

**THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH
AND ALL THE HOST OF THEM
WERE FINISHED**

Because of the blood Jesus shed we can grab onto this faith that draws us near to God (Heb. 10:19). So grab hold of this truth and remember, Jesus is Himself our peace (Eph. 2:14 AMP) with God, Who is in the light. And if the choice is made to live in the Light through our union with the Lord, the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). So look up for on the top of the heights beside the way, where the paths meet, stands Wisdom (Prov. 8:2).

Good understanding is received by those who follow God's Word (Ps. 111:10b), Christ Jesus, Who has become for us wisdom from God (1 Cor. 1:30a). Paul wrote: We speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began (1 Cor. 2:2). Yes, Christ is our righteousness, holiness and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30b), to Him belongs eternal praise.

How pleasant and fitting to praise the Lord! How good it is to sing praises to our God! (Ps. 147:1). No matter the circumstances immerse yourself in praise of the Lord so you can be filled with awe:

wonderment, amazement, interest, curiosity, captivation, reverence...for this is to fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom (Ps. 111:10a).



So don't lose heart. Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. Fix your eyes on what is unseen for this is eternal (2 Cor. 4:16-17). We have been spiritually blind for way to long. Turn the pages of God's Word, and Holy Spirit will lead you by ways you have not known, along unfamiliar paths He guides us. For God's Word will turn the darkness into light before you, and make the rough places smooth. These are the things the Lord will do for you; He will not forsake you (Isa. 42:16). Listen, for Wisdom calls aloud in the street, a voice raised in the public squares (Prov. 1:20): Who knows the power of God's anger? His wrath is as great as the fear (honor, respect, reverence) that is due Him. The length of our days are seventy years - or eighty, if we have the strength. Oh that we would gain a heart of Wisdom (Ps. 90:10a,11), Who teaches us to recognize the brevity of life (Ps. 90:12 NLT) so we can live well! Yes, Wisdom teaches us to live wisely and well! (Ps. 90:12 Message)



Just think! Though we have done nothing to deserve it, we have been given a very unique opportunity to partake in the special joy of God's Word, for in Christ the endless treasures of heaven are available to everyone. And God, Who made all things, secretly planned from the very beginning to send His Messiah, as Savior of the world.

His reason? To show all the rulers in the heavens how perfectly wise He is by joining people from every tribe and nation together in His Church, the body of Christ. Yes, anyone with faith and trust in Jesus can now enter fearlessly right into God's presence, assured of His glad welcome (Eph. 3:8-12 TLB), for He has given us His Word:

"I will accept you as a fragrant incense when I bring you out of your exile into darkness, and I will show Myself holy among you in the sight of the nations. Then when I have brought you into the land of Promise, you will know that I am the Lord."

"You will look back on all the ways you defiled yourselves, and will loath all the evil you have done. You will know that

I am the Lord, when I've honored My name by treating you mercifully in spite of your wickedness and corrupt practices."

Ezek. 20:41-44 NLT



Yes, God has shown His mercy to the world, according to His unfailing love, according to His great compassion He has blotted out our transgressions. Those transgressions and sins that are ever before us! He receives those who are in Jesus washing away all our iniquity, and cleansing us from our sin.

Against God we have sinned, and done what is evil in His sight; therefore, He is proved right when He speaks and justified when He judges. Surely, we were sinful at birth, sinful from the time of conception. Surely God desires Truth to dwell in the inner part. He sets Wisdom in the inmost place to teach and to cleanse us so our conscience would be clean. No more guilt or regret or condemnation!

God gives us Holy Spirit to wash us with water through the Word (Eph. 5:26) so we will be whiter than snow. God shares with us His joy and gladness (Ps. 51:1-8). We have this treasure in jars of clay so all can

know the all-surpassing power of Holy Spirit is from God and not from us. For though we are hard pressed on every side, we're not crushed; we may be perplexed, but not in despair; we may be persecuted, but definitely not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

With the death of Christ being carried around in us, then the life of Jesus may also be revealed in us (2 Cor. 4:7-10). For God has hidden His face from our sins, and blotted out all our iniquity. Holy Spirit is creating in us a pure heart, and renewing a steadfast spirit within us. Christ died so we would never be cast from God's presence or have His Holy Spirit taken from us. The Lord has restored to us the joy of His salvation, and grants us a willing spirit, to sustain us (Ps. 51:9-12).



Paul wrote: When I think of the wisdom and scope of God's plan, - that out of His glorious unlimited resources He will give you the mighty inner strengthening of His Holy Spirit. I fall down on my knees and pray to the Father of all the great family of God - some who are already in heaven and some down here on earth (Eph. 3:14:16 TLB).

However, there are those who do what only cruelty condones, like those soldiers who fell down on their knees, paying mock homage to the One Who was not esteemed; instead, despised by them (Isa. 53:3). History reports soldiers led Christ away, and called together the whole company of soldiers. They put a purple robe on Him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on His head.

Again and again they struck Him on the head with a staff and spit on Him. When they had finished mocking Him, they took off the purple robe, and put His own clothes on Him. Then they led Him out to crucify Him (Mark 15:16-20).



God's Word explains there are those who avoid light at all costs, who scorn the light-filled path. When the sun goes down, the murderer gets up. Sexual predators can't wait for nightfall. Burglars do their work at night keeping well out of sight through the day. They want nothing to do with light. Deep darkness is morning for that bunch; they make the terrors of darkness their companions in crime (Job 24:13-17 Message).

They bow the knee to self-interest; instead of God, Who fills a heart with Truth and Grace and Gratitude so His Goodness and Mercy can

not only be heard but seen. The Bible has recorded the first Christian martyred. Stephen looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

“Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” At this rage took control of those men who yelling at the top of their voices, all rushed at him. They drug him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep,” Acts 7:55-60.



Have you come to the decision that Jesus is the Messiah as many others have (John 10:42 TLB)? Or, will you be found among the multitudes and multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is approaching the valley of decision. The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars will no longer shine. The Lord will roar from Zion and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the sky will tremble.

But the Lord will be a refuge for His people, a stronghold for the people of Israel.

“Then you will know that I, the Lord your God, dwell in Zion.” Joel 3:14-17

Can you hear the voice of Wisdom? Listen to what the Lord is saying:

“How foolish and naïve you are! Let Me give you understanding. Let Me show you common sense! Listen to Me! For I have important information. Everything I say is right and true. I hate lies and every kind of deception. My advice is wholesome and good. There is nothing evil in it.”

“My words are plain and clear to anyone if their mind is only open. My instruction is far more valuable than silver or gold.”

“The value of Wisdom is far above rubies; nothing can be compared to it. Wisdom and good judgment live together, for Wisdom knows where to discover knowledge and understanding. If anyone respects and honors and fears

God, they will hate evil. For Wisdom hates pride, arrogance, corruption and deceit of every kind.”

“Yes, I, Wisdom, give good advice and common sense. I love all who love Me. Those who search for Me shall surely find Me. Unending riches, honor, justice and righteousness are Mine to distribute. My gifts are far better than the purest gold or sterling silver! My paths are those of justice and right. Those who love and follow Me are indeed wealthy. I fill their treasuries.”

Prov. 8:2-21 TLB



In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through Him, and nothing was created except through Him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and His life brought light to everyone. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it (John 1:1-5 NLT).

“Yes, I, Wisdom, existed before the earth began. I lived before the oceans were created, before the springs bubbled

forth their waters onto the earth, before the mountains and the hills were made. I was there to establish the heavens and form the great springs in the depths of the oceans.”

“I was there to set the limits of the seas and gave them their instructions not to spread beyond their boundaries. I was there when God made the blueprint for the earth and oceans. I was the Craftsman at His side. I was His constant delight, rejoicing always in His presence. How happy I was with His creation-His wide world and all His family of mankind! So listen to Me, for how happy and triumphant are all who follow My instructions.”

“Listen to My counsel – oh, don’t refuse it; instead, be wise. Happy and hopeful are those anxious to be with Me. Because whoever finds Me finds life, and wins acceptance, approval and validation from the Father. But, those who miss Me injure themselves irreparably. Those who refuse Me, reveal that they love Death.”

Prov. 8:23-32 TLB



No one with common sense would admit that they love Death, but this is exactly what is being said by the choices that are made to trust and follow the ungodly wisdom that is gained from the world. For just as God's eternal purpose is to give Life to those Who accept His divine Wisdom, our enemy the devil, the god of this age has an entirely different intent - to blind minds so faith would be placed in human philosophies, for then the Light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, cannot be seen (2 Cor. 4:3-4).

Yes, God has laid a Stone in Zion, and for those who believe this very Stone is precious. But for those who do not this Stone the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone. He is the Stone that causes people to stumble, the Rock that makes them fall. They stumble because they disobey the Message God sent from heaven - which is the fate that was planned for them (1 Pet. 2:7-8), but it doesn't have to be the fate for you.

The Message sent from heaven provides the world this assurance:

“I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”

Luke 10:18



As a result, Death and Sin and Pride became a reality for mankind. The devil will never cease in his deceptive ways, for his purpose is to kill and steal and to destroy (John 10:10) so pain and heartache and misery would cause people to fall away from God – permanently.

But God, He has given us gifts of life and time and opportunity to make this discovery – the enemy’s intent is to harm us; but God, He intends what is used to harm – jealousy, rejection, abandonment, animosity, contention, comparison...- to give proof good can be accomplished, and lives will be saved.

God doesn’t want us to be afraid; instead, that we would know and trust and believe He will provide for us and our children (Gen. 50:20-21) now and throughout eternity. So look, for a smile can make a person happy, and Good News of God’s Word has the power to make them feel better (Prov. 15:30 ERV).

If we have faith in God and His Word, when troubles come our way we can choose to look at it differently – to think differently - by considering this to be an opportunity for great joy to be experienced for God’s goodness is standing with us. When our faith is tested, then endurance and perseverance and patience have a chance to grow. So

let them grow! For when patience is fully developed, we will be ready for anything, strong in character, mature and complete (James 1:3-4 TLB).



Know the enemy will never stop causing trouble, for pain and sorrow can tempt anyone to stumble and to fall. But also know, Jesus has given us authority to use His name to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy. Nothing will harm us (Luke 10:19)! We are in possession of God's Word!

So when the way is rough, and the going gets tough remember to give patience a chance to grow. Let it grow! Don't try to squirm out of your problems (James 1:3-4a TLB). For God will give to each person according to what they choose to do. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life.

But, for those who are self-seeking and who reject God's Word of Truth to follow wrong doing, there will be wrath and anger (Rom. 2:6-7). The Sovereign Lord has said:

“As surely as I live, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from their wickedness! Why should they die?”

Ezek. 33:11



What is even more astounding, even though we have all sinned and have fallen short of God’s glorious standard (Rom. 3:23 NLT), when we accept God’s Word is true and reliable and trustworthy, Jesus gives to us the glory God gave to Him (John 17:22). God gives us power, filling us with His Holy Spirit so we can wield (apply, exercise, exert) His sword, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17).

There were twelve who spent three years with Jesus, but when the devil charged (boggled-minds, squeezed, incited) fear, faith and loyalty failed. Not once, but three times Peter betrayed his friendship with the Lord. There are many reasons that cause us to betray or deny God’s Word as we lean on our own understanding instead of trusting the Lord with all our heart (Prov. 3:5).

But God, He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings deep shadows into the light (Job 12:22). So let the fear of the Lord now be upon you. Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery (2 Chron. 19:7).

Much dreaming and many words are meaningless; therefore, stand in awe of God (Eccl. 5:7), Who sent Jesus, Manna from heaven, the Bread of Life to give us the sustenance of Faith and Hope and Love so our heart would fill with gratitude as Peter's did.



Though Peter said, "Even if all fall away, I will not," Mark 14:29; however, when he was sitting in the courtyard a servant girl said to him, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," but he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said (Matt. 26:69-70).

Fear may have stymied Peter, but it can't stop Love, for God is Love (1 John 4:8). Jesus said:

"Peter, do you truly love Me more than these?"

Peter said, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” Jesus said:

“Feed My lambs, as a shepherd after My own heart,
lead them with knowledge and understanding.”

John 21:15, Jer. 3:15

So Peter told of what he’d learned. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins (1 Pet. 4:8). There is no fear in Love. Perfect Love drives fear out, because fear has to do with punishment. Those who fear have not been made perfect in Love.

Tell them, you love, because God first loved you.”

1 John 4:18-19



Though Peter, along with all the other disciples had said, “Even if I have to die with You, I will never disown You,” Matt. 26:35, when another girl spoke out, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth,” Peter denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the Man!,” Matt. 26:71-72.

Yes, Peter took offense and vehemently denied knowing Jesus. So again the Lord asked:

“Simon son of John, do you truly love Me?”

Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” Jesus said,

“Take care of My sheep.”

John 21:16

For though an offense when repeated can separate close friends, when Love is promoted so too is an offense covered (Prov. 17:9). Keep this in mind: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death (James 5:20).

Sharing God’s Word of Truth promotes faith so every effort can be made to add to it goodness; and to goodness – knowledge; and to knowledge – self-control; and to self-control – perseverance; and to perseverance – godliness; and to godliness – brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness – love!

A person possessing these qualities in increasing measure, will be kept from being ineffective and unproductive in their knowledge of our Lord Christ Jesus. But those who do not possess these qualities, they

are nearsighted and blind, and have forgotten that they have been or could be cleansed from their past sins (2 Pet. 1:5-9).



Peter was heard to say, “Even if all fall away on account of You, I never will,” Matt. 26:33. Yet, when he was approached by those who said, “Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away.” Peter began to call down curses on himself, and he swore to them, “I don’t know the Man!” Immediately a rooster crowed (Matt. 26:73-74).

When a person’s mouth is full of curses and lies and threats; trouble and evil are under their tongue (Ps. 10:7). For the sins of their mouths, and for the words of their lips, they will be caught in their pride. For the curses and lies they utter, consume them in wrath; consume them till they are no more (Ps. 59:12-13).

