

A CITY WAS BUILT

Cain lay with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a city, and he named it after his son Enoch. To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael (Gen.4:17-18a).

Within four short chapters we have learned how God stepped out of eternity to start the clock of Time. He spoke and there was light, which He called "Day", and the darkness He called "Night." And the first day ticked off.

It seems to me there are so many vital and essential elements of life that we just take for granted (accepted, given, undeniable). As defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary to take something for granted is to:

1. Fail to properly appreciate (someone or something), especially as a result of overfamiliarity
2. Assume that something is true (or false) without questioning it

For instance, the Light that God sent into the world, Jehovah Ori – the Lord My Light, Who is God’s Son, and Who shines out God’s glory, so we would know that all God’s Son is and does marks Him as God. He is the Word Who regulates the universe by the mighty power of His command. He is the One Who died to cleanse us and clear our record of all sin; and then, sat down in highest honor beside the great God of heaven (Heb. 1:3 TLB).



Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn over all creation; by Him all things were created. Things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. Jesus is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is the Head of the body, the Church; He is the Beginning and the Firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in His Son, and through Christ Jesus reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through the blood Jesus shed on that cross (Col. 1:15-20).



As He did for Moses, God caused all His goodness to pass in front of us (Ex. 33:19) like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless day, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass up from the earth (2 Sam. 23:4), Jehovah Tsidkenu – the Lord our Righteousness.

God set Moses in the cleft in the Rock, the great Rock of Protection is alive (Ps. 18:46 TLB), Jehovah Sali – The Lord My Rock. He is my refuge, a Rock where no enemy can reach me (Ps. 62:7).

However, sin became as a veil God's enemy placed over us. In fact, because of sin our mind is dulled for it lost the power of Understanding. Our heart grows hard and calloused. That is until we turn to Jesus, for then the veil is taken away (2 Cor. 3:14-16).

By His Word God built a foundation through the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the Chief Cornerstone. And those who believe are carefully joined together with Christ as parts of a beautiful, constantly growing temple for God (Eph. 2:21 TLB).

Coming to Jesus as to that living Rock – rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, we also, as living stones, are being built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ Jesus (1 Peter 2:4-5).



So as God has done for us, so too did He for Moses when He set Him on that sturdy, solid Rock of protection, and because of sin had said:

“You cannot see My face, for no one may see Me and live. I will cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will remove My hand and you will see My back; but My face must not be seen.”

Ex. 33:21-23

So down in a cloud God came, and stood there with Moses proclaiming His name,

“Yahweh!”

He passed in front of Moses, declaring:

“The Lord, the Lord the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.”

Ex. 34:5-7



El Hakabodh – The God of Glory – said:

“Let there be Light!”

Gen. 1:3

And sent His Word so His glory could be seen and His voice heard. Yes, God sent His Word so we could scrutinize and prove what the prophets said came true (2 Peter 1:19a TLB). There were 456 Prophecies fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

“The Mathematical Probability that Jesus is the Christ,” an article taken from the website Empower International

<https://empower.global/the-mathematical-probability-that-jesus-is-the-christ/>

The reason why prophecy is an indication of the divine authorship of the Scriptures, and hence a testimony to the trustworthiness of the Message of the Scriptures, is because of the minute probability of fulfillment.

Anyone can make predictions. Having those prophecies fulfilled is vastly different. In fact, the more statements made about the future, and the more the detail, then the less likely the precise fulfillment will be. For example, what's the likelihood of a person predicting today the exact city in which the birth of a future leader would take place, well into the 22nd century? This is indeed what the prophet Micah did 700 years before the Messiah.

Further, what is the likelihood of predicting the precise manner of death that a new unknown religious leader would experience, a thousand years from now – a manner of death presently unknown, and to remain unknown for hundreds of years? Yet, this is what David did in 1000 B.C.

Again, what is the likelihood of predicting the specific date of the appearance of some great future leader, hundreds of years in advance? This is what Daniel did, 530 years before Christ.



After examining only eight different prophecies, it was conservatively estimated the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17} . To illustrate how large the number 10^{17} is (a figure with 17 zeros), this illustration was given: If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten.

Suppose we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up the one silver dollar that received the special mark. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance the prophets would've had when writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time.



In financial terms, is there anyone who would not invest in a financial venture if the chance of failure were only one in 10^{17} ? This is the kind of sure investment we're offered by God for faith in His Messiah.

From these figures, it was concluded the fulfillment of these eight prophecies alone proves that God inspired the writing of the prophecies – the likelihood of mere chance is only one in 10^{17} . Another way of saying this is that any person who minimizes or ignores the significance of the biblical identifying signs concerning the Messiah would be foolish.

But, of course, there are many more than eight prophecies. In another calculation, 48 prophecies were used (even though Edersheim's 456 could have been used). At an extremely conservative estimate it was determined the probability of 48 prophecies being fulfilled in one person is the incredible number 10^{157} . How large is 10^{157} ? 10^{157} contains 157 zeros!

An illustration of this number was given by using electrons. Electrons are very small objects. They're smaller than atoms. It would take 2.5 TIMES 10^{15} of them, laid side by side, to make one inch. Even if we counted 250 of these electrons each minute,

and counted day and night, it would still take 19 million years just to count a line of electrons one inch long.



With this introduction, let's go back to our chance of one in 10^{157} . Let's suppose that we're taking this number of electrons, marking one, and thoroughly stirring it into the whole mass, then blindfolding a man and letting him try to find the right one. What chance has he of finding the right one? What kind of a pile will this number of electrons make? They make an inconceivably large volume.

This is the result from considering a mere 48 prophecies. Obviously, the probability that 456 prophecies would be fulfilled in one man by chance is vastly smaller. Once one goes past one chance of 10^{50} , the probabilities are so small that it is impossible to think that they will ever occur.

As the professor concludes, "Any man who rejects Christ as the Son of God is rejecting a fact, proved perhaps more absolutely than any other fact in the world."

FYI this website identifies 351 Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled
In Jesus Christ <https://www.newtestamentchristians.com/bible-study-resources/351-old-testament-prophecies-fulfilled-in-jesus-christ/>



So you will do well to pay close attention to everything that has been written by the prophets; for, like lights shining into dark corners, the Word of God helps us to understand many things that otherwise would be dark and difficult. But, when you consider the wonderful Truth in the prophet's words, then the Light will dawn in your soul and Christ the Morning Star will shine in your heart (2 Peter 1:19b TLB).

Yes, God said:

"Let Light shine out of darkness!"

Knowing He would make His Light shine in our hearts to give us the Light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Christ (2 Cor. 4:6). If your desire is to do well, pay attention to God's Word as you would a lamp shining in a dismal (squalid and dark) place, until the Day breaks through the gloom.

The Word of God did not originate because someone willed it to do so. (God's Word never came by human impulse), but by those who were borne along (moved and impelled) by Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21 AMP).



Elohe Tishuathi – God of My Salvation – set His Word as the “Son-dial” of time. That we may learn more and more how God works (Col. 1:10 Message); so we can walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever (Mic. 4:5). However, just as we accept Christ Jesus to save us, we must also trust Him as Lord for each day's problems, so we can continue to follow Him (Col. 2:6).

Sadly, there are those who think all is well between themselves and God because He has given them His Word. They even boast they are Christ's special friends. Yet they dishonor Him by not living in accord (aligned, covenant, agreement) with the knowledge and truth the Lord imparts.

No wonder the Scriptures say the world speaks evil of God because of His people. How important for our hearts to be right

with God. For He is looking for those with His mark – a heart, a soul and mind changed by His Word of Life (Rom. 2:17-24,29 TLB).



There are those who have let their roots grow down deep into God's Word, and let their lives be built on Truth. Individuals that have let their faith grow so strong in Christ Jesus they are overflowing with gratitude and thankfulness (Col. 2:6-7).

Taking steps circumspectly (deliberately, thoughtfully, attentively) redeeming the time, being wise not foolish because these days are evil (Eph. 5:15-16). So we have the strength to stick it out over the long haul – not the grim strength of gritting our teeth; instead, the glory-strength God gives. It is strength that endures the unendurable and spills over into joy, thanking the Father in every circumstance. For it is the Father Who makes us strong enough to take part in every bright and beautiful thing that He has for us.

God rescued us from dead-end alleys and dark dungeons. He's set us up in the Kingdom of the Son He loves so much, the Son

Who got us out of the pit we were in, got rid of the sins we were doomed to keep repeating (Col.1:10-14 Message).



God has given us His Word, Christ Jesus, so we can hear Him speak of Truth and Peace and Rest that is found in Contentment; so we can find our way into the chambers of His heart where Love and Compassion and Mercy is found,

God has given His Word, Christ Jesus, the Righteous One, the Victor (over sin) (Zech. 9:9), Who offers peace with God to the world.

God did for us what we could never do for ourselves, He gives us victory over sin and death through the Lord Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 15:57).

But, our heavenly Father doesn't stop at such a glorious spiritual victory, He gives us His Holy Spirit so we can know His love, His concern for our physical, emotional and cognitive well-being. So we can know what it means to be more than conquerors through His Word, Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:34), Who loved us and died for us

so we too can experience the resurrection power of Holy Spirit,
Who always leads us to the Truth so we can rise victoriously over
what the evil one disperses: Fear, hatred, covetousness,
immorality, confusion, wrath, vindictiveness, abuse....



So heed God's Word:

*"Arise, shine, for your Light has come, and the glory of
the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord
rises upon you and His glory appears over you.
Nations will come to your Light and kings to the
brightness of your Dawn."*

Isa. 60:1-3

Who answered the doubters and disbelievers:

*"The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has
sent!"*

John 6:29

This is how God showed His love among you: He sent His One and Only Son, Christ Jesus, into the world that we might live through Him (1 John 4:9).

The Word of Truth prepares us for living a certain way for God by giving people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins. All because of the tender mercy of our God, the risen Son Who comes to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, and guide our feet into the path of peace (Luke 1:76-79).

For the wages, which sin pays is death, but the bountiful free gift of God is eternal life through (in union with) Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23 AMP). Who restores, renews and revives our soul when He makes His face to shine upon us that we may be saved (Ps. 80:3).



For it is not by sword the land of promise is won, nor can our arm bring us victory; it was God's right hand, His arm, and the Light of His face, for He loves us. Yes, the Lord is our King and our God, Who decreed victories for His people.

Through the name of Jesus we push back our enemies – fear, sin, pride.

Through the Word of Truth we trample our foes – anger, rebellion, unforgiveness... We don't trust in our own strategies.

Our weapons of warfare – duplicity, fraud and violence – won't give us victory. The Word of Life gives us victory over our enemies. God's Word puts our adversaries to shame not us. In God we make our boast – not in self-reliance or wealth or fame – so we can praise the name of Jesus forever (Ps. 44:3-8).

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim the Lord, who walk in the Light of His presence (Ps. 89:15). For the Rock of Israel assures:

“When a person rules (governs, values, manages) their life and the lives of others in righteousness and in the fear of God, they too are like the Light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning.”

2 Sam. 23:3-4



No one can serve two masters; either they will hate the one and love the other, or they will stand by and be devoted to the one and despise and be against the other. God and mammon (deceitful riches, money, possessions, or whatever else a person might trust in) cannot be served.

So stop being perpetually uneasy (anxious, fearful and worried) about your life; for the eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is sound, your entire body will be full of Light. But, if your eye is unsound, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the very light in you (your conscience) is darkened, how dense (closed, impenetrable, unreasonable) is that darkness (Matt. 6:22-25 AMP).



Instead, we can always and forever give thanks to God Who through the righteousness of His Christ we receive such a precious Faith that grace and peace can be ours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of our Lord Jesus.

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him Who called us by His

own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them we may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by our evil desires (2 Peter 1:1-4).

As a result of this Faith that God gives, we now know the light of the Lord's face is shining upon us. We can now wholeheartedly believe it is Jesus Who fills us with the greatest joy; greater than the grain used for baking or the new wine that's more plentiful in that region than water.

Yes, we would come to understand it is Jehovah Machseh, our Refuge and Fortress, Who makes us dwell in safety so we can lie down and sleep in peace, for He alone is Lord (Ps. 4:6). Who says:

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. So don't let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. I have gone away, but I am coming back to you. Be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”

“I told of this before it happened, so that when you heard that what I prophesized happened you would believe. Though the prince of this world was coming, he had no hold on Me. However, the world must learn that I love the Father, and that I do exactly what My Father has commanded Me. Come now, let us leave together.”

“For surely, I am with you always to the very end of the age; just as My Father Who sent Me was with Me; He did not leave Me alone, for I always did what pleases Him. I brought Him glory on earth by completing the work He gave Me to do. And now, He has glorified Me in His presence with the glory I had with Him before the world began.”

“If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I obeyed My Father’s commands and remain in His love. I tell you this so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this - that they lay down their life for their friends.”

John 14:27-31, Matt. 28:20, John 8:29, John 17:4-5, John 15:10-13



Christ did not please Himself but, as it is written:

“The insults of those who insult You have fallen on Me.”

Everything that was written in the past, was written to teach us so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have Hope (Rom. 15:3-4).

That we would know Jesus is the Light of the World, and whoever follows Him will never walk in darkness, but will have the Light of Life (John 8:12). For God’s Word of Truth truly is a lamp for our feet and a Light for our path (Ps. 1119:105).

God sent His Word, Christ Jesus, that we would see and comprehend the Light for which God blessed the world will turn back souls from the pit so the Light of Life may shine on them (Job 33:30).

