

## PLEASING TO THE LORD

The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the Lord said:

"I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth — men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air — for I am grieved that I have made them."

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord (Gen 5:32-8:9).



Beloved, God's Son and His Holy Spirit are interceding and working in your behalf that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers because of the Truth that is already in you (3 John 1-3 NKJV). 1 Cor. 2:9 tells us, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him," who trust Him as a child should be able to trust a parent.

It's not an easy ask for an adult who has gone through so many different phases of life to think of themselves as a child. Honestly, we are much more inclined to think and feel and even sing we are a friend of Jesus. The interesting thing Jesus called Judas who betrayed Him, friend (Matt. 26:50). In Isa. 55:8 God assures us:

“My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways  
My ways.”



In many ways we conduct our adult affairs and behaviors with a litany of “do’s” and “don’ts” some of which have been given governing privileges since childhood. When we come to God we are agreeing to give His Word governing privileges in our life. We ask God to forgive our sins, but continue to do the same things over and over again.

God asks us to repent, which not only means we regret our sins, but we are willing to think differently, to change our mind and also change our conduct.

The words we use to form our thoughts, opinions and beliefs are affected and altered by the swaying of our feelings. Unfortunately,

many of us have discovered the hard way that feelings and beliefs are not fact. They are tainted by error and inaccuracy and misconception.

Our feelings and beliefs reveal what we believe to be true and accurate or what we may want to believe. God's Word of Truth is not swayed by our feelings or opinions or beliefs. Thankfully for the sake of our eternal being, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb. 13:8).



Can't you see that God's loving-kindness is intended to turn you from your sin? When you say others are wicked and should be punished, you are condemning yourself, for you who judge practice the same things. Since you judge others for their sins, why do you think you can avoid God's justice when you too are doing sinful things (Rom. 2:1-4 NLT)?

The practices of pride are to be critical and judgmental when there are differences in opinions and behaviors...; also it is to be controlling and manipulative. We attempt to change someone instead of accepting our differences. As a result, anger, hostility, bitterness, unforgiveness,

prejudice....flourish the enemy's work – to kill, steal and destroy – would be done.

A prideful nature wants to be served, which forces us into the slavery of desire so we'll think and say and do what is not only wrong but also harmful to ourselves and those around us. Jesus revealed a godly nature is to love. He said:

“The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Whoever will be great among you, let them be your minister.”

Matt. 23:26&28 KJV

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14)? Whosoever will be chief among you, let them be your servant (Matt. 20:27). For anyone who becomes as humble (compliant, deferential, yielding to God's Word) like a child, is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 18:4).

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Jesus said:

“I no longer refer to you as servants, because a servant does not know their master’s business. I call you friends for everything that I learned from My Father I have made known to you.”

John 15:15

However, in vs 14 He stipulates:

“You are My friends if you do what I command.”

instruct, order, demand



However, it wasn’t until I was able to truly understand how essential this relationship I shared with God as Father and child before I could recognize and understand my guilt for usurping (misusing, infringing, trespassing) authority.

Seeing myself as a child – learning, growing, trusting – His love was being offered so differently – unconditionally - I didn’t have to earn God’s love. I just had to be me and be willing to be taught (Prov. 12:1 TLB).

To be willing to learn about God and His Word and His will so I could truly know and understand Love. Being willing to learn what is pleasing to the Lord, and allowing experience to unfold (emerge, grow, blossom) so my life could make evident (Eph. 5:10 AMP) my respect and awe and reverence for God and His Word.



Viewing myself as a child actually freed me from what performance requires by: Believing what God freely gives should be freely given by myself and others; instead of believing acceptance, validation and love must be earned. I could give myself permission to be flawed, and forgive myself when mistaken. I could stop trying to attain the unattainable - perfection.

Prov. 22:15 tells us a child's heart is filled with foolishness, but correction and discipline will drive it far away. Foolishness is not the only thing bound up in a heart so too is defiance and rebellion. How quickly a child learns to say "No."

What we consider mistakes and misjudgments God calls sin for they each mean we missed the bull's eye of Perfection. Everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard (Rom. 3:23 NLT) to

freely give love, kindness, understanding...as we have freely received  
(Matt. 10:8)

For then we can be freed from the pressure and constraint of perfectionism. We can't avoid making mistakes, nor can we avoid consequence. But why become angered when consequence works to help establish within us a moral compass – the ability to discern and judge what is right and wrong and act accordingly.

When we acknowledge we are guilty of acting no better than children, by telling God, “No! I'd rather do it my way!” then we should also be prepared because sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for (Gen. 4:7) each person to do whatever they determine to be right so sin can not only master (best, win against, but also dispatch) frustration, anger and confusion.

If we take a closer look at the word dispatch we discover its essential meaning is:

1. to send (someone or something) quickly to a particular place for a particular purpose
2. to defeat (a person or team) in a game, contest. etc...
3. old-fashioned: to kill (a person or animal) quickly

A few synonyms for dispatch are: export, import, render, take, destroy, murder, suicide, upend, overpower, notice, word....



Sadly, this world has been corrupted by evil so it cannot be avoided, but it should never be embraced for deception and fear, guilt and shame are always working to remove Good from everyone. In many cases partiality is shown to appease (disarm, please, pacify) because unlike Truth people are swayed by rank and status and privilege.

1 Sam. 16:7 tells us, "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

In the Garden of Eden though God's Word was heard the depth of meaning (signifying, pointing to, telling of) could not be fully understood. God's intent was to send His Word, His Son, for this purpose to reveal His love for the world (John 3:16), to destroy the devil's work, and to expose those who do what is sinful for they are of the devil. No one who is born of God will continue to sin (1 John 3:8-9).





God's Word always works to reveal the Father (Creator, YHWH, Godhead) and His intent and purpose. Yes, in the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God, and the Word is God (John 1:1). The Word of Life, Who already existed with the Father was made visible (was revealed, made manifest, demonstrated) God's love and concern for the welfare of our physical and spiritual beings.

If relationship and fellowship with the Father and with His Son is desired, which is the distinguishing mark of Christians (1 John 1:1-3 AMP), God's Word must be given access to our soul so the Word, Christ Jesus and all the riches of His wisdom, can have a home in our heart and mind (Col. 3:16).

Yes, sin separated our natural from God's super; however, throughout time God has been supernaturally and miraculously working in our behalf to reunite us to Himself through His Word. In that garden, though God's Word was clearly spoken, all the depth of meaning has yet to be revealed regarding the enmity that has been set between Good and Evil and which was placed between the devil and the woman's Seed (Gen. 3:15).

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Literally the woman God spoke of was Eve. Figuratively speaking this woman was meant to reveal the enmity between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness. In the Book of Revelation chapter twelve we are told of an enormous red dragon that appeared in the heavens. His tail swept a third of the stars (fallen angels) out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman (Israel) who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.

She gave birth to a Son, a male child, who will rule the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to His throne. The woman (Israel) fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days (Rev. 12:3-6).



The woman also speaks of the great city that rules over the kings of the earth. "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for unclean and detestable birds. All the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed (spiritual) adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries."

“Come out of her, My people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues, for her sins are piled up to heaven and God has remembered her crimes. He will give back to her as she has given. He will pay her back double for what she has done. She will be given as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, “I sit as queen, I am not a widow and I will never mourn.”

“Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her; Death, Mourning and Famine. She will be consumed by fire for mighty is the Lord God Who judges her.”

Rev. 17:18-18:10



Fortunately for mankind, the Lord does not change (Mal. 3:6). He Who is the Glory of Israel, Who does not lie or change His mind, for He is not a human being, that He should change His mind (1 Sam. 15:29). How bittersweet to truly realize God does not want anyone to perish (2 Peter 3:9). From the beginning He revealed the power and authority of the woman’s Seed:

“He will strike your head, and you will strike His heel.”

Gen. 3:15b

Deception caused mankind to be exiled from that paradise on earth, but El Emeth, the Lord God of Truth, will once again give to those who overcome the right to eat from the Tree of Life, which is in the paradise of God (Rev. 2:7). Jesus said:

“When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to Myself. Yes, My heart is troubled, Father, save Me from this hour. No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Now is the time for judgment on this world, the sentence is now being passed. Now the prince of this world will be driven out. Father, glorify Your name, Elohim!”

John 12:27-31



By this name, Elohim, God revealed Himself – bringing cosmos out of chaos, light out of darkness, habitation out of desolation, and life in His image. Elohim, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, having absolute power and authority established His covenant to be with

mankind in relationship (from Names of God by the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago). In essence a covenant is an agreement, but an agreement of a solemn and binding force (from International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Electronic Database of Biblesoft).

An agreement of solemn and binding force made between God and those individuals who acknowledge God's Word is my strength. Into Your hand Lord I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, El Emeth, O Lord God of Truth (Ps. 31:4-5 KJV).



Those who have placed their faith in - Him Who is holy, in Him Who is true, in Him Who has the key of David. For what He opens, no one can shut, and what He shuts, no one can open.

The Lord knows our works and has set before us an open door, that no one can shut it. He knows the little strength we have, but anyone who chooses to enter will keep (celebrate, honor, treasure) God's Word, and not deny the name of Jesus (Rev. 3:7-9). For Christ makes us kings and priests to exalt Truth upon earth, and gives entrance into His Kingdom for the glory of God the Father.

Those of us who desire grace and peace from the One, Who is, and was, and is to come; and revelation from the seven-fold Spirit before His throne; and Truth from the Father, Who so mercifully bestows Life to the world. To those who profess Jesus the first to rise from death, to die no more; who give praise and worship Him whose love flows as freely as His lifeblood that freed us from sin. Yes, to those who give to Him, Who rules forever all glory in every circumstance for this is truly everlasting (Rev. 1:4-6 TLB) freedom.