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall (1 Cor. 10:12)! For the heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? But the Lord, He searches the heart and examines the mind, to reward a person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve (Jer. 17:9-10).

For the third time Jesus said to Peter:

“Simon son of John, do you love Me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love Me?” He said, “Lord, You know all things, You know that I love You,” (John 21:17).

Know though troubles without number may surround you, and the regret and sorrow, shame and guilt of your sins overtake you so you cannot see; look at the Lord, at God’s Word, Who will not withhold His mercy from you; may His love and His Truth always protect you (Ps. 40:11-12).

Peter got caught up in his pride, in fear, in offense, in anger, in regret and sorrow and shame. He knew all too well the remorse of sin, the great burden guilt places on a soul. Yet, He was to experience the depths of God’s love to share with world.

We all like sheep have gone astray, but now we can return to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. For Jesus, God Himself bore our

sins in His body on that tree, so we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by His wounds we have been healed (1 Peter 2:24-25).



Paul wrote: If my sharing of God's Word causes you sorrow I do not regret it. I understand the Word of Truth may hurt you, but only for a little while. Yet, I am happy, not because you were made sorry and sad, but because your sorrow may lead you to repentance. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death (2 Cor. 7:8-10).

Remember, no temptation has seized you except what is common to all mankind. And God is faithful! He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But, when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (1 Cor. 10:12-13). So you can eat and enjoy the fruit that your labor produces; so blessings and prosperity will be yours. For those who fear the Lord, who walk in His ways are blessed (Ps. 128:1-2).

When we trust in our own ways instead of putting God and His Word first in everything we think and do (Prov. 3:4a TLB), He cannot smooth out the roughness in our nature or straighten the crooked tendencies

we have learned and developed (Luke 3:5). God's desire is not only for all mankind to see His salvation (Luke 3:6), but that we trust His Word to direct us and crown our efforts so success can be known and experienced (Prov. 3:5-6 TLB).

Yes, God wants to help us. The Almighty wants to bless us with blessings of the heavens above, with blessings of the deep that lies below (Gen. 49:25), blessings to crown the head of the righteous (Prov. 10:6a). Yes, Jesus said,

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives, for the mouth of the wicked conceals violence. Do not let your heart be troubled and do not be afraid. Trust in God; trust also in Me, His Word.”

“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 so you also may be where I am.”

John 14:27, Prov. 10:6b, John 14:1-3



There are many things about ourselves – attitudes, opinions, beliefs, motivations...- that have the power to produce impatience, intolerance, indifference, thoughtlessness, strife...all of which effects both our present and eternal well-being.

Like Peter, when we use means to protect and defend ourselves, at some point in time we will discover they are the means the enemy uses to depress (demoralize, burn (out), sadden) us with shame and guilt, condemnation and regret.

I have been trying to figure out when to tell of this passage I read from the book “The Black Echo” written by Michael Connelly. The main character, Harry Bosch, is a detective, who served in Vietnam as a “tunneler,” someone who entered tunnels to ensure the safe advancement of the troops.

When asked to explain what he meant by the black echo he said, “There isn’t anything really to tell. It’s just what we called one of the intangibles. There was no name for it, so we made up a name. It was the darkness, the damp emptiness you’d feel when you were down there alone in those tunnels. It was like you were in a place where you felt dead and buried in the dark. But you were alive. And you were

scared. Your own breath kind of echoed in the darkness, loud enough to give you away. Or so you thought. I don't know. It's hard to explain. Just...the black echo."

Of course, this was meant to describe a specific time and experience of not just feeling but actually being confined within a vast network of dark narrow passageways to confront not just the unknown but the known horrors of war that were always lurking up ahead.

Although, after reading this passage I thought of the expression "dark night of the soul." This phrase is often used to describe an extremely difficult and painful period in a person's life.

How many have gone through a time when what emerges from darkness - fear, sadness, sorrow, anguish, confusion, loneliness, despair...- doesn't just seem to surround us, but fill our soul until it seems we are being smothered or inflamed by a vast array of our own thoughts and feelings.

And the unknown it's not only a sense of unease or dread about what is waiting up ahead, but a seemingly tangible uncertainty (distrust,

skepticism, paranoia) that can alter normal into bizarre thinking and behavior. Could this become an eternal consequence for sin?



We each experience life-events that change us from the inside out causing us to become fearful, anxiety-ridden, consumed by worries and doubt, harboring resentment and unforgiveness, while being poisoned by the gall of bitterness.

But the Lord fought for us so the oppressor would come to an end, and destruction would cease (Isa. 16:4a). So don't fight against the Lord for destruction doesn't have to be eternal. Jesus fought against prideful men, against fearful circumstances, against every evil temptation to defeat Death and eternal doom and destruction for you and me and all mankind while we were yet His enemies (Rom. 5:10a TLB).

Salvation and strength and the kingdom of God and the power of His Christ has come (Rev. 12:10a NKJV) to bring us back to God by the blood Jesus shed on that cross (Rom. 5:10b TLB).

The accuser of the brethren has been cast down. The devil who accused God's people day and night, has come down to the inhabitants

of the earth and the sea with great wrath, because he knows that he has but a short time (Rev. 12:10b-12 NKJV) before he is thrown into hell, where “the worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched,” Mark 9:47-48 TLB).



Hardship and affliction happens because the enemy hates God and he hates God's creations. We don't have to suffer the hatred of this beast throughout eternity if we're willing to think differently. For what blessings the Lord must have for us when we become His friends and He is living within us (Rom. 5:10c TLB). And, we don't just know because we read, but we believe with all our heart the Word of Truth is and always will be our shelter from the destroyer (death) (Isa. 16:4b).

So submit yourself to God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit (James 4:7a) because the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23). Yes, come near to God and He will come near to you (James 4:8a). Then in the name of Jesus, God will send the Counselor, Holy Spirit, to teach you and remind you what His Word says (John 14:26):

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

James 4:8b

Know God's enemies cringe before Him because they know how awesome His deeds are, and how great His mighty power (Ps. 66:3). When Jesus comes on that day, He will receive glory from His holy people – praise from all who believe. My prayer is this includes you, that you believe what God's Word says and what the Lord has accomplished (2 Thess. 1:7-10).



Those who share in the heavenly calling, who belong to God, thought carefully about Jesus, Who is declared to be God's Messenger, His Word and High Priest (Heb. 3:1 NLT). Other high priests wore the breastplate of decision as a continuing memorial before the Lord as they entered the Holy Place of God's temple (Ex. 28:29), our High Priest put on righteousness as His breastplate with the helmet of salvation on His head (Isa. 59:17), so that our very being could be made a temple of Holy Spirit, who lives within us (1 Cor. 6:19). Holy Spirit is:

The Spirit of the Living God (2 Cor. 3:3)

The Seal (Gal. 3:18)

The Promise (Gal. 3:14)
The Spirit of God's Son (Gal. 4:6)
The Deposit (Eph. 1:14)
The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation (Eph. 1:17)
The Wine (Eph. 5:18)
The Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19)
The Vindicator of Christ (1 Tim. 3:16)
The Spirit of Love, Power and Self-Discipline (2 Tim. 1:7)
The Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29)
The Spirit of Glory (1 Pet. 4:14)
The Anointing (1 John 2:27)
God's Testimony (1 John 5:9)
The Seven Spirits of God (Rev. 4:5)
The Spirit of Prophecy (Rev. 19:10)
The Spirit of Truth (John 16:13)



Jesus told His disciples:

“When Holy Spirit comes the Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengthener, Whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth Who comes (proceeds) from the Father, He will testify regarding Me.”

“I am telling you nothing but the Truth, it is profitable (good, expedient, advantageous) for you that I go away. Because if I don’t go away, the Comforter, will not come to you; but, if I go away, I will send Him to you to be in close fellowship with you.”

John 15:26, John 16:7

So we can stand firm, and as the angel Gabriel said to Daniel, “Don’t be afraid. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. The prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me,” Dan. 10:12-13. The prince of Persia is a reference to an evil spiritual entity that wielded and continues to wield authority over the regions of the ancient kingdom of Persia.

We are not battling against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world. But God, He has given us armor so we will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil (Eph. 6:10-12). We each have our own share of hardship and suffering, but we can make the decision to endure it like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

As the Lord's soldier, do not let yourself get involved in civilian affairs, or tied up in worldly matters, for then you cannot satisfy the One Who has enlisted you in His army. Follow the Lord's rules for doing His work, just as an athlete either follows the rules or is disqualified and wins no prize. Work hard like a farmer who gets paid well if he raises a large crop. Think over these illustrations, and may the Lord help you to understand how they apply to you (2 Tim. 2:3-7 TLB)



Sadly, there are many who have no fear of God before their eyes, no fear of death, no fear of consequence, the way of peace is not known to them (Rom. 3:17). How can they learn to behave as true sons of God, when anger and hatred and vindictiveness have been given dominance and control in their soul.

Instead of pointing a finger and blaming God, for giving His sunlight to both the evil and the righteous, and sending rain on the just and unjust too (Matt. 5:45 TLB). Why not consider those fingers pointing back at humanity, for the apron strings that keep us bound in darkness need to be cut.

Yes, there is a vast amount of trouble, sorrow and heartache in this world. Why? Because there are people that just don't care about being fair and honest; instead, they lie and grumble and oppose the good (Isa. 59:3-4 TLB) doing whatever their heart desires.

DO SOMETHING

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_RjndG0IX8

I woke up this morning
Saw a world full of trouble now, thought
How'd we ever get so far down, and
How's it ever gonna turn around
So I turned my eyes to Heaven
I thought, "God, why don't You do something?"
Well, I just couldn't bear the thought of
People living in poverty
Children sold into slavery
The thought disgusted me
So, I shook my fist at Heaven
Said, "God, why don't You do something?"
He said, "I did, yeah, I created you" (now listen)

If not us, then who
If not me and you
Right now, it's time for us to do something
If not now, then when
Will we see an end
To all this pain
Oh, it's not enough to do nothing
It's time for us to do something
I'm so tired of talking about
How we are God's hands and feet
But it's easier to say than to be
Live like angels of apathy who tell ourselves
It's alright, "somebody else will do something"
Well, I don't know about you
But I'm sick and tired of life with no desire
I don't want a flame, I want a fire and
I wanna be the one who stands up and says
"I'm gonna do something"

If not us, then who
If not me and you

Right now, it's time for us to do something, yes it is, come on

If not now, then when

Will we see an end

To all this pain

Oh oh, it's not enough to do nothing

It's time for us to do something

We are the salt of the earth

We are a city on a hill

We're never gonna change the world

By standing still

No, we won't stand still

No, we won't stand still

No, we won't stand still

No

If not us, then who

If not me and you

Right now

It's time for us to do something

If not now, then when

Will we see an end

To all this pain

It's not enough to do nothing

It's time for us to do something

It's time for us to do something

It's time for us to do something

Song by Matthew West



From the first day of creation, God knew our earthen vessels would have to be subdued. That didn't prevent Him from planning and implementing and establishing Good upon the earth, or from sending the Light of heaven to triumph over darkness.

God made the earth by His power; He founded the world by His wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by His understanding. When He thunders, the waters in the heavens roar, He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth (Jer. 51:15-16). Who can really fathom His majesty and splendor?

God is magnificent He can never be praised enough. There are no boundaries to His greatness (Ps. 145:3 Message). The mountains and hills will burst into song; the trees of the field will clap their hands (Isa. 55:12). If we keep quiet the stones will cry out (Luke 19:40).



God, Who lives forever and ever created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it (Rev. 10:5). He made the sand a boundary for the sea, an everlasting barrier it cannot cross. The waves may roll, but they cannot prevail (Jer. 5:22).

Yes, to Him, Who alone does great and awe-inspiring wonders – His love endures forever. Who by His understanding made the heavens – His love endures forever. Who spread out the earth upon the waters – His love endures forever (Ps. 136:4-5).

The day is His, and His also the night; He established the sun and moon (Ps. 74:16). He pitched the heavens as a tent for the sun, which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. It rises at one end of the heavens and makes it circuit to the other, nothing is hidden from its heat.

Yes, the heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech (Ps. 19:1-2a, 4b-6) for Him, Who determines the number of the stars and calls them each

by name (Ps. 147:4), night after night they display their knowledge (Ps. 19:2b).

God made the great lights - His love endures forever. The sun to govern the day - His love endures forever. The moon and stars to govern the night - His love endures forever (Ps. 136:7-9). There is no speech or language where their voices are not heard. Their voices go out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world (Ps. 19:3-4).



Yes, long ago by God's Word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of the water and by water (2 Peter 3:5). God set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved. He covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains (Ps. 104:5-6).

By these waters also the world was once deluged and destroyed (2 Peter 3:6). But, at His rebuke the waters fled. At the sound of His thunder they took to flight. They flowed over the mountains they went down into the valleys, to the place God assigned for them.

God makes springs pour water into the ravines to flow between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field. The birds of

the air nest by the waters, they sing among the branches. He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of His work (Ps. 104:7-13).



How many are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom You made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number – living things both large and small (Ps. 104:24-15). Yes, O Lord, You are our Father. We are the clay, You are the Potter, we are all the work of Your hand (Isa. 64:8).

You, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and all that comes from it, Who gives Breath to its people, and Life to those who walk on it, has said:

“I am Elohim – God, the Strong Creator, I have called You to demonstrate My righteousness. I will take You by the hand and guard You, and I will give You to My people, Israel, as a symbol of My covenant with them. And You will be a Light to guide the nations. You will open the eyes of the blind. You will free the captives from prison, releasing those who sit in darkness.”

“I am Jehovah – Lord, the Self-Existing One that is My name!
I will not give My glory to anyone else, nor share My praise
with carved idols. Everything I prophesied has come true.”