God the Father shared heaven's Light with the world so He could bestow His grace and peace to those who bask in the glorious rays of the Son's loving-kindness. Jesus gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father to Whom will be the glory forever and ever (Gal. 1:3-5).



So I ask, do you want more and more of God's kindness and peace? Then learn to know His Word better and better. For as you get to know the Lord better, you will be able to receive God's great power, everything you need for living a truly good life: for God even shares His own glory and His own goodness with us!

And by that same mighty power God has made it possible for us to receive all the other rich and wonderful blessings He has promised; for instance, the promise to save us from the lust and rottenness all around us, and to give us His own character (2 Peter 1:2-4 TLB).

In Eccl. 7:29 Solomon wrote: God created people to be virtuous, but they have each turned to follow their own downward path.

How wonderful to be wise, to analyze and interpret things. Wisdom lights up a person's face softening its harshness (vs 8:1 NLT).

I have always tried my best to let wisdom guide my thoughts and actions. I said to myself, 'I am determined to be wise.' But it didn't work. Wisdom is always distant and difficult to find. I searched everywhere, determined to find wisdom and to understand the reason for things. I was determined to prove to myself that wickedness is stupid and that foolishness is madness (Eccl. 7:23-25 NLT).

King Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes, and was a seeker on a quest for the meaning and purpose of life...So he began to search for the meaning and purpose of life "under the sun," apart from God. In one sense we should be glad that he did because he left us an account of the futility of life without trust in God.

[http://static1.squarespace.com > static > Ecclesiastes+1+16..](http://static1.squarespace.com/static/Ecclesiastes+1+16..)



This was the issue from the beginning lack of trust in God and His Word. My personal thought, if Adam was God's only human

creation the garden may have remained his residence. However, when Eve was introduced so too was selfness: the awareness of our essential individuality (distinctiveness, temperament, disposition) our personality (individuality, composition, selfhood) and status (rank, standing, condition).

How easily selfness will slant our thoughts, opinions and beliefs toward one-sidedness and away from the dictates of fairness and equality. Which is what Codependence does: causes us to behave in a way to direct or control someone else's thinking, behavior or mood.

Now I want you to realize God is not the author of confusion, but of peace (1 Cor. 14:33) this is why He ordained a hierarchy: the Head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the Head of Christ is God (1 Cor. 11:3).

In the plan of the Lord and from His point of view woman is not apart from and independent of man, nor is man aloof from and independent of woman; for as woman was made from man so man is also born of woman; and all whether male or female go forth from God as their Author (1 Cor. 11:11-12 AMP).



Peter spoke out boldly: Most certainly and thoroughly I now perceive and understand that God shows no partiality and is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34 AMP). The distinction the Lord makes is between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not (Mal. 3:18).

In every nation those who venerate and have a reverential fear of God, treating Him with worshipful obedience and living uprightly, are acceptable to Him and sure of being received and welcomed by Him (Acts 10:35 AMP). Actually, we should let this same attitude and purpose and humble mind be in us, which was in Christ Jesus. Let Him be your example in humility.

Who, although being essentially One with God and in the form of God (possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God, God), He did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained, but stripped Himself (of all privileges and rightful dignity), so as to assume the guise of a servant, in that He became like men and was born a human being.

After He had appeared in human form, He humbled Himself still further and carried His obedience to God to the extreme of death, even death of the cross! Therefore, God has highly exalted Him, and has freely bestowed on Him the name that is above every name. That in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:5-11 AMP).



To the glory of God the Father, for this very reason Jesus humbled Himself because God so loved the world. Those who believe this, and put their faith and trust in God's one and only Son shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16).

IF, we allow Love to guide our life then the whole church would stay together in perfect harmony. For this purpose, we should let the peace of mind and heart, and thankfulness that comes from what Christ has achieved for us to be always present in our life, for this is not only our responsibility but our privilege as His Body of believers.



So remember what Christ taught, and let the Word of God enrich your life and make you wise (Col. 3:14-16 TLB). For the wisdom (clear-sightedness, sensitivity, discernment) that comes from heaven is first of all pure and full of quiet gentleness. The wisdom (brightness, prudence, rationality) from God is peace-loving and courteous, allows discussion and is willing to yield to others.

God's Wisdom (understanding, farsightedness, Good News) is full of mercy and good deeds, wholehearted and straightforward and sincere. Those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of peace and goodness (James. 3:17-18 TLB).

However, if bitterness and jealousy and selfish ambition are residing in a heart, Truth is being covered up with boasting and lies. None of these tactics are the kind of wisdom (foolishness, unreasonableness, ignorance) that comes from God. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic because they are inspired by the devil. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish-ambition there you will find disorder and every other kind of evil (James 3:14-16 NLT).



God did all He could to protect mankind from evil. He cautioned not to eat from the tree He had placed in the middle of the garden. Free-will such a precious gift; however, consequence is attached to every choice we make. And there is no escaping that day-of-judgment when an account will have to be given for every careless word we've spoken. By our words we will be acquitted, and by our words we will be condemned (Matt. 12:36-37).

However, for those who have placed themselves – their faith, hope and love – in Christ Jesus there is now no condemnation because through Jesus the law of the Spirit of Life sets us free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:1). God is Spirit (John 4:24), we can once again enjoy fellowship with God through the spiritual bond that is made when we place our faith in Christ Jesus.

There is no tomfoolery or coercion just a matter of choice. Do we want to receive God's goodness, His love and protection, His Word of Truth, Wisdom and Life?



Betrayals (falsities, disloyalties, infidelities) began when a spiritual bond was made with the author of deception. We're told the serpent was craftier (insincere, shrewd, more scheming) than any of the animals God created (Gen. 2:24), which explains why that first perversion (corruption, immorality, abuse) was able to occur.

Through this creature, the one who spreads evil, sin and death was able to gain the power and authority, to not only change the complexion of the world but that of our very being.

The enemy attacked their soul (thoughts and emotions to weaken the power of their will) so doubt, concern and distrust could enter their heart and fester (spoil, contaminate, sour) the relationship they shared with God.



The source of evil, Satan himself, was the first to behave in a way to attempt to direct or control someone else's thinking, behavior or mood and Codependence was birthed. Depending on, leaning

on, trusting in and caring about what others think. How? When the lack of trust in God was acted upon we were made spiritually dead and doomed by our sins Eph. 2:5a TLB).

The desire to worship and obey God was deadened by the desire to follow the flesh, and gratify the cravings of our sinful nature, which caused us to by nature become objects of wrath (Eph. 2:3). As a result of not knowing God, we were made slaves to those who by nature are not gods (Gal. 4:8).

What developed foolishness (denseness, absurdity, insanity) when the glory of the immortal God was exchanged for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles (Rom. 1:22-23).



Whatever belongs to our earthly, sinful nature: idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, envy, drunkenness, greed, lust, evil desires, sexual immorality...put these to death (Col. 3:5-6a). Don't let sin put you to death it is because of these, the wrath of God is coming (Col.

3:6b). Those who live like this will not inherit the Kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).

But it's not just God's wrath that is coming, it's the enemy's wrath that came upon us because of lack of trust and obedience to God, whose will it is that we should be sanctified: that we should not just avoid sexual immorality (1 Thess. 7:3), but flee from it; for all other sins that we commit are outside our body, but sexual sin is being committed against our own body (1 Cor. 6:18).

God blessed mankind with free-will so what else could He do but give us over to the sinful desires of our heart to sexual impurity for the degrading of our body with one another. Why? We exchanged the Truth of God for a lie to worship and serve created things rather than the Creator – Who is forever praised (Rom. 1:24-25).



God gave mankind over spiritually dead even while we live (1 Tim. 5:6 NLT); to follow the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient (Eph. 2:1-2).

Yes, because of this God gave us 'freedom': 'freedom' to fall by the sword, plague and famine (Jer. 34:17). To the thief that comes only to steal and kill and destroy (John 10:10). To shameful lusts, so even women exchange natural sexual relations for unnatural ones.

In the same way men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion (Rom. 1:26-27).



We have all lived in the darkness of this world, but God has given us time and opportunity to be light in the Lord. We can live as children of Light (for the fruit of Light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth). We can discover what pleases the Lord.

We can take the first step by ridding ourselves of the fruitless deeds of darkness. Faith and hope and trust in God's Word will expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But, everything exposed by the Light

becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said:

“Wake up, O sleeper,
Rise from the dead,
And Christ will shine on you.”

Eph. 5:8-14



Because of His great love for us, God, Who is so rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in our own transgressions – it is by His grace we have been saved (Eph. 2:4-5). So again, remember what Christ taught. Let the Word of God enrich your life and make you wise (Col. 3:16 TLB).

For those who desire to do God’s will, they will know (have the needed illumination to recognize, and tell for themselves) whether the Lord’s teachings are from God or whether Jesus spoke from Himself and of His own accord and on His own authority. Anyone who speaks on their own authority seeks to win honor for themselves.

(Those whose teaching originates with themselves seek their own glory). But, Jesus seeks the glory and is eager for the honor to be given to the Father, Who sent Him. God's Word is Truth (John 17:17b AMP). There is no unrighteousness or falsehood or deception in Christ Jesus (John 7:17-18 AMP).



Deception is a characteristic of Codependency, which manifests in the form of Denial. According to Darlene Lancer denial comes in many forms. Some block out more reality than others. However, all forms of denial accomplishes its purpose of keeping you from facing the Truth and dealing with problems. Here are methods people usually employ with denial:

1. **Forgetting:** Overlooking something that you don't want to do
2. **Self-Deception:** Believing the reverse or a variation of the truth
3. **Lying:** Asserting the opposite of the truth (different from a lie)
4. **Rationalizing:** Justifying with excuses or arguments
5. **Minimizing:** Making less of something than it really is

6. **Repressing:** Removing awareness of feelings, thoughts, needs, desires, traumatic events or memories

<https://www.dummies.com/health/mental-health/codependency/forms-of-denial-a-characteristic-of-codependency/>



When the fall of our nature occurred the natural usurped what was Superior, and the flesh began to govern. So instead of being dependent on God and His Word, we began to be dependent on self and co-dependent on others. A new way of life emerged where taking control became a means to achieve what requires receiving – peace and harmony; and, what has developed problematic relational issues.

Life was completely turned upside down. Instead of giving love unconditionally conditions were attached to accommodate our “selfness”. Instead of possessing an attitude for serving, a different attitude was adopted, one that is self-serving. Instead of simply enjoying what Righteousness bestows – love and peace, patience and kindness and gentleness...the demands of self-righteousness causes hatred and chaos, perversity and hostility and ruthlessness to thrive.



Taking what seems best for me, myself and I has definitely given evil time and opportunity to kill and steal and destroy what is essential for our well-being knowing and being in relationship with the only One Who is Good, God (Luke 18:19).

Taking control has become a natural occurrence because we have become doers that want to fix and sway the thinking and ultimately the behavior of others. Self-serving ways and means utilized to control and cope with the unmanageable aspects (appearances, postures, renderings) of emotion.

The ineffectiveness of taking measures to change things about another should be blatantly apparent, since the only person we have the power to change is ourselves.



You think God knew we needed the differences we offer to one another. I say definitely “yes” because He knew and implemented a process for the changes that need to be made in our thinking and believing and demeanor:

ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

“Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find;

Knock and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks receives;

Those who seek finds;

And to those who knock the door will be opened.”

Matt. 7:7-8



Yes, issues of control arise as does anger and resentment, unfaithfulness and treachery and betrayal from those constant thoughts about me, me, me and my own welfare. A secret I discovered about myself, when I thought I was in control I was really out of control.

All that stems from fear: anxiety, worry, apprehension, agitation, turmoil, anguish...brought about a need to adjust to and manage life in ways I thought were best not only for me but for others too.

Though my intentions were to work good, I really couldn't because I didn't know what and Who really is Good. I knew interfering and complaining and fixing and controlling and how to be intrusive and upsetting.

The best decision I ever made was to seek knowledge of Jesus, because I found God's Word gave me reason and insight and discernment to change what I definitely could with His counsel and guidance - my way of thinking and doing so I could know Love and Peace and true Contentment.



Adam, who was with Eve and the one with authority, didn't prevent the eating of that fruit; instead, he too ate from it. Why? Doubt and worry and confusion undermined their trust in and for God's Word. Like water that becomes muddied when disturbed, their thinking became muddled with words that altered God's instructions. Eve told the enemy, "God said, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die,'" Gen. 3:3.

The Bible provides us a synopsis of what has occurred throughout the generations of mankind. We have no way of knowing how often that first couple was confronted by seduction. I mean that forbidden tree was in the very center of the garden. We can't know how many times they repeated to themselves 'we must not touch that fruit' before they started to believe their own added misinformation.



This article posted on the website Metro 50, "If you repeat a lie enough, people will think it's true," written by Ellen Scott, and offers the following information:

Want to convince someone of something entirely untrue? Just keep repeating it. Over and over. The Illusory Truth Effect has been flying around the world of psychology since 1977. But recently, more and more evidence has arrived to back it up.

The Illusory Truth Effect is the idea that if you repeat something often enough, people will slowly start to believe it's true. Sounds about right, considering all the times we've blindly trusted an old wives' tale or a much-tweeted factoid.

But a new study has revealed the Illusory Truth Effect is much stronger than we imagined. Because it turns out that even if a person has prior knowledge disproving a lie they're being told, they'll still believe the lie if it's repeated enough.

<https://metro.co.uk/2015/12/01/if-you-repeat-a-lie-enough-people-think-its-true-5536488/>



The illusion of truth effect in psychology is the tendency to believe false information if it is repeated often enough.