Surely, those who love to destroy others not only with their words but also with their acts of violence are kin to the father of all liars, and God will bring them down to everlasting ruin (Ps. 52:4-5 NLT).

They displease God with their hostility and dishonesty. All the ways they practice oppression and extortion causes their sins always to be heaped up to the limit, and the wrath of God is destined to come upon them (1 Thess. 2:15). They are both spiritually dull and indifferent; unable or unwilling to see the glory of the One and Only, Who came from the Father full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

If only these betrayers of God's Son and the words of Truth could be hauled off alive to hell so they could experience the horror, and feel every desolate detail of a damned life (Ps. 55:15 Message).

That they would realize when the ground soaks up the failing rain and bears good crops for the farmer, it has God's blessing. But, if a field bears thorns and thistles, it is useless. The farmer will soon condemn that field and burn it. Those who plot and plan and sow wickedness and injustice will harvest disaster, and their reign of terror will certainly come to an end (Prov. 22:8).



God is not unjust. His intentions are for the world to know all people are meant for better things, things that come with salvation (Heb. 6:9-10 NLT). Sadly, there are people like those who plotted to arrest Jesus, and in some sly way kill Him (Matt. 26:4). For they have turned against God to nail His Son to the cross once again holding Him up to mocking and public shame (Heb. 6:6 TLB).

However, God turns the sins of evil people back on them. For their own sins they are destroyed (Ps. 94:23 NLT). Yes, the ones who cause deceit to prosper whose voices are heard crowing.

Many flaunt their voices like those treacherous spies who continued to question the message Christ was sharing, “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that You do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the Truth,” Luke 20:21.

Their eyes saw and their mouths professed but their hearts were much too calloused by self-interest that God’s Truth and His Grace could not be perceived. Yes, there continue to be people who care nothing for what the Lord has done or for what His hands have made (NLT). God will smash them to smithereens and walk away from the ruins (Ps. 28:5 Message).



All things are possible with God! Nothing is impossible with Him (Mark 10:27)! For man, pride and self-interest, arrogance and defiance make it impossible for us to follow Christ’s example, and receive the inheritance God promises, which comes only by faith (Heb. 6:12 NLT) not will-power, by endurance not muscle, by steadfastness not complacency.



God gave His Word life in a human form so every other human being could be born again into this Life He sent from heaven. All honor and glory to God for His boundless mercy has given us the privilege of becoming members of His family. Every single person can receive this hope of living the newness of Life here on earth, and a glorious life in heaven because the power of sin nor fear nor death could not prevent Christ Jesus from rising to give all glory to His Father (1 Peter 1:3 TLB).

As it is said of growing old, "It's definitely not for wimps." However, neither is living a "Christ-like" life - a Christian. People who are committed in giving not just their voice, but thought to finance action honoring and exalting, trusting and glorifying the Way of love, for God is Love (1 John 4:8).



Being a Christian is to deny a heart that has been cursed to serve self-interest by refusing to follow its self-centered desires. To be a Christian is to do as Jesus did stand upright and open your eyes, your ears, your heart and your arms to receive. For in every situation that is encountered God will provide exactly what is needed.

So at any time, in any place we can release the power and authority of God's Word so we will not be bent on doing what is harmful to self and others; instead, we can stand upright with arms open, ready and willing to receive from God.

Take a moment and consider what we look like standing upright with arms reaching out not only to God but to others - the shape of a cross is formed. A Christian is meant to take up our cross of flesh and bone and follow the Life, the Truth and the Way to see God's will accomplishing good in us and through our lives right here, right now on earth.

I can't think of anything more challenging then denying self of what is deemed as pleasure. But, it is difficult to express with words how rewarding, how fulfilling it is to know the One whose pleasure it is to bestow Good into our lives.



Yes, it would be impossible for us to die to self. For what dies - the resolutions that are made - not the bad we would like stopped. When our goals are to be reached by self-determination, then we are

powerless to exceed the limits set by our own thoughts and feelings and beliefs.

However, if the decision is made to reach the exceedingly abundant limits that self-sacrifice can reach, then all that fear produces will be abolished by the Love and Power and Wisdom that Father and Holy Spirit and Christ Jesus give to us.

When Truth is given time and opportunity to help us think and feel different about the ways of God, then Holy Spirit will give us what we need to do what Jesus says:

“Don’t follow the ways that are determined and plotted by self. Take up your cross and follow Me. Whoever wants to save their life will lose it. But, whoever loses interest in selfish desires so My interests can be discovered will find new life in Me, God’s Word.”

“Truly consider what can someone give in exchange for their soul? What good would it be if the whole world is gained, yet a soul is forfeited as a result? For the Son of Man is going

to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and then each person will be rewarded according to what they have done."

"Anyone who does not carry their cross and follow Me cannot be My disciples. I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was Your good pleasure."

"ALL things have been committed to Me by My Father! No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him to."

"Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the Truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Matt. 16:24-28, Luke 14:27, Matt. 11:25-27, Mark 10:14-15



How difficult, but certainly not impossible for an adult to view themselves as a trusting, care-free child! For this is what would please God, that we cast our cares on the Lord so He can sustain us! He will never let the righteous fall (Ps. 55:22) into that waterless pit. For God has given us His Word:

“My sheep listen to My voice! I know them and they follow Me! I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish. No one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all! No one can snatch them out of My Father’s hand. I and the Father are one!”

John 10:27-30

So do as Jesus says, and cast all your anxiety onto Him because He cares for you! Are you willing to humble yourself under God’s mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time (1 Pet. 5:6-8)? If you are willing, Holy Spirit will help you to be self-controlled, to keep the breastplate of faith and love covering your heart and the hope of salvation as a helmet protecting your head (1 Thess. 5:8-9).

For though we live in this world, we do not wage war as the world does! The weapons we fight with are not weapons of this world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. We take every thought captive to make it obedient to the Word of God, Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 10:306). For in the Son of Man all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form (Col. 2:9).



Holy Spirit is making us prepared and ready to punish every act of disobedience. But, first we must be willing to learn through obedience so our faith and trust, hope and love for God and His Word can be built up so we each would completely mature as we grow into the full stature of a son of God.

Through obedience to God's Word the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with Christ forever (1 Thess. 4:16-18)! So whatever you do, do it for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31)



Your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold, so if it remains strong after being tested in the test tube of fiery trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day of Christ's return. Though not seeing Him, you trust Him, and are happy with the inexpressible joy that comes from heaven itself, for trusting Him will be the salvation of your soul.

This salvation was something the prophets did not fully understand. Though they wrote about it, they had many questions as to what it all could mean. They wondered what Holy Spirit within them was talking about, for He told them to write down the events which, since then, have happened to Christ, His suffering and His great glory afterwards. They wondered when and to whom all this would happen.

They were finally told these things would not occur during their lifetime, but long years later, during ours. Now at last this Good News

has been plainly announced. It was preached to us in the power of the same heaven-sent Holy Spirit Who spoke to the prophets of old. It is all so strange and wonderful that even the angels in heaven would give a great deal to know more about it.

Now you can look forward soberly and intelligently to more of God's kindness to you when Jesus Christ returns. So search God's Word of Truth and strain for obedience because you are His children (1 Peter 1:2-14 TLB).



And as God's children, we should no longer be conforming to the pattern and behavior of this world (Rom. 12:2a). Those of us who profess Jesus to be our Savior should no longer be living as though we are dead in our transgressions and sins. We should continually be stamping out this kind of living following the ways of this world and the prince of the kingdom of air.

Those of us who profess Jesus to be our Lord have been given the authority of His name to trample snakes and scorpions, those cohorts of the devil that work to fill us with their poisonous venoms – hatred, rage, prejudice, greed, jealousy, covetousness...



Jesus has given all of Himself - the entirety of God's Word - so we can learn and train and overcome the enemy instead of being overcome - defeated, knocked over, mastered, overwhelmed, subdued, stopped...



Satan roams throughout the earth going back and forth in it (Job 1:70) like a roaring lion. The devil is the enemy of God and mankind, for we are God's creations, and Satan will never cease prowling around looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8-9).

His is the same spirit working in those who are living to gratify the cravings of their sinful nature and following its desires and its thinking (Eph. 2:2).

In this Scripture Ex. 9:16-17 we are told that God raised up Pharaoh for this very purpose: That He might show people His power and that His name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Yet, because of what pride can produce within a soul - complacency, conceit, egotism, pomposity, self-admiration, self-assumption, self-glory, self-importance, self-opinion, smugness, vanity...- we too like

Pharaoh not only set our opinions and feelings and beliefs against people, but also against God, refusing to let them go and finding ourselves fighting against God's Word (Acts 5:39).



Who is it you have insulted and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice, and lifted your eyes in pride? Against the Holy One of Israel! (2 Kings 19:22). What is it about pride that produces this need to be right even when upset and anger and turmoil make it blatantly obvious something is dreadfully wrong – a feeling, an opinion, a belief?

You may think dreadful is too strong a descriptive word until you consider its implications, sparked by thoughts and feelings that are – unwanted, distressing, disturbing, unspeakable, horrifying, dismaying, demoralizing, unwholesome, nightmarish, terrible, hateful, undesirable, objectionable, unpleasant, ungodly... Dreadful is a manifestation of fear, and fear is responsible for producing attitudes, beliefs and behaviors to manifest in us.