Isa. 42:6-9



ISAIAH 42:6

“I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness;
I will take hold of your hand.
I will keep you and will make you
To be a covenant for the people
And a light for the Gentiles.”

Adonai – Lord/Master *has called you in righteousness*. The Messiah,
Whom God called to the office of Mediator, in a righteous way and
manner, consistent with His own perfection, and not against the will of
Christ; instead, with His full consent.

Jehovah El Emeth, Lord God of Truth, Whom God called to the office of High Priest, “Unto righteousness,” to fulfill His righteous purposes concerning the welfare and salvation of His people.

Jehovah Elohe Yeshuathi, Lord God of My Salvation, Whom God called to be the Redeemer of the world, to perform God’s righteous promise of His coming, and of good things by Him; to show God’s strict justice against sin, in the punishment of it; and to bring an everlasting righteousness for His people.

“I have called Thee with righteousness.”

Christ came a righteous Man, holy in His nature, harmless in His life, *and He will hold your hand.*

I will hold Thine hand: denotes God’s presence with Jesus, and nearness with Him; His favor and affection for Christ, His counsel and direction of the Lord; the support and assistance God gave His Son; and the strength the Son of Man received from His heavenly Father, to go through trials and temptations as a spotless Lamb to do His work.

I will keep Thee: as the apple of His eye, being dear unto Jesus; keeping Christ from being hurt by His enemies till the time came for Him to be delivered into their hands. God sent His Son to intervene on behalf of Truth and Right; His own arm brought Him victory, and His own righteousness (having the Spirit without measure) sustained Him (Isa. 59:16 AMP), and kept Him from miscarrying in His work; and from the power of the grave.

I will give thee as a Covenant for the people: Christ is a Coventantee, Who is concerned in the covenant of grace; the Representative of His people in it; the Surety, Mediator, Messenger, and Ratifier of it; the great Blessing in it; the Sum and Substance of it; all the blessings and promises within God's covenant are in Jesus, and as such He is "given."

It is of God's free grace that Jesus was appointed and entrusted with all this in eternity, and was sent in time to confirm and secure it for "the people." We are given Jesus by the Father; we are redeemed by the Lord and through Him the Spirit applies the blessings and promises of the covenant, for the elect of God, both among Jews and Gentiles.

And a Light of the Gentiles: who were in the dark as to the true knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, and the way of righteousness and salvation by Him, and of all divine and spiritual things. Now Christ, God's Word, by His Spirit is a Light unto the world; by which mankind receives enlightenment into our own state and condition by nature, and into the knowledge of God and His Word and the mystery of the Gospel revealed to us by the Spirit of Grace.

Information taken from John Gill's Exposition of the Bible/Isaiah 42:6
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/isaiah-42-6.html>



The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. He is not served by human hands, as if He needed anything, because He Himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.

From one man He made every nation of men that they should inhabit the whole earth; and He determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.

God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. 'For in Him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are His offspring,'" Acts 17:24-28.



Yes, God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created Him, male and female He created them. God blessed them and said:

"All that I have created is yours. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground. Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it."

Gen. 1:27-28

They failed to rule over and subdue their own earthen vessel, and soon discovered – what sorrow for those who say evil is good and good is evil (Isa. 5:20 NLT). Yes, evil wounds, but God binds up. Evil injures, but God's hands heal. Those whom He corrects are blessed, for trusting the discipline of His Word (Job 5:17-18).

For every intention of evil is to harm us, to kill and steal and destroy what God considers very-good. But God, evil cannot and will not prevent what He intends for Good to accomplish salvation, deliverance and healing (Gen. 50:20).

Sadly, when the ways of evil are chosen, the very good God wants to accomplish through us is impeded. A simple choice to trust God and His Word; however, the consequence of so many harm-filled thoughts and beliefs and choices are absolutely preventing us from experiencing all the good of God's intent – peace, joy, and contentment – for this is what Covenant, a sincere Commitment and Gratitude, accomplish within us.



Yeah, there are issues many of us have struggled with since childhood abandonment, rejection, bigotry, vindictiveness...the learned tendencies and behaviors that power the cycle of abusiveness toward self and others. There may be no intent of malice, but hurting people hurt people. Why? Pride!

Living however we want. Following our own moral code of ethics that permits dishonesty, injustice and corruption. Believing things about

ourselves and others that are so contrary to what is truly good that perversity has been given license to run rampant.

We not only give fear and anger and confusion a voice, we give them power over our soul – intellect, emotions and our will. Power to control and manipulate our thinking, sway our feelings, confuse our intentions, all to affect our behavior. We think we're in control, but as the world reflects we are so out of control.



When we are allowing our heart and soul to guide, we're not just walking but running toward that great Abyss. Sadly, we are contaminated, trampled, even crushed, by the stampeding of self-absorption, hatred and violence in our world, when pride is ruling the roost.

Learning to think differently is key. So I share of God and His Word so the life-changing ways of Love can be known. Without this knowledge people are destroyed, for they exchange their Glory for something disgraceful (Hos. 4:6-7). Many are living as enemies of God, of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction. Their god is their stomach.

Their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things (Phil. 3:18-19).



Yes, our mind can easily become consumed by the earthly things we want and need and desire, but when our life is being governed by one earthly thing - our heart - selfish ambition will be in charge. And, when there is selfish ambition there is jealousy and disorder and every other kind of evil ways of thinking and tendencies and behaviors.

When such things are harbored in a heart - bitterness, jealousy, selfish ambition...- then Truth has been denied for the worst sort of lie (James 3:13-14 TLB) - it's okay to do whatever you determine to be right. Does it really matter if fairness and justice and kindness are slightly ignored? Do whatever you feel like doing. Won't a lie or a wee bit of trickery be adequate protection? However, God's Word says:

“I have seen horrible things. People commit adultery against Me and each other to live a lie. The hands of evildoing are so strengthened that wickedness is not turned from.”

“People don’t understand the bargain they’ve made with Death. They don’t realize the agreement they’ve made with the grave by selling themselves to the devil. They deceive and fool themselves and others expecting his protection.”

“This is the protection I offer – a Rock – a Cornerstone. A very precious Foundation Stone that I’ve set in Zion – a firm, tested, precious Cornerstone that is safe to build on. Everything will be built on this important Rock. Anyone who trusts in this Rock will not be disappointed.”

“Workers use a string and weight to show their work is straight and true. I have used justice as the string, and righteousness as the weight to lay a sure foundation. The safe places of lies people build will be destroyed and washed away when the troubles come against them like hail storms and floods.”

“What protection does lies and pretension provide? When fingers are uncrossed, this agreement of compromise with Death and the devil will not be erased. For there is one who enforces this pact – to kill and steal and destroy – not to protect; instead, that someone would come to punish, to

condemn and berate, to make you feel like the dirt you walk on.”

“Because of sin the terrible enemy will flood in, and you will be trampled to the ground. Again and again that flood comes to carry you off, to disperse punishment from early morning until late at night, but it doesn’t have to be eternal. This story may help you understand: A man tried to sleep on a bed that was too short for him. He had a blanket that was not wide enough to cover him. The bed and the blanket were useless, and so are your agreements with the devil.”

Jer. 23:14, Isa. 28:14-20 ERV, John 10:10, Isa. 28:16-19 TLB



God is talking to His people. A soul is so easily manipulated and controlled by deception. Here’s why I say this. God housed within our soul a will, intellect and emotions. Our will is powered by what we think and how we feel. We go through life determining what we think and how we feel until a pact, a pledge, a vow, a promise, a belief...is firmly molded.

In other words, until a determination is made; here are a few words the Thesaurus offers as synonyms: decision, firmness, granite, purposefulness, resoluteness, resolve, obstinacy, persistence, stubbornness, tenacity, order, mandate, judgment, mind, feeling, disposition, persuasion, doom, deliverance, consequence....

How long have we been making determinations? Since we could think and feel. This can't be made more apparent than the witnessing of a young child's temper tantrum. All of the above words would work well to describe or explain such an unpleasant outburst.

Sadly, reaching adulthood doesn't prevent tantrums from occurring: rebellion, disrespect, arrogance, rage, bullying, abuse, violence...give evidence to this fact. Why? Those determinations have not only been founded on faulty and incomplete information, many are immature stemming from our childhood. I was praying for a way to provide better understanding, and the answer came while gardening.

I purchased a couple plants that required large holes to be dug. I lack the upper body strength to use a regular spade so I took my trusty trowel in hand. The ground was hard so it took some work to break through that thick upper crust. Though the digging became easier the

work had only just begun. I had to cut through a system of roots that varied in size the deeper I dug.

We make a lifetime of determinations that are woven into an elaborate system with roots of different maturation that we have pondered and weighed and deemed to be what's best for me, myself and I. This is how I feel, this is what I think, this is what I want, this is what I deserve, this is what I'm going to work for, this is what I'm going to do...A lot of data. How much is based on speculation, assumption and wishful thinking, but surely every ounce with personal meaning.

No matter how hard we may try we cannot 100% understand ourselves let alone another person. There's this adage that cautions before we judge or criticize another walk a mile in their shoes. This is the only way to truly understand their experiences, challenges, thought processes, feelings...those things that impact and run deep down into our core.

Yet we do judge and criticize ourselves and others why? Our lop-sided comparisons seem exemplary because they're weighed with who and how and what is significant to me, myself, and mine.



What we tend to do dodge and divert, almost instinctively, with the different masks we wear, and the pretenses (airs, deceptions, double-dealings, pretexts, falsities, betrayals..) we've committed. We rationalize and justify, minimize and excuse the behavior of ourselves and others; feeble attempts to reconcile what we think to how we feel and what we do.

But God, He is merciful, but how long can we continue being dishonest blaming ourselves and others and even God for our imperfections, our failures, our disappointments.

Yes, mistaken judgments have and will continue to occur; but, when God's Word, filled with grace and truth, is not known or being applied so too will those self-centered outbursts continue to occur. Luke tells us, "Everyone who falls on that Stone will be broken in pieces; but upon whomever it falls, it will crush them, winnow them and scatter them as dust," Luke 20:18 AMP.



This is God's determination. We cannot compare ourselves to Him.

God is not a man; He will not lie. God is not a human being; His decisions will not change. If He says He will do something, then He will do it. If He makes a promise, then He will do what He has promised (Num. 23:18-19 ERV). God sent His Son, Christ Jesus, so He could bless the world through Him.

With the Lord as our God, we can be confident He is with us. The Great King is with us! He will bring us out of the captivity (Num. 23:21-22 ERV) of deception. For God said:

“Let light shine out of darkness.”

He made His Light shine in our heart to give us the light of knowledge so we could receive Truth and understand the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus (2 Cor. 4:6 NLT).

There is no power or authority or dominion that can defeat God’s Word. Jesus must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after Truth has destroyed every dominion, authority and power that deludes and confuses and deceives (1 Cor. 15:24-26).

There is no magic that can stop the miraculous resurrection power of Holy Spirit, Who raised Christ from the realms of Death. Jesus is the Life and the Truth and the Way, no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). Prayerfully you are among those who say, "Look at the great things God did," Num. 23:23 ERV.

Yes, there is no magic that can stop God's Word from prospering on the earth, only magical thinking that our ways are better than God's; that our thoughts and feelings are more substantial than His words of Truth and Promise and of Covenant.



God has extended an invitation to the world to be truly God-like. Not the pretentious, boastful self-centered mannerisms born of pride. In His great mercy God offers us new birth into a living Hope through the resurrection of Christ Jesus from the dead (1 Peter 1:3:3). An opportunity for thoughts and feelings to be reconciled by God's Word of Truth; born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of Life (1 Peter 1:23).

By the sovereignty and dominion of God, by the authority of Jesus, and by the power of Holy Spirit we receive grace and peace of mind and heart, which means we can not only know but experience harmony, unity and an undisturbed relationship with God – through the Faith and Hope and Love He bestows on us (Eph. 1:2 AMP).



God gives us faith, hope and the greatest of all He gives us Himself, God is Love (1 John 4:16). **Faith** to know if you believe you will see the glory of God (John 11:40 NASU). **Hope**, for God has chosen to make known to the world the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). **Love**, for there is no fear in Love (1 John 4:18).

Faith, hope and love for God with no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. When a person belongs to Jesus, the power of the life-giving Spirit frees us from the power of sin that leads to death. The Law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature.

So God did what the Law could not do. He sent His own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. In that body God declared an end to

sin's control over us by giving His Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so the just requirements of the Law would be fully satisfied for us, who have determined to no longer follow our thoughts and emotions and the desires of our flesh, instead to follow the Spirit of Truth (Rom. 8:1-4 NLT).



When we receive God's invitation to accept His Word of Truth, Christ Jesus, He redeems our life from the pit, and crowns us with His love and compassion (Ps. 103:4). God calls us by name to come forth from behind that grave stone of delusion, doubt or disbelief (John 11:40).

Yes, when we are dead in our transgressions and sins, following the ways of this world and the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is at work in everyone who is defiant and rebellious and disobedient to God and His Word (Eph. 2:1-2); however, when those who hear the call of the Lord come forth, though they are spiritually bound by death's burial wrappings, God sends His life-giving Spirit to free us from those deadly bindings sin has wrapped us in: fear, hatred, bitterness, unforgiveness...God knows everything that has worked together to bind and hinder and lead us astray (John 11:42-44).

Those who believe in Jesus, who not only hold onto to His teachings but apply and follow God's Word, they are really the Lord's disciples. Holy Spirit helps them to know and understand the Truth, and they experience the Truth, Who sets them free (John 8:31-32).

As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our transgressions from us (Ps. 103:12). Yes, God has compassion on us, and treads our sins underfoot and hurls all our iniquities into the depths of the sea (Mic. 7:19).



This is a Holy Spirit message:

“God is Light! There is no darkness in Him at all. So you are lying if you say you have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; you are not practicing by applying the Truth. If you are living in the Light, as God is in the light, then you have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses you from all sin.”