The illusion of truth effect is very simple: People are more likely to believe something the more often it is repeated to them. With repetition, it is easier for the human mind to process a statement relative to other competing ideas that have not been repeated over-and-over again.

Repetition is used everywhere to persuade people, in advertising and the media, and it certainly works. It seems too simplistic that just repeating a persuasive message should increase its effect, but that's exactly what research discovers (again and again).

Repetition is one of the easiest and most widespread methods of persuasion because of the Illusion of Truth Effect. In fact, it's so obvious that we sometimes forget how powerful it is. People rate statements that have been repeated just once as more valid or true than things they've heard for the first time. They even rate statements as being truer even when the person saying them has been repeatedly lying. That's how powerful the Illusion of Truth Effect is. And, when we think something is more 'true', we also tend to be more persuaded by it.

The above information was taken from the article, "Illusion of Truth Effect: Repetition Makes Lies Sound True," which was posted on Psyblog, by its author Jeremy Dean, PhD.

<https://www.spring.org.uk/2021/07/illusion-of-truth.php>



We don't know how much time elapsed before God's command was altered. We don't know how long it took before these seductive words took hold, "Surely, you will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil," Gen. 3:4-5).

They allowed their doubts and insecurities to get the best of them. And so the birth of dysfunction occurred as evidenced by Adam's response to shame and guilt, "The woman You put here with me - she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it," Gen. 3:12.

As a result, codependent traits and the learned behaviors that accompany codependency can and will develop from dysfunction. Dysfunctional families, in which members suffer from fear pain or shame, can and will develop anger issues, a lot of anger.

When a person reacts as Adam did by not accepting accountability, and that portion for which they are responsible, they start finger pointing. Dysfunctional remedies are applied: denial, accusations, blame shifting, minimizing...When strong emotions arise, which only causes additional dysfunction to occur, because emotions are not being managed or expressed effectively. Why? Basically, the brain uses anger to hide pain.

~

What is really happening underneath the anger? Some mental health professionals refer to anger as a secondary emotion. According to Dr. Harry Mills anger is the emotion we are most aware we are experiencing. However, anger usually just hides the presence of deeper and less comfortable emotions like sadness, guilt, embarrassment, hurt, shame, fear....

What anger can also do is shield others and sometimes ourselves from seeing the pain, embarrassment or other more vulnerable emotions that exist underneath. If certain actions have triggered hurt, and it's believed this hurt may show weakness, being mad is likely a step to try to ensure that no one takes advantage.

Information taken from the article, "Covered in Red: How the Brain Uses Anger to Hide Pain," written by Shani Bell and posted on the website: Fuller Life.

<https://fullerlifefamilytherapy.org/how-the-brain-uses-anger-to-hide-pain/>



It is easy to understand how a person can become covered in red when they find themselves believing they contribute more than

others, who break promises and commitments, violate their boundaries, or disappoint or betray them.

Anger hurts. It's a reaction to not getting what we want or need. It can escalate to rage when we feel assaulted or threatened by something physical, emotional or abstract, such as an attack on our reputation. Anger, control and codependency all go hand-in-hand.

Codependent symptoms of denial, dependency, lack of boundaries and dysfunctional communication produce anger. Denial prevents us from accepting reality and recognizing our feelings and needs. Dependency on others spawns attempts to control them to feel better, rather than to initiate effective action.

But, when people don't do what we want, we feel angry, victimized, unappreciated or uncared for, and powerless – unable to be agents of change for ourselves.



Dependency also leads to fear of confrontation. We prefer not to “rock the boat” and jeopardize the relationship. With poor

boundaries and communication skills, we don't express our needs and feelings or do so ineffectively. Hence, we're unable to protect ourselves or get what we want and need. Instead we become angry and resentful

- Expecting others to make us happy and they don't
- Agree to things we don't want to
- Have undisclosed expectations of other people
- Fear confrontation
- Deny or devalue our needs, and don't get them met
- Try to control people and things, over which we have no authority
- Ask for things in non-assertive, counter-productive ways: hinting, blaming, nagging, accusing
- Don't set boundaries to stop abuse or behavior we don't want
- Deny reality and therefore
- Trust and rely on people proven to be untrustworthy and unreliable
- Want people to meet our needs who have shown that they won't or can't
- Despite the facts and repeated disappointments, maintain hope and try to change others

- Stay in relationships although we continue to be abused



Anger can and will overwhelm us if we can't manage it effectively. How we react is influenced by our innate temperament and family environment. Different people react differently. Codependents don't know how to handle their anger. Some explode, criticize, blame, or say hurtful things they later regret. Others hold their anger in and say nothing. They please or withdraw to avoid conflict, but stockpile resentments. Yet anger always finds a way.

Codependency can lead to being passive-aggressive, where anger comes out indirectly with sarcasm, grumpiness, irritability, silence or through behavior, such as cold looks, slamming doors, forgetting, withholding, being late, even cheating.

If we're in denial or anger, we don't allow ourselves to feel it or even mentally acknowledge it. We may not realize we're angry for days, weeks, years after an event.

All of these difficulties with anger are due to poor role models growing up. Learning to manage anger should be taught in childhood, but our parents lacked skills to handle their own anger maturely, and therefore were unable to pass them on.



The truth is that anger is a normal, healthy reaction when our needs aren't met, our boundaries are violated, or our trust is broken. Anger has to move. It's a powerful energy that requires expression and sometimes action to correct a wrong. It needn't be loud or hurtful. Most codependents are afraid their anger will hurt or even destroy someone they love. Not necessarily so. Correctly handled, it can improve a relationship.

Sometimes anger hurts us most of all. Mark Twain wrote, "Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured."

Anger can contribute to ill health and chronic illness. Stressful emotions wear down the body's immune and nervous systems and its ability to repair and replenish itself. Stress-related symptoms include heart disease, high blood pressure, heart

attacks, stroke, digestive and sleep disorders, headaches, muscle tension and pain, obesity, ulcers, rheumatoid arthritis, TMI, and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Unexpressed anger breeds resentment and gets turned against ourselves. It's been said that depression is anger turned inward. Examples are guilt and shame, forms of self-hatred that when excessive, lead to depression.

Information taken from the article, "Relationship Killers: Anger and Resentment," written by Darlene Lancer, JD, LMFT, and posted on the website: Codependency.

<https://whatiscodependency.com/relationship-killers-anger-and-resentment/>



When mankind gained the knowledge of evil, dysfunction affected our thoughts, feelings, behavior and relationships. We need only read the first several chapters of Genesis to realize dysfunction is wide-spread, and it's so harmfully unwholesome.

The thing is, we now know codependency doesn't just happen in the context of alcoholism. It happens on its own, as well as alongside all sorts of trauma, addictions and behavioral

problems. Codependent relationships are an unhealthy way of obtaining self-esteem, and feelings of safety that deteriorate our identity and independence (self-governance, freedom, power).

Here are the basics:

- Codependent relationships happen between two individuals
 - One person is “troubled” and tends to absorb the other’s energy and resources by behaving selfishly.
 - The other person, the Codependent, compulsively takes care of the other at the cost of their own wellbeing and independence.

<https://breathelifehealingcenters.com/toxic-codependency-looks-like/>



Research has revealed the characteristics of codependency were much more prevalent in the general population than had been imagined. Most families are dysfunctional, so that pretty much covers everyone.

Researchers have found that codependent symptoms progress in stages and get worse if untreated, but the good news is that they are reversible. Here’s a list of symptoms of codependency,

including six core symptoms. You needn't have all of them to qualify as codependent.

Shame and Low Self-Esteem – Core Symptom

- Not feeling that you're good enough or comparing yourself to others is a sign of low self-esteem. The tricky thing about self-esteem is that some people think highly of themselves, but it's only a camouflage for really feeling unlovable or inadequate. Underneath, usually hidden from consciousness, are feelings of shame. Some of the things that go along with low self-esteem are guilt feelings and perfectionism.

People-Pleasing

- It's fine to want to please someone you care about, but codependents usually don't think they have a choice. Saying "No" causes them anxiety. Some codependents have a hard time saying "No" to anyone. They go out of their way and sacrifice their own needs to accommodate other people.

Dysfunctional Boundaries – Core Symptom

- Boundaries are sort of an imaginary line between you and others. It divides up what's yours and somebody else's, and that applies not only to your body, money, and belongings, but also to your feelings, thoughts and needs. That's especially where codependents get into trouble. They have blurry or weak boundaries between themselves and others. They feel responsible for other people's feelings and problems or blame their own on someone else.

Some codependents have rigid boundaries. They are closed off and withdrawn, making it hard for other people to get close to them. Sometimes, people flip back and forth between having weak boundaries and rigid ones.

Reactivity

- A consequence of poor boundaries is that you react to everyone's thoughts and feelings. You might take things personally and get easily triggered. If someone says something you disagree with, you either believe it or become defensive. You absorb their words, because there's no

boundary. With a boundary, you'd realize it was just their opinion and not a reflection of you and you don't feel threatened by disagreements.

Caretaking

- Another effect of poor boundaries is that if someone else has a problem, you want to help them to the point that you might feel guilty if you don't and give up yourself in the process. It's natural to feel empathy and sympathy for someone, but codependents start putting other people ahead of themselves. In fact, they need to help and might feel rejected if another person doesn't want help. Moreover, they keep trying to help and fix the other person, even when that person clearly isn't taking their advice. For some codependents, their self-worth is dependent upon being needed.

Control – Core Symptom

- Control helps codependents feel safe and secure. Everyone needs some control over events in their lives. You wouldn't

want to live in constant uncertainty and chaos. But, for codependents, control limits their ability to take risks and share their feelings. Sometimes they have an addiction that either helps them to loosen up, or helps them hold their feelings down, like workaholism, so that they don't feel out of control in close relationships.

Codependents also need to control those close to them, because they need other people to behave in a certain way to feel okay. In fact, people-pleasing and caretaking stem from an effort to control and manipulate people.

Alternatively, codependents can be bossy and tell others what they should or shouldn't do. This is a violation of someone else's boundary.

Dysfunctional Communication – Core Symptom

- Codependents have trouble when it comes to communicating their thoughts, feelings and needs. Of course, if you don't know what you think, feel or need, this

becomes a problem. Often times, you know, but you won't own up to your truth. You're afraid to be truthful because you don't want to upset someone else. Instead of saying, "I don't like that," you might pretend that it's okay or tell someone you do. Communication becomes dishonest and confusing when we try to manipulate the other person because of our own fear.

Obsessions

- Codependents have a tendency to spend their time thinking about other people or relationships. Often, they try to decipher what someone else is thinking or feeling and why. This is caused by dependency on others and anxieties and fears about being rejected, due to shame. For the same reason, they can become obsessed when they think they've made or might make a "mistake."

Sometimes you can lapse into fantasy about how you'd like things to be or about someone you love as a way to avoid the pain of the present. This is one way to stay in denial but it keeps you from living your life.

Dependency – Core Symptom

- Codependents need other people to like them to feel okay about themselves, and they're afraid of being rejected or abandoned, despite the fact that they can function on their own. Often codependents need to always be in a relationship, because they feel depressed or lonely when they're by themselves for too long. This trait makes it hard for them to end a relationship, even when the relationship is painful or abusive. They end up feeling trapped.

Denial – Core Symptom

- One of the problems people face in getting help for codependency is that they're in denial about it, meaning that they don't face their problem. Usually, they think the problem is someone else's or the situation. They either keep complaining or trying to fix the other person, or go from one relationship or job to another and never own up to the fact that they have a problem.

Codependents also deny their feelings and needs. Often times, they don't know what they're feeling and are instead

focused on what others are feeling. The same thing goes for their needs. They pay attention to other people's needs and not their own. They might be in denial of their need for space and autonomy. Although some codependents seem needy, others act like they're self-sufficient when it comes to needing help. They won't reach out and have trouble receiving. They are in denial of their vulnerability and need for love and intimacy

Problems with Intimacy

- By this, I'm not referring to sex, although sexual dysfunction is often a reflection of an intimacy problem. I'm talking about being open and close with someone in an intimate relationship. Because of shame and weak boundaries, you might fear that you'll be judged, rejected, or left. On the other hand, you may fear being smothered in a relationship and losing your autonomy. You might deny your need for closeness and feel that your partner wants too much of your time; your partner complains that you're unavailable, but he or she is denying his or her need for separateness.

Painful Emotions

- Codependency creates stress and leads to painful emotions. Shame and low self-esteem create anxiety, guilt, and fear about:
 - Being judged
 - Being rejected or abandoned
 - Making mistakes
 - Being a failure
 - Being close and feeling trapped
 - Being alone

All of these symptoms lead to feelings of anger and resentment, depression, hopelessness, and despair. When the feelings are too much, you can feel numb.

There is help to recover from codependency and create change. The first step is getting guidance and support. These symptoms are deeply ingrained habits and difficult to identify and change on your own. Join a Twelve Step program, such as , Celebrate Recovery, Codependents Anonymous or seek counseling.

Information taken from the article, “Symptoms of Codependency,” posted by Darlene Lancer, MFT
<https://whatiscodependency.com/symptoms-of-codependency/>



Another interesting tidbit, “Codependency and Narcissism May Have More in Common Than You Think,” Contributed by Zawn Villines, Good Therapy. Org. Correspondent

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/codependency-narcissism-may-have-more-in-common-than-you-think>

0807187#:~:text=Codependency%20is%20often%20associated%20with,to%20those%20with%20nar

Narcissism and codependency are both linked to an undefined self. They often struggle to get a sense of who they truly are. People with these conditions often rely on other people to define their own identities. As such, they place a lot of importance on what others think of them.