The vast number of fear-filled and anxiety-ridden disorders are not only daunting – unsettling, disheartening, dispiriting, unmanaging,

afflicting, weighing, depressing... - they are undermining – corrosive, crushing, devastating, weakening, bashing, tearing- us down...

They drain God’s people of power. They dismay and put to shame those who God’s Word describes as plants in the field, tender green shoots, grass sprouting on a roof that is scorched before it grows up.



It isn’t just to Satan that God says:

“I know where you stay and when you come and go and how you rage against Me.”

It is also to those like the king of Assyria, Sennacherib, who follow the dictates of the world. They will not only hear God say:

“Because you rage against Me, and your insolence has reached My ears;”

They too will experience God putting His hook in their nose and His bit in their mouth. He will make them return by the way they came.

FYI: Sennacherib was forced to return to his kingdom, and while he

was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons killed him with the sword, and they were forced to flee their father's kingdom (2 Kings 19:23-28&37).



LET US PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES FOR TAKING  
STEPS TOWARD RENEWAL AND RECOVERY  
TO BE MORE GOD-DEPENDENT NOT  
CO-DEPENDENT

- The first key is to maintaining 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 at taking steps of faith
  - God exists and I matter to Him
  - We admit we are powerless
  - We admit in certain areas our lives have become unmanageable
  - We believe God will restore us with Love, a Sound Mind and Power
  - We believe He will help us stay committed to this decision to put all of who we are into His possession and safekeeping

- We believe the Word of God will encourage, support and strengthen us as we make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves
- Because of God's loving-kindness we are willing to admit to God, to ourselves and another person the exact nature of our wrongs
- With Truth as our solid foundation we are entirely ready to have God remove all our defects of character
- Having received faith and hope and love for the Surety God has given we humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings
- Having gained knowledge and insight and understanding we make a list of anyone we have harmed, and become willing to make an amends to them all
- Having gained confidence and trust in God's refuge we step out with the mindset we are doing this with God and for His glory to make those amends whenever possible unless to do so would cause injury to others
- We embrace our covenant relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by continuing to take a personal moral inventory, and when we are wrong being prompt to admit it
- We invest in our relationship with God by communicating through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious

contact with Him seeking knowledge of His will and the power of grace to carry that out

- We seek Revival, Restoration and Reconciliation a spiritual awakening as a result of taking steps to carry God's message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs



From the beginning God gave His Word, which will accomplish what He desires and achieve the purpose for which He sent it (Isa. 55:11). God's patient restraint must be interpreted for what it is – Salvation (2 Peter 3:15 Message). For the Lord God said:

“Look, the human beings have become like one of us, knowing good and evil. They must not be allowed to reach out their hand and take also from the Tree of Life, and live forever”

God banished them from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which they had been taken (Gen. 3:22-23). Unfortunately for mankind, the war that broke out in heaven against the dragon and his hosts of fallen angels (Rev. 12:7 TLB) was given opportunity to also be declared upon the earth. Simply because God's Word was not properly

esteemed, hostility rages between that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan and the woman and her offspring (Gen. 3:15a).



When God's Word was doubted maybe even disbelieved the consequence was for enmity to be set between evil and everything God declared to be good upon the earth.

Evil caused mankind to suffer and endure both the effects and affect of change (distortion, displacement, wavering). To effect (mastery, mark, influence) change, Satan's initial assaults were spiritual. With words of cunning (sneaky, deceitful, treacherous) He succeeded to alter the meaning (intention, objective, purpose) of Truth. Soon they were to discover just how miserably putrid and bitter the taste of evil.

Since the significance (importance, weightiness, essentialness) of Truth was improperly discerned, and God's Word was incorrectly handled (kept, treated, served) the holistic affect change had on this couple became immediately apparent.

Though they literally lived and walked and talked with God, they hid in fear and shame and guilt because their disregard (neglect, dismissal, slight) of Truth was blatantly exposed, for God asked:

“Who told you that you were naked?”

Gen. 3:11



Because God is Spirit (John 4:24) the most integral part of our being was spiritual. Disobedience (disrespect, defiance, perversity) had a tremendous ramification (aftereffect, outcome, development) because the innocence (uprightness, simplicity, openness) we shared with God was forfeited, when soulish and fleshly desires gained preeminence.

God always sought relationship with mankind through His Word. And, the desire He wishes to accomplish and the purpose He intends to achieve has spanned throughout the centuries and into the homes of many generations. God’s Word provides us with historical and theological meaning because God is concerned with both our physical and spiritual well-being.





The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of Truth (Deut. 29:29). In God's Word, Christ Jesus, are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:2-3).

God's Word (pledge, covenant, promise) has been freely given to us for thousands of years. However, if the decision is made to cry out for insight and to ask for understanding of God's Word, and the choice is made to search for them as you would for silver, and seek them like hidden treasure the pledges and covenants and promises of God will not only be seen with your eyes, God's intent and His purpose will be made heartfelt.

For you will understand what it means to fear (awe, reverence, revere) the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God. For the Lord grants wisdom! From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest. He is a shield to those who walk with integrity. He guards the paths of the just, and protects those who are faithful to Him, God's Word of Truth (Prov. 2:3-8 NLT).



Sadly, in many cases, the repercussions we suffer as a result of horrendous experiences that were so far out of our control they cause fear and anger and vengeance to gain much more prominence than thoughts of God and feeling the need to draw closer to Him. Hostility (bitterness, spite, loathing, discord) erupts within our soul. Though I knew God's Word, I was swamped with uncontrollable thoughts which resulted in PTSD coming upon me.

I couldn't stop the thoughts that made me feel as though I was losing my identity and definitely my footing. The hostility that erupted in my thinking turned inward to war against me. Negativity didn't just swamp my soul it caused the soil of my core, those beliefs and opinions and feelings that made up who I thought I was, to become as quicksand by engulfing me in anxiety and self-doubt and what seemed an unsurmountable sense of powerlessness.



Though trauma caused me to question myself and the things I did without thinking, it also brought about a sense of being inferior, incompetent and needy. And if this wasn't bad enough, it stirred up a constant nagging of beliefs not being good enough, not doing enough, not feeling loved... that have troubled me since childhood.

For two and half years the emotional upheaval of trauma adversely affected my days with hypersensitivity, anxiety, the ongoing struggle to avoid conflict and oh so many unwanted memories. Memories not only pertaining to what had currently happened, but a life-time of past events.

Countless times I lost that internal struggle to avoid conflict. Like a switch being flicked or button being pushed, my behavior would be charged with aggression and compulsion. I couldn't prevent myself from reacting, and there wasn't a switch or button to push to stop my bizarre behavior it just played out.

Unless PTSD is experienced it is impossible to image what it's like to view yourself and life as being normal, and then at a finger's snap being unable to extricate yourself from a circuit of behavior that is resolutely proving a point that couldn't be refuted by denial - something was terribly wrong with me.



Yes, bad things happen. Things many of us never deserved - happen. The reason I decided to write about God and His Word, Christ Jesus.

Codependency, People-Pleasing and Emotional Trauma they have an impact and in undiscernible ways affect our lives. I write with the sincere hope that what is being read will effectively reveal a need for change, instead of any sort of undesirable experience proving there is a need for change.

I wouldn't wish what I went through on anyone. Sadly, it was the only way for me to see and understand the conditioning (adapting, conforming, patterning) humanity does to accommodate evil, that not only endangers our very lives but also our relationships.

I have learned:

- Not everyone would be classified as being codependent; however, everyone has traits that need attention and transformation. For there are patterns (inclinations, habits, practices) of codependency - denial, self-esteem, compliance, control and avoidance – in which we participate.  
<https://coda.org/meeting-materials/patterns-and-characteristics-2011/>
- You may think, as I once did, being a people pleaser makes you a “good” person and is perhaps even a generous or loving way to

be. Nope. It's selfish to be a people pleaser. Why? Because being attached to pleasing others is really about you.

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-being-a-people-pleaser-is-selfish\\_b\\_598fc39de4b0caa1687a60d0](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-being-a-people-pleaser-is-selfish_b_598fc39de4b0caa1687a60d0)

- Emotional and psychological trauma is the result of extraordinarily stressful events that shatter your sense of security, making you feel helpless in a dangerous world. Psychological trauma can leave you struggling with upsetting emotions, memories, and anxiety that won't go away. It can also leave you feeling numb, disconnected, and unable to trust other people. Experiencing trauma in childhood can result in a severe and long-lasting effect. When childhood trauma is not resolved, a sense of fear and helplessness carries over into adulthood, setting the stage for further trauma.

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/coping-with-emotional-and-psychological-trauma.htm>



Love not only helps us cope with our struggles in this fallen, evil world, Love heals the inner wounds by helping us to reconcile the turmoil of our thoughts and emotions with His amazing grace. God is Love, and He helps us to see ourselves as we are seen by Him. Love

laid down His life so we could pick ourselves up, and not only continue living but to once again enjoy day-to-day life. Love gives us the ability to recover and be renewed and to share our testimony of His loving-kindness with others.

Love works to cast out the evil forces of negativity until we truly believe through Jesus we receive truth and faith and hope and strength and encouragement to know with our knower, and believe with all our heart God is for us, He is not condemning us. We can leave the past in the past. Yes, there are things we have done, and things that have been done to us that were not right or fair, but we must be able to look beyond so Good can be seen, but most importantly received.



The problem is we get stuck in our learned behaviors and trapped in worldly opinion. And, since the Garden of Eden we have learned to judge and complain, accuse and shift blame onto others and onto God. Fear, anger, shame, a conscience plagued with guilt, regret and sorrow...work to keep our focus on what circumvents and confuses.