“If you claim you have no sin, you are only fooling yourself and not living in the Truth. However, if you confess your

sins to Him, God is faithful and just to forgive you your sins and to cleanse you from all wickedness. If you claim you have not and do not miss the mark because of sin, you are calling God a liar and showing that His Word has no place in your heart.”

1 John 1:5-10 NLT



Why should anyone doubt or disbelieve and be overwhelmed by sin when God forgives our transgressions (Ps. 65:3). Why not repent, and turn to God, so your sins may be wiped out, and times of refreshing may come from the Lord (Acts 3:19).

Knowing, believing, trusting God has swept away our offenses like a cloud, our sins like the morning mist when we return to the One Who redeems so we can sing for joy for what God has done for us (Isa. 44:22-23); bestowing upon us an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for those, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time (1Pet. 1:4-5).

God's Word doesn't sugar-coat anything! He speaks Truth so we can break free from any ties to dishonesty and know:

"I tell you all this so that you may have peace, confident reliance, faith, hope and trust in Me, God's Word. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but take heart, because I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 NLT



The time of darkness and despair shall not go on forever. Israel will again be great, filled with joy like that of those who divide up the plunder they have won. For God will break the chains that bind His people and the whip that scourges them, He has contempt and judgment for His enemies.

In that glorious day of peace there will be no longer the issuing of battle gear; no more the blood-stained uniforms of war; all such will be burned. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders. These will be His royal titles: "Wonderful," "Counselor," "The Mighty God," "The Everlasting Father," "The Prince of Peace."

His ever-expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule with perfect fairness and justice from the throne of His Father David. He will bring true justice and peace to all the nations of the world. This is going to happen because the Lord of Heaven's Armies has dedicated Himself to do it (Isa. 9:1-7 TLB).



God's desire is for us to be peacemakers. People who are wise, willing to live a life of steady goodness so that only good deeds will pour forth; people who not only say they know, but are applying the Wisdom that comes from heaven, which is entirely pure and full of quiet gentleness. Wisdom that is peace-loving and courteous.

Wisdom that allows discussion; willing to yield to others. Wisdom that is full of mercy and goodness. Wisdom that is wholehearted, straightforward and sincere. Godly Wisdom gives life to an entirely different breed of people on the earth - peacemakers - that will plant seeds of peace, and reap a harvest of eternal righteousness (James 3:13, 17-18 TLB).

Though I thought of myself as a peacemaker, there was trouble ahead that would reveal heart motivations that were not pleasing to God. Before I could find peace-of-mind and contentment, God had to bring people and circumstances together in answer to my prayer: Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind (Ps. 26:2). Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Ps. 139:23-24).

For years I was grateful to God, giving thanks to my heavenly Father, because He qualified me so I could share in the inheritance He bestows on all the saints, His Kingdom of Light. Yes, I was grateful God rescued me from the dominion of darkness and brought me into the Kingdom of the Son that He loves. Through Jesus I received redemption, the forgiveness of all sin – past, present and future (Col. 1:12-14).



There was every reason for me to be grateful for this eternal gift of salvation God gives through His Son, Christ Jesus. But God's goodness didn't stop there. He provided me time and opportunity to enjoy all the benefits of sharing a relationship with Him.

How amazing! God didn't let my weaknesses or failures or character flaws dissuade His love for me. How priceless the gifts God bestows: His Word of Life, His Spirit of Truth.

Holy Spirit always points to Jesus, God's Word, so I could learn to live my life as He did: freed from the restraints of pride for Jehovah Yirah, The Lord of Awe, teaches Wisdom since the Fear of the Lord and Humility are such great riches (Prov. 22:4 KJV).

Freed from the constraints of deception by Jehovah Tsidkenu, The Lord Our Righteousness, Who bestows Honor through Faith which is more precious than gold, since faith that is genuine will bring praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Christ Jesus (1 Pet. 1:7 KJV).

Freed from the clutches of fear for Jehovah Elohiym Ahab, The Lord God Loves Thee, He forgives and restores to God, by a bond of perfectness that is Love, (God is Love, 1 John 4:16), so the peace of God can rule in a faithful heart. A heart with thanksgiving and gratitude and willingness to let the Word of Christ dwell in them richly (Col. 3:13-16 KJV).



What I want to share, God definitely answered my prayer, but I didn't know to do so the rug would have to be pulled out from beneath my feet. The rug – my perception of self and life and even God; you see, I believed I trusted Him with all my heart, but Truth revealed a different story. There were things I had to discover about myself that would be difficult to view.

Unfortunately, there was no way to physically rip them up and throw them away as we would do with any bad picture of ourselves. But that was exactly what God was going to help me to do.

I was riding high on my high-horse when I accepted God's gift of faith proclaiming Jesus as my Savior. Together God and I set off on this spiritual journey until I knew that I knew that knew, God's Word is Lord.



For years we traveled throughout time and circumstance before the worst was experienced, being thrown from favor. Prov. 16:18 tells us: First pride, then the crash – the bigger the ego, the harder the fall

(Message Bible). But, thank God I landed at the feet of Jesus, for He gives more grace so God's Word can be heartfelt:

"God opposes a heart that is proud, but gives grace to one that is humbled. So give yourself humbly to God. Let your heart be filled with God alone, and He will make it pure and true to Him."

"Let there be tears for the wrong things you have done. Let there be sorrow and sincere grief. Instead of laughter let there be sadness for then you will realize the worthlessness of a proud heart before God."

"For it deceives, and will cut a person down to size so they feel small and are disfavored. A heart that exalts itself will be humbled, but if you humble yourself God will lift you up, encourage and help you."

"Man wanted to know what God withheld to keep him safe and prevent the downfall a proud heart causes. So now the things of God must be sought; but know, the discovery of humility won't gain anyone honor. God bestows honor and

exalts those where the Word of Truth and the Spirit of Grace dwells so a proud heart can learn to enjoy Life humbly.”

James 4:6-10 TLB, Obad. 2:2-3 TLB, Prov. 18:12



When the Word of Life and the Spirit of Truth are companions in our daily journeys, then we too can spend our days as Noah building an ark to protect and cherish what we've gathered from the Lord. Yes, there are times when the goodness of God takes our breath away; however, the deluges of this world knock the wind out of us to keep fearfulness ever present.

BUILD A BOAT

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l3Fl8ngQzWk>

I've been wandering through the desert
Ain't seen a cloud in forever over me
But I believe Your rain is coming, mm
Yeah, I've been hanging onto high hopes
'Cause You're the One who's making dry bones come to life
You're the Light I put my trust in
Every word You say is gonna come true
You will lead me to the promised land

Everything You say is gonna happen

Even though I haven't seen it yet

I will build a boat in the sand where they say it never rains

I will stand up in faith, I'll do anything it takes

With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades

I'll build a boat in the desert place

And when the flood and the water starts to rise, yeah

I'll ride the storm 'cause I got You by my side

With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades

I'll build a boat, so let it rain

You're the map, You're my compass

You help me navigate the currents underneath

Take the lead, I surrender

Every word You say is gonna come true

You will lead me to the promised land

Everything You say is gonna happen

Even though I haven't seen it yet

I will build a boat in the sand where they say it never rains

I will stand up in faith, I'll do anything it takes

With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades

I'll build a boat in the desert place

And when the flood and the water starts to rise
I'll ride the storm 'cause I got You by my side
With Your wind in my sails, Your love never fails or fades
I'll build a boat, so let it rain
I'll build a boat, so let it rain

Song by Colton Dixon with Mercy Ships



That the praises of God's people would be like rain that comes down upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. For in the days of the Lord the uncompromisingly righteous shall flourish, and peace shall abound till there is a moon no longer. Christ shall have dominion from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth (Ps. 72:5-8 AMP).

Yes, people err in vision, they stumble with pronouncing judgment. To whom will God teach knowledge? And whom will He make to understand the Message? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, rule upon rule, rule upon rule; here a little, there a little! (Isa. 28:9-10 AMP)

No, rebels must be taught in more humiliating ways. To the scoffers and complainers God's Word says:

“They could have rest in their own land if they would obey God. This is the true rest, the way to true comfort and happiness that He gives to the weary. This is the true refreshing – yet they would not listen to My teaching.”

“Therefore, the Word of the Lord will be to them merely monotonous repeating of precept upon precept, rule upon rule; here a little, there a little – that they may go and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken.”

“They have made a covenant with Death, and under falsehood they have hidden and made their shelter. Did not My words and my decrees overtake many lives? Then they repented and said, ‘The Lord Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as He determined to do.’”

“So come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters! You who have no money come receive freely! Why labor and spend money on what does not satisfy? Listen closely to Me,

and you will eat what is good. You will enjoy food that satisfies your soul.”

“Listen to me so that you will live! I will make an agreement with you that will last forever. It will be an agreement you can trust, the one I made with David – a promise to love him and be loyal to him forever. I made David a witness of My power for all nations.”

Isa. 28:12 TLB, Isa. 28:9-15 AMP, Zech. 1:6, Isa. 55:1-2a NIV, Isa 55:2b-3 ERV



We are invited into the place of Covenant, the heart of God. So the beloved of the Lord can rest secure in Him, for He shields them all day long, and the one the Lord loves rests between His shoulders (Deut. 33:12).

So lean back, and rest your head on the chest of God, knowing His Word of Truth fills the seat of mercy so we can receive what His Spirit of Grace disperses - revelatory nuggets sweet as Manna, while trusting God's rod of correction imparts godly Wisdom (Prov. 29:15) 'til it sprouts then blooms then fully blossoms, driving what tangles up a heart far from us – foolishness (Prov. 22:15).

For surely then, we will experience Life, that abundant life Jesus came to bestow (John 10:10) overflowing with faith and hope and love for Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



God is a Master Gardener, but the pruning and weeding and planting He does can only be personally experienced for God's work is done in our heart. Yes, I'm a very ordinary person who not only continues to act foolishly at times, but thankfully will never again be viewed as a fool who pretty consistently:

- Thought my way was right
- Was quick-tempered
- Didn't think before acting
- Plunged ahead with reckless confidence
- Liked to air my own opinions
- Trusted my own knowledge and insight

I have learned a great deal in regard to my way of life which was definitely tainted with deceit (Eph. 4:22); however, by acquiring knowledge of God and becoming more aware of issues that plague

humanity; codependency, emotional trauma, habits, compulsions, hurts...all of which cause what just naturally seems to occur chaos and imbalance in our lives.

I have come to better understand Scriptures such as second Cor. 5:18. For years this verse caused me to wonder, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." Nothing about me seemed new. As a matter of fact, several years after studying the Word I realized God wrote about me in His Book. I so resembled that fool He spoke of.



However, in verse 18 Paul went on to say, "Now all things are of God" (NKJV). OF, such a small word, a function word and in this case used to indicate belonging or a possessive relationship as defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

In other words, the all things Paul wrote so it could be understood – everything about me belongs to God. He has reconciled me to Himself through Jesus. God is not imputing (charging, connecting, associating) my trespasses against me, or defining me by them as does the world.

Just as I am, God accepted me with all my flaws and weaknesses. God gave me all of Himself: BODY – Christ Jesus so He could be seen (John 14:9); SOUL – Hope of salvation, perfect Love, Faith to trust in the authority of His Word – your sins are forgiven; SPIRIT - Truth to be strengthened and renewed by the power of His grace, which He so generously and freely bestows.

All of this He offers to the world, but what He does personally for me and for you and everyone who trusts: He wipes away every offense we committed against Him, and adopts us into His family as sons who belong right now and forever with Him.

How could anyone who carries with them animosity and offense, bitterness and unforgiveness believe even just for a moment that they could accomplish what only Christ Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, could accomplish for us?

God made Jesus Who knew no sin to be sin for the world; but, those with faith in God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit - will receive His might (authority, power, capability) to personally believe and proudly proclaim, “I have become right now, right as I am the righteousness of

God,” 2 Cor. 5:21, “sealed for the day of redemption by His Holy Spirit,” Eph. 4:30.



God gives all of Himself so we can be delivered from our enemies. So He can lift us up above those who rise against us; so He can deliver us from the violent man (Ps. 18:48), who not only established evil on the earth but in the heart of mankind.

God gives His all so we won't stumble and be hurt by sin; instead, that we could take a faithful stance in His presence irreproachable (acquitted, vindicated, upright) and triumphant (Jude 24).

So I ask again, how could I not be grateful to God? How could I not give God my all, but I hadn't. There is always trouble waiting up ahead, but it was in the going through difficulty that I discovered trusting God and His Word brings us more than gratefulness.

God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – brings us Gratitude, which fills a heart and mind with peace and contentment. Gratitude doesn't come by just knowing God's Word of Truth, but experiencing Truth delivering us from all the errors in our thoughts, our attitudes, our

beliefs...- God says what He means, and means what He says. We can tell a greedy, covetous, dissatisfied heart enough, because Gratitude turns what we have into enough.



There were many things hidden in my heart - long forgotten, excused, minimized or simply just ignored - but certainly known to God. There is knowledge that we must obtain so greater depths of understanding can be reached.

When I embarked on this journey of renewal and recovery I thought I knew myself; that is, until I was forced to acknowledge I wasn't in touch with my true feelings. The time had come to do what seemed unpleasant, unpack what was hidden. Unpleasant, yes; but, with inner healing comes peace.