People with Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) often develop an intense, almost exclusive focus on themselves. They

may display a lack of empathy or regard for others' needs. They may only care about others' feelings in relation to themselves.

Narcissistic people often need someone else to inflate their self-esteem. They may need a continuous stream of affection and admiration to feel good about themselves – referred to as “narcissistic supply.”

Meanwhile, people with codependency are often hyper-focused on others. They typically form an identity around serving the needs of others. They may try to control another person's behavior, believing they know what is best for the person. Instead of praise, codependents often crave gratitude and a sense of “being needed.”

Almost everyone wants to feel loved or important. Narcissism and codependency are two strategies to achieve that goal. However, both conditions can create an excessive reliance on the approval of others. Similar experiences may have occurred in their lives, but different ways of adapting have been adopted.



I don't think Eve was stupid. I believe the serpent was shrewd, and Adam was not acting as he should as her covering. Satan enticed them with beguiling words. Using exaggeration (overstating, embellishing, stretching) the Truth to reel them in because exaggerating provides a breeding ground for additional lies to be hatched.

Adam didn't correct Eve's statement, "God said we must not eat or touch it or we will die," Gen. 3:3. So Satan shrewdly replied, "Surely you will not die," Gen. 3:4. Now we're told the devil was a murderer from the beginning, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies (John 8:44).

We don't know how long that first couple was tempted before their fear (awe, reverence, trust) of God became diminished. What we do know when evil gains entrance into our thoughts, our heart will suffer from its perversity, depravity, deception and ultimate betrayals.



Let's take a moment to better understand that Codependency is a group of personality traits or personality characteristics. They are

cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns that affect an individual's ability to have a healthy, mutually satisfying relationship with oneself and with others. They are maladaptive patterns.

- Codependency traits represent one's difficulties in loving, accepting, trusting, and being true to "Self"
- Codependents carry shame, guilt, and feelings of inadequacy, which leads to constantly trying to please others, prove worth of Self, and seek external validation at great costs, but little reward
- Codependents are focused outward – on trying to please, help, fix, wrapped up in, and attempt to intervene or control other people and situations
- Codependents base happiness and feelings on what other people are doing, rather than internal feelings and values
- Codependents don't know how to be their True Self because they never learned how. They never learned what they truly want and how to be happy with Self



Co-dependency brings about learned behavior that can be passed down from one generation to another. It is an emotional and behavioral condition that affects an individual's ability to have a healthy, mutually satisfying relationship. It is also known as "relationship addiction" because people with codependency often form or maintain relationships that are one-sided, emotionally destructive and/or abusive.

The pain of being abused, lied to, cheated on, neglected, ignored, cursed at, rejected, made to feel invisible, or invalidated has never healed. Adam and Eve were made to feel all of this and so much emotional trauma because in the garden there was no fear or anger or shame only Love and Peace and Honor.

Though the List of Characteristics of Codependency has been shared revisiting the topic is important. Like Abel we may not even be aware of how our maladaptive tendencies and behaviors are affecting others:

- Hyper-aware of other people's problems and needs in the form of care-taking, controlling, advice giving, and over-worrying about others
- Demanding, controlling, and perfectionistic. Wanting things to be done a certain way and may resort to telling others what to do and how to do it
- Hyper-critical of others because they often don't live up to our high expectations
- Our high expectations also make it hard to ask for or accept help from others
- Stressed out or anxious when things don't go exactly and perfectly as planned
- Hyper-focused on predictability, structure, and certainty – things we probably didn't have in our childhood family
- Self-critical; unrealistic expectations for ourselves. Self-talk is often harsh about our imperfections and mistakes

- Our self-criticism is a result of low self-esteem and the harsh criticism we've received from others during childhood
- Feeling responsible for everything and everyone, even other people's happiness, but denying our own happiness and needs
- "People Pleaser" - Afraid to upset or disappoint others, but this can lead to over-extending ourselves and exhaustion
- Dependable and responsible. People can always count on our being reliable. Feeling guilty if we don't follow through even if we're sick
- Boundary issues: We have trouble with speaking up for ourselves and saying "no." Sometimes, we allow people to mistreat or take advantage of our kindness because we don't want to hurt their feelings, let them down, or create a conflict
- Ignore our own feelings and needs, often suppressing them, denying them, avoiding them, or numbing them. These occur at the conscious level. These are self-defeating behaviors
- In addition to denying our feelings and needs, we may have a difficult time seeing how unmanageable or unhappy our lives are and have become. This is a form of subconscious defense: repression (e.g. dis-associative amnesia)
- Our happiness is dependent upon what other people are feeling or doing. For example, if our partner is in a good mood,

we can relax a little bit. However, if our partner is angry, we likely feel anxious

- We have a hard time separating ourselves from other people's feelings, needs, and experiences
- We define our Self (identity) in relation to others, but lack a strong sense of Self (i.e. knowing who we are, what we believe, want, and like)
- Emotional Pain. For some individuals, the pain is close to the surface (manifesting) such as, shame; and for others the pain is buried in the subconscious (latent) such as, anger and rage
- Feeling guilty and ashamed. Guilt and shame are the roots of low self-worth and low self-esteem
- We probably feel there is something wrong with us. Perhaps someone said this directly or we may have come to this conclusion based on how we've been treated. Yet, we minimize the problems or sensitivities
- Martyr or saint or savior: taking care of everyone else, giving without receiving, and then feeling angry, resentful and taken advantage of by others
- Passive-Aggressive: Sometimes we feel good (needed and worthwhile) and other times, we feel angry and resentful and

complain about “having to do everything”, but we still continue the pattern of “people pleaser”

- Reactive. Anger and resentments build up over time causing us to seemingly explode over trivial matters. Then, we feel shame and guilt and then may overcompensate as “Polly-Anna do gooders”
- Overwork and over schedule ourselves as ways to prove our self-worth and/or distract ourselves from low-self-esteem or other painful feelings
- Intimacy, open communication, and trust are difficult because we didn’t have role models for healthy relationships in childhood. And in adulthood we’ve probably been betrayed in our relationships, but stayed anyway
- Afraid of anger, criticism, rejection, and failure. We “play it safe” or “become invisible” with our own needs
- Minimizing problems, minimizing other’s behaviors, and minimizing one’s own needs
- Probably feeling on edge, or episodes of anxiety and/or depression. If we don’t have a diagnostic clinical level of anxiety, or depression; or generalized anxiety disorder, then we feel tense, anxious, or stressed frequently. Or we may feel like we’re having a “Nervous Breakdown”

- Probably experiencing ongoing or reoccurring or episodic physical problems manifesting from the stress

<https://spacioustherapy.com/codependency-traits-what-how-when-formed/>



Now granted you may not be a full-blown codependent like myself, but everyone suffers personality deficits and self-destructive/abusive behaviors. These traits inhibit and interfere with the peace the Word of God offers. Jesus said:

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.”

John 14:27

Only God knows the extent of harm sin has inflicted on our soul. Only God can help us to reconcile (integrate, balance, order) our emotional struggles with the stinking thinking we have adopted: that expresses fear, anger, shame, guilt...so we can really leave all of it at the foot of Christ's cross.



One of the greatest investments we can make is the time we share with Christ, God's Word, for our own well-being.

Through the blood Jesus shed on that cross, God was able to reconcile to Himself all things (Col. 1:20). Through the blood Jesus shed on that cross, though we were once far away from God we are brought near (near to God's heart) because the Word Himself is our peace (Eph. 2:13-14).

Through the blood Jesus shed on that cross, God sends Holy Spirit so we can receive knowledge and understanding and insight and discernment and the wisdom that is needed to reconcile any error with ALL that Truth bestows. There may be something you definitely need or are unaware of within that ALL that God bestows.

God sent His Word so all mankind could know Him and experience His loving-kindness. For those who accept God's Son, Christ Jesus believing we can know the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, is received when we allow God's Word to guard our heart and our mind (Phil. 4:7); that we might

truly be able to understand what God has freely given us (1 Cor. 2:12).



Yes, God sends in the name of Jesus the Counselor, Holy Spirit, to teach us ALL things and remind us of everything God's Word has shared (John 14:26).

Our heavenly Father wants us to love Life and see good days (1 Peter 3:10a). He has given us His Word of Life as solid food, for Truth helps us to flourish and mature as we consistently train ourselves to distinguish Good from evil (Heb. 5:14).

Though God wants the very best for us not only now but for all eternity, wanting can't accomplish this. However, wanting is a great place to start acknowledging the good we have is God given, and those things that are working against us – distraction, confusion, doubt, disbelief, procrastination, lack of motivation, fear...are evil means meant to rob us of every good and perfect things God wants us to possess.



Accomplishment is achieved through willingness. Willingness requires steps to be taken with a belief in self-control and discipline, which are actually powered by Holy Spirit, if success is to be realized. Sadly, our measure of being successful is weighted by “the necessary evil” that is used and usually chosen to be ignored or denied or reasoned for why it is being used – lying, cheating, conniving...

However, what produces adversity and danger and violence, unsoundness and dysfunction should definitely not be ignored let alone applied because there is so much more that evil is always ready to lay on us: humiliation, shame, disgrace, dishonor, pain, suffering, distrust, remorse....



Why are we making choices that set us in the way of harm? Willingness is essential so steps can be taken for new perceptions of “selfness” and the world and God can emerge.

This suggestion may not cause a blip to occur on your radar screen of interest; however, if you desire answers for whatever it may be that haunts then being teachable is of the utmost

importance. “Being teachable” is of great value if that inner turmoil is to find rest.



“Being teachable” is more than gaining knowledge from books. It is an attitude that ensures we’ll be willing to learn as we go. Meaning, we’re willing to learn from mistakes, from other people, from circumstance, from the lessons that every-day-life sets before us.

Decisions are made and impossible standards are set to curb the upset and ridicule that accompany mistaken judgments; such as, perfectionism. There are many reasons given to adopt behaviors that work against us. Behaviors that cause us to take a stance so far from what is really practical (serviceable, applicable, sensible) that we miss the target we’re aiming for. How many times will we go around that mountain before we learn how to permanently remove it?

How many times will we do the same things over and over and over again until we realize this is insane? There may be certain things about ourselves that may not be comfortable or pleasant to

view because we are flawed. We were designed with cracks, and personally I think we should be grateful, for what else could possibly cause us to consider – We Need a Savior! God’s Word gives us a great explanation:

“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken Me, the Spring of Living Water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken-cisterns that cannot hold water.”

Jer. 2:13

In other words, we have behaved as lost sheep. We have all gone astray each of us has turned to our own way (Isa. 53:6). We are living a life in a world that has been turned upside down where wrong appears right causing “fate” and “coincidence” to be thought of as normal. In Isa. 5:20 God’s Word says:

“Woe! to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for Light and Light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.”

~

Woe provides us warning affliction, anguish, distress, misery, torment, tribulation...will come upon us. There are so many behaviors mankind has adopted that are animalistic that lack thought and concern for the welfare of life; instead, compliance and conformance to a non-God-fearing soul.

How ludicrous! The list of our fears is exceedingly extensive fear of man of failure of rejection of abandonment of dogs....but the fear of Him Who, after the death of the body, has the power to throw us into hell remains absent? God's Word is made perfectly clear by the Spirit of Truth:

“Yes, I tell you, fear Him! Five sparrows were sold for two pennies, and not one of them was forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid! Sparrows have little worth, but your worth to the Father is so exceedingly great He sent His one and only Son, so that whoever chooses to believe in Him shall not perish; instead, have eternal life.”

“God did not send His one and only Son into the world to condemn it, but to save the world through Him.

Therefore, you have no excuse or defense or justification, whoever you are who judges and condemns another. For, in posing as judge and passing sentence on another, you condemn yourself, because you who judge are habitually practicing the very same things.”

“The spirit of the world within those who have no fear of God will become exhausted and emptied out and will fail. For their counsel will be destroyed, and their plans confounded; they will seek counsel from the idols and the sorcerers, and from those having familiar spirits and from witchcraft.”

“No one can contend with One Who is stronger than they are. The more the words, the less the meaning, and how does that profit anyone? For who knows what is good for a person in life, during the few days they pass through like a shadow? Who can tell them what will happen under the sun after they are gone?”

“Woe! To those who go to great depths to hide their plans from the Lord, who do their work in darkness and think, ‘Who sees us? Who will know?’ You turn things upside down, as if the Potter were thought to be like the clay! Shall what is formed say to Him Who formed it, ‘He did not make me?’ Can the pot say of the Potter, ‘He knows nothing?’”

“In a very short time the wilderness will be turned into a fertile field that seems like a forest. In that day the deaf will hear the words of the Scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see.”

“Once more the humble will rejoice in the Lord; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. The ruthless will vanish, the mockers will disappear, and all who have an eye for evil will be cut down – those who with a word make a person out to be guilty, who ensnare the defender in court, and with false testimony deprive the innocent of justice.”

Luke 12:5-7, John 3:16-17, Rom. 2:1 AMP, Isa. 19:3 AMP, Eccl. 6:10-12, Isa. 29:15-21



The Word Who God has shared with us has the Spirit of the Sovereign God on Him, because the Father has anointed Him to preach Good News to the poor and humble in spirit.

God continues to send His Word to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of the vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness a planting of the Lord for the display of His splendor (Isa. 61:1-3).



Instead of running amuck ignoring, rejecting or disbelieving the Woe of God, why not heed the man-made version "Whoa" slow down, give pause, because there are so many teachable moments that give Truth opportunity to be heard if we are willing to invest our time.