“All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees (soft-spots, Achilles’ heel, undoing) of things; all truth with malice in it; all

that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle (heinous, cruel, immoral) demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified, and made practically assailable in Moby Dick. He piled upon the whale's white hump the sum of all the general rage and hate felt by his whole race from Adam down; and then, as if his chest had been a mortar, he burst his hot heart's shell upon it," quote by Herman Melville, Moby Dick or The White Whale.

Who or what has been the "White Whale" our heated emotions have burst upon? What causes the trigger to be so quickly pulled as evidenced by the rage that is let loose on our roads? Uncertainty! And the build-up of what lies in the underbelly of uncertainty: doubt, disbelief, mistrust, remorse, reluctance, unwillingness, unease, objection, questioning:

- How could?
- What purpose?
- Could've?
- Should've?
- Why?

Unanswerable! What lies behind cannot be altered, only worsened when we attempt to justify or reconcile Evil with the good we think we are and the truth we think we possess. In despair and desperation the spirit of mankind ridicules, criticizes and condemns, while the grace and mercy and ability to forgive is what God's Spirit of Truth bestows.

God's Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, Who came from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of Life.

The Life appeared! We have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us here on earth. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Christ Jesus. We write this to make our joy complete (1 John 1:1-4).

~



We write so the grace and mercy and peace from God, the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be received so the Truth and Love that is with us (2 John 3) can also be with you. For though you have not seen God (1 Pet. 1:8a), He has spoken to us through His Word, His Son (Heb. 1:2a).

And, even though you do not see Him now, through His Word you can come to believe in Him, and be filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for receiving the goal of this faith given to us by the Father – the salvation of our soul (1 Pet. 1:8b-9)!

Holy Spirit breathes life into a spirit pride has deadened. God's Spirit of Grace works within to wash our conscience with the living water of God's Word until shame and guilt, regret and remorse erode away. God gives us His Word and His Spirit to revive and resurrect our spirit. God's desire that we be filled with His hope when the unique and very special Message He sent from heaven is received:

*“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. So look for you too can be radiant! Your heart will throb and swell with joy!”

“Through His Word, Christ Jesus, God made the whole world. And, He has chosen His Son to have all things. The Son shows the glory of God. He is a perfect copy of God’s nature, and God holds everything together by the power of His Word.”

“The Son made mankind clean from their sins. Then He sat down at the right side of His Father, the Great One in heaven. The Son became greater than the angels, and God gave to Him a name that is much greater than any other.”

“But, mankind continues to behave more wickedly than their fathers. See! For those who are following the stubbornness of their evil heart instead of My Word are quite apparent.”

“Scoundrels and villains that go about with corrupt mouths, who wink with their eye, signal with their feet, and motion

with their fingers always stirring up dissension. Their plots are evil for deceit is in their heart.”

“How long will wicked thoughts be harbored? Wash the evil from your heart and be saved! The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart! I test the mind to give every person according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.”

Isa. 60:1-3, Heb. 1:2-4 ERV, Jer. 16:12, Prov. 6:12-14, Jer. 4:14, Jer. 17:0-10 NKJV



Think for a moment what does evil accomplish by wielding fear and deception but to corrupt the Truth with malice. Why? To corrupt our soul with the underworld of malice: hatred, grudge, disdain, bitterness, resentment, vengefulness, jealousy, spitefulness, cruelty, contempt. Along with hostility, revulsion, rancor, malignancy, abusiveness, ill-will to Truth, to Good, to Authority so not only are our eyes and ears closed, but our backs are turned to God’s Word.

How then can Truth be known? How can the call of the Lord be received? Have you answered His call?

“Think! How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come.”

“In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house. I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of the people will be forgiven them. But, whoever blasphemes against Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, for their guilty of an eternal sin!”

“Whoever knows God listens to His Word. Whoever is not from God does not listen to gain knowledge of His Word. This is how the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of falsehood is recognized.”

“Love comes from God! This is how God showed His love among the people: He sent His one and only Son into the world that you might live through Him. This is Love: Not

that you loved God. But, that He loved you and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for your sins.”

Mark 3:23-24



When emotions are allowed to run wild, how can we not be misdirected? How can mistakes and misjudgments be rectified? They can't, they can only be forgiven! Forgiveness is not forgetting because lessons must be learned. But, of this you can be certain, the enemy will ensure they're learned the hard way. And sadly, repeated over and over because our aversion to Truth includes what is revealed about self.

Forgiveness is not about removing consequence, because consequence requires a personal payment. When Truth was rejected and the lie consumed, what consumed mankind became quite evident. The prince of pride rose within that garden to defend and protect self. The fear (awe, respect, honor) of the Lord, replaced by fear of the unknown and anger, which arose to criticize and condemn, to justify himself with fingers pointing at another who made me do it and at our Creator.

Those words that led to these actions covered God's blessings with the curse of deception – denial, avoidance, rationalization, blaming....



The following PATTERNS OF DENIAL were developed by Terrence Gorski N.C.A.C. II, C.S.A.C and the CENAPS Corp. with regard to Denial Management Counseling:

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

<http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/Curriculum/309%20Drug%20and%20Alcohol%20Issues/Handouts/HO%2023%20The%20Dnl%20Ptrns.pdf>



So many bad habits and behaviors have developed, causing it to be difficult if not impossible for the Truth and Goodness and the Authority of our Creator to be acknowledged, let alone received.

Why? There's a mountain of words. Opinions, believes, perspectives, points-of-view, attitudes, personality and character defects have developed that can no longer be circumvented or avoided or ignored. That prideful stance must be moved into the realms where only an open mind can gain entrance! God's Word of Truth asks us to think, to consider:

“Having faith in God, for I tell you the Truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart, but instead, believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them.”

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And, when you stand praying, IF you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

“I have listened carefully, but from so many I have heard not so much as a whisper. Not one word of regret has been expressed. Not a single ‘I’m sorry’ did I hear. They just keep at it, blindly and stupidly banging their heads against that brick wall – the stubborn walls they’ve erected with what their thinking and how they feel.”

“Cranes know when it’s time to move south for the winter. Robins and bluebirds know when it’s time to come back again. But these people, My people know nothing, not the first thing of God and His rule.”

“How can they say, ‘We know the score, we’re the proud owners of God’s revelation?’ Look where’s it gotten so many of them – stuck in illusion. Their religion experts have taken them for a ride! Those know-it-alls will be unmasked, caught and shown up for what they are.”

“Look at them! They know everything but God’s Word. Do you call that ‘knowing’?”

Matt. 11:22-25, Jer. 8:6-10 Message,





How powerful God's gift of forgiveness. How essential to our well-being, our peace of heart and mind to find the willingness to forgive. Not to forget! Not to excuse or minimize what occurred! Instead, to be released from the underbelly of malice!

One of the synonyms for malice – malignancy! However, these too have similar meaning – bile, jaundice, distaste. Being deceived, deceiving ourselves with denial, avoidance, minimizing, rationalizing, projecting, comparing, blaming affects our internal being with both physical and spiritual ramifications.

When food is eaten what is unhealthy for the body will be excreted. When deception has been consumed there is no protection for our body, for our soul; and unfortunately, for those bodies around us when what is excreted has been emotionally charged by what is malice.

Knowledge of God's Word gives us new perspectives, a new way to think about ourselves, about the world we live in and about God and the world He offers us to partake of and in, right now, right here on

earth, which is most important for His peace to be secured within our soul.



We can consider, we can learn, we can refrain from engaging in thoughts and behaviors that reveal our participation in the world's cycle of mistreatment and abuse. If you're willing to look up and reach out to God – you will receive His Word and the resurrection power of His Holy Spirit to look within so you can rise above adversity as new perspectives are being gained. We can be made free for Truth and Grace and God's loving-kindness is found within His Word.

We no longer have to allow ourselves to be brought down by malice, by animosity and enmity. Instead, we can learn to soar on eagle's wings to heights where Grace and Hope and Forgiveness help us reach. That is, when the call of Holy Spirit is not only heard but answered by a willing heart ready to receive the Truth:

“No one has seen God, but if you love – honor, respect, appreciate – one another, God lives in you and His love is made complete in you. Holy Spirit is given so you know God is living in you and you are living in Him!”

“Anyone who acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so you can know and rely on the love God has for you. In this way, Love is made complete among Christians so that you will have confidence now and on the Day of Judgment, because in the world in which you live you have chosen to be like Christ.”

“God has given this command: Whoever loves Him must share Love - kindness, patience, goodness, faithfulness, thoughtfulness...with others.”

1 John 4:4-21



The most amazing realization I've had of God, though I studied Scripture for years, when I couldn't prevent life from turning me and my world upside, God's Word, Christ Jesus, continued to support and protect me from the thoughts and opinions that negativity uses to destroy our view of the hope and faith and love we've placed in others and ourselves and most definitely where is it most needed to be placed - in God.

What I discovered, if my hope and faith and love had been placed securely in God from the get-go, my feelings may get hurt, but my heart would not be able to tear me down and try to break me. Being codependent instead of God dependent causes us to seek strength and support from flesh that is made weak by what seems and looks and feels good to self.

How can we receive true comfort and relief from what is totally opposed to what Good intends for us? Instead of knowing Who is Good, we allow ourselves to be duped by our personal views of what is good. God's Word said:

“The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with the many generations and condemn them; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the godly-wisdom of Solomon, and now One greater than Solomon is speaking.”

“How long will the simple ones love their simply ways?  
How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? If they would respond to My rebuke, I would pour out My heart to them, and make My thoughts known to them.”

