do.

The best resolve of this understanding seems to be based on the idea that the translation of some bibles say "demon-possessed" which clearly denotes ownership, but it would be better translated "demonized" having an entirely different connotation.

Many Christians are affected by other things like illnesses, wrong thoughts, injuries, mental illnesses, etc. So there is no doctrinal conflict to say that a Christian can be demonized, and we know of many cases where they have been. There simply needs to be a complete house-cleaning and breaking of all bondages for those individuals. God gave the Promised Land to the people of Israel, but they still had to clear out the giants and enemies and establish all the land for themselves and the Lord.

### **How To Cast Out Demons**

1. Be a solid Christian who knows his standing and righteousness are in the Lord Jesus.
2. Be walking in holiness and make sure you have no sins in your life.
3. Discern if there is a demon spirit involved
4. Speak to it, to order it to leave. Do not engage it in conversation, but tell it to be quiet and to leave.
5. Persist in faith as it may not want to leave, be steadfast and insistent.
6. Break all bonds and legal holds it may have.
7. Engage the person you are seeking to deliver to have them accept Jesus Christ and renounce the devil and repent of their sins.
8. Instruct the person that they must give no more room to the demons and accept the Lord and remain steadfast, or if he turns the last state will become worse than the first state he was in.
9. Use the word of God in speaking to the demons, they must obey it.

### **I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

Understanding the reality of demons and the need that so many have for deliverance, I will endeavor to prepare myself to be able to cast out demons. I will keep on my spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:20) and be prepared to minister.

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Chapter 10**

### **Wisdom**

This lesson can save your soul and it could save you thousands of dollars and many heartaches!

Wisdom gives an answer when it seems no answer can be given. It can have the same facts as everyone, but wisdom provides solutions which no one else can see.

The beginning step towards wisdom is to realize we do not have wisdom and power. It all comes from God, which foolish people tend to forget. We are wise if we understand that we do not have all the wisdom we need and we need to get it from God. According to I Corinthians 8:2 who is someone who does not yet understand as he should?

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There may be many ways of doing something, but wisdom will do it better. There may be ways of talking with people in which the foolish give offense, while the wise give understanding.

While God gives us a lot of grace we have to understand that when a Christian is foolish, he is as foolish as a foolish non-Christian; if he makes a stupid decision, he can still suffer the affects of that decision. Many Christians have given bad witness by being foolish in their statements and actions.

#### **Are Spirit-Led and Wisdom Compatible?**

There is a tendency, I believe, among many, especially Pentecostal/ Charismatics to have the feeling that because I am a Christian, I don't have to be "wise" because I am Spirit-led. In reality there is no dichotomy between the two! Both work together in truth. But there is a feeling that if you are spiritual, you do not have to be wise; the exact opposite is true. If you are spiritual, you should be very wise.

While God is love and grace, He is also Wisdom. Those who follow Him should also experience and follow in greater wisdom. To be ultimately spirit-led is to walk in wisdom.

#### **Wisdom Can Stand A Challenge**

We see in Jesus a great wisdom. He answered all the various groups that challenged Him to the extent that they were afraid to ask Him any more questions, because the answers He gave were so obviously correct through the wisdom with which He spoke that He put to shame many of the groups that held false ideas.

The same was true for Stephen, a deacon in the church. According to Acts 6:10 how powerful was Stephen's reasoning's with those who challenged his beliefs?

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When I went to seminary, I knew there were going to be tough questions thrown at my faith. I had seen a number of acquaintance go to seminary and come out with a disillusioned faith; but I thought, Jesus always had an answer and if my faith can not answer back, then it is not much of a faith. As I entered seminary with this attitude and very openly looked into all skeptical ideas and investigated them, I found so many of them were very shallow ideas with no basis.

We see that many people look at Christians who hold conservative ideas as being closed minded. I overheard one liberal minister say one day, "Is there any such thing as an open-minded conservative?" But nothing should be further from the truth. In fact the only way we can know we are right in our choices is if we have taken everything into account. We should not hold a position unless we have seen all sides and concluded what the truth is. Scientists who study and investigate many ideas are not called closed-minded when they come to hold firm to the discovered laws of physics.