That mistake that caused you to miss the mark can definitely provide new meaning so any sense of hopelessness can be upended when it's known or you become aware of the Truth, that because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His compassion and His mercy never fails. They are new every morning; great is His faithfulness. We can be encouraged and uplifted when it is not only believed, but decreed: 'The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for Him,' Lam. 3:22-24.

That liar or betrayer or abuser or murderer...you believed and trusted who causes such loss and grief know their paths are dark and slippery, and the angel of the Lord pursues them. They hide a net and dig a pit without cause for others; but ruin will overtake them by surprise – the net they hide for someone else will entangle them. They will fall into the pit to their own ruin (Ps. 35:5-8), if they don't repent and turn to God and establish, settle and prove their repentance by their deeds (Acts 26:20).



Sadly, woe awaits them! A different cross of sorrow, asperity and desolation overshadows the nations and cities of oppressors,

rebellious and defiled! They obey no one, they accept no correction. They have no trust in the Lord, they do not draw near to God (Zeph. 3:1-2).

However, those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, who rest in the shadow of the Almighty (Ps. 91:1); those with a willing heart, who are teachable, who have gained more and more faith and hope and trust, confidence and assurance in God and His Word have learned through experience and readily proclaim, "The Lord is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I trust."

"Surely He will save me from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover me with His feathers, and under His wings I will find refuge; His faithfulness will be my shield and rampart. I will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday."

"A thousand may fall at my side, ten thousand at my right hand, but it will not come near me. I will only observe with my eyes, and see the punishment of the wicked."



Yes, if you make the Most High your dwelling – even the Lord, to be your refuge – then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. For the Lord will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

For the Lord of Heaven's Armies says:

“Because you love, honor and respect Me not just with words but with the choices that you make to demonstrate to the world the love you have for Me, I will rescue you; I will protect you, for you acknowledge My name.”

“You will call upon Me, and I will answer you. I will be with you in trouble, I will deliver you and honor you. With long life I will satisfy you and show you My salvation.”



Holy Spirit may be hovering over your life, but if you are sincerely willing to learn and apply godly Wisdom there is no way His divine presence won't be hindered from softening a heart that has been injured and calloused by the ways and means and wisdom of this world, when He is given entrance in your soul through Christ Jesus.

Like in Isaiah 58 when God said to His people,

“If you honor the Lord in what you do, not following your own desires and pleasure nor talking idly – then the Lord will be your delight, and I will see to it that you ride high and get your full share of My promised blessings.”



So I continue to ask the world to hear “Listen now;” for the Lord isn't too weak to save you. And He isn't deaf! He can hear when you call! But, the trouble is that your sins have cut you off from God. Your hands are those of murderers and your fingers are filthy with sin. You lie and gossip, grumble and oppose the good.

No one cares about being fair and true. Your lawsuits are based on lies; you spend your time plotting evil deeds and doing them. You spend your time and energy in spinning evil plans that end up in deadly actions. You cheat and shortchange everyone. Everything you do is filled with sin; violence is your trademark.

Your feet run to do evil and rush to murder; your thoughts are only of sinning, and wherever you go you leave behind a trail of misery and death. You don't know what true peace is nor do you know what it means to be just and good. You continually do wrong and those who follow you won't experience any peace either.



It is because of all this evil that you aren't finding God's blessings; that's why He doesn't punish those who injure you. No wonder you are in darkness when you expected Light. No wonder you are walking in the gloom. No wonder you grope like those who are blind, and stumble along in broad daylight. Yes, even at the brightest noontime, as though it were the darkest night!

No wonder you are like a corpse when compared with vigorous young men! You roar like hungry bears; you moan with mournful cries like doves. You look for God to keep you, but He doesn't. For your sins keep piling up before the righteous God and testify against you.



Yes, we know what sinners we are. We know our disobedience; we have denied the Lord our God. We know what rebels we are and how unfair we are, for we carefully plan our lies. Our courts oppose the righteous person; fairness is unknown. Truth falls dead in the streets, and justice is outlawed.

Truth is gone, and anyone who tries a better life is soon attacked. The Lord saw all the evil and was displeased to find no steps taken against sin. He saw no one was helping you and wondered that no one intervened. Therefore He Himself stepped in to save you through His mighty power and justice.

He put on righteousness as armor and the helmet of salvation on His head. He clothed Himself with robes of vengeance and of godly fury. He will repay His enemies for their evil deeds-fury for

His foes in distant lands. Then at last they will reverence and glorify the name of God from west to east. For He will come like a flood tide driven by Jehovah's breath. He will come as a Redeemer to those in Zion who have turned away from sin.

The Lord says:

“As for Me, this is MY promise to them, My Holy Spirit shall not leave them, and they shall want the good and hate the wrong - they and their children.”

“Arise, My people! Let your light shine for all the nations to see! For the glory of the Lord is streaming from you. Darkness as black as night shall cover all the peoples of the earth, but the glory of the Lord will shine from you.”

Isa. 58:13-60:4



In Genesis 4:17-24 we discover Cain didn't have the glory of the Lord upon him. He was the first to spend his life apart from God. As a result, he went from being a farmer dedicating his life to the

Lord, to investing all his strength into building a city he dedicated to his son, Enoch.

By examining the meaning of the names that are mentioned in these verses a deeper understanding can be acquired. Cain means “possession or possessed.” Just think he was in possession of a healthy, wholesome life enjoying relationship with God and family. That is until it became apparent the attitudes and opinions he possessed spoke of self-importance.

Enoch means to narrow, to initiate, to discipline, to throttle (garrote, smoother, stifle) or reflex (natural, instinctive, reactive) - to choke oneself to death (by a rope). Exalting ourselves, our opinions, our feelings, our beliefs over others not only initiates rivalries (contention, controversy, conflict), when left undisciplined (defiant, rebellious, self-willed and stubborn) we are actually placing ourselves and those we care about in precarious positions where our mortal (deadly, infectious, destructive) enemy and the dark forces of negativity can throttle us.

To Enoch was born Irad, which means to sequester (isolate, confine, confiscate) itself; fugitive (elusive, evasive, unapproachable). Only an enemy would want suffering to occur, and then also gain pleasure from it. For many in our lives the enemy may be the reflection in the mirror. When I did as Rom.12:3 suggests, "You must see yourself just as you are, not thinking you are better than you really are," God helped me to recognize and acknowledge my character deficits and those codependent, self-destructive ways.

Though these revelations were life-changing, when I realized what a cracked pot I really was, my heart was also changed by compassion. When I fell off my high-horse, my eyes were opened to Truth - my thoughts and opinions and beliefs will definitely not lead me to love God and others the way that I should.

Why? Because love is patient and kind! Love does not envy or boast! Love is not proud or rude or self-seeking! Love is not easily angered nor keeps records of wrongs! Love rejoices with the Truth instead of delighting in evil. Love always trust, always hopes, always perseveres! Love never fails! (1 Cor. 13:4-8)

My heart was severely calloused, and to this very day I struggle to offer love as I should; But God, He never fails instead continues to disclose the most excellent Way (1 Cor. 12:31) is Christ Jesus.



Holy Spirit beseeches:

“Oh! That you were not so proud and stubborn! Then you would listen to the Lord, for He has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before it is too late, before He causes deep, impenetrable darkness to fall upon you so that you stumble and fall upon the dark mountains; then, when you look for Light, you will find only terrible darkness. Do you still refuse to listen? Then in loneliness My breaking heart shall mourn because of your pride. My eyes will overflow with tears because the Lord’s flock shall be carried away as slaves.”

Jer. 13:15-17 TLB

Hurt and lonely! Slaves to fear and addiction; hatred and anger; prejudice and preference; Hurt and lonely! Call out to the Lord for He will show you mercy and free you from your troubles. He will help you resolve your problems if you are willing (Ps. 25:16-17 ERV).



NEVER ALONE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ByOhwDMNSY>

May the angels protect you, trouble neglect you
And heaven accept you when it's time to go home
May you always have plenty, the glass never empty
And know in your belly, you're never alone

May your tears come from laughing, you find friends worth
having

As every year passes, they mean more than gold
May you win and stay humble, smile more than grumble
And know when you stumble, you're never alone

Never alone, never alone

I'll be in every beat of your heart when you face the unknown

Wherever you fly this isn't goodbye

My love will follow you, stay with you, you're never alone

Well, I have to be honest as much as I wanted

I'm not gonna promise that cold winds won't blow

So when hard times have found you and your fears surround you

Wrap my love around you, you're never alone

Never alone, never alone

I'll be in every beat of your heart when you face the unknown

Wherever you fly this isn't goodbye

My love will follow you, stay with you, you're never alone

May the angels protect you, trouble neglect you

And heaven accept you when it's time to go home

So when hard times have found you and your fears surround you

Wrap my love around you, you're never alone

Never alone, never alone

I'll be in every beat of your heart when you face the unknown

Wherever you fly, this isn't goodbye

My love will follow you, stay with you, you're never alone

My love will follow you, stay with you, you're never alone

Song by Jim Brickman ft. Lady Antebellum



Loneliness is all too often equated to being alone. Research suggests that social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of heart disease, obesity, anxiety, depression, Alzheimer's disease, high blood pressure, and even early death.

Isolation can increase the risks of mental health issues such as depression, dementia, social anxiety, and low self-esteem. Isolation and mental health issues can also interact with one another in a feedback loop.

Emotional isolation occurs when someone is unable or unwilling to share their emotions with others. Someone may be reluctant to discuss anything but the most superficial matters. Without emotional support, they may feel “shut down” or numb.

Emotional isolation can occur due to social isolation. Yet a person may feel emotionally isolated despite having a social network. Even though relationships are necessary for our well-being, they can trigger negative feelings and thoughts.

Emotional isolation can act as a defense mechanism to protect a person from distress.

Someone in an intimate relationship can still experience emotional isolation. One or both partners may feel alone within the relationship, rather than supported and fulfilled. Infidelity, abuse, and other trust issues often cause such feelings.

Solitude, isolation, and loneliness are similar terms, but they have distinct meanings.

- **Solitude** is the state of being alone.
- **Isolation** is a lack of social relationships or emotional support.
- **Loneliness** is a craving for social contact. It is often linked to feelings of sadness and emptiness.

Spending time alone is not inherently bad. Solitude can be a healthy, rejuvenating experience. It can allow people to reconnect with their needs, goals, and feelings.

Some people require more solitude than others. Introverts, for example, enjoy spending lots of time alone and can feel drained

through social interaction. Meanwhile, extroverts often need more social interaction to feel fulfilled. Circumstances that feel isolating or lonely to one person may be healthy for another.

Information taken from the website – Good Therapy

<https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/issues/isolation>



Only God has complete knowledge of Good and Evil and the affect they have on our lives. For two and half years I struggled with PTSD, and was so concerned with the adverse effect it was having on me that I was seeing a marriage counselor and a personal therapist. Neither came up with this diagnosis only God. Even though I was told the emotional trauma I experienced could be equated to a third degree trauma a soldier would experience, the Great Physician diagnosed the problem.

This is why I share Jesus, the Word of God, for this is where knowledge, understanding, wisdom, insight and discernment will be found. Investing time by looking into and rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15) is the only way we can receive all that God wants to give us. The meaning (essence, essentiality, spirit) so you will become thoroughly acquainted

with divine things and know and understand them accurately and well to the end (2 Cor. 1:13 AMP).



So we look for meaning even in names such as Mehujael, the son of Irad. For this gives us opportunity to look into what is unseen, which is eternal (2 Cor. 4:18). The smallest of words such as “El” has great significance for this speaks of God, great, Mighty One, powerful, strong; used as an adjective that references the strength of the Almighty. The name “Mehujael” means smitten of God; also to stroke or rub; to erase; also to smooth as if with oil; to touch; blot out; destroy; utterly wipe away.

The temporary is what can be seen (2 Cor. 4:18). In these passages we see people who are living, but not made alive because there was an absence of relationship with God. However, this meaning “smitten of God” reveals God may be ignored but He is definitely not absent. He has given us a very unique and special gift of time to be as smitten is defined - deeply, suddenly affected with or struck by strong feelings of attraction, affection or infatuation for the blessings of heaven.



Why live under a curse? Yes, many things have gone wrong generally in this fallen world, but specifically in our lives. Why? Our thoughts, our heart, our feet go in the wrong direction away from God. The voice of Moses can still be heard: Today I am giving you a choice. You may choose the blessing or the curse (Deut. 11:26 ERV).

You can choose life or death. The first will bring a blessing. The other choice will bring a curse. So choose life! Then you and your children will live. You must love the Lord your God and obey Him. Never leave Him, because the Lord is your Life (Deut. 20:19-20 ERV).

The curse God pronounced was and remains His divine judgment upon sin. It is not the casting of an evil spell, but simply the judgment of God and the proper response to His judgment is repentance. Jimmy Draper, who wrote this article, "DOCTRINE: Are you living under a curse?" continued to explain, Curses are real – genuine, but they were divine curses, a synonym for divine judgment, not a curse from Satan.



Let's consider synonyms the Merriam-Webster Thesaurus provides for the different usages of the word "Curse," and God's judgment:

1. Curse: As in condemnation – a prayer that harm will come to someone
 - damnation, voodoo, spell, denunciation....

"Truly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now has come, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."

"As the Father has life in Himself; so has He given to the Son life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man."

"Do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves will hear His voice, and will come forth. Those who have done good to the

resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.”

“I can of My own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge. My judgment is just, because I seek not My own will, but the will of the Father Who has sent Me.”

“The people in nations who practice sorcery or divination will be dispossessed. Disaster is coming their way. They won’t know when it will happen, but disaster is coming. And there is nothing they can do to stop it. These people who have worked hard all their lives learning magic tricks and spells.”