“Instead they reject My call, and give no heed to My outstretched hand. They ignore My advice, and will not accept My rebuke so disaster and calamity shall overtake them. Like a storm, calamity will overtake them. Like a whirlwind, disaster will sweep over them. They will be overwhelmed by the distress and trouble their evil ways produce.”

“Yes, disaster has been prepared for them. A plan has been formed against them. Heed My warning and turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform you ways and your actions. Sadly, many will reply, ‘It’s no use. We will continue with our own plans; each of us will follow the stubbornness of our evil heart.’”

“They reject the Truth can bring down any wall that they’ve erected. Therefore, disaster will overtake them in an instant they will suddenly be destroyed – without remedy.”

“For there are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to Him: Haughty eyes, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked

schemes, Feet that are quick to rush to evil, A false witness who pours out lies, and A person who stirs up dissension among their brethren.”

Matt. 12:42, Prov. 1:22-27, Jer. 18:11-12, Prov. 6:12-19

I pray this song “SHOULDERS” by Town and Country resonates in your heart:

[https://www.google.com/search?q=song+shoulders+town+and+country&rlz=1C1VFKB\\_enUS703US703&oq=SONG+SHOULDERS+TOWN&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j33i160l2.7251j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:9a080607,vid:TfiYWaeAcRw](https://www.google.com/search?q=song+shoulders+town+and+country&rlz=1C1VFKB_enUS703US703&oq=SONG+SHOULDERS+TOWN&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j33i160l2.7251j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:9a080607,vid:TfiYWaeAcRw)

I look up to the mountains  
Does my strength come from the mountains?  
No, my strength comes from God  
Who made heaven and earth, and the mountains  
  
When confusion's my companion  
And despair holds me for ransom  
I will feel no fear  
I know that You are near  
  
When I'm caught deep in the valley  
With chaos for my company  
I'll find my comfort here  
'Cause I know that You are near

My help comes from You  
You're right here, pulling me through  
You carry my weakness, my sickness, my brokenness  
All on Your shoulders

Your shoulders

My help comes from You  
You are my rest, my rescue  
I don't have to see to believe that  
You're lifting me up on Your shoulders  
Your shoulders

You mend what once was shattered  
And You turn my tears to laughter  
Your forgiveness is my fortress  
Oh, Your mercy is relentless

My help comes from You  
You're right here, pulling me through  
You carry my weakness, my sickness, my brokenness  
All on Your shoulders

Your shoulders

My help comes from You  
You are my rest, my rescue

I don't have to see to believe that  
You're lifting me up on Your shoulders  
Your shoulders

My help is from You

Don't have to see it to believe it

My help is from You

Don't have to see it, 'cause I know, 'cause I know it's true

My help is from You

Don't have to see it to believe it

My help is from You

Don't have to see it, 'cause I know, 'cause I know it's true

My help comes from You

You're right here, pulling me through

You carry my weakness, my sickness, my brokenness

All on Your shoulders

Your shoulders

My help comes from You

You are my rest, my rescue

I don't have to see to believe that

You're lifting me up on Your shoulders

Your shoulders





Earlier I shared we could be fully armed and prepared for battle by having knowledge of God's Word. I discovered the Truth and Power and Love that resides in God's Word had a tight hold on me even though life events seemed to have caused me to be groping in the darkness of uncertainty and confusion. God's Word has the power to sustain us because it is the Lord Who enables us to stand our ground even when it seems we've lost our footing.

We need to be in agreement with what the Lord says no matter how we may think or feel. This realization is astounding! This prideful nature that we possess causes us to fall, and not only causes evil to fall upon us, but kicks us when we're down. What could make matters worse, discovering we share a portion of accountability! This is a fallen world in which we reside! Without what is good- God given: Love, hope, encouragement, kindness, generosity... how would be able to get up again and continue to move forward.

Wherever your thinking may be taking you, stop! Take a few minutes and think of all the good you enjoy - a relationship, a friendship, food, activities, a certain smell that reminds you of good, a verse of

Scripture, a favorite flower, poem or song, an experience, a good idea, a kind word...think of these things. Remind yourself how Good makes you feel, then praise God for these are gifts from the Father of heavenly lights (James 1:17).

God is working within us. Through His mighty power, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think imaginable (Eph. 3:20 NLT). Yes, we must go through many hardships before the kingdom of God can be entered, but God's Word strengthens and encourages us to continue taking steps of faith (Acts. 14:22) because absolutely nothing worth having comes easy.



Beloved, you must not forget this one thing: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and the Lord can accomplish in a day what it would take a thousand years for man to do. The Lord isn't really being slow about His promise, as some people may think. No, He is being patient for our sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed; instead, He wants everyone to repent, to be saved.

For the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements

themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

And since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this (2 Peter 3:8-11 NLT) those who belong to Christ Jesus should be keeping in step with God's Holy Spirit, nailing the passions and desires of their sinful nature to His cross and crucifying them there.



We should be following the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives (Gal. 5:24-25 NLT), looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. For on that day, He will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames.

However, everyone with faith and hope and trust in God are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth He has promised, a world in which righteousness dwells. So remember, the Lord's patience gives people time to be saved (2 Peter 3:12-15 NLT).

Everyone must turn to God in repentance and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). For those who have fled to take hold of this hope offered to us can be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an

anchor for our soul, firm and secured (Heb. 6:18-19) in an immovable foundation of Truth, not on the fault-lines of self-opinion.



Let us cling to our hope that Holy Spirit will help us know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings (Phil. 3:10 NIV) to remain obedient to His Higher Power, the God of Israel. There are things we think are valuable, but instead should be considered worthless because of what Christ has done, and what God's Word is accomplishing within us.

Yes, everything else should be deemed worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing how good and pleasant the taste of Who Good is - Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior. For God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with Holy Spirit and power, and He went around doing good and healing not some but ALL who were under the power of the devil, because God was with Him (Acts 10:38).

For His sake all these things should be counted as garbage so that we can gain Christ and become one with Him. We should no longer be counting on our own righteousness or our good works; rather, we should be counting more and more on God Who makes us righteous

through our faith in Jesus. God's way of making us right with Himself depends on faith that is securely placed in everything Jesus has done not on anything we could do (Phil. 3:7-9 NLT).

Therefore, dear friends, don't be surprised at the painful trials you are suffering, as though something strange is happening to you. Instead, be glad - for these trials make us partners with Christ in His suffering, understanding we will have the wonderful joy of seeing His glory when it is revealed to the entire world (1 Peter 4:12-13 NLT).



Jesus couldn't do enough good for those who only desired to feel good instead of truly knowing the only one Who is Good (Matt. 9:17). So make every effort to not only remember but believe, if you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal or meddler. If you suffer as a Christian do not be ashamed (1 Peter 4:14-16); instead, praise God for the privilege of being called by Christ's name. The time of judgment has come, and it must begin with God's household.

If judgment begins with us, what terrible fate awaits those who have never obeyed God's Message. So if you are suffering in a manner that pleases God because of your faith in Jesus, keep on doing what is right, and trust your lives to the God Who created you, for He will never fail you (1 Peter 4:16-19 NLT).

For surely, we haven't learned all that we should; so let us keep on working toward that day when we will finally have that perfection that Christ saved us for and wants us to be.

Yes, we are still not all what we should be. So bring all your energies to bear on this one thing: Forget the past, and look forward to what lies ahead (Phil. 3:12-13 TLB) so you can experience the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3:11 NLT) in a life with Jesus right now, right here on earth.



Strain to reach the end of the race and receive this prize for which God is calling us upward to heaven because of what Jesus did for us. Take hold of this hope as mature Christians seeing eye-to-eye with God's Word of Truth.

However, if you do disagree on some point, God will make it plain to you – if you strain to obey fully the Truth you have. Sadly, there are many who walk along the Christian road, and are really enemies of the cross of Christ. As a result, their future is eternal loss, for their god is their appetite. They are proud of what they should be ashamed of, and all they think about is this life here on earth (Phil. 3:13-19 TLB).

Instead, let us take possession of the pasturelands of God (Ps. 83:12), for our homeland is in heaven, where our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, is; and we are looking forward to His return from there.

When He comes back, He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like His own, using the same mighty power that He will use to conquer all else everywhere.

My beloved friends, stay true to the Lord (Phil. 3:20-21&4:1 TLB). Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to Him: “Forgive all my sins and receive me graciously, that I may offer the fruit of my lips,” Hosea 14:2.

That we may say, "Take me away with You – let us hurry! Let the King bring me into His chambers. I rejoice and delight in You Lord, and I will praise Your love more than all else. How right I am to adore You," SS 1:4.



This testimony though brief I believe is filled with the power of Holy Spirit. Throughout my childhood I suffered emotional and psychological traumas that caused me to react in a way I questioned for many years. At the age of fourteen I attempted suicide. When I woke the next morning a new belief took form – God doesn't even want me. This discovery also took years God actually protected me from myself.

Though I felt a sense of hopelessness, God's love for me was so great He prevented me from spending eternity in the never-ending presence of hopelessness.

Approximately 25 years ago at the age of 40 I found myself once again being engulfed with suicidal thoughts. Nothing seemed to provide relief. Not my love for friends or family or the career I worked so hard



to achieve as a RN, BSN. Not even that special love and affection a grandparent has for their grandchild.

At that time we had one grandson. Maybe it was that old belief that God didn't want me that prompted me to share my struggle with my husband and my friend Fern. My husband went with me to seek medical assistance, and I went to my friend's church where I received assistance from the great Physician.