God Himself is "open-minded". James 3:17 in the NASV says, "*But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable*", God is "open to reason" as another version says. Because God knows the truth of things, does that make Him "closed-minded"? Of course not; how ridiculous!

Throughout Christianity, the brightest scientists were Christians who gave glory to God. Our Christianity will help us in the search for truth. Indeed, let all Christians display great wisdom. Let our young people become the scientists, lawyers, doctors, philosophers of the world.

For leaving God out of any equation is like leaving a foundation out of a house. The ultimate creator is seen in all the creation which constantly displays great intelligence and balance in design, so much so that in many, many cases we hear that if some particular item were not just balanced and functioning correctly there could not be life on earth.

We do not need to fear being open-minded, for true wisdom and knowledge are in God, we need to be wiser to acknowledge God and trust in Him in order to truly begin to see wisdom and knowledge.

### ***Don't Be Stupid***

As one minister friend of ours, Rev. Orville Olson said, "Gullibility is not a Christian virtue." Unfortunately there are many examples of Christians being taken by scams, often in the name of Christian charities or churches etc. Being duped is not a good witness. I have known of many instances where Christians have lost much in their foolishness. The latest one I heard, just a couple months ago, was of a woman who lost

\$7000 on these e-mail scams which say somebody died in Africa leaving lots of money they wanted to bequest to your church or ministry.

Sometimes we get the idea of being loving and gracious confused with being wise and prudent. Here again, these principles are not opposed to each other but work together.

Check things out, don't be afraid to investigate, ask questions, don't be intimidated, for truth is not afraid of the light of day. Jesus commands us to have two characteristics in Matthew 10:16. What are we to be?

- 1.) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.) \_\_\_\_\_

Even in Psychology they have discovered that a person's I.Q. can be upped if they work at it. Wisdom can be gained. There can be a big difference between an educated fool and a non-educated wise man. Knowledge does not equate wisdom. It should help, but does not necessarily relate together.

Too often I have seen people who in their zeal in their faith seem to miss wisdom. They seem to not even have any common sense. It is very frustrating. How can you tell someone to have some common sense. If you tell them, will they say, "OK," and have it from then on?

Christians without wisdom may not realize they are being obnoxious, interrupting people, being overbearing, or thoughtless. I think one of the reasons is because some of these people have not learned to see things beyond their nose. In other words, they are self-absorbed. Are they thinking about how other people are responding, or what their needs are. For God as a good of love sees beyond himself and thinks of other's needs. So to should we; there is real wisdom in love.

### **The Difference Between Faith and Presumption**

Steps of faith often appear to not have any wisdom with them when in reality there is great wisdom, because the unseen God is leading, who knows many unseen facts. For instance we should all be wise to work hard and invest wisely, but how do you reckon that with "leave your nets and follow me?" Sometimes faith looks irreconcilable with wisdom. Were Peter and the Apostles wise to leave their fishing business, their tax business, their political aspirations? How can you expect to build a financial portfolio that way?

Some people think therefore, that all steps of wild faith are wise; but not so. Many people have stepped out into many ventures presumptuously thinking and saying they were doing God's will only to end up in very bad situations. *There is a big difference between faith and presumption.*

Real faith works and is of God. Presumptuous faith is not faith, just our own foolish ideas with no basis or support from God. How can we know the difference? Wisdom. Don't be stupid; you have to be sure your venture is God; not your own agenda.

The Gospel does not make sense to many. It all depends if you are including the invisible God in the equation. The Apostle Paul compared a Christian's wisdom with other's in I Corinthians 1:18-31. What kind of wisdom do we have according to I Corinthians 2:6?

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### **How Do We Get Wisdom**

The greatest step towards wisdom is to realize, we do not have wisdom or the ability to create or save ourselves.

According to Proverbs 1:7 what is the beginning of wisdom?

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Who despises wisdom?

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According to Romans 1:21-23, how can we be wise, if we use what is stated in these verses in the opposite way?

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Read Proverbs 2:1-12; state in one sentence how we can get wisdom.

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Wisdom operates in the same way as many things work which God gives us, in a partnership. Yes God gives us wisdom, but we too have to use it. You have to seek it; think about it, apply it. William Booth said: *"Work as if everything depended upon your work, and pray as if everything depended upon your prayer."* This too is how we must think and act in regards to wisdom, we too must use our brains and thoughts, for God has given those to us to use.