“Start using that magic! Maybe their spells will help you. Maybe they will be able to frighten someone. Many advisors you have who read the stars. They can tell when the month starts, so maybe they can tell you when troubles will come.”

“But, they can’t even save themselves. They will burn like straw, for they all go their own way. There will be no one left to save you.”

John 5:25-30 President’s Bible, Deut. 18:14, Isa. 47:11-15 ERV



2. Curse: As in swear – a disrespectful or indecent word or expression

- swear, name, cuss, oath...

“Don’t say anything you don’t mean. You only make things worse when you lay down a smoke screen of pious talk, saying, ‘I’ll pray for you,’ and never doing it, or saying, ‘God be with you,’ and not meaning it. You don’t make your words true by embellishing them with religious lace. In making your speech sound more religious, it becomes less true. Just say ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ When you manipulate words to get your own way, you go wrong.”

Matt. 5:33-37 Message

- God exalted the Lord to the highest place, and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of

Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. For Jesus, Who being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! (Phil. 2:6-11)

“Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.
What kind of house will you build for Me?”

Acts 7:49



3. Curse: As in bone – a source of harm or misfortune

- menace, peril, nemesis, trouble, danger...

“From what source do quarrels and conflicts among you come? Do they not come from this source, namely, from your inordinate passions, which are struggling with one another in your members? You have a

passionate desire and are not realizing its fulfillment; you murder.”

“You covet and are filled with jealousy, and you are not able to obtain. You engage in conflicts and quarrel. You do not have because you are not praying for something to be given you. You pray for something to be given you and do not receive because you pray with evil intent in order that you may use it for self-gratification in your inordinate passions.”

“Oh! Spiritual adulterers untrue to God your Husband, do you not know that your friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore would desire after mature consideration to be a friend of the world is thereby constituted an enemy of God.”

“Do you think what the Scripture says is in an empty manner and to no purpose. The Spirit of God Who has been caused to make His permanent home in us has a passionate desire to the point of envying any control indwelling sin may have over us?”

“The Holy Spirit gives greater grace. For this reason He says, ‘God sets Himself in battle array against the arrogant and haughty, but gives grace to the humble and lowly.’”

James 4:1-5 Wuest



4. Curse: As in to imprecate – to ask a divine power to send evil or harm upon
- denounce, vex, condemn, revile...

There’s a story in the Bible of Balaam that second Peter 2:15-16 refers to: They have left the straight-way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But, he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey – a beast without speech – who spoke with a man’s voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.

The story of Balaam is one of the strange but true stories of the Bible, and is found in the book of Numbers 22-24. Balaam was

one of the many prophets whom God had dispersed throughout the world since the dawn of history.

Balaam was of Mesopotamian extraction (Deut. 23:4), and was a foreigner among those in the regions of Canaan. Balaam was considered by the people in this area to be a diviner or soothsayer of considerable power.

The intrusion of God's people in this land alarmed Balak the king of Moab, and he called upon Balaam to put a curse upon the Israelites so as to stop their progress.

What Balaam did right – he refused to make any pronouncement other than what God told him to say. Even when he was pressed by the king to curse the people, Balaam gave them a blessing.

Over and over the leaders of Moab asked Balaam to have another go at divining the message they wanted. Each time the Lord gave Balaam a stronger version of the Truth, and told him to pronounce a blessing instead of a curse. Balaam repeated the blessing faithfully, defying the king. His attitude was, "I must

be careful to speak what the Lord puts in my mouth,” Num. 23:12.



The Scriptures blast Balaam because even though he was right to speak only what God told him to speak, Balaam get very bad press repeatedly in the Bible:

- God was angry with Balaam because he went to Balak (Num. 22:5-7,22)
- Moses said Balaam gave evil counsel that brought a plague on Israel (Numb. 31:14-16)
- Balaam had wanted to curse the children of God, to be paid the hire (Deut. 23:3-6)
- Balaam was killed by the Israelites in the days of Joshua (Jos. 24:8-10)
- The Lord recalled Balaam’s sin in Joshua’s farewell speech (Josh. 24:8-10)
- Recalled again through the prophet Micah (Micah 6:5)
- Re-visited in Nehemiah’s time (Heh. 13:1-3)
- Peter recalls how Balaam “loved the wages of unrighteousness” (2 Pet. 2:15-16)

- Similarly Jude recalls how “for pay...the error of Balaam” was committed (Jude 1:11)
- Jesus recalls how Balaam “Kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the Israelites – to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality (Rev. 2:14)



What Balaam did wrong was to be an unfaithful prophet. By the powers granted to him by God, Balaam had the opportunity to demonstrate the power of the true God against the deception of false gods and idols. When he pronounced a blessing or a curse, it worked. Balak said as much when he summoned Balaam to curse God’s people (Num. 22:6).

Balaam could have helped the Moabites and their neighbors to “turn to God from idols, to serve the living God” (1 Thess. 1:9). However, Balaam let God down badly. As a false prophet he was too easily led away from God’s Truth into error, and he in turn led many others astray (Num. 25:1-9, Num. 31:14-16). Balaam loved money more than Truth. For all his talk about speaking only what God put into his mouth, he was wishing to

curse the children of Israel for the generous fee Balak would pay him.

Instead of loving righteousness, Balaam “loved the wages of unrighteousness” (2 Pet. 2:15-16). Balaam knew what pleased the Lord, but what pleased the Lord did not please him.

Balaam presumed to manipulate God. Sure, he uttered a blessing instead of a curse, but only because God gave him no option. What would be the point for him to pronounce a curse, if God was going to give a blessing?

Balaam would look stupid and damage his reputation. However Balaam kept going along with Balak’s repeated attempts to get a curse from God upon the Israelites, because like Balak he hoped that maybe somehow God could be pressured or possibly persuaded into doing a backflip. God, however, refused to listen, and He was angry with Balaam for not rejecting Balak’s proposal outright from the very first (Num. 22:12).



The Scriptures tell how Balaam was dealt with:

- God told Balaam the Truth clearly. “Do not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed,”
Num. 22:12
- God gave Balaam a unmistakable sign. The incident with the donkey and the Angel of the Lord left Balaam without any excuse for continuing to compromise God and His Word and even himself with Balak’s wishes (Num. 22:21-35)
- God judged Balaam worthy of death. The reason was that Balaam still insisted on going to Balak. But for his donkey, this false prophet would have been killed by the Angel of the Lord (Num. 22:33)
- God provided a savior for Balaam. Balaam’s donkey was his suffering savior (Num. 22:33)
- God was longsuffering to Balaam. God was showing patience with this man’s pandering to Balak’s three attempts to change God’s Word by changing locations (Num. 24:10-13)

- God punished Balaam’s hearers with death. God killed those who heeded Balaam’s wicked counsel (Num. 25:1-8, Num. 31:14-18)
- God finally killed Balaam. Balaam died at the hands of the Israelites (Josh. 13:22)

Information from the article, “The Error of Balaam,” by Ron Graham, and posted on the website SimplyBible – Australia.

<https://www.simplybible.com/f416-2pet-the-error-of-balaam.htm>



5. Curse: As in to blame – to use profane or obscene language at or about

- blame, criticize, rebuke, admonish....

“Do not blame and criticize, judge and condemn others so that you will not be blamed or criticized, judged or condemned. Just as you do so judging or criticizing or condemning others, with the measure you use to deal out to others, it will be dealt out again to you.”

“Why stare from without at the very small speck in someone’s eye, but you are not aware of and consider the beam of timber that is in your own eye? How can

you say, 'Let me get that tiny speck out of your eye, when there is a beam of timber in your own? First look inward to get the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the tiny speck out of someone else's eye.'

"When boards and specks are in your eye, by what right can you criticize God? Should what is made say to the One Who made it, 'Why have you made me like this?' Does not God have a perfect right to show His fury and power against those who blaspheme?"

"There's nothing done or said that can't be forgiven; unless, the One Who forgives is rejected – Holy Spirit. Those who do so are sawing off the branch on which they were sitting, severed by their own perversity."

"If a healthy tree is grown, healthy fruit will be picked; a diseased tree will grow worm-eaten fruit. The fruit speaks to you about the tree. How can anyone with minds like a snake pit suppose what they say is worth anything when they are so foul-mouthed?"

“It’s their heart, not the dictionary that gives meaning to their words. Every careless word is going to come back to haunt them. There will be a time of Reckoning. Words are powerful, take them seriously! Words can be your salvation. Words can also be your damnation.”

Matt. 7:1-5 AMP, Rom. 9:20-26 TLB, Matt. 12:31-37 Message



God continues to send His Word to attract our attention that we might be stirred by the strong emotion (sense, fervency, conviction) of Love. For God knows how impactful negative forces such as fear have been in our lives. Even when no thought is given to God, innately (naturally, instinctively, intuitively) it is known our sin causes us to fall short of His glory (Rom. 3:23).

To cope with rejection and disapproval, guilt and shame the natural thing is done. We tend to use self-made means of protection to hide and cover up with those patterns of denial, which was developed by Terrence Gorski:

1. AVOIDANCE

2. MINIMIZING – problem is less serious
3. RATIONALIZING – finding ways to justify problem
4. BLAMING – refusing to accept responsibility
5. COMPARING – other people have same problem
6. MANIPULATING – forcing others to act as rescuers to solve your problem
7. SCARING SELF – fear of consequences
8. COMPLIANCE – say anything – leave me alone
9. FLIGHT INTO HEALTH – feeling better means better
10. STRATEGIC HOPELESSNESS – nothing works don't try
11. DEMOCRATIC DISEASE STATE – right to do as I please – live my life
12. ABSOLUTE DENIAL – refusing to admit



A price will definitely have to be paid for the choices that we make, but the cost doesn't have to be eternal damnation. God calls us out from under those self-made coverings so we can be freed from our own negative reasoning. Then we can see how faithfully and diligently God has been working to make us aware of the presence of Good:

- God sent His Son **to destroy** the devil's work (1 John 3:8)

- Jesus appeared to **take away** our sin – in Him is no sin (1 John 3:5)
- For those who are victorious in faith, their names will not be **erased or blotted out** from the Book of Life (Rev. 3:5)
- The Sovereign Lord will **wipe away** the tears from all faces; He will remove the disgrace of His people from all the earth (Isa. 25:8)
- The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet (Rom. 16:20)

Those who believe Jesus is the Son there is no rejection, no condemnation – they will not incur eternal damnation (John 3:18 AMP); instead, they will be heard singing:

WALKING FREE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVnMUkohE1o>

The verdict was guilty
 Case closed the end
 No chance for me to ever leave
 This prison of my sin
 Now I know it might sound crazy

But one day a key unlocked that cell
I heard a small voice say
Your debts been paid by somebody else
And now I'm walking, walking
Walking free
No more darkness
Guilt has lost its grip on me
When mercy called my name
Those chains fell at my feet
And now I'm walking, walking
Walking free
Now I ain't nothing perfect
I still stumble every single day
I still get knocked down
But the difference now
Is that's not where I stay
'Cause I've got a Savior
Who knows everywhere I've been
And He's telling me that I never have to
Go back there again
So now I'm walking, walking
Walking free

No more darkness
Guilt has lost its grip on me
When mercy called my name
Those chains fell at my feet
And now I'm walking, walking
Walking free
To the one walking wounded
And to the one with regret
Look up and see your victory is just up ahead
'Cause there is a Savior
Who knows everywhere you've been
And He's telling you that you never have to
Go back there again
So if you know that you never have to
Go back there again
Then sing
I'm walking, walking
Walking free
No more darkness
Guilt has lost its grip on me
When mercy called my name
Those chains fell at my feet

And now I'm walking walking
Walking free

Song by Micah Tyler



There are no differences, there can be no excuse made for the long and sorry record of our sins. We have proved ourselves utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God has paid the price for us to live. What God did for us out of sheer generosity – He put us in right standing with Himself. A pure and free gift; He got us out of the mess we're in and restored us to where He always wanted us to be, right next to Him. And He did it by means of Jesus Christ.

God sacrificed Jesus on the altar of the world to clear the world of sin. Having faith in Him sets us in the clear. God decided on this course of action in full view of the public – to set the world in the clear with Himself through the sacrifice of Jesus, finally taking care of the sins He had so patiently endured. This is not only clear, but it's now – this is current history! God sets things right. He also makes it possible for us to live in His righteousness (Rom. 3:22-26 Message).

Truth just needs to be received, acknowledged and accepted.

Don't be deceived by those patterns of denial!



What marvelous love and goodness the Father has extended to us! Just look at it – we're called children of God. That's who we really are when we believe this is only the beginning of this process of renewal and recovery we're invited to partake in, with God and for His glory. When Christ is openly revealed again, we'll see Him – and in seeing Him, become like Him. All who look forward to His Coming will stay ready.

However, those who indulge in a sinful life are dangerously lawless, for sin is a major disruption of God's order. Surely, God has made it clear Christ showed up in order to get rid of sin. There is no sin in Jesus, and sin is not part of His program. No one who lives deeply in Christ makes a practice of sin. None of those who do practice sin have taken a good look at Christ. They've got Him all backwards.

Please don't let anyone or anything divert you from God's Word of Truth. People conceived and made alive by God don't make a practice of sin. How could they? God's seed is deep within them, making them who they are. We must not be like Cain, who joined the Evil one and then killed his brother. And why did he kill Abel? He was deep in the practice of evil while the acts of his brother were righteous.