All praise and glory to God, ten years later when my life and my world was falling apart suicide was never entertained. During all those years of reading and studying the Scriptures, God had been working to unite my soul with His Word of Truth. Though unsettling feelings and bizarre thoughts tried to gain control, God's Word, Christ Jesus, had a greater influence in my thinking.

Though I couldn't physically feel His touch, my spiritual being came to know the warmth of peace and joy of Holy Spirit, Who always shares His love of Jesus (Rom. 14:17 AMP) - God's Word. There is no special feeling or awareness when God unites us spiritually in Christ Jesus,

Who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30).

God has designed a process that enables us to know and experience our life in Christ –

ASK SEEK KNOCK!

So keep asking the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, to give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know Him better (Eph. 1:17).



For Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars (Prov. 9:1), and when Holy Spirit's dwelling is within us, through God's Word His great power is released.

Yes, the perfect sevenfold power of God's Spirit strengthens and establishes our faith upon these seven pillars: God's Word of Truth, wisdom, understanding, counsel and power, knowledge and the fear of the Lord, so we too can delight in the fear of the Lord (Isa. 11:2-3). And as it is written: "Let those who boast, boast in the Lord, Jesus," 1 Cor. 1:31.

For Christ will judge the world in righteousness; He will govern the people with justice. The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who KNOW (understand, perceive, appreciate) His name will trust in Him, for the Lord has never forsaken those who seek Him (Ps. 9:8-10).

A choice was made not to listen. And the consequence, the evil of pride dwells within our soul. We are not physically living with the Lord, whose throne is founded on two strong pillars – the one is Justice and the other Righteousness (Ps. 89:14 TLB).

But praise God, for through His Word and Holy Spirit our spiritual being can find rest in the Lord. Yes, through God's Word we can see and understand and confess the earth is full of His unfailing love (Ps. 33:5).

We live in the miraculous through the power of God's Word and His Spirit. We can know Mercy and Truth walk before us as our attendants. Those who hear the joyful blast of the trumpet are truly blessed, for they shall walk in the light of Christ's presence.

All day long we should be rejoicing in the Lord's wonderful reputation and in His perfect righteousness. For He is our strength! What glory! Our power is based on His grace, His favor! Yes, our protection is from God Himself and He, the Holy One of Israel, has given us our King (Ps. 89:15-18 TLB).



There is such awesome power in the faith we receive from our heavenly Father. As little as a mustard seed, when it is watered by Holy Spirit with the living water of God's Word, we can come to know through experience the Lord's righteousness is like the mighty mountains.

We can come to understand His justice is like the great deep oceans. We will come to profess with all our heart: How priceless is His unfailing love for the Lord preserves both man and beast (Ps. 36:6-7).

Amazingly, we just have to be willing and the Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - will unite us in their covenant relationship to share as child and Father, as wife and Husband, as friend and Confidante - through the Truth - God's Word, Christ Jesus.

Yes, the power within God's Word will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret – it leads only to evil (Ps. 37:6-89).

Instead, trust in the Lord and wait patiently for His help! Blessed are the people who know the passwords of praise, who shout on parade in the bright presence of God. For Righteousness and Justice are the roots of His rule, and Love and Truth are its fruits.

You too can be delighted and dance all day long, when you know the Lord and what He's done – you won't keep it quiet! For the Lord's beauty has gotten inside you – He's been so good to us! You too will be walking on air, when you finally realize all we are and have we owe to God, Holy God of Israel, our King (Ps. 89:14-19 Message).



Countless times I read this Scripture, "Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus," Rom. 13:14 not realizing I was doing exactly that by believing God's Word. By gaining knowledge of God and His Word,

acknowledging my flesh is weak (Matt. 14:38) since human effort can accomplish nothing eternal. It is Holy Spirit Who gives Life that is everlasting. The Word of God is Spirit and Life (John 6:63 NLT). Christ Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8).

So then, just as we receive Christ Jesus as Lord when we believe in our heart God raised Him from the dead, and confess this with our spoken words (Rom. 10:9), Holy Spirit works to root us and build us up and give us strength to lean on and trust in and rely on what we're learning about God's Word so we can overflow with gratitude and thankfulness (Col. 2:6-7) knowing Jesus has our best interest and attention.



Because we believe no prophecy of Scripture had its origin in the will of man; instead, the words they spoke were from God as they were carried along by Holy Spirit Who shines Light in the dark places of our soul, until the Day dawns and the Morning Star rises in prominence in our heart (2 Peter 1:19-21) as a result of the dawning of this realization - All we need is Jesus. We not only proclaim His praise everywhere to everyone, but in everything we do all the glory is given to the Lord (Isa. 42:12).

Without the counsel of Holy Spirit, Who God the Father bestows within us (John 15:26), we could not be guided into all Truth. Nor could our heart be filled with the confident assurance that whoever trusts in Jesus is kept safe. Freed from that snare (trap, entanglement, pitfall), which is the fear of man (Prov. 29:25).

this article by Brunstad Christian Church, “The Secret to Overcoming Fear of Man,” tells us:

<https://activechristianity.org/the-secret-to-overcoming-fear-of-man>

Whether you are an introvert or an extrovert, a wall-flower or the life of the party, or anywhere in-between, fear of man has it hooks in all of us. It shows itself in many different ways:

- Need for approval/fear of disapproval
- Need for acceptance
- Peer-pressure
- Need for honor
- Need for recognition
- Fear of criticism
- Fear of humiliation

“These things can lead us to:

- Second-guess our decisions
- Become timid when we should be bold
- Be disobedient to authority – God’s and parental and government
- Fear confrontation
- Have poor self-confidence
- Judge our self-worth by other people
- Be inactive
- Not be ourselves
- Indecisiveness
- Unstable faith

It can actually become like a form of slavery! It can be especially binding with people on whom I especially want to make a good impression. Some people will even change and adapt according to what they think people want to see in them. It can get to the point where I become a virtual “shape-shifter,” changing my opinions, personality, etc...according to who I’m with. That’s not the glorious freedom that is in Christ!

QUOTES:



- “The greatest prison people live in is fear of what other people think”
- “One of the greatest mental freedoms is truly not caring what anyone else thinks of you”
- “What God knows about me is more important than what others think about me”
- “Until we can care more about what God thinks than what other people think we are never truly free”
- “You are not what others think you are. You are what God knows you are”



Holy Spirit’s testimony is always about Jesus (John 15:26). He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, which is confirmed by God’s Word. He brings glory to God by taking from what is Christ’s and making it known to us (John 16:13-14). The Son of God has come and gives us understanding that we may know:

- The Scriptures and the power of God (Mark 12:24)
- Jesus Christ has come to help us understand and find the true God (1 John 5:20a TLB)

- An idol is nothing at all in the world for there is but One God (1 Cor. 8:4)
- Jesus is the Holy One of God (John 6:69)
- The only true God and Jesus Christ, Whom God sent for this is the way to have eternal life (John 17:3 NLT)
- We love because God loved us first
- There is no fear in Love
- Perfect Love drives out fear (1 John 4:18)
- That we may know Christ's love, which surpasses understanding, and receive and be made complete with all the fullness of Life and Power that comes from God (Eph. 3:19 NLT)
- We are not our own, we were bought at a price – honor God with our body (1 Cor. 6:19)
- Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31)
- In all things God works for the good of those who love Him (Rom. 8:28)
- We are in God, and can live in Love because we are in Jesus Christ, His Son, Who Himself is God and eternal life (1 John 5:20b)
- We are children of God (1 John 5:19)
- Anyone born of God does not continue to sin (1 John 5:18)

- Our body is the temple of Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19)



Those who reject this are not rejecting man but the God Who gives to us His Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 4:8). Those people who teach false doctrines and do not agree to the sound instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ are arrogant and lack understanding. The Lord's wholesome teachings promote a godly life. For Jesus told the people:

“If you trust Me, you are trusting not only Me, but also God Who sent Me. For when you see Me, you are seeing the One who sent Me. I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in Me will no longer remain in the dark.”

I will not judge those who hear Me but don't obey Me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it. But all who reject Me and My message will be judged on the Day of Judgment by the Truth I have spoken. I don't speak on My own authority. The Father Who sent Me has commanded Me what to say and how to say it. And I know His commands

lead to eternal life; so I say whatever the Father tells Me to say.”

John 12:44-50 NLT



God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Jesus, and through His Son to reconcile to Himself all things by making peace through the blood Christ shed on the cross (Col. 1:19-20). Yes, there is a Judge for those who reject the Lord and do not accept His words; that very word which He spoke will condemn them at the last day (John 12:48).

Know the Word of God is living and active (Heb. 4:12). God gives us birth through the Word of Truth (James 1:18). The person who just listens to God’s Word and doesn’t do what the Lord says is only fooling themselves (James 1:22 NLT).

The Word of God continues to work in those who believe (1 Thess. 2:13 NLT). Like a double-edged sword, God’s Word penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow, judging the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and lay bare before the eyes of Him to Whom everyone must give account (Heb. 4:12-13).



Those who desire to be esteemed and blessed by God are humble and contrite in spirit (Isa. 66:2 NIV); people simple and plain who are in awe and reverently responsive to His Word (Isa. 66:2 Message). God anoints those who are committed to their vows to love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. Also, to love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:30-31).

God sets His seal of ownership on those of us who love Jesus, and puts His Spirit in our heart as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. It is God who makes us stand firm in Christ (2 Cor. 1:21-22). This is not some speculation this is God's guarantee (promise, pledge, covenant).

We are made strong because God's Word lives in our heart, and we have won our battle with the evil one (1 John 2:14 NLT). God gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:57). We must begin to live victoriously!