Yes you pray for it, but you have to work at it, work through it and work it. You have to do a lot of thinking, a lot of checking everything out, a lot of praying and discerning, a lot of keeping your mind open and fresh, experiencing and applying a lot.

What does James 1:5 say about how to get wisdom?

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### **A Gift**

Wisdom is a general concept available for all who have it, such as faith is a general precept for all who have it; but just as faith is mentioned again as a specific gift of the Holy in I Corinthians 12, so also is wisdom mentioned. So what is the difference between general wisdom and the gift of a "Word of Wisdom" in I Corinthians 12:8?

This gift of the Holy Spirit refers to a specific “word” of wisdom given for a particular solution. It does not say “wisdom” but “a word of wisdom”. Some one in church may be troubled by a very serious perplexing problem, so we pray and God will give to someone a word of insight that is an answer for their brother. This comes from no human reasoning, but is a gift of insight from the Holy Spirit.

Read I Kings 3:5-28 and answer these questions.

Why did Solomon ask for wisdom?

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How did Solomon solve an impossible case no one else could answer?

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### **The Character of Wisdom**

One key plumb line, by which to judge if you are functioning in wisdom is by understanding the character of God.

Read James 3:13-18 and note what James is comparing wisdom with, is it with our a.) intelligence, b.) faith, c.) pocketbook or d.) character

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In Galatians 5:22 it shows us if we are operating under the wise Spirit of God these will be the surrounding attitudes: List them:

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According to 2 Timothy 1:7 when we are functioning in the Holy Spirit will we be scared, in a hurry, not knowing what it do? How will a person moving in the wise Holy Spirit conduct himself?

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Now as you reflect on these characteristics of the nature of God I want you to compare these with the nature of many situations in which you need to act in wisdom. This is very pertinent!!!

You will see for instance when foolish situations come up, these will be missing. You will have to act right now, hastily. You will not have time to check it out. You will be intimidated not to take time or check things out because you will be asked, “Don’t you trust me; I thought you Christians were supposed to be trusting people?”

I had one scam artist ask me that question when he was solicitation church funds for his needs. I told him, "If you think that you are very wrong, I don't know you, it would be foolish for me not to check you out. Give me your identification credentials and let me make some calls." That has been a very effective way of having scammers quickly beat a path out of my door who come to me as a pastor. A few days latter, at a ministerial meeting here in Ankeny I heard of numerous pastors in town who were taken by that scam artist, giving him monies in the name of Christian charity.

Remember, God did not get caught off guard by what has suddenly hit you. You do not need to go into a panic or act in haste. Carefully and thoughtfully think through things in good order without panic and with all peace and fruit of the Holy Spirit.

According to Proverbs 12:15 what is a wise thing to do?

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**Ways To Check If You Are Functioning In Wisdom?**

1. Have you thought through all facts, all scenarios.
2. Think beyond your nose; in other words, how are others going to be affected by this? How will they respond? Do you care about them?
3. Am I being obnoxious?
4. Am I being reasonable, polite, and considerate?
5. Am I agitated and in a rush? Hasty, pressured decisions are bad decisions.
6. Is God clearly in this; or is this my agenda, my flesh, a false spirit?
7. Is this from a "host" of witnesses or just one wild instance?
8. Is this in accord with the spirit and context of the word of God?
9. Is this "yielded" and not running rough-shod over people or facts?
10. Does this meet with "common sense" and stability?
11. Have I submitted this idea to trusted spiritual brethren?
12. Have I checked out, tested, confirmed the people involved and the facts offered with reputable and authoritative people?

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:     *To Be WISE!!!***

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Chapter 11**

### **Witness**

*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

*Matt. 28:18-20*

#### **Part I**

##### **A Good Basis For Witnessing**

You are witness. You are a witness that church is not that important when you do not go to church regularly. You are a witness that Christ is not that important if you do not let Him change your life. You are a witness that Christians are hypocrites if you cheat on your taxes. If you get angry so easily at people it is a witness that Jesus is just a religion you believe in not a love that fills your life.