The way we know we've been transferred from death to Life is that we love God and others. And this is how we've come to understand and experience Love: Christ sacrificed His life for us. This is why we ought to live sacrificially for God and for others, and not just to be out for ourselves (1 John 3:1-16 Message)



Without knowledge of God we are limited by self-interest, which places greater value in what is seen and what is earned. Without knowledge of self, those things we ourselves empower will continue to close our minds and hearts until it becomes apparent there is no greater value than to receive from the One Who takes a genuine interest in our welfare (Phil. 2:20).

For God's Word floods the eyes of our heart with Light, so we can know and understand the hope to which He calls us, and the immeasurable and unlimited and surpassing greatness of God's power that not only works for us, but within those who believe (Eph. 1:18-19 AMP).

The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10). Why? Because God so loves the people in this world He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish – instead, receive eternal life (John 3:16).

And so the Word of Life could work within those who believe (1 Thess. 2:13b). Constantly renewing us in the spirit of our mind (Eph. 4:23 AMP) helping us to strip (put off and discard our old un-renewed self), which characterizes our current manner of life made corrupt by lust and the desires that spring from deception, doubt and delusion (Eph. 4:21-22 AMP).



God sent His Word into the world so the extensive meaning of His love could reach into the depths of our being. Jesus revealed God's love as He taught, fed the hungry, addressed individual

needs, offered protection and safety during storms, healed the sick, gave sight and hearing to the blind and deaf, which made it possible for many fish, people who are swimming in the raging currents of the world, to continue to be caught, renewed, recovered, released to share God's Word:

"Jesus is the Gate; whoever enters through Him will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture. Jesus came that we may have Life, and have it to the full."

"Who has appointed you to be a judge or an arbiter between people? Watch out! Be on guard against all kinds of greed and selfish desire; a person's life does not consist in the abundance of their possessions."

"Death reigns through the disobedience of one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one Man, Jesus Christ."

John 10:10, Luke 12:14-15, Rom. 5:17



Yes, God sends His Word so we could know the depths of His love and concern. But, also know the enemy speaks words of deception, of course, not to set us free, but to turn us into addicts. Addiction doesn't have to speak of alcohol or drugs. We are made addicts to the impossible standards and expectations that we set, to our own way of thinking, our own opinions, feelings and beliefs. We become addicted to complaining, being miserly, physical activity....

Recently I was introduced to a series of books written by Louise Penny about a small village in Quebec, Three Pines, and of Armand Garmache the Chief Inspector of the Surete du Quebec's division of homicide.

Louise wrote this letter at the beginning of her book "The Long Way Home:

When I was thirty-five, I thought the best was behind me. I was lonely, and tired, and empty. Plodding through life at thirty five!

By the time I was forty-five, I was married to the love of my life, and my first book was about to be published.

And now I'm sixty! Living in a beautiful Quebec village, surrounded by friends, with thirteen books to my name, and counting! This milestone birthday gives me a chance to look back in wonderment. And gratitude! And amazement! That I should be here, happy and joyous and free!

No one quite appreciates, and recognizes the light like those who've lived in darkness. That awareness is what I try to bring to the books. The duality of our lives! The power of perception! The staggering weight of despair, and the amazement when it is lifted!

The gap between how we appear and how we really feel! Those are the foundations of the Gamache books. Initially they were called the Three Pines books, which, of course, they are. Three Pines is the tiny hidden village in Quebec. Not on any map, it is only ever found by those who are lost. But, once found, never forgotten.

At their core, though, these books are about the profound decency of Armand Gamache, and the struggles he has to remain a good person. When “good” is subjective, and “decent” is a matter of judgment.

These books might appear, superficially, as traditional crime novels; but, they are, I believe, more about life than death. About choices! About the price of freedom! About the struggle for peace!

At thirty-five, I thought the best was behind me. As I celebrate my sixtieth birthday, I can hardly wait to see what happens next.

Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There's a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in

Welcome to the very cracked world of Armand Garmache and Three Pines. I am overjoyed to be able to share it with you. Meet you in the bistro...

Louise Penny

March 2018



This letter was written in the book “The Long Way Home.” Within the series this book follows “How The Light Gets In,” which is the novel that inspired me to speak of addiction.

One of the main characters found himself caught up in an addiction to pain medication. What finally broke through that hard and crusty exterior he erected with layers upon layers of doubt and fear and deception, manipulation and anger and despair – a simple act of Love.

I am of the opinion that Ruth Zardo has become one of my favorite characters. Now you’ll have to start reading to understand why she may be an unusual choice. Her layers of crustiness are made quite apparent. Maybe that is why her thoughtfulness and sheer kindness was unexpected.



You see, Ruth's simple act of love was extended with great risk attached, because it would and could have cost her dearly.

However, this gesture opened not just the eyes of an addict who was driven by such anger that isolated pushing him into great despair and loneliness; BUT LOVE, (and know we love because God first loved us, 1 John 19) his heart was opened to feel and sing and celebrate life once again.

Yes, his was an addiction to chemical agents, but also an addiction to his own thoughts and feelings, his own perceptions, beliefs and opinions, which proved a continual source of torment. Refusing to believe; therefore, unable to receive the love being offered.

Yes, stinking thinking led to much closure; BUT LOVE, brought about renewal, recovery, restoration, reconciliation and the resurrection of a remarkable and miraculous transformation.

If you decide to follow Armand, and I hope you do, the first step of that journey begins with – Still Life, where you too can join Louise in the bistro...



The importance of our spiritual being cannot be denied. It makes it possible for us to see and consider and hopefully learn from our mistakes.

We can each look back at the different stages of our life. A child, an adolescent, an adult, a spouse, a parent, an employee or employer! Change is always accompanied by a before and an after. I was all of these in the era I spent BC (Before Christ), but found myself struggling to hope, to appreciate, to be grateful for all the love in my life.

When I entered the AD era, in the years I now spend with the Lord, I came to realize love isn't just a feeling or strong sentiment because God is Love (1 John 4:8). Though I had come to be in relationship with God and His Word, Christ Jesus, the struggles of life never diminished. Instead, they actually grew worse.

Thankfully, I also came to believe and trust the One Who is Love (1 John 4:16). The One Who remains the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). The One Who laid a Stone in Zion. A tested Stone! A precious Cornerstone as a sure foundation so those who believe and trust will never be dismayed (Isa. 28:16).

The One Who never leaves or forsakes and leads us into hope and peace and contentment (Heb. 13:5).



As a result, I would learn how to let myself, and others and even God be who they are instead of who I believed or wanted them to be and ultimately do for me. Though circumstances appeared bad, I held tightly to the Lord's hand. How you may ask? My heart was filled with God's Word of Truth. The most amazing and wonderful and miraculous things occurred.

Though the following decades brought with them a great deal of loss, the burdens of addiction to "selfness," to the self-destructive ways and behaviors of Codependency, of people-pleasing, of PTSD, of emotional traumas were being revealed so they could be lifted from me. I was being made free indeed because the Son, the Word of Life and Promise and Covenant commitment, was working in my behalf - to make me free (John 8:36).

Yes, I also consider life before and after the effects disability brought into my life! And though this testimony may at first appear bleak, twice during my BC life's journey, my very own

thoughts and feelings were persuading me to seek relief – just answer death’s call.

BUT, and this is a very big but, through all the loss and anguish I experienced after turning to the Lord, I never lost what is priceless and eternal: Faith and Hope and Love’s gift to me of Life that holds Surety, God’s Word, Christ Jesus bestowed to me so I would never again be so shaken by my own perceptions and opinions and beliefs to answer death’s call.

Honestly, it wasn’t that I couldn’t hear the ringing of death’s call I just had absolutely no interest in receiving what is deceptive. All glory to God, Who through His Spirit helped me to move my but’s out of the way so I could fully embrace the One Who is true and righteous and everlasting (Ps. 119:142). The One Who became flesh and made His dwelling among us, the Word (John 1:14), Who has made His dwelling forever in my heart (Col. 3:16).



I came to know through experience nothing is impossible for God, nothing (Luke 1:37) because the Word of God is living and active (Heb. 4:12a).

The Lord continues to address individual needs. Nothing in all creation is hidden from Him, Who exposes our innermost thoughts and desires (Heb. 4:12b-13a). Who knows when and how and what gave life to those core beliefs and feelings that are really not as reliable, trustworthy or factual as we tend to believe.

Why? Because like us they are cracked! They too reside in a natural environment that allows what is Good to seep out, and what is bad to be absorbed.

However, there has only been One Who walked the ways of this world with unique and Super-natural knowledge and understanding, for He knew where He came from and where He would return (John 13:3).

That doesn't mean Jesus didn't experience the devil's prompting to sin: to lie, to betray, to abuse and destroy. What Jesus did experience, just as all mankind does, pain and sorrow and suffering at the hands and from the hearts of those who actually follow evil's promptings. The Apostle John simply said, "Jesus wept," John 11:35.



Yes, as a man of flesh and blood, Jesus was allotted time to walk this earth so Goodness and Kindness and Love could be seen, so Truth could be heard and the Grace of God could be revealed. However, as God, the Eternal Word, by the power of His Spirit, continually traverses throughout the many, many eras so God's loving-kindness and goodness could become personally known and experienced.

Multitudes have come to Jesus Who forgives and calls us family. Truth finally absorbed instead of secreted. Jesus laid down on that cross freely no one forced Him. And, as He hung in pain and agony what He said is most astounding:

“Father, forgive them!

For they know not what they are doing!”

“Come near, and listen! Pay attention! So you can be strong and not consumed by fear! Your God will come! He will come with vengeance! With divine retribution! He will come to save you!”

“Come! From Me you can buy gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich! I will give you white clothes to wear to cover your shameful nakedness, and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.”

“Unaware! You are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked, but so truly loved! And those I love I rebuke and discipline! So be earnest! Repent! For here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they with Me!”

“Those who overcome what evil has brought into their lives: Pridefulness and Fear and Sin, I will give the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame the promptings of evil and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

“Those who have an ear, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches!”

Luke 23:34, Isa. 34:1, Isa. 35:4, Rev. 3:14-22

An invitation like known other to join the company of those who begin real living by believing in Him (Acts 26:18 Message); those who willingly and earnestly endeavor to take steps toward the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6) by accepting the Lord's invitation to know through experience a changed life, changed inside and out (Luke 5:32 Message).



God gives us time and ample opportunity to decide to co-labor with Him and change the only thing we possibly can change – ourselves, our perspectives, our attitudes, our behaviors. The high and lofty One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy offers us new perspectives from His high and holy place (Isa. 57:15a).

A vastly different perspective, far from those formed in the high and lofty places where prideful people make their beds (Isa. 57:7). Places where fear and pride, lust and complacency rest their heads. Enemies battling against and within all mankind causing us to be fainthearted and afraid! So terror that gives way to panic and difficulty is experienced!

How impossible for sound judgment and sturdy decisions to be made. However, for those who are contrite God will revive their heart (Isa. 57:15) so they can be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power (Eph. 6:10). Yes, for the willing and teachable and the humble He will revive their spirit (Isa. 57:15) so they can claim victory through the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:56) the Life, the Truth and the Way (John 14:6) to peaceful living.



God doesn't simply offer us this opportunity so feelings can change. He works within to bring about a total transformation. With faith He can remove us from the enemy's encampments of rebellion and defiance, unbelief and denial. With trust He can sift through all the historical and religious clutter so that only unshakable things would remain and continue (Heb. 12:27) so we can grow and prosper and flourish.

With confidence God's Word can teach us to fight with weapons that have divine power to demolish strongholds. To demolish arguments and pretensions that set themselves up against the knowledge of God. Yes, Holy Spirit will help us to take captive every thought, and make it obedient to the Lord (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

For it is God's desire for the peace within His Word to guard our heart and mind (Phil. 4:7) as we co-labor with Holy Spirit to clothe ourselves with Christ Jesus (Rom. 13:14).

With hope we can profess the Lord our God goes with us to fight for us against our enemies: Sin and Fear and Self-Centeredness to give us victory (Deut. 20:4). For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

God gives us a full set of armor to put on so we can stand our ground, and after we have done everything, to stand (Eph. 6:12-13). Every piece of armor God gives is meant to help us resist the enemy whenever he attacks, until he flees (James 4:7); that we remain standing with faith and trust in God and with the hope of glory given to us through knowledge and understanding of His Word, Christ Jesus in us (Col. 1:27)



With love (honor, respect, appreciate) our citizenship is transferred to heaven (Phil. 3:20). The veil has been taken away

and there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:16-17). For we have donned the belt of Truth and been strengthened. Our heart knows God's approval for the Lord has given us the breastplate of His righteousness. Our feet are clad with the Good News - Peace with God - a Message so worthy to be shared (Eph. 6:14-15).

For personal discovery will prove God's commands are not burdensome. They are divinely powered so we can overcome the world (1 John 5:3-4). For in every battle Faith and Truth, Righteousness and Justice are essential.

Yes, our shield of faith can stop those fiery darts aimed at us by the devil (Eph. 6:16). For as it is written: "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God," Matt. 4:4.

God sends His love and reveals His concern for us in many different ways. We just have to move a few things out of the way so we can clearly see Him. The lyrics to the song "Next To Me" by Jordan Felix, has a similar message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3MKP3SkzkIA>

I've been empty
When I'm low, You fill the cup
But my ego fights back telling me that
I'm ready to grab the wheel and take
control
But I'll crash if I don't let myself - let go

You put the "X" on my faded map
Draw a line back to where You're at
Patient when I try to move to fast

I get this feeling in my spirit when I'm
low
I hear it calling like a compass to my
soul
Saying child, come on back now
You've been gone too long
Let Me lead you back where you belong

Right next to Me
Right next to Me

I've been captive by the plans I tried to
make
I've been selfish
'Cause callous hearts they die hard
Like habits that I know I gotta break
Ain't it good to know that help is on the way?