We are going to make mistakes! There will always be something to learn, for He Who began a good work in us will carry it on to

completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). Everyone born through God's Word of Truth overcomes this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith (1 John 5:4 NLT).

The children of God are doing their best to present themselves to their heavenly Father as ones approved, serving Him without shame and correctly explaining His Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15 NLT). What we need to do is daily walk in faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7)! Honoring Him Who has set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our heart as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Cor. 1:22).

By His blood Jesus purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (Rev. 5:9). Yes, God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in Whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:13-14). The Lord has made us to be as kings and priests to our God, and we SHALL reign upon the earth (Rev. 5:10). For God has given us His Word:

“Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words I say to you are not just My own. Rather, it is the Father living in Me Who is doing His Work.”

“Believe Me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. They will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”

“If you love Me, you will obey what I command. And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask Me for anything in My name, and I will do it.”

“So don’t allow your heart to be troubled. Trust in God! Trust also in Me! In My Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am.”

John 14:10-16, John 14: 1-4



Yes, the Messenger of the covenant He is surely coming – the Lord of Heaven’s Armies!

But who will be able to endure it when He comes? Who will be able to stand and face Him when He appears? His is like a blazing fire that refines metal, or like a strong soap that bleaches clothes.

Yes, He sits like a refiner of silver, burning away the dross. He will purify God's people, refining them like gold and silver, so that they may once again offer acceptable sacrifices to the Lord (Mal. 3:1-3 NLT).

So do as 2 Tim. 1:6 instructs - Stir up - rekindle the embers of, fan the flame of, and keep burning - the gracious gift of God - the inner fire - that is in you with God's Word and His Spirit of Truth

For it is through faith in Christ Jesus we are all sons of God. For all who are baptized into Christ have clothed themselves with Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). We are made strong for God dispenses His armor (Eph. 6:14-17) through His Word:

- The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us (John 1:14). God's Word is Truth. We are sanctified through Truth (John 1:14) made to stand firm with the belt of Truth buckled around our waist.



- Boast in the Lord Who creates in us a clean heart and steadfast spirit (Ps. 51:10 AMP). For with the heart a person believes (adheres to, trusts in and relies on Christ) and so is justified (declared righteous, acceptable to God, Rom. 10:10). For Jesus has become for us Wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30-31). So we can stand against the wiles of the devil with the breastplate of righteousness in place.
- Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand (Rom. 5:1-2) with our feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of Peace
- This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus to all who believe (Rom. 3:22). So take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.
- The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all mankind (Titus 2:11). Yes, the salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord (Ps. 37:39). Christ alone is our Rock and our

fortress those who believe and place their trust in Him will never be shaken (Ps. 62:2).

- Though Jesus is God's Son, He learned obedience from the things He suffered. In this way, He became the Source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him (Heb. 8-9 NLT). In Christ lives all the fullness of God, and we are also complete through our union with Him (Col. 2:9). So take the helmet of salvation for we have been given divine power to demolish strongholds. To demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God. We have in our possession the divine power to take captive every thought to make it obedient to the Word of Truth (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

What do you desire more than giving all glory and honor to  
Jesus?

~

- Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding arguments that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ (Col. 2:8). Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God for

we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Give yourself completely to God! Stand against the devil, and the devil will run from you. Come near to God, and God will come near to you. We are sinners! Let us clean sin out of our lives! You who are trying to follow God and the world at the same time, make your thinking pure (James 4:7-8 NCV).

Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is love, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. Put into to practice what you have learned from God’s Word, and the God of peace will be with you (Phil. 4:8-9).



- Pray in the Spirit on all occasions for the prayers of a righteous person are powerful and effective (James 5:16). While Jesus was here on earth, He offered prayers with a loud cry and tears, and God heard His prayers because of Christ’ deep reverence for His Father (Heb. 5:7).

- Those who believe they are children of the Light and children of the Day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness (1 Thess. 5:5). And, since we belong to the Day, let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet; for God did not appoint us to suffer wrath, but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:8-9).
- Blessings crown the head of the righteous (Prov. 10:6) for in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives, and we have been given fullness in Christ, Who is the Head over every power and authority (Col. 2:9-10).

Jesus is merciful and tender toward those who don't deserve it! He is slow to get angry and full of kindness and love. He never bears a grudge! He has not punished us as we deserve for all our sins, for His mercy toward those who fear and honor Him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth.

He has removed our sins as far away from us as the east is from the west. He is like a father to us, tender and sympathetic to those who reverence Him. For He knows we are but dust and that our days are

few and brief, like grass, like flowers, blown by the wind and gone forever.

But the loving-kindness of the Lord is everlasting to everlasting to those who respect and reverence Him! His salvation is to the children's children of those who are faithful to His covenant and remember to obey Him (Ps. 103:6-17 TLB)!



Beloved, don't forget every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights. He chose to give us birth through His Word of Truth (James 1:16-18). With God we will gain the victory, and He will trample down our enemies (Ps. 60:12). Remember God is in the details – taken from a Daily Devotional by Max Lucado.

Do you think the odds are against you? That even God is against you?

If so, ponder the plight of Haman and the outcome of Mordecai in the book of Esther. God flip-flopped their stories. Haman began the day large and in charge. Mordecai began the day praying in the shadow of a gallows that bore his name. Yet from one moment

to the next, Haman was humiliated, and Mordecai was given the keys to the city.

The next time you hear someone say, “The devil is in the details,” correct them. God is in the details. He works in the small moments. The insignificant becomes significant because He is ever orchestrating the day-to-day details of innumerable lives through a millennia of time to do what He has foreordained to do.

[https://maxlucado.com/listen/god-is-in-the-details/?utm\\_source=daily\\_devotional&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=post\\_title&mc\\_cid=17f589407b&mc\\_eid=3ff2507e91](https://maxlucado.com/listen/god-is-in-the-details/?utm_source=daily_devotional&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=post_title&mc_cid=17f589407b&mc_eid=3ff2507e91)



Blessings crown the head of the righteous (Prov. 10:6), as we continue our journey of renewal and recovery, we are growing in our conscious contact with God, and He starts to unfold His will for our lives. This message He kept secret for centuries and generations past, has now been revealed to God’s people. This secret is Christ lives in you. This knowledge gives the assurance of sharing in His glory (Col. 1:26-27 NLT). Jesus said:

“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all.”

John 10:28-29

God has given us the greatest reason to be thankful. Here are a few things we should remember about Gratitude:

- Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough...Melody Beatty
- Through the eyes of Gratitude everything is a miracle
- The more grateful I am the more beauty I see - Mary Davis
- Gratitude is riches and complaint is poverty
- Gratitude is the best medicine. It heals your mind, your body and your spirit. And attracts more things to be grateful for
- Gratitude can transform ordinary days into thanksgivings. Turn routine jobs into joy. And change ordinary opportunities into blessings - William Arthur Ward
- Thankfulness is the beginning of Gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of Thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts - Henri Frederic Amiel

- It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy
- Gratitude is when memory is stored in the heart and not the mind  
Lionel Hampton
- To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch heaven -  
Johannes A. Gaertner



Let all you who take refuge in the Lord be glad (pleased, happy, satisfied), Let them ever sing for joy (exuberance, delight, elation). His protection is spread over them, that those who love the name of Jesus may rejoice (triumph and find satisfaction and contentment) in Him (Ps. 5:11).

For devotion to God with contentment is great gain (NKJV). In fact, a devout life brings wealth, but it's the rich simplicity of being yourself before God (Message) that makes a person content and satisfied with what they have (1 Tim. 6:6 ERV).

Behold, the Lord lifted His hand in an oath to the nations, and set up His standard of Truth for the peoples (Isa. 49:22 NKJV). Those who



choose to follow believe and trust in Him and His standard of rectitude (honesty, integrity, right-mindedness). They will display conduct that conforms to what God's Word states is right and wrong.



Since we entered this world penniless and will leave it penniless, if we have bread on the table and shoes on our feet, that's enough. But if it's only about possessions and wealth that people are after, they'll self-destruct in no time. Lust for money brings trouble and nothing but trouble. Going down that path, some lose their footing in the faith completely and live to regret it bitterly ever after (1 Tim. 6:9-10 Message).

For the Lord will bring disaster from the north, and great destruction. Take refuge! Do not delay! Christ has setup the standard (NKJV) the signal has been raised to go to Zion (Jer. 4:6) the church of God. Surely, the Lord blesses the righteous surrounding them with His favor as with a shield (Ps. 5:12). For now it's known the Lord saves His anointed, He answers them from His holy heaven with the saving power of His right hand (Ps. 20:6).



The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear Him, on those whose hope is in His unfailing love, to deliver them (Ps. 33:18-19 NIV). Yes, God's eye is on those who respect Him, the ones who are looking for His love. He's ready to come to their rescue in bad times; in lean times He keeps body and soul together.

Those who are depending on God discover He's everything we need. What's more, our heart will be brimming with joy because He's given for our own His Holy name (Ps. 33:18-21 Message).

Sadly, those who put their trust in mere human ability, who rely on human strength and turn their hearts away from God (Jer. 17:5 NLT) are like a bush in a desert where the land is hot and dry and the soil is bad. That bush does not know about the good things that God can give (Jer. 17:6 ERV).