We have come to realize in raising children that "more is caught than taught." The same is true in being a witness. Indeed, you are a witness by your life; but what is that witness saying. When we think of being a witness most of us think of how we can phrase our words, but unless we know how to phrase of lives, our witness will not be credible.

How does James 2:18 say we show our faith?

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Read the next verse, James 2:19 and explain who can believe in God but it does no good.

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From this verse explain the difference between knowing God and trusting in Him.

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God is nobody's fool. Read Jesus' parable in Matthew 21:28-31 and tell how some people can fake a faith that isn't real before God.

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The Bible tells us God can not be mocked, according to Galatians 6:7-8 how do people mock God?

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Unfortunately, I have met too many people who identify themselves as Christians yet do not connect their Christianity with their ethics and morals. These people leave a real disaster in their wake wherever they go because people think that is how Christians act. They think they are being great Christians because they constantly talk the talk, yet they can't be trusted. We have known people who were very active in church, but the community gossip we heard was they were a "tricky dicky". People sometimes build a reputation of being swindlers. But, they see their actions in business not as crooked; they are just being very shrewd in business. They don't even have as high a standard as the world does. They are a witness alright.

We are not even to have the appearance of evil, we should go overboard in being generous, faithful and of the highest character. Our lives should not be about walking as close to the line without going over. Our priority should be through our lives and character to be a good witness.

Read Romans 6:11-15 and respond to these questions

Verse 11: What are we to consider ourselves dead to?

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Verse 12: What are we no longer to let rule over us and obey?

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Verse 13: What are we to do with our body parts?

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Verse 15: According to this verse, explain what argument some are making about grace and the law of God, to which Paul is here arguing against.

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According to Jude 1:4 what have some turned the wonderful grace of God into?

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In Matthew 5:16 how does Jesus say we can cause people to glorify God?

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Through this last section we see that the base of our witness is through our changed life and good works; we can talk all we want about God and the gospel, but if our actions and morals are corrupt so will be our witness. We must be people of integrity and Christian character to begin with before we can be worthy of a hearing.

What did Paul tell the Corinthians to do in I Corinthians 4:16?

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The only Jesus people may see is you. We should live in such a way that we can tell people, "if you imitate me, you are imitating Jesus."

### **Friendship and Servant Evangelism**

Some Christians become very interested in ministry and in witnessing and they can't wait for that great day they can begin ministry, but it seems it never comes. But I have discovered if you want to be in ministry just simply best way to develop a ministry is just to start feeding the sheep:

*Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."*

*John 21:15*

In short, there are many hungry, hurting people out there and if you will just be a friend in a very real way and share with them the hope you have in the gospel, they will come to you when they need some answers and care in their spiritual lives. Some have coined the phrase, "friendship evangelism" to explain this type of approach in witnessing.

If we have a real faith to share what kinds of things will we be doing for people according to James 2:15-17

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So, another way of witnessing is to actively minister out to people's needs: feed the hungry, help the poor, do chores for the shut-ins and handicapped. There is no end to the number of people you can witness to by ministering to them. This could be called "servant evangelism".

Often people will go to a church, not on the basis of their doctrine, but on the basis of their outreach of caring for people; they have helped them.

### **Power Evangelism**

We are so glad that Jesus was not just a great philosopher or religious teacher of doctrine. He evidenced the will of God through the power of the Holy Spirit working through Him. So the reason Christianity spread so quickly because of the works of power. We see this with Jesus, the apostles and Christians throughout history. When a notable miracle takes place it greatly catches people's attention and confirms the message that we are sharing.

*And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed. Mark 16:20*

What does Jesus say believers will do in John 14:12?

What does Paul say about the Kingdom of God in I Corinthians 4:20?

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“Power evangelism” is God’s method for reaching people who would not normally pay attention to the message. Often in the Bible and in present History, whole tribes and cities come to Christ when a notable miracle takes places. Tell what miracles produced these kind of responses:

In the city of Samaria - Acts 8:4-8:

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In the city of Lystra – Acts 14:8-11:

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Through many miracles, signs and wonders, we constantly read, how these things impacted people’s lives as a witness to the gospel.