Isn't it good to know God is our help and our shield (Ps. 33:20),
Who says:

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed,
for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I
will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Isa. 41:10



Duet.1:30-31 gives us this assurance, "The Lord your God, Who is going before you, will fight for you, as He did for those in Egypt, before their very eyes, and in the desert." We all suffer times in the desert, when we become overheated by anger, frustration, rejection...feeling the cold of darkness as betrayal, slander, loneliness, resentment, remorse, regret...settles on us.

However, making the choice to agree with, lean on, rely on and trust in the Word gives God opportunity to work good into and out of whatever mess we set before Him. He will never disappoint.

In fact, He has left me in awe of His amazing goodness. Through the Word we not only gain knowledge of His miraculous power, we gain experience so we can proclaim not just with our mouths but with our hearts, “The Lord will fight for me, I need only to be still,” Exodus 14:14. And give God the same special and unique gift He has given us – time.



And as we wait no matter the length of time that’s needed, we can hold tightly to God’s Word. Thankful for all He has given us. Especially the helmet of salvation because the most arduous battlefield doesn’t lie before us, it lies within – our mind.

And though we confess with our mouth “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead so we will be saved. We must also confess with our mouth “God’s Word is

Lord,” and believe with all our heart “With authority and power the Lord gives orders to evil spirits and they come out,” Luke 4:36.



The Word of Truth reveals God’s promises (Isa. 55:11-12):

“You will go out in joy, and be led forth in peace because God’s Word will accomplish what He desires for you, and will achieve the purpose for which God has sent the Lord.”

With our eyes on Jesus and not the surrounding troubled waters, the Lord will raise us from the depths of anguish so we can step out in faith and confidence and assurance:

GOD REALLY LOVES US

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yG-Y9bWlCw8>

I've got a friend
Closer than a brother
There is no judgement

Oh, how He loves me

I've got a friend

And He is my strength

He is my portion

With me in the valley

With me in the fire

With me in the storm

Let all my life testify

Hallelujah

We are not alone

God really loves us

God really loves us

Hallelujah

Oh, praise my soul

God really loves us

God really loves us

His mercy's enough

His grace is sufficient

So come if you're needing

Forgiveness or healing

His mercy's enough

Oh, and this is our hope
The cross, it has spoken
Death is no more
Christ is the Lord
Oh, this is our hope, yeah

Hallelujah

We are not alone
God really loves us
God really loves us
Hallelujah

Oh, praise my soul
God really loves us (yes, He does)
God really loves us

And oh-oh, oh-oh
Sing oh-oh, oh-oh
Scream (oh-oh)

What a Father
What a Friend
What a Savior He is (sing oh-oh)
What a Father

What a Friend
What a Savior He is

Hallelujah

We are not alone
God really loves us
God really loves us

Hallelujah

Oh, praise my soul
God really loves us
Oh, God really loves us (yes)

What a Father

What a Friend

What a Savior He is (thank you, Jesus)

What a Father

What a Friend

What a Savior He is (oh)

What a Father

What a Friend

What a Savior He is

What a Father

What a Friend

What a Savior He is

Song by Crowder, Dante Bowe



Just continue to remember, you are taking steps toward a richer and deeper relationship with God. While putting into practice the principles of renewal and recovery for they guide us into becoming more God-dependent.

- The first key is to maintain an honest view of reality not only considering particular circumstances and events as substantial, but recognizing the substance of Truth – the Life, the Alpha and Omega, the heart and the spirit as we work on taking steps of faith acknowledging:
 - God exists and I matter to Him – that God could and would if He were sought
 - Admitting I am powerless – If God is your co-pilot, switch seats
 - Acknowledging in certain areas my life became unmanageable – Sorrow shared is halved; Joy shared is doubled

- Believing God will restore me with Love, a Sound Mind and Power – Success means getting your BUT out of the way
- Believing God will help me stay committed to this decision to put all of who I am into His possession and safekeeping – There is no magic in this process of renewal and recovery only miracles
- Believing the Word of God will encourage, support and strengthen me as I make a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself – There is pain in this process. Misery is optional
- Because of God’s loving-kindness I have become willing to admit to God, to myself and another person the exact nature of my wrongs – The road to resentment is paved with expectation
- With Truth as my solid foundation I have become entirely ready to have God remove all my defects of character – Courage is faith that has said its prayers
- Having received faith and hope and love for the Surety God has given me in Christ Jesus, I humbly ask Him to remove my shortcomings – F.A.I.T.H. = Fantastic Adventure In Trusting Him

- Having gained knowledge and insight and understanding I have become willing to make a list of anyone I have harmed, and to make an amends to them all – Just for today I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle my whole life problems at once
- Having gained confidence and trust in God’s refuge I have become willing to step out with the mindset I am doing this with God and for His glory to make my amends whenever possible unless to do so would cause injury to others - Remembering nothing is going to happen today that you and God can’t handle
- I embrace my covenant relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by continuing to take a personal moral inventory, and when I am wrong being prompt to admit it – We are not human beings having spiritual experiences; we are spiritual beings having human experiences
- I invest in my relationship with God by communicating through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with Him seeking knowledge of His will and the power of grace to carry that out – If God seems far away, who moved?

- I seek Restoration, Reconciliation and Revival a spiritual awakening, as a result of taking steps to practice these principles in all my affairs and carry God's message to others so they too may know – Worry is a conversation you have with yourself about things you cannot change. Prayer is conversation you have with God about things He can change



- One of the purposes for taking steps toward renewal and recovery is to turn our focus from what has been done to us and toward what we have done to others
- List the names of people you have harmed, which you listed earlier, as well as any others you can think of at this time
- Describe the specific incident(s) as completely as you can
- Describe your part in the harm but do not describe anything the other person did to you, whether before or after your harmful behavior
- The point for taking this step is to look at your own harmful behavior without justification, defenses or excuses
- Give the approximate date of the incident(s)

- The second half of this particular step is to become willing to make amends to each person
- Even though you may not be willing to make amends at this point, go back to your list and write some ideas about how you might approach the person if you were willing to make amends
- During this step, we begin to do some repair work on the relational side of our lives
- Making our amends is the beginning of the end of our isolation from God and others
- Making amends is not about our past so much as it is about our future
- Before we can have the healthy relationships that we desire, we need to clean out the guilt, shame and pain that has caused many of our past relationships to fail
- During this step, we are asked to make a list of persons that we have harmed, and become willing to make amends to them all
- You are only looking for the WILLINGNESS
- This step only requires that we identify those to whom we need to make amends or offer forgiveness

- Luke 6:31 reminds us to treat others the way we want to be treated
- For some of us, that may be very difficult
- Many of us have been hurt very badly or abused
- We may have had nothing to do with the wrong committed against us
- The wrong done against some of us has been child molestation, sexual abuse or adultery
- Such sins are deep violations that leave painful wounds, but they also are the root of dysfunction
- Forgiving the perpetrator of such wrongs, even after the emotional pain has been dealt with, may seem impossible
- For those who have been sexually/physically abused this step has been reworded:

Make a list of all persons who have harmed us
 And become willing to seek God's help in forgiving our
 perpetrators, as well as forgiving ourselves and even Him.

- During this Step, our addictions and inappropriate behavior toward others is made clear, and the list of people we have

harmed, and the behaviors with which we have harmed them may be glaring

- We have been working through our denial and into a state of self-acceptance where no amount of justifying, rationalizing, blaming, accusing, comparing, avoidance, fear, minimizing, overly complaining or manipulating behaviors can be explained away
- We acknowledge and accept truth – we are accountable for the wrongs we have done
- Through the lens of Denial the severity of our predicament is minimized, we (Can't See)
- The steady diet of negativity keeps us locked in the turmoil of trauma
- Like ostriches burying their heads in the sand to escape their predators
- Though this behavior is a myth, it perfectly symbolizes the struggle of many of us to the effects of trauma
- When we are frightened, the most natural thing in the world is to bury our heads
- When trouble is circling our lives as in Custer's last stand, we instinctively hide -- we duck

- There are many creative ways we make denial happen
- We pretend the problem doesn't exist, minimize the challenge or ignore a problem hoping it will magically disappear
- When you find yourself habitually avoiding painful concerns this is when we are functioning from the restricted Can't See perspective produced by trauma
- Anger is the immediate reaction when the mere mention of anything on your list of hot "do not talk about these or else" issues is broached
- Such topics make you squirm
- They make you feel uncomfortable and vulnerable
- You would do just about anything to sidestep feeling exposed
- The consequences of functioning from this Can't See perspective is that we become spectators of our own lives
- When we create too much distance between us and our pain, we detach
- When we disconnect from the reality of our suffering, we start to drift emotionally

- Sometimes our heartache becomes so unmanageable that we forget who we are
- Jezebel's threats of murdering Elijah were more than he felt he could handle
- Jezebel traumatized Elijah; and in this state, death seemed more appealing than life
- We too find ourselves in situations of overwhelming stress
- When this happens, we find a place to hide
- We seek the pseudo-solace of denial
- Working through this process of renewal and recovery we learn that as long as we run from our fears, they chase us; BUT, when we stand firm and face them, the need for denial dries up and so does the pain that keeps our fears revved up
- The hidden belief in the Can't See perspective is that "Ignorance is Bliss"
- Chronic avoidance of painful truth is the order of the day
- The desire to keep everyone happy and not rock the boat is a prominent theme

If it were not for You, Lord, when my pain overwhelms me, I would bury my head in the sand like the ostrich. But, when I remember Your mercy Your grace, I receive new courage. I want to stretch my wings like that eagle.

I believe that if I face my problems, You will help me to fix them; But, if I run away, they'll never get better. So I stand on Your redeeming Love that takes things that are wrong and makes them right.

Amen.

- God has provided a strategy of escape – the way is coping
- However, the tendency of some survivors is to avoid difficult emotions
- The more you run from an issue you need to face, the stronger your emotional trauma gets
- When you stand firm and face your pain, it WILL dry up and lose its force
- Remember this principle:

Resist the devil and he will flee from you

We have all acted as unfaithful wives who love their Husband's enemies. Many have not realized that making friends with God's enemies – the evil pleasures of this world – makes us an enemy of God. Truth reveals if the aim is to enjoy the evil pleasures of this unsaved world, we cannot also be a friend of God. For God's Word assures: Holy Spirit, Whom God places within us, watches over us with tender jealousy. He gives us more and more strength to stand against every evil longing.

For God gives strength to the humble, but sets Himself against the proud and haughty. So give yourself humbly to God, for when you draw close to Him, He will draw close to you. Wash your hands not of the faith and hope God bestows, but of wrong doing! Let your heart be filled with God and His Word Who heals and sanctifies with Truth. Let there be tears and sorrow and sincere grief for the wrongs that you have done. Then as our deficiencies are realized so too God's Word Who helps us, encourages us and lifts us up in honor (James 4:4-10 TLB) filling us

with compassion and gentleness and kindness to bestow on others.

The Message Bible tells us to get down on our knees before the Master, for it's the only way we'll get on our feet.

- And accept the importance of taking responsibility for ourselves and our behavior in our relationships – though our lists may be foggy, vague and filled with our own sense of victimization and powerlessness
- Emotional clutter loves the company of chaos – a few synonyms – disorder, confusion, unruliness, commotion....
- Sometimes the pain is so great that you need a good distraction -- emotional clutter serves that exact purpose
- Emotional clutter lights a fire under multiple issues, typically all at one time
- So you find yourself speeding from one crisis to another
- With too many agendas, you simply cannot focus your energy in any clear direction

- With too much pain, you never really resolve anything -- not handling problems in depth, so there is no real resolution, no real progress
- Instead, you wind up feeling scattered, frayed and outnumbered by the sheer volume of pressures you have to manage in your life
- Those who have survived the ravages of trauma know what it is like to have their flaws exposed -- feeling naked and uncovered
- Shame is an emotion that tells us that something is wrong with us -- deep in our core

- This is a simple truth: Fighting fairly is a struggle for many trauma survivors because they were treated so unfairly by those who harmed them
- Disagreements last much longer than is helpful or Biblical
- Letting go is a consistent problem with anger issues
- Letting go is also a major concern with guilt burdens
- Many firmly believe in the teachings about forgiveness, but have real problems accepting forgiveness for themselves

- The result is that trauma bound people are frequently loaded down with feelings of guilt for the mistakes they have made along the way -- not moving forward
- People whose souls are saturated in negativity quickly learn self-hatred
- They become desperate for approval as a substitute for true self-esteem
- When people give themselves over to making others happy at the expense of their own joy, they often become “People Pleasers
- On the surface, people pleasing sounds like a really nice thing to do; BUT, when pleasing others is done at the expense of being who you really are, saying what you truly feel and doing what you sincerely believe, then people pleasing suddenly becomes toxic
- When people pleasing is offered at the altar of integrity, it has crossed the line and has become too costly

- Some of the things that happen to you when you become a people pleaser are:
 - Loss of Self
 - Poor Self-Esteem
 - Resentment
- Many make sure they go out of their way for just about everyone in their lives to make sure they are accommodating the needs of others in the hope of winning their approval
- This is their way of overcompensating for the gap in their spirit left by the hurt of being or feeling devalued for years

Dear God, I pray for willingness – willingness to evaluate all my past and current relationships. Please show me the people who I have hurt, and help me become willing to offer my amends to them. Also, God, give me Your strength to become willing to offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me. I pray for Your perfect timing for taking the action this step calls for. I ask all these things in Your Son’s precious name, Amen.