For me and I hope you make the same discovery, the most important knowledge I've gained is from the Word of God. We have suffered as a result of deception and manipulation, conflicts and traumas: This is what makes Truth so absolutely essential:

1. Truth and grace come to us through Christ Jesus (John 1:15 Wuest NT)
2. The Source of all Truth is the Comforter – Holy Spirit, Who comes to us from the Father. always pointing us to God’s Word, so we can learn all about Jesus (John 15:26-27 TLB)
3. It must be understood that God is faithful (reliable, trustworthy, and therefore ever true to His Word, His promise, and He can be depended on); by Him we are called into companionship and participation with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:9 AMP)
4. As surely as God is faithful, His Message to us does not waver between “Yes” and “No.” For Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the Message, He does not waver between “Yes” and “No.” Christ is God’s ultimate “Yes,” He always does what He says. All of God’s promises have been fulfilled in Jesus with a resounding “Yes!” And through Christ, our “Amen” (which means “Yes”) ascends to God for His glory (2 Cor. 1:18-20 NLT)
5. It is God Who enables us to stand firm for Christ. He identifies us as His own by placing Holy Spirit in our heart as the first installment that guarantees everything He has promised us (2 Cor. 1:21-22 NLT)



With God's Word, Christ Jesus, in our life we don't have to waver. No longer do we have to waver between two opinions (1 Kings 18:21)! If it is believed God raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. That God delivered His Christ over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification – then follow Him!

We don't have to waver in fear or doubt or unbelief regarding the promise of God; instead, we can be strengthened in our faith giving glory to God, as Abraham did. We too can be fully convinced God has power to do what He has promised. This is why "God credited righteousness to Abraham" he believed and trusted God for what he did not see. So too does "God credit righteousness" to everyone and anyone who believes and trusts God sees us and He will do exactly what He says (Rom. 4:20-25).

HEAD TO TOE (The Armor of God Song)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_bWMr8a9YSo

Little one be strong
In the power of the Lord

And let the Keeper of the stars keep
Your heart forevermore
Even though you might be small
It is in you His kingdom reigns
And from your mouth the Lord has made
A fountain for His praise

And with His righteousness across your chest
Salvation for your head
The belt of truth around you now
The shield of faith in hand
And His peace upon your feet
Everywhere you go
His Word will be the sword you keep
You're covered head to toe
You're covered head to toe

Oh, the night is quickly fading
And the Day will soon break in
And with the dawn, the Lord will give
The grace you need to stand
And turn your worries into songs

Put on your covering of Light
And you will long outlast the darkness
Because He's with you in this fight!

Song by Christy Nockels



Yes, the Lord is fighting for us against the forces of darkness (Ex. 14:25). Do not be afraid of them; the Lord your God Himself will fight for you (Deut. 3:22). Yes, the Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still (Ex. 14:14). You need only to believe and trust and proclaim God will do exactly what He promises. When we give something to the Lord, we don't have to take it back trying to find our own solutions.

We can not only know, our mind's eye can see the Lord appearing over us and our circumstances. We can choose to stand in faith believing the Lord's solutions are intended for Good to be seen and to be experienced. The Word gives details describing His arrow flashing like lightning. The Sovereign Lord will sound the trumpet; He will march in the storms with us. The Lord Almighty will shield us! We too will destroy and overcome.

For we believe and we trust the Lord our God will save us on that day as the flock of His people. We will sparkle in His land like jewels in a crown. How attractive and beautiful we will be! The Bread of Life will make us thrive, and new Wine, Holy Spirit, will keep us young (Zech. 9:14-17).



You will not have to fight this battle alone! Take up your position of faith; stand firm trusting God, and see the deliverance the Lord will give you. Do not be afraid! Do not be discouraged! Go out in your tomorrow and the next day and the day after that knowing, believing, trusting the Lord will be with you (2 Chron. 20:17).

Yes, the Lord our God, who is going before you, will fight for you before your very eyes, as He did for those in Egypt (Deut. 1:30). Our enemies will look on. A loud voice from heaven will be heard saying, "Come up here." Up to heaven in cloud (Rev. 11:12) who will go? Those who show their faith by what they do (James 2:18)!

Those who not only know, but stand firm in their faith believing, trusting the Lord is going before them, and the God of Israel is our rear

guard (Isa. 52:12). For their rock is not like our Rock, as even our enemies concede (Deut. 32:31); you believe there is one God? Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder (James. 2:19).



God our heavenly Father and the Lord Christ Jesus bestow on us grace, favor and spiritual blessings so we can enjoy peace of heart and mind. So live your life giving thanks and glory to God for the Truth and Grace He bestows to you in Christ Jesus.

God ensures those who believe and trust in Him will be enriched in every respect through Jesus, in full power and readiness to speak of your faith and in complete knowledge and illumination. God sends His Spirit to give us full insight and meaning regarding the faith and hope and love God reveals concerning Christ, His Messiah. The same faith and hope and love He bestows so to confirm and establish, and makes sure remains in those who whole-heartedly believe.

God doesn't want anyone to fall behind or be lacking in any spiritual endowment or Christian grace, which is received by the divine power of Grace, by Holy Spirit, Who is operating in our souls as we wait and

watch for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when His being will be made visible to all.



God gives us His Word so He can establish faith and trust for Him within us. To keep us steadfast, to give us strength to the end for He guarantees our vindication; God will be our warrant against all accusation or indictment so that we will be guiltless and irreproachable. No one can condemn or insinuate or refute on that day of our Lord, Christ Jesus, for we will be among those who shine as jewels in His crown.

So I pray you hear the plea of Holy Spirit:

“I urge and entreat you, dearly beloved, by the name of the Lord, Christ Jesus, the entire Church, all of you be in perfect harmony and full agreement in what you say and do. That there would be no dissensions or factions or divisions among you; instead, that you be perfectly united in your common understanding and in your opinions and judgments; there is and has been among you contentions, wrangling and factions that they would cease.”



Sadly, accounts have been given the appearance of the Church is worse than that of world, for we profess faith, but live as though we deny its power is found in Christ Jesus not in self-interest. Just as Truth has the power to renew and reconcile, recover and restore so too does fear have the power to twist and distort, rob and destroy with anger, arrogance, hatred, bitterness....

All of this operates in a way to keep God away from us, and to prevent us from experiencing true freedom! So it will not be known: If the Word of Truth, the Son of God sets you free, you will be free indeed. The Word of Life, Christ Jesus, bestows on us a new way to live in faith knowing, believing, trusting we have a permanent place in God's family as sons who belong with Him forever (John 8:35-38).

With faith in God and His Word and the power of Grace that comes to us by Holy Spirit, we don't have to be afraid to retrieve old memories and confront feelings that have been stuffed or diminished or neglected. God's Word brings us reconciliation not just in regard to our spiritual well-being; He brings reconciliation into our soul.

God's Word can open eyes and ears so hands and minds and hearts would be opened to receiving Truth: The peace the Lord gives is not the same peace the world gives (John 8:35-36). The Lord brings peace into our thoughts and feelings so memories can be given rest. God has always intended His Holy Spirit to give that eternal Breath of Life so we can exhale/release what torments, and inhale/receive all the good God has planned for us since the beginning of time.



This is what Paul has said about this: I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ saved me for and wants me to be. There was a time when I thought of myself as a real Jew if there ever was one! You see, I was a member of the Pharisees who demanded the strictest obedience to every religious law and custom.

Yes, I was sincere. So much so that I greatly persecuted the Church; I was trying to obey every rule and regulation right down to the very last point. But, all of these things that I once thought very worthwhile – now I've cast them aside so that I can put my trust and hope in Christ alone, being obedient to the Word.



Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Jesus is God's Word and my Lord. I have put aside all else, counting it worth less than nothing, in order that I can have Christ, God's Word, Who makes us one with Him.

I'm no longer counting on being saved by being good enough, or by obeying religious laws and traditions, but by trusting Christ to save me! For God's way of making us right with Himself depends on faith – counting on Christ, the power and authority of God's Word, alone.

Now I have given up everything else! I have found it to be the only way to really know Christ. Through God's Word, the only Way to experience the mighty resurrection power of Holy Spirit that brought Jesus back to life again. The only Way to discover what it means to suffer and to die with Christ, so the Word of Truth could be exalted in my life always.

Whatever it takes, I will be one who lives in the fresh newness of Life of those who are alive from the dead. I am still not all I should be, but I am bringing all my energies to bear on this one thing: Forgetting the

past and looking forward to what lies ahead. I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God is calling us up to heaven because of what Christ Jesus did for us.

I hope all of you who are mature Christians will see eye-to-eye with me on these things, and if you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you – IF you fully obey the Truth you have (Phil. 3:5-16 TLB).



Truth the only Way to receive important details known by God not just in His Word, but details that explain what and how and when and where those learned behaviors sprang from, possibly from childhood. Character deficits and toxic tendencies that develop along life's journey to acquire what is deemed mine, mine, mine. Yes, quite often a child's display of temper; however, the immaturity laced within adult thought, emotion and belief is evidenced by the chaos, injury and destruction when the mine, mine, mine explodes. At what cost? How many lives affected?

In verse 18 of second Cor. 5 Paul also added, "Now all things are of God Who has given us the ministry of reconciliation (acceptance,

concession, peace). We become ambassadors for Christ (representatives, evangelists, spokespersons), as though God were making His appeal through us on behalf of what Christ has done so anyone; but, sadly not everyone, can be reconciled to God.”



This relationship with God starts out a bit unusually. His love for us is so great He commits Himself to us. His covenant (oath, word, seal), the promised Holy Spirit given to those who believe and are marked (identified, entitled, pronounced) to be in Jesus. God made this priceless deposit (to establish, orient, settle) thoughts and emotions by His Word of Truth, guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession (Eph. 1:13-14).

A simple decision, invite Jesus to be Lord and Savior; however, one that involves the complexity of sincerity, willingness and commitment, which posed a dilemma I was soon to confront.

I believed myself to be a good person who deserved God’s redemption. As a result, I went about living my life not realizing there were things that I was doing that actually nullified (invalidated, cancelled, overrode) and made of no effect the power and authority of

the Word of God because of tradition (custom, heritage, lifestyle) that is handed down (Mark 7:13).



For many years I took for granted my relationship with the Lord and His love for me. I said I loved and trusted Him, but when it came to commitment I cheated because my heart was elsewhere. Also, though I told the Lord how much I trusted Him, many times I interfered.

My thoughts turn to Abraham whose trust in God was so great he was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. I believe too much emphasis is given to what we receive from God, instead of what we are willing to sacrifice for Him.

There was much I had to learn about myself before I was able to really offer my heart as a living sacrifice. Like this fact – the price for serenity and peace of mind and heart definitely requires sacrifice of self.



I thought I had done as Rom. 12:1 instructs offering all of me because I definitely wanted to please God. This Scripture actually says “pleasing to God.” When I realized how much of my behavior was displeasing, it

was painful; however, there is always a 'But God' to be experienced. Though He showed me a picture of myself that was difficult to view, He was pleased to reveal one of me dwelling in His Word.

For years God has communicated to me through His Word so I could learn His will, His love, His judgments and His warnings; so I could hear Truth, learn there is Life everlasting, and follow the Way to find rest in the chambers of His heart.

Only God can transform failure and rejection, disappointment and despair when there is faith and hope and love not just for knowing His Word, but abiding in His Word.

It is awesome to believe Jesus, God's Son, is Savior - the Doorway to Life in heaven; but, what's truly astonishing to trust Jesus, God's Word, as Lord. When Truth is loved and exalted over self-opinion, we stand at the threshold (Alpha, Genesis, Fountainhead, Spring, Source, dawning, opening, emerging) into that abundant life to be shared with God right here on earth.



The Message Bible paraphrases what Jesus said this way:

“With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply –
Our Father in heaven, reveal Who You are.”

Matt. 6:9

God has given us His Word so we could know that He and Jesus are one (John 10:30). God’s Word makes all things about our heavenly Father known to us (John 17:26a) through the Spirit of Truth, Who will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears from the Lord will He share.

Holy Spirit guides us into all Truth to glorify the Lord, for He takes what is Christ’s and declares it to us (John 16:13-14 NKJV). So we can know when God’s goodness and compassion are accepted for oneself they fill to such a great capacity, that a mounting need arises to share God and His Word with others. How grateful I am that Holy Spirit caught my attention, and continues to fill my heart with faith and hope and love for God and for His Word.



Yes, I am definitely a work in progress, but Jesus has clothed me in the garments of salvation, which is ever unfolding to reveal an unrelenting

love that covers all of what's wrong with me. However, Truth and error have absolutely nothing in common. And though I believe my final destination will be heaven, there are many destinations yet to be determined. Will my faith be ever unfolding to reveal heaven's hold on me? Please pray for me!

Second Chron. 20:15 encourages us not to be afraid or discouraged because of the vastness of the enemy's army, for the battle is not ours, but God's. Scripture also tells us there are secret things that belong to God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, so we may follow God's Word (Deut. 29:29) right out onto the battlefield.

There are battlefields where death is made visible by the color red. There is the battlefield where God's last enemy, Death, (1 Cor. 15:26) will be destroyed because of the blood Jesus shed. Sadly, we engage in a war where the losses of death are way too often experienced – a hope, a dream, a relationship, finances, homes, loved ones... How much of our lives have been affected by an enemy that can't be seen, only experienced.

~

The very first war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But, he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down – that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to earth, and his angels with him (Rev. 12:7-9).

What happened? Death! God's Word gives some insight:

“Lucifer was a murderer from the beginning, and a hater of Truth, not an iota of Truth is in him. He speaks his native language – lies. When he lies, it is perfectly normal. When the Liar speaks, he makes things up out of his deceitful nature and fills the world with lies. He is the father of liars.”

John 8:44b Message/TLB



When Lucifer fell from heaven, the fire that pride and greed that anger and lust caused to roar within him set the flames of hell ablaze. And Sheol, the unseen state, the realm of the dead, has enlarged its appetite and opened its mouth without measure. People go into captivity to

their enemies without knowing it, because they have no knowledge of God, Who says:

“Yes, Hell is licking its chops in anticipation of this delicious morsel. Humanity will be destroyed, and people brought down; even the arrogant will lower their eyes in humiliation. Nobility and the multitude, the pomp (flamboyance, gaudiness, pretense) and tumult (upset, rebellion, furor), the drunken reveler who exults (brags, struts, shows off) shall surely descend into it.”