Read Acts 1:5-8 and answer these questions:

What did Jesus say that the disciples were to receive in verse 5?

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In verse 8 what did He say they would receive because of this?

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What was the purpose for this, in verse 8?

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Jesus gave us “the great commission” as people call it to go out and be His witnesses in Matthew 28:18-20, but why did Jesus tell us we could now go out, in verse 18?

## **Part II**

### **Verbal Evangelism**

While these things we have covered need to be in place, yet unless we also verbalize and speak clearly the Gospel message, people still will not catch it and understand it.

What does Paul say is necessary for people to believe the Gospel in Romans 10:14-17?

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While we say we can be a light and a witness through our lives and good deeds, yet we still must learn to be able to speak clearly and clearly explain the gospel to people.

I was a committed Christian, called into ministry, in college, but still could not clearly explain the Gospel and salvation to anyone. Then one night in a coffee shop someone gave me a “Four Spiritual Laws” tract produced by Campus Crusade. Its simple and explanation along with the scriptures were a marvel to me.

There are a variety of such “tools” available. The most important thing is to clearly understand the Gospel for yourself and have the basic scriptures for each point memorized so you can at anytime present the message of salvation. It is helpful to have something like a tract to look at and to go through with people. It keeps on the subject and provides a visual reference.

Once you know the basic steps and scriptures you can, at any time, give a straightforward, clear understanding of the message. We do need to talk; we do need to in a simple straightforward way give the clear verbal message.

It is OK to not know all the answers and to say so. We need to keep in mind that we were glad somebody told us and many people do want to know. At a Campus Crusade for Christ Regional conference after a day of going out and witnessing in Chicago, the common experience shared by so many afterwards was that people did listen and did want to know.

One of the things the tracts do offer, which is important however we present the message, is to give an invitation and an opportunity for people to respond positively. Then pray with them and follow up with them as a friend to help led them into the Christian life.

What does God expect us to be prepared for?

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Even if we feel we are not able to share the Gospel we are to work toward knowing how. We are to be vocal and explain the details; so we need to learn and tell people about the good news of Jesus Christ.

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:** To learn to be a good witness to Jesus Christ by my character, presence of His Spirit and my words.

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Chapter 12**

### **Attitude**

*“Attitude is Everything!”*

It is not just enough to know all the details and doctrines of the Christian faith. Attitude is another dimension of the Christian experience that can be different from facts and doctrines; yet it can still make or break a Christian’s life.

Chemical reactions react differently depending on temperature. A recipe may have the same ingredients, but too much of the wrong flavoring can make it undesirable. Your faith and the faith of others can be ruined, even if you have all the right knowledge, yet have a wrong attitude.

But, you can set your own attitude! You can either be unhappy and looking negatively at everything or you can be positive and upbeat. You can either make everyone around you miserable or you can have a good life and make people around you feel good.

Yes, you can set your attitude. The Bible demonstrates and commands it. The right attitude is necessary for faith to be maintained, for witness to be maintained. There will always be negatives to focus on and there will always be positives to focus on.

You will find people at work, in families, in life in general who will always find something to be miserable about and complain about; but Christians are to have a good attitude. The Apostle Paul gives some final directions in Philippians 4:8. He tells us to keep our thoughts on positive things and to keep thinking on these things. Name the 8 type of things we should keep focusing on:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

Now can we ever find the opposite, the negatives, of these things? Isn’t it being realistic to know there are bad things? Yes, we must be realistic, but in that truth we have more positive than negative, because God is acting in our lives. We are to keep our focus on positive things. Think about this and give your reasons as to why and how doing this will affect us:

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I have often noticed one common element in people who have become negative and left the church in a bad way -- they become focused on one negative to the exclusion of the 95% of everything that is good.

These same people will have earlier testified to finding love, faith and friends, through the ministry of the church. But when something doesn't work out the way they think it should, they become so focused on one little thing that it overshadows everything else. If you talk to them, they will say everyone and everything is terrible. They lose sight of all the good there is around them as they allow one negative to grow into a mountain. Even when there are problems in the church, we need to see things in true perspective and balance.