- Working this step seeking God and His will through prayer and meditation will keep us so we can become centered, grounded, and balanced
- We learn to be still, be quiet, ask for guidance – then allow ourselves to move forward in confidence

- We learn, when confused or in doubt, we stop, and ask – what do I need to do to take care of myself – listen, and trust the answer
- This step tells us we have a path, and no one can interfere with it – we don't have to hold on so tightly – others do not hold the key to our happiness, nor do they hold the key to our lives
- This step of seeking God and His guidance tells us that no one, not one person, can stop or interfere with the good and the love that is coming to us – others do not hold that in their hands – this is between us and God
- We can accept God's unconditional love for us, and we can choose to love unconditionally – we are free and empowered to do what it is we need to do to take care of ourselves, in faith and confidence that nurturing, self-care behaviors will move us forward on our journey
- This is the step where we say, "Show me what you want me to do, than help me do it."
- This is the step where we talk to God, and let God talk to us – we ask God to help us take responsibility for ourselves – we believe we are in good hands now

- This step tells us the moment we open ourselves to spiritual consciousness, we have started a positive chain of events that will benefit us, our lives and our relationships
  - When our conscious contact with God improves, our connection with ourselves and others will too
  - Pray and meditate – don't criticize ourselves for not doing it well enough – let go of our fears about whether or not God hears and cares – God is there
  - When we don't know what to do next, God does
  - Each day we are exactly where we need to be, and where we are meant to be
  - Trust God, because He will never, never ask us to do anything that He will not equip and supply us to do – if we are to do something, God will empower us
  - We never have to do more than we can – we never have to do anything we can't – we never have to do anything before it's time – when it's time – we will do it
- Remember, many of us have maintained an excessive reliance on DENIAL and:
  - A selective inattention to internal and external realities

- Denial lies largely outside the direct control of person's conscious awareness
- Denial results from a deep unwillingness to experience feelings that would ensue if those forbidden realities were acknowledged
- An unwillingness so deep the mind blocks any awareness that would lead to these dangerous emotions
- Denial may be seen as an impaired strategy for achieving security
- In the face of a threat, narrowing one's awareness can create the appearance of safety
- Frequently we see the breakdown of our denial system as a sign of our own personal inadequacy, much as chemical dependents view their growing lack of control over their using as a sign of personal weakness
- Each typically attempts to regain control through renewed applications of willpower
- Denial is rarely acknowledged and relinquished until the pain and emptiness of our ever narrower and more isolated life becomes too much to bear
- Many of us suffer from a constriction of emotions
- Some of us may even view emotions as enemies (or as weapons)
- The emotions worked at hardest to restrict are those normally considered too immature, dangerous, uncomfortable or just plain

bad: anger, fear, sadness, rage, embarrassment, bitterness,  
loneliness

- It is impossible to put a lid on such “Negative” feelings without also impeding the expression of more positive ones, such as happiness
- This effort to control one’s feelings is precisely the behavior targeted by the second half of the first step “We admitted...that our lives had become unmanageable
- Many of us have been deeply dedicated to “Managing” our lives – a dedication which stems from the same pride, self-confidence and arrogance, which leads humans to feel that they can improve on nature by exterminating dangerous beasts or by throwing poison on fields to eliminate “Bad” insects
- In a desperate attempt to survive (in other words, not to feel), some have chosen to “Close Down,” “Shut Down,” “Phase Out”
- This results in a quality of being more present in body than in mind
- Numbness gives the illusion of safety and control
- Some of us may also exhibit symptoms, which appear to directly contradict the constriction of feelings: the dramatic outburst, and the compulsive display of feelings

- When unexpected feelings have built up over time, the most minor incident can trigger an explosion, causing that individual to feel “Crazy” and “Bad”
- The essence of codependence is to minimize the anxiety and ambiguity of allowing feelings to run their natural course, whether by damming them up or by expelling them as quickly as possible
- Many of us have suffered from depression
- Anger turned inward, unresolved grief, the chronic restraint of feelings, being identified more with one’s false self than one’s true self
- Many of us have plenty of reason to be depressed
- We view our depression as evidence of inadequacy, and the failure to stay in control, and for this reason we usually deny its presence
- To acknowledge depression is to acknowledge loss, which challenges the family’s shared denial, and focuses attention on one’s own feelings
- We may often cite the pressures of children, work, and home life as justification for not indulging in our personal feelings

- Admitting that one is depressed means admitting that one has needs, and codependents, by definition, always place the needs of others above their own in importance
- Many of us are coping with hypervigilance
- Our environments have been unpredictable, basically incomprehensible, and highly stressful
- The only way some of us survived was by being ultra-sensitive to subtle shifts of behavior and moods of others
- Such hypervigilance is a recognized symptom of PTSD, which is most typically seen in combat veterans
- Unfortunately, there is seldom an “Off” switch
  
- Once a person starts scanning the environment for signs of impending disaster, a state of free-floating anxiety can be established
- Hypervigilance is also a natural byproduct of investing one’s self-esteem in another person’s behavior
- For many of us to feel good about ourselves, we must first attend to everyone else’s happiness
- The merest hint of dissatisfaction in another signals that one’s own behavior needs to be modified
- Hypervigilance requires great expenditures of energy



- When the strain becomes too much to bear, that individual may suddenly feel overwhelmed and demoralized
- If an individual is overly reliant on the opinions and feelings of others for their own self-esteem, and is always watching for the slightest change in facial expressions or tones of voice, then they will be in a constant state of tension
- Many of us struggle with compulsions
- Compulsivity is a primary defense process
- The internal dynamic – a struggle between two poles, one “Inside” and one “Outside”
- The person’s identity is connected to resisting the impulse, while the impulse itself is experienced as an alien force
- The resulting high drama distracts the person from unwanted feelings, which usually have little or nothing to do with whatever compulsion is currently occupying center stage
- Codependents can only remain active in their disease by disregarding the pain that it brings
- The compulsion may be to eat, to work, to be religious, to gamble, to watch TV, to read, seek sex....
- Many can describe in detail the subjective experience of sliding gradually into the whirlpool of their compulsivity

- There is a surge of adrenaline
- An intense buildup of emotions specific to the compulsion occurs  
“I’ve got to stop eating,” while more threatening emotions are eclipsed “I feel empty in this marriage”
- A feeling of inevitability takes over
- Eventually they stop resisting the compulsion, and this is followed by a temporary sense of relief
- In most cases, the emotions that are being avoided are unavailable for the duration of the compulsion
- In order for the emotions to surface, be identified, and be experienced, one must abstain from the compulsion
- To recover they must choose abstinence
- Many of us are struggling with anxiety
- When a person’s self-worth must continually be validated by someone else, there is an ever-present risk that their identity will be thrown into limbo, should the relationship come to an end
- Codependents are by nature chameleons
- They become whatever their partners want and need them to be
- But mirroring the actions and emotions of others means abandoning one’s true self in favor of a façade – a false self

- And even this false self must shift and change according to the needs of others
- Gradually, the true self becomes less and less substantial, until the anxiety that is being felt becomes anxiety about their very existence
- Some of us have struggled with substance abuse
- Denial is necessary to avoid being overwhelmed by feelings, and substance abuse serves as a biochemical “Booster” for one’s crumbling denial
- Substance abuse is consistent with the personality structure of the codependent
- Codependents exhibit a wide range of compulsions, and the use of alcohol or drugs falls into this category
- Once chemical dependence has been broken, the Codependence remains; left untreated, it acts as a barrier to long-term sobriety

Dear God, help me set aside all the hassles and noise of the World to focus and listen just to You for the next few minutes. Help me get to know You better. Help me to better understand Your plan, Your purpose for my life. Father, help me live within

Today, seeking Your will, and living this day as You would have Me - realizing "Whatever may be your task, work at it heartily (From the soul), as (being done) for the Lord and not for men; Knowing (with all certainty) that it is from the Lord (and not From men) that I will receive the inheritance which is your (real) Reward. (The One Whom) I am actually serving (working with me is) The Lord Christ (our Messiah)," Col. 3:23-24.

It is my prayer, Father, to have others see me as Yours; not just In my words; but, more importantly, in my actions. Thank you For Your love, Your grace, Your perfect forgiveness. Thank You For all those You have placed in my life. Your will be done, not mine. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Father, help us to do what Your power and will  
Had decided beforehand,  
And that all we do is for Your glory.  
Consider the threats we face in this world,  
And enable Your servants to speak Your Word  
With great boldness!  
Stretch out You hand to heal and perform

Miraculous signs and wonders through the name  
Of Your holy Servant Jesus!

Acts 4:28-30

COVERED

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdkuU052smc>

Here I am

I am ready to receive

Everything You want in me, there is more

Here I am

There is nothing in the way

Oh that You would find my faith, an open door

Oh that You would find my faith, an open door

Let Your presence cover me

Let Your presence cover me

In Your presence I receive

Far beyond what I could fathom

You exceed my expectations

Meet me here

Holy Spirit in this place

Let Your glory lead the way

I am Yours

Meet me here

Not for all that You can do

God the miracle is You and nothing more

God the miracle is You and nothing more

Let Your presence cover me

Let Your presence cover me

In Your presence I receive

Far beyond what I could fathom

You exceed my expectations

More than I could ask or imagine

In You, I will find every blessing

More than I could ask or imagine

In You, I will find every blessing

More than I could ask or imagine

In You, I will find every blessing

More than I could ask or imagine

In You, I will find every blessing, oh-ohh  
More than I could ask or imagine  
And in You, I will find every blessing  
More than I could ask or imagine  
In You I will find every blessing

Let Your presence cover me  
Let Your presence cover me  
In Your presence I receive  
Far beyond what I could fathom  
You exceed my expectations  
Far beyond what I could fathom  
You exceed my expectations

Song by Mack Brock ft. London Gatch

