

## GOD RESTED

Since the creation of the world, after God had finished all His work He rested. Yes, in the beginning was the Word. Before anything else existed, there was Christ, with God. Jesus has always been alive and is Himself God. Christ Jesus, the Word of God, through Him all things were created; nothing exists that He didn't make (John 1:1-3 TLB).

The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow. God's Word, Christ Jesus, judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered, and laid bare before the eyes of Him to Whom we must give account (Heb. 4:12-13).

Eternal life is in the Lord, and this life gives light to all mankind. The Life in God's Word is the light that shines through the darkness, which the darkness has not understood, nor can the darkness ever extinguish (John 1:1-5 TLB) the Light of the World (John 8:12). God's Word is a lamp that guides our steps, a Light that shows the path that we should take (Ps. 119:105 ERV).



God is faithful! Do you think that He is like people of the world who say “Yes” when they really mean “No”? God’s Word does not waver between “Yes” and “No.” For Jesus Christ, the Son of God, does not waver between “Yes” and “No.” God has given His Word to the world as His ultimate “Yes,” He does what He says. For all of God’s promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding “Yes!” And through Christ, our “Amen” (which means “Yes” So Be It) ascends to God for His glory (2 Cor. 1:17-20 NLT).

God has given us His promise and His oath. Now when someone takes an oath, they call on someone greater than themselves to hold them to it. And without any question that oath is binding. God also bound Himself with an oath, so that those who received the promise could be perfectly sure that He would never change His mind.

Yes, God has given both His promise and His oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:15-18a NLT). And this promise God made still remains that some may enter His place of rest.

All who enter God's rest have rested from their labors, just as God did after creating the world (Heb. 4:9-10 NLT). Those who have fled to Him for refuge can have great confidence and trust in the hope God has placed in His Word. This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our soul (Heb. 6:18b-19a). For God's Word that goes forth from His mouth shall not return to Him void. His Word shall accomplish what God pleases, and shall prosper in the thing for which His Word was sent. That you could go out with joy, and be led out with peace (Isa. 55:11-12 NKJV).



Yes, there is a special rest still waiting for the people of God (Heb. 4:9 NLT). However