“But, the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will be exalted by His justice. The holiness of God will be displayed by His righteousness. In that day lambs will find good pastures, and fattened sheep and young goats will feed among the ruins.”

“What sorrow for those who say that evil is good and good is evil, that dark is light and light is dark, that bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter. What sorrow for those who are wise in their own eyes, and think themselves so clever. What sorrow

for those who are heroes at drinking wine, and boast about all the alcohol they can consume.”

“Just as fire licks up stubble, and dry grass shrivels in the flame, so too their roots will rot and their flowers wither. For they have rejected the ways of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies; they have despised the Word of the Holy One of Israel.”

“The shouts of the enemy sound like the roar of lions. Like strong, young lions, they growl and grab their prey. The captives struggle and try to escape, but there is no one to save them. Then there is a roar as loud as the ocean waves, and the captives turn their faces to the ground, for there is only darkness closing in as the Light fades away in a black cloud.”

Isa. 5:13-14 AMP, Isa. 5:15-18 NLT, Isa. 5:20-24 NLT, Isa. 5:29-30 ERV



Yes, there’s another battlefield on which attacks occur – our mind - a very personal realm scarred by the wounding of betrayal, deception, disappointment, affliction and the emotional trauma we experience. However, there are wounds we inflict upon ourselves, for these seven -

Pride, Greed, Lust, Envy, Gluttony, Wrath and Sloth – are deadly offenses that plague (pursue, torment, oppress) for they infect (contaminate, corrupt, transmit) disease (disorder, debility, unsoundness) within our very soul.

1. Pride produces fever (chaos, confusion, pandemonium): self-centeredness, opinion, confidence, reliance, regard, worth, esteem, trust...which leads to the development of ego, conceit, complacency, arrogance, presumption, assumption, pretention, selfishness
2. Greed brings trouble: self-interest, covetousness, discontent, impatience, ambition, aggression, pushiness, competitiveness, rivalries
3. Lust furthers complications by igniting: yearnings, longings, passions, impulses, compulsions, lewdness, mania, perversion, depravity, abusiveness, loathsomeness, profanity, vulgarity
4. Envy causes weaknesses – jealousy, resentment, animosity, enmity, ill-will, malice, spitefulness, maliciousness, malignancy, venom, grudge, bitterness, revulsion, disdain, discord, mean-spiritedness, viciousness, vindictiveness, abomination, which God identifies as:

- Idols
- The demise of a child
- Divination
- Sorcery – Witchcraft, Magic, Conjuring, Voodoo, Fetish, Hex
- Soothsayer – Fortune Telling
- Medium – Necromancer – Speaking to the Dead
- Harlotry – Sodomy
- Corruption in business dealings
- Withholding a repayment of a debt
- Haughtiness
- Lying
- Murder
- Plotting evil
- An eagerness to do what is wrong
- A false witness
- A trouble-maker that sows discord
- Rulers that commit wickedness
- Those who justify the wicked and condemn the righteous
- Faithless and treacherous behavior

5. Gluttony generates illness – overindulgence, excessiveness, insobriety, unreasonableness, irrationality, debauchery, immorality, unscrupulousness, fiendishness, indecency, miserableness, demoralization, wretchedness, wantonness

6. Wrath brings about disorder – anger, fury, indignation, outrage, madness, contrariness, crankiness, belligerence, defiance, malevolence, road-rage, nemesis, penalty, punishment, revenge, vengeance, retaliation, confinement, imprisonment, criticism, condemnation, denouncement, damnation

7. Sloth brings about infirmity – laziness, shiftlessness, languor, indifference, lukewarm-ness, halfhearted-ness, insensitivity, boredom, recklessness, carelessness, thoughtlessness, unawareness, ignorance, unconcern, disinterest, detachment, aloofness, hard-heartedness, callousness, lethargy, stupor, apathy, emotionless, disregard, disrespect, rejection, denial, abandonment



No wonder these seven are considered deadly. Such behaviors rob (ransack, ravish, spoil, exploit, fleece, swindle) life – our life.

Unfortunately, when such attitudes and tendencies are adopted we

become a source of evil – the thief, the liar, the slayer... The Lord issued this warning:

“The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy; I came so you could have real and eternal life, more and better life than could ever be dreamt of.”

John 10:10 Message

As the above lists confirms, when we mull over our thoughts and feelings we give negativity license to spread its inflammatory accelerants so the fires of pride or lust or wrath become ALL consuming.

Many an unforeseen consequence has been the result of menacing and treacherous thoughts and feelings that when acted upon, will not only be far reaching, but will boomerang back onto self. We just naturally plan and agree, approve and follow through with strategies (means, tactics, methods, concepts, intentions) that actually pave the way to our own downfall and ruin.

~

Ruin also refers to being broken, which my heart definitely was. Though I would not have been able to make this connection until years later, as I spent time with God's Word, Holy Spirit was making such a priceless investment in me, helping me to know vulnerability and transparency with the Lord.

Holy Spirit was working with me to help me remove the coverings we use – denial, avoidance, accusation...- so praise and thanksgiving and gratitude could be seen on display for the glory of the Lord.

Job tells us those whom God corrects are happy and fortunate; so do not despise or reject the correction of the Almighty, subjecting you to trial and suffering. For He wounds, but He binds up; He smites, but His hands heal (Job 5:17-18 AMP).

When this verse is read from a critical perspective, God could be thought of as being cruel. I have told my grandchildren, if you go out in the rain you're going to be rained on. If a person chooses to do the wrong things, certainly they are heading into a deluge of trouble.



Jesus assured His disciples:

“In THIS world you will have trouble.”

John 16:33a

God sent His Son so we could know there is another world in which to ascend. We don't have to be drug down into the depths of the grave (Ps. 83:13). We don't have to wait until our life on earth ends to know the benefits of becoming a citizen of heaven.

We know what is required of us to live in this world. We need to receive knowledge and understanding from God's Word so we won't allow our thoughts and feelings and opinions to rob of us citizenry in heaven, or not to know or understand the power and authority of God's Word.

If we give Truth a position of eminence in our lives; then, when a storm approaches the wails of the enemy, Satan himself, may not only be heard but felt, for evil's intent is to harm. But God, He intends to take what evil spawns so Good can be delivered. There is difference in every new born life, and Good can accomplish what needs to be done in us and through us on the earth, for the saving of many lives (Gen. 50:20).



Yes, bad things are going to happen. But God, He will protect you. So don't be fearful or angry or vengeful. Hold tightly to God's Word of Truth, because those who don't their sins will trap them. Those sins will be like ropes holding them back. Causing them to face Death a second time for refusing to be disciplined, to be corrected, to admit they have been wrong. Yes, they will be trapped by their own desires (Prov. 5:22-23 ERV).

And those with faith in Jesus as their Savior; but, are not clinging tightly to God's Word as their Authority and Lord, while on the earth evil is given time and opportunity to bring ungodly torment.

Why allow the enemy to get away with this? Like any visit made to ensure our physical welfare, the probing and operations of Holy Spirit may be uncomfortable, but for the holistic well-being of our lives they are essential.



So let us examine and probe our ways. For why should anyone offer complaint in view of their sins? Because of our stubbornness we have

each transgressed and rebelled. Let us turn back to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts and hands to the God of heaven (Lam. 3:39-42 ERV).

Why? This is an important time in which we live. Yes, it is now time for us to wake up from our sleep. Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is almost finished. The Day is almost here.

We should stop doing whatever belongs to darkness, and prepare ourselves to fight evil with the weapons that belong to the Light, living in the right way (Rom. 13:11-13 ERV).

So turn to God's Word and clothe yourself with Jesus (Rom. 13:14).

Holy Spirit will help you take off your old self with its practices and put on the new self, which is being renewed in the image of its Creator by the knowledge received from the Word of Life (Col. 3:9-10).

The Spirit of Truth will be at work within you, helping you to know and understand the ways and will of God. He helps you to do what pleases God, and He gives you the power to do it (Phil. 2:13 ERV). As we grow in knowledge of Jesus, so too will our spiritual muscle as God's Word makes a personal impression in our soul.



As man, Jesus was taken from a garden in Gethsemane revealing the intentions of evil since the Garden of Eden has been to lie, to kill, to steal and to destroy the presence of all that is Good.

And though our heavenly Father doesn't desire that we face ruin, to be broken-hearted, He knows for some it is a necessary evil. Ruin can actually cause every heartfelt touch of Good to be valued and appreciated (recognized, special, cherished) and remembered as being God-sent specifically for us.

I was so ingrained in the hand-me-downs of this world, that ruin was a necessary evil. However, a most remarkable experience resulted from all the upset and sorrow; however, explaining the miraculous isn't easy.

When I turned to God's Word for comfort and encouragement, Holy Spirit not only breathed life into my soul, by His Resurrection power He revived God's Word so the glory of the Lord could be seen shining through.

I no longer opened God's Word just to read passages written on the pages of a book, I was entering arms opened wide to embrace me, to support me, to help me confront and be victorious over what is harmful. When I really got it, got what Jesus did for me personally that through the Word I could come to know, until I knew that I knew that I knew I am the beloved of the Lord.

I could relax and learn to be me. The me God designed me to be. I could let go and let God help me so I could receive all He intends for me to have. I can rest secure in the Lord, for God's Word shields me all the day long. I am one the Lord loves, and I can rest my head between His shoulders (Deut. 33:12).



Ps. 17:13 speaks of a time of physical battles, when fear and hatred and confusion are on the attack, "Rise up, O Lord, confront them, bring them down; rescue me from the wicked by Your sword, from men of this world whose reward is in this life."

There are also internal battles with which we struggle maybe not realizing the personal interest and concern the Lord has not just for our spiritual welfare but for the well-being of our body and our soul.

When the true significance of what Jesus has already done for each of us is honored as it truly should be, then God's Word can and will have a personal and powerful impact on us.

Holy Spirit gives voice to God's Word:

"Rise up _____! The Lord, Christ Jesus, will help you confront the likes of fear and hatred and confusion so they can be brought down. He will rescue you from evil."

"Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Take the helmet of salvation so your heart does not cause you to run out or lag behind. Lift the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

"Submit yourself to God. Resist the devil and his cohorts, and they will flee from you. Come near to God through His Word so He can come near to you. Truth will help you to wash your hands, for all have sinned and fallen short of God's divine greatness."

“God’s Word purifies the heart of double-minded people through faith in His Word. God makes a person right by His free gift of grace. People are made right with God by being made free from the penalty of sin through His Son.”

“God gave Jesus as the Way to forgive the sins of mankind through their faith in Him. He can and does forgive because the blood Jesus shed pays for their sins. God gave Jesus to show that He always does and always will do what is right and fair and just.”

Ps. 17:13 ERV, 2 Chron. 20:15, James 4:7-8, Rom. 3:23-25 ERV



Yes, there were three crosses on that Calvary hill. One reveals to the world what Jesus accomplished when the goodness of God is lifted up. The others reveal there are only ever two choices do what is right so God can be glorified or do what glorifies me, myself and I.

From the Word of Truth, God’s goodness – grace and mercy and forgiveness – flows abundantly from heaven throughout the world. Yes, there are only two choices - be laden down with the shame and guilt and sins for being pride-filled and stubborn, or look to God’s

Word and be Hope-filled renewed and empowered so knowledge and discernment and wisdom can help us recover from _____.

Without struggle, Jesus laid Himself down on that cross to reveal God's love for mankind. Death could not prevent God from exalting His Word so **Truth** could be glorified; Sin could not prevent God from bestowing an abundance of **Life** that spans a-Cross time and eternity; Satan, Himself could not prevent God from forging the **Way** into the most Holy of Holies where grace and mercy and loving-kindness freely flow.



Satan has many titles, and this one would definitely apply - Arsonist. When we concentrate on ourselves, what we think and how we feel, we too become as an arsonist igniting desires, longings, cravings, infatuations... An internal burning that when ignored or nurtured could erupt into a wildfire of mayhem and destruction.

Holy Spirit reminded me of a vision I had several years ago while attending a prayer meeting. During the quiet time spent in the presence of the Lord, I saw images of several different forms of fire. From the darkness each form appeared: a campfire, flames of fire, a

man of fire, licks of fire, rays of fire, candle fire, flares of fire, fire like that of a shooting star and a wild brush fire. Not so easy to describe because the flames differed in shape and intensity as did their hues – orange, red, yellow, white – varied in brightness.

As I laid there thinking about what I saw, once again the darkness was slightly illumined into darker shades of steely gray by what appeared to be an amber source of light. As if this wasn't strange enough, the most bizarre effect took place. The semi-darkness seemed to resemble a mesh-like substance that was being pushed through until a 3D shape emerged, and I was gazing in astonishment at the face of Jesus.



Interpretations are a personal matter, for what the Lord shares is as pertinent and unique as we each are to Him. When this vision occurred, the wish I would have made as the flame of that shooting star soared by would have been for ministry so God and His Word would be glorified. What I am putting together with these booklets may be the answer to that heart-felt desire, but it wasn't even a thought or desire twinkling at the time.

What I can say, this was definitely an unusual experience, but there was no fear because Holy Spirit kept the peace of Christ kindling within my heart. We are all aware of how unpleasant it is to be in the presence of fear.

Paul wrote to assure, it's not God, Who gives us a spirit of fear. From Him we receive the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:17). However, being in the presence of the fear of the Lord is more than completely satisfying, it's edifying (uplifting, inspiring, comforting, encouraging, loving, warm,,,) all wrapped up in One.

There's a sense of awe and reverence that fills a soul because it saturates the very atmosphere. Making this so understandable: When God's Word tells of those who have fallen to the ground whenever the presence of all that is Good is around.



I have given myself credit for so much that only God, Who is able to do immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine, does according to His power that works within us (Eph. 3:20), and for me these booklets provide ample evidence of this truth. There has been no pre-planning of content only trust in Holy Spirit to raise awareness so

the Light of Life would emerge from what God shared in the first few chapters of the Book of Genesis.

Being familiar with God's Word will cause the most miraculous things to develop and emerge from within us. This is why God wants not just our eyes but our heart to be opened to His Word so we can know the resurrection power of Holy Spirit.

God has given each of us time and opportunity to start experiencing His miraculous work within us, since it is God Who establishes us through His Word of Truth so we can stand firm in Christ Jesus. God anoints us. He sets His seal of ownership on us, and puts His Spirit in our heart as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come (2 Cor. 1:21-22).

Gen. 1:1-4 tells of the beginning when God created all that we see and are. But, it also reveals the beginning of our being transformed into the likeness of the One Who created us. The Spirit of God not only hovers over the waters within our earthen vessel, He fills our formless and empty spirit with God's Word so the darkness that has fallen over the deep surface of our soul can be separated, and we can emerge as light of the world.



Jesus said:

“I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, for they will have the Light of Life. They too will be lights in this world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp, and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before the world, that people may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

John 8:12, Matt. 5:1-16

If you have not done so, be reconciled to God, Who sent His Word so we would know the Lord was with God from the beginning. And, in Christ there is eternal life, and this life gives light to all mankind. His life is the light that shines through the darkness – and the darkness can never extinguish it (John 1:2-t TLB).

The Spirit of Truth reveals people find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. And this is because the mercy of our God is very tender,

and heaven's dawn is about to break through to give light to those who sit in darkness and death's shadow, and to guide those willing to step out in faith to travel the path of peace (Luke 1:77-79 TLB).

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

- The first key is to maintain an honest view of reality not only considering particular circumstances and events as substantial, but recognizing the substance of Truth – the Life, the Alpha and Omega, the heart and the spirit as we work on taking steps of faith-knowing, believing, trusting:
 - God exists and I matter to Him
 - Admitting we are powerless
 - Admitting that certain areas our lives have become unmanageable
 - Believing God will restore us with Love, a Sound Mind and Power
 - Trusting God will help us stay committed to this decision to put all of who we are into His possession and safekeeping

- Believing the Word of God will encourage, support and strengthen us as we make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves
- Realizing 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 the Word of 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's help, 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



And the Spirit of Truth, will come, and guide us into all Truth (John 16:13) so we can don the armor of righteousness, as we learn to patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind (2 Cor. 6:4,7b NLT). We belong to the Day, so let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet (1 Thess. 5:8).

We can faithfully serve God whether people honor us or despise us, whether they slander us or praise us (2 Cor. 6:8 NLT) because our faith does not rest on our own wisdom, but on God's power (1 Cor. 2:5).

Yes, those who have been buried with Jesus in baptism and raised with Him through faith in the power of God, Who raised Christ from the dead (Col. 2:10), can and will receive this gift - Peace of mind and heart. The Peace the Lord gives is a gift the world cannot give. So don't

be troubled or afraid (John 14:27 NLT); instead, be joyfully God-dependent.

Know that peace of mind makes the entire body (soul and spirit) healthy, but jealousy – covetousness, envy, resentment, enmity, hatred, malice, spitefulness... - is like a cancer (Prov. 14:30 ERV). But those who through the righteousness of God and our Savior Christ Jesus have received such a precious faith that grace and peace can be ours in abundance (2 Pet. 1:1). Why? God is love (1 John 4:8).



Love requires intimate knowledge, which is so essential, and cannot be truly realized unless another is given time and access to our heart. God gives us such treasured gifts the first being life with time to spend. For years I was not investing my time wisely. For instance, how often in my relationships I was guilty of usurping (taking over, infringing, invading) boundaries.

A sad admission, but I have since learned a hidden goal of “People Pleasing” is to have others conform to our way of thinking. Things I saw about myself were difficult to view. I wanted to bless and be helpful; instead, I had to discover and acknowledge my behavior was

at times disrespectful, intrusive and simply down right rude and offensive.

However, when I did come to the end of myself, a place where a lot of my deficits of character could be exposed, I discovered Jesus is that Friend Who sticks closer than a brother not wanting me to come as Prov.18:24 says to ruin (defeated, torn down, swept away).



Holy Spirit breathes life into the Word of God so Jesus can be seen and known as: The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; however, don't be fooled by no means will He clear the guilty (Ex. 34:6-7).

As I gained knowledge of what are as plagues against humanity – pleasing self and others, codependency and trauma, fear, confusion and deception... – God in His goodness and mercy, patience and loving-kindness works to reveal and counter and reconcile all such opposition with His Word of Truth.

God gives us His Spirit to apply salve on our spiritual eyes so Truth can be recognized, considered and received as words of the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Ruler of God's creation. Words that caused me to examine myself, was I really playing it safe being neither against the Lord or totally committed? How hard to hear Him say:

“I wish you were either one or the other.”

Yes, I came to Jesus, and believed God marked me and set me in His Son; however, my hope and faith and trust was found to be firmly set in others. Would Jesus really spew me from Himself because the desire to become His spitting image was lacking?



Another sad admission, there was much that I highly esteemed because I absolutely did view myself as rich. Not so much in monetary wealth, although we could afford to be adventurous. I felt rich in family both personal and church, possessions and career. I was totally unaware of what motivated me – a heart that hides its evil like nothing else can. It can be very sick (warped, queerish, diseased), and no one really understands it (Jer. 17:9 ERV).

God was right I didn't realize how wretched or how pitiful my lifestyle. Nor did I understand just how spiritually poor (famished, needful, possession-less) I was. How blind to the ways and will of God, naked (earthy, natural, unadorned) (Rev. 3:14-17). I may have read my Bible each morning, but after it was closed I was dressed to do life my way.



What's amazing the Lord hung in there with me; Jesus' counsel (admonishment, recommendation, solution):

“Buy from Me gold refined in fire, so you can become rich.”

Rev. 3:18a

Gold and silver are products of God – they are not a creation of man. Gold is a precious metal that is associated with wealth, grandeur and prosperity; the color of success, achievement and triumph; gold represents the sovereignty, majesty and splendor of Jesus - of Life, of Truth and a more excellent Way - Who discloses higher ideals, wisdom, understanding and enlightenment; meant to inspire interest and relationship with God and deeper understanding of self and the soul.

Gold is a cousin to yellow, which is associated with illumination, love, compassion, courage and passion. Together they are used to describe fire, and fire represents the presence of God and how He refines us. Yellow represents the joy, the presence of God and God's anointing, while gold represents His holiness, divine nature and majesty.

Information taken from the website Find Any Answer:

<https://findanyanswer.com/what-does-gold-represent-in-the-bible>.



The following information tells of the many things gold represents in the Bible, and was taken from the website Prison Fellowship:

www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/what-does-the-color-gold-represent-when-used-in-the-bible/

- The value of God's Word, wisdom, and judgement Job 28; Psalms 19:7-11; Psalms 119:127-128; Proverbs 3:13-14
- The pure foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; Revelation 3:18
- The sanctification or purifying of one's faith Job 23:8-12; Psalms 66:10; Zechariah 13:9; Isaiah 48:10; Malachi 3:1-3; 1 Peter 1:3-9

- The value of a person to God
1 Peter 1:18-19
- The object of man's idolatry
Exodus 20:23; Psalms 115:1-8; Psalms 135:15-18; Daniel 5:4;
Revelation 9:20
- The object of the wasteful desires of people
Ecclesiastes 2:8-11; 1 Timothy 6:6-12
- The impurities (dross) in gold represent the impure in heart
Ezekiel 22:19
- The deeds motivated by the love of God and love of our neighbor
1 Corinthians 3:11-15
- The gold accumulated by man is worthless in eternity
Zechariah 14:14; Ezekiel 16-19; Revelation 18:9-16



Yes, Jesus says:

“Buy gold refined in fire from Me so you can become rich. And white clothes to cover your nakedness. Remember, those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, serious-minded and repent. And to those who overcome, I

will give the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”

Rev. 3:14-22

The Lord is always willing to share, always hoping His voice will be heard. We are baptized by man in water, but Jesus baptizes with Holy Spirit and with fire (Matt. 3:11). Why? A spiritual workout with God’s Word sanctifies, purifies, consecrates, makes holy and separates us from the masses when Truth is heard; God’s Word is Truth (John 17:170).

And like any other workout there will be a burning as the heart gives way so we can be clothed with Jesus (Rom. 13:14). The hard times I experienced definitely caused my heart to burn with the problems that arose. However, the most remarkable transformation occurred as I collaborated with Holy Spirit, the attitudes of my mind were being made new (Eph. 4:23). The only person I could change was me, and while going through this dark time I discovered: All I really need is Jesus.



God’s Word! And, when a personal connection is made Truth not only fills us with awe and reverence, wonder and amazement as it reveals

the jealousy (warmth, heat, passion) of Love for me, for you. Love is as unyielding and enduring as the grave (SS 8:6). God doesn't want anyone to face Death a second time, for then an eternal burning will occur in that lake of sulfur (Rev. 21:8).

Yes, it is a timely and ongoing process exploring the Word of God, but what is eternal will be yours resting in the love of Jesus. Right now the pages of the Bible give voice to the words of the Lover of our soul so we can read, then hope, then proclaim my Husband is Christ Jesus, and He has set His banner over me - LOVE (SS 2:4).

HIS BANNER OVER ME

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsPB6zgd184>

I'm my Beloved's and He is mine

His banner over me is love

I'm my Beloved's and He is mine

His banner over me is love

I'm my Beloved's and He is mine

His banner over me is love

His banner over me is love

He brought me to His banqueting table

His banner over me is love

He brought me to His banqueting table

His banner over me is love

He brought me to His banqueting table

His banner over me is love

His banner over me is love

He lifted me up to the heavenly places

His banner over me is love

He lifted me up to the heavenly places

His banner over me is love

He lifted me up to the heavenly places

His banner over me is love

His banner over me is love

I'm my Beloved's and He is mine

His banner over me is love

I'm my Beloved's and He is mine

His banner over me is love

I'm my Beloved's and He is mine

His banner over me is love

His banner over me is love

Song by Christy Nichols



When Adam and Eve lived in Promise with Life in abundance there was no thought of receiving joy and happiness and pleasure from anyone else but God, Who has given us what really matters His Word:

“When you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God then you are in error. For instance, at the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.”

“But, about the resurrection of the dead – God has said:

‘I am the God of Abraham,
The God of Isaac,
And the God of Jacob’

“He is not the God of the dead but of the living.”



Adam didn't know Eve as his wife (Gen. 4:1) until they were forced to seek peace and contentment from one another. Those things that money could never buy, and certainly can't be secured through self-serving effort for even wealth and privilege can't procure true contentment.

Since the fall of mankind from the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), we can't possess the riches of Promise or Life with abundance unless we ASK for Understanding, and SEEK Knowledge from the Word and KNOCK and keep on knocking until the door is open so sustenance from the Bread of Life can be received (John 6:48).

Communication is essential! Anything that's needed or desired requires we ask for information, we have to seek instructions and knock on many, many doors to obtain what is necessary – some assistance. God absolutely knows what is essential – the need of His assistance right now, right here on earth. What is needed is to hear from God so He gave us His Word:

“Suppose you went to a friend’s house at midnight, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread. You would shout up to him: A friend of mine has just arrived for a visit and I’ve nothing to give him to eat. Your friend would call down from his bedroom: Please don’t ask me to get up. The door is locked for the night and we are all in bed. I just can’t help you this time.”

“But I’ll tell you this – though he won’t do it as a friend, if you keep knocking long enough, he will get up and give you everything you want – just because of your persistence. And, so it is when communicating with God – keep on asking and you will keep on receiving; keep on looking and you will keep on finding; knock and the door will be opened.”

“Everyone who asks, receives; all who seek, find; and the door is opened to everyone who knocks.”

“You men who are fathers – if your boy asks for bread, do you give him a stone? You women who are mothers your daughter asks for fish, do you give her a snake? You who are

parents, if your child asks for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not!”

“And, if even sinful people give children what they need, don’t you realize that your heavenly Father will do as much, giving you Holy Spirit so that you can be heard and partake in the Bread of Life.”

Luke 11:5-13 TLB



Adonai, Lord and Master, asks:

“Am I God only when near, and not when far away? Can anyone hide in a place so secret that I won’t see them? Do I not fill heaven and earth?”

“Those who do what they know is wrong have not set their heart on seeking the Lord. Why? Heaven’s Message is not important to them; their heart neither cares for nor seeks after Truth.”

“But those who have tasted and now know how good the Bread of Life, even as they sleep their heart will be awake to the sound of My love knocking!”

Jer. 23:23-24 CJB, 2 Chron. 12:14 NIV, 2 Chron. 12:14 Message, SS 5:2 ASB



Yes, God so loved the world, He sent His only Son (John 3:16)! But, He doesn't have to give us what we ask for just to please us. We don't have to ask where God is when trouble comes our way for His Word says:

“The Lord goes before you, and the God of Israel is your rear guard.”

Isa. 52:12

God has given us His very great and precious promises through His Word, to trust and to treasure so we can participate in the Divine nature and escape the corruption in this world caused by what evil desires (2 Pet. 1:3-4). So we can escape the efforts of the destroyer (death) to put us entirely out of the way so Truth and Righteousness can't be received.

The fate of a heart lifted up by a mind and spirit hardened so they act proudly (Dan. 5:20 AMP), without faith in the written Word of God to admonish and fit them for right action by the Lord's good instruction (1 Cor. 10:1-11 AMP).



Without hope in God; instead, in themselves and others; they remain darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God due to the ignorance that is in a hardened heart (Eph. 4:18). A soul unable or just unwilling to understand from the beginning God chose to provide salvation for mankind. However, He also determined His call would be heard through the Gospel, so we could share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The beloved of the Lord, with faith God will save us through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through our belief in the Truth will stand firm and hold to the teachings of God's Word (2 Thess. 2:13-15). God's call has been accepted: Take action, and receive this faith that has once for all been entrusted to God's people (Jude 3).

Take action, set boundaries, make the decision to turn your life and will over to the care of God. Make the conscientious choice to seek

knowledge of Jesus, for when the student is ready, the Teacher appears. As does grace and mercy, peace and love for they are granted in abundance to those in right standing with God. Those who have chosen to glorify God by conforming to His will in purpose, thought and action (Gal. 5:5 AMP).



God sent His Word in flesh to dwell among us (John 1:14). God sends His Word so the Spirit of His Son can dwell in our heart, and we can know Love: Jesus laid down His life (1 John 3:16) so we can personally discover the amazing, awe inspiring love God has for us.

Death could not extinguish such a fierce love. Many a heart hardened by pride could not prevent the love of Christ from reaching into the world, into homes, into hearts and thoughts and lips. Though fear's promise is one of punishment a Love this perfect is so transformational fear is consumed when honor and respect and reverence is given to the One Who is our Deliverer (Dan. 6:27).

The love of God far surpasses our knowledge for it flows from the Giver of Wisdom and Compassion Who knows what we need before we even ask (Matt. 6:8)



An immeasurable Love extended to the world, to each and every heart. However, only those who know the strength and power of God's Word will be able to receive Love's reward – Victory.

Victory over death, over doubt, over disbelief and unforgiveness!
Victory over the error and deceit a heart possesses, for God is greater than our heart (1 John 3:20b).

When we are learning God's Word, and allowing Holy Spirit to help train us to walk in the Way of Life and Truth; then, God will give us what He promised, an undivided heart, so we may fear His name (Ps. 86:11). Not just knowing but believing with all our heart everything comes from the hand of God (1 Chron. 29:13). His arm is endued with power, His hand is strong, His right hand exalted (Ps. 89:13).

So don't fear for God is with you (Isa. 41:10a). Be confident that God not only is working in the mess for the good of those who love Him in and through ALL things (Rom. 8:28); but, He will also carry out to completion this good work He has begun in us until the day of Christ

Jesus (Phil. 1:5). For it is God Who justifies, who is it that condemns (Rom. 8:33-34)?



Who sets us free from stinking thinking and a life of slavery being dominated by sin? God knows and we must understand there is another power within us that is at war with our mind. For though we may want to do what is right, we inevitably become distressed maybe even discouraged by habitually doing what is wrong (Rom. 7:21-24).

At times we may be at the end of our rope, for sin is there to trip us up. The answer, thank God, is Christ Jesus, the Word of Truth and Life (Rom. 7:21-25 Message). The Lord died – more than that, He was raised to life – to the right hand of God and is interceding in heaven right now in our behalf (Rom. 8:33).

Jesus gave His all to set things right in this life of contradictions where our desire is to serve God with all our heart and mind, but we are pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different (Rom. 7:25 MESSAGE).

The power of our will propels us through this fallen world. Sadly, unpleasant experiences occur that enforce our clinging to the likes of fear and anger, bitterness and unforgiveness. God sent His Word to walk in the presence of every sort of evil. And though He was not intimidated or bullied into the hands of Sin its abusive and corrupt behavior was publicly displayed as Jesus faced down Death.



Though our journey in this life has been affected, and our soul infected by Evil, Sin and Death, God sends Holy Spirit so the very breath of Truth can be received, and we can learn and perceive Life differently.

When we invite the Word of God, Christ Jesus, to walk with us we learn to see from His perspective. Faith in Fear can be exchanged for faith in God's goodness; condemnation can be exchanged for God's eternal loving-kindness.

We can do as Jesus did and walk in the presence of fear and sin and death; however, Fear of the Lord can be chosen and exalted not just with words but with the loyalty and love for Him we ensure our heart possesses.

When our behavior reflects the decision we have made to please God not me, myself, and I - and others; then, when our own heart accuses, criticizes or condemns, even if there is something to it, we can shut it down because we know (recognize and understand) we are of God, We believe and trust His Word of Truth (I John 3:20-21). We have chosen to always remember, to always give thanks and praise for heaven's Love and Mercy and Faithfulness have atoned for all our sin (Prov. 16:6).

When a heart is filled with awe and wonder, reverence and amazement for the great sacrifice God made to reveal His resurrection power is also meant to be received by us, God's Word will help us grasp the importance of the fear of the Lord, for this is wisdom: To be made secure through understanding Truth, so evil can be shunned (Job 28:28).



Accepting the Lord's invitation a one-time decision to give your life to Him; however, giving ALL of ourselves will affect, and will have an effect on every decision for a lifetime. No matter what you may think or feel if given time and opportunity the Word of God will reveal some things are topsy-turvy.

Trust me there are times when my heart still criticizes and causes hard feelings to arise. BUT GOD, when THE decision is made to focus on the Lord, the Truth and Life and Way will always be found to take our focus off of a heart's desire or circumstance or betrayal...For God brings Clarity to remove confusion, Truth to dissolve deception, Knowledge to bring awareness, Love to defeat fear, Revelation to make a personal impression, and Understanding to melt a heart.

Here are a few things to consider:

- I don't always know what God's will is for me, but I always know what it's not
- F.E.A.R. False Evidence Appearing Real
- Success means getting your BUT out of the way
- The road to resentment is paved with expectation
- The lesson I must learn is simply that my control is limited to my own behavior, my own attitudes
- It is not the experience of today that drives people mad, it is the remorse of yesterday and the dread of tomorrow
- It's a shame we can't forget our troubles the same way we forget our blessings

- The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us
- If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere



This is why I share knowledge of God because He leads us into promise and potential by giving us Faith in His Son, Hope to find the way to heaven, Love to cast out fear, Peace that goes beyond our understanding so we can have peace of mind and heart in every situation.

To be yourself with God and others brings the richness of simplicity (1 Tim. 6:6 Message) freed from the likes of ambiguity, deviousness and obscurity; pretention, skepticism and depression.

We can stop allowing negativity to be so very harmful by acquiring knowledge that will help us make the only possible changes – to ourselves. HOW: Honesty, Open-Mindedness, Willingness to step out in a new direction.

To take action and:

- ACCEPT - God's testimony about His Son (1 John 5:9)
 - COMMIT - Commit your spirit into the Lord's hands (Ps. 31:5)
 - TURN IT OVER - Turn all things about your life over to God for repair, recovery, renewal, revitalization and revelation (2 Kings 12:7)
 - IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING - God will show you a more excellent Way (1 Cor. 12:31)
 - ONE DAY AT A TIME - Without worry of tomorrow for it will not add a single hour to your life (Matt. 6:34)
 - NEXT STEP - Letting go and letting God so you can grow in love for Him, yourself and others (2 Peter 1:6 TLB)
- By taking this next step of action - THE decision has been made to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God - we will learn how to identify what we want, and then consider that important
 - We will work on letting go and practicing detachment
 - We may wallow in feelings, especially anger, as we come alive emotionally
 - We will learn how to terminate and initiate relationships
 - We will learn how to have fun - though we may have to make ourselves do that, and that may take years

- Though we have made many mistakes, we learn that mistakes are okay they always point out our need for a Savior
- We will learn how to communicate, to laugh, to cry, to ask for help
- We will learn how to react less and act more; quietly, confident that who we are is okay
- We will learn to own our power
- We will also learn we must constantly return to the act of surrender in order to own our power
- We will learn that self-care is not narcissistic or indulgent – self-care is the one thing we can do that most helps us and others too
- We will learn how to let others love us, and how to allow the “Good Stuff” to happen in our lives
- We will learn how to let God love us
- In order to be able to turn over our wills to God, we must first commit and surrender our lives to Jesus
- When you choose to live this principle, you will consciously choose to commit all your life and will to Christ’s care and control
- If anyone knew what it was like to be on an emotional roller coaster, it was Jesus
- One minute He was being hailed, and the next He was being nailed

- Within a week's time His disciples deserted Him, Judas betrayed Him, Peter denied Him and the Jewish elite condemned Him, an angry crowd mocked Him and the Romans crucified Him
- People can be mean-hearted and wildly unpredictable
- If you let them, they'll send you on an emotional coaster ride
- Even though this step is a beginning to "Let go and let a Higher Power," at this stage of our renewal and recovery we are not as able to turn our will and our lives over to the care of a Higher Power as we will be after learning, working and taking the next few steps
- We will gain a lot more information as we look at how our self-destructive codependent behaviors have impacted us personally and the lives of others with whom we are in relationship, and then we'll know more specifically what we have to turn over
- The first three words of this step - "Made a decision" - are very important decision to turn our life and our will over to the care of God
- Again, at this stage of our renewal and recovery most of us really don't know how to turn our will and our lives over to the care of a Higher Power

- But we make a decision that our intention is to do just that
- And during the process of taking steps our Higher Power will teach us to reach for excellence not perfection
- The Word of Truth will teach us how to let go
- How to stop solving everything ourselves
- How to stop using our own will
- How to stop trying to control the outcome of our lives

- The decision is “Yes, I’m going to learn how to turn it over and I’m going to begin learning by taking the next step and then the next one for there is much to be gleaned within the 12
 - A number symbolizing God and His powers
 - A number relating to your faith and life purpose
 - Indicating new beginnings and positive changes
 - A destiny of peace and harmony for your soul
 - With God’s help you will be successful and make improvements in all areas of your life

- So begin to notice:
 - When you’re struggling to use your own will
 - Trying to make a change by yourself
 - Attempting to solve a problem alone

- Seeking to control the outcome of your life or someone else's
 - Remember E.G.O. is Edging God Out
 - As you catch yourself -- Remember your very next step should be to turn it over to your Higher Power, for me this is Jesus
-
- Take courage because the Lord's ability to create peace is greater than the evil one's ability to stir up turmoil
-
- Remember, courage is faith that has said it prayers
 - Don't be intimidated
 - Trauma causes the rules of logic to be suspended and raw emotions to rule
 - Realize - Hell, spirituality is for those who have been there
 - You may still go through times when you may respond to what feels like an attack by overreacting and "losing it"
 - Remember nothing is going to happen today that you and God can't handle
 - The over-reactor's credo is to fight fire with fire -- get them before they get you
 - WILLPOWER - our willingness to seek the assistance of our Higher Power
 - G.O.D. Good Orderly Direction

- Another way of coping is through distancing -- numbing feelings by hitting the emotional off switch -- becoming unavailable
- Remember, Fear is the darkroom where negatives are developed
- Taking this step to turn our lives over to God's care encourages us to force Gratitude because it is probably the most helpful life tool available – and also by taking unremitting steps instead of ones that are tentative for they lead us into sound judgment, awareness, acceptance, detachment and positive action
- With any tool, thinking about using it will never be enough – it only works when we pick it up in our hands, and actually begin to use it
- Just as knowledge of the answers never made anyone slip – it was failing to practice the known answers
- This step is the step of Surrender, where we become free to take care of ourselves, with the assistance of our Higher Power
- Surrender doesn't mean we are helpless, or surrender to abuse or intolerable circumstances
- Surrender means we acknowledge our circumstances, then ask God to help us take care of ourselves in these circumstances
- While working this step of surrender:

- We learn how to say no
 - How to set boundaries
 - How to listen to our feelings, wants and needs
 - How to respond to others in a responsible, loving way
 - How to respond to external circumstances in a reasonable way, one that exhibits self-care, self-respect and respect for others
-
- We begin to recognize how our codependent behaviors have created within us a distorted relationship to willpower which leads to continual attempts to control and fix problems in order to keep others happy
 - The confusion of identities can actually make doing so seem imperative
 - Co-dependency is a learned behavior that is passed down from one generation to another
 - It is an emotional and behavioral condition that affects a person's ability to have a healthy, mutually rewarding and satisfying relationship
 - It is also known as "Relationship Addiction" because one-sided relationships are often formed and hence difficult to maintain

- The subconscious hope is the other person will see all the love that is being given and be inspired to change
- There is a belief that if we hang in there and give our love, understanding and support, we will finally get the love we desire and deserve
- This codependent thinking is deeply self-destructive due to the lack of healthy boundaries that protect us from the unacceptable and abusive behavior of others
- Codependency is responsible for the development of harmful tendencies and behaviors in everyone because we learn from childhood to lean on, depend on and rely on others
- Being God-dependent is a life changing choice
- For only God can help us learn to be responsible for the effort not the outcome
- If God is the co-pilot change seats
- For there is no magic involved in our renewal and recovery only miracles
- So let your mind be like a parachute – they won't work unless they're open

Dear God, I believe You sent Your Son, Jesus, to die for my sins so I can be forgiven. I'm sorry for my sins, and I want to live the rest of my life the way You want me to. Please put Your Spirit in my life to direct me. Amen

JUST BE HELD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s53R3aj5pfc>

Hold it all together

Everybody needs you strong

But life hits you out of nowhere

And barely leaves you holding on

And when you're tired of fighting

Chained by your control

There's freedom in surrender

Lay it down and let it go

So when you're on your knees and answers seem so far away

You're not alone, stop holding on and just be held

Your world's not falling apart, it's falling into place

I'm on the throne, stop holding on and just be held

Just be held, just be held

If your eyes are on the storm
You'll wonder if I love you still
But if your eyes are on the cross
You'll know I always have and I always will

And not a tear is wasted
In time, you'll understand
I'm painting beauty with the ashes
Your life is in My hands

So when you're on your knees and answers seem so far away

You're not alone, stop holding on and just be held
Your world's not falling apart, it's falling into place
I'm on the throne, stop holding on and just be held

Just be held, just be held

Lift your hands, lift your eyes

In the storm is where you'll find Me
And where you are, I'll hold your heart

I'll hold your heart

Come to Me, find your rest

In the arms of the God who won't let go

So when you're on your knees and answers seem so far away

You're not alone, stop holding on and just be held

Your world's not falling apart, it's falling into place
I'm on the throne, stop holding on and just be held

(Stop holding on and just be held)

Just be held, just be held

Just be held, just be held

Song by Casting Crowns