One way to avoid this is to compartmentalize the truth, to openly see what is good and what is bad and keep things in perspective. Do not think or speak in exclusive and conclusive ways – don't say everything is bad, don't jump to conclusions. See specifics, good and bad and have a truthful balance to get a realistic view; then act out of a Christian spirit of love and grace in a redemptive way.

### **Thinking of Others**

Some people allow their own agendas to override the Lord's view of the situation. Some people get distorted views of things because they don't see beyond their nose – they are self-indulged. It is important to think about how others are affected by what we say and do.

What does Romans 12:3 tell us-About how we should think about ourselves?

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About the kind of judgment we should use?

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We are to think about others first and put others interests beyond our own. We are to judge situations and people correctly. We do this by looking at their intentions, by the fruits of their lives and by their hearts.

If someone says something that could hurt you, do you jump to a negative conclusion or do you give them grace? Do you look at a good person with a right heart and wonder if you may have misjudged their intentions by a misunderstanding of what they said. Look to the heart of people and their intents; give people grace and the benefit of the doubt.

One means of making sure you are in balance is to keep a very open humble attitude. We need God's favor and blessing. According to Isaiah 66:2 who will God look to?

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**Don't "Catch" a Bad Attitude**

Some times if we hang around people, after a while we find that we take on their attitude. If they are happy, we start feeling happy, if they are down, we can start feeling down. If they are negative and critical, we can start feeling negative and critical.

We must watch not to "catch" a bad attitude! The only attitude we are to catch is being like Jesus. Don't allow yourself to take on other people's offences, anger, disputes etc.

In Ephesians it is telling us we are to be like Jesus. What does Ephesians 4:23 tell us to do?

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What does Ephesians 4:24 tell us to do?

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What does Ephesians 4:31 tell us to not be involved with, to put away?

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According to Psalm 1:1 we can be blessed by avoiding certain situations. List the three situations.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

If a person is filled with pride, other attitudes come out of him. What are three of these attitudes according to Proverbs 21:24?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **A Can Do Attitude**

A “Can Do” person is one who sees what needs to be done and gets it done, period. Anyone can see obstacles and point out what is lacking, but that never has accomplished anything. Which type of person are you? What type of person do you think Jesus want you to be.

We see this scenario played out constantly in the Bible. From the 10 negative spies who gave the report of a wonderful promised land, but advised against trying to take possession because of the giants in the land, (Numbers 13), to Jesus telling the disciples to feed the multitudes. (Luke 9:13) “God will not place you where the grace of God can not keep you!” If God wants you in a situation, He will give you the grace and means to handle the job.

***“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” –Phil. 4:13***

A “Can Do” person will not let situations remain in a stagnant way, but will find the best way to make things work out for the best.

Imagine you are a business man setting up a new business and need a lot of work done, are you going to want to hire a person who is always stopping getting the work done because of some obstacle? No, you want someone who will see to it the job is done and done well in spite of obstacles. One example I can think of, is one time someone had the responsibility one week to clean the church. The vacuum cleaner broke down as he started to clean, so he just didn’t clean. The fact remained that the building still needed to be cleaned, but he was done; that didn’t help us any. He could have used a broom or picked up the most noticeable pieces by hand. In fact he lived close by; he could have gotten his own vac and finished the job.

Jesus expects His people to be “Can Do” people. We see it in the parable of the talents. The lord was especially angry at was the person that didn’t even try.

In spite of how things appear to be, what is happening for us as faithful Christians according to II Corinthians 2:14?

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We have many resources as a Christian in facing challenges. List some of these according to these verses:

James 1:5 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 21:22 \_\_\_\_\_

Exodus 11:3; I Peter 2:20 \_\_\_\_\_

I Timothy 1:12; II Thessalonians 3:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 4:19 \_\_\_\_\_

Some people stay, all their lives, boxed into their own expectations which they have of themselves or what others have put on them, but God sees us as “more than conquerors”, Romans 8:37. God wants you to be adventurous, learning, growing, visionary and able to do all things. He wants wonderful things for you, but you have to have the boldness of belief to try to do and be what He wants you to do and be! *AMEN!*

**I RESOLVE THIS IN MY LIFE:**

I will color and flavor my life with the right attitudes, that I may be a true representative of God in all character and outlook!

**SIGNED** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

*#D10-06-0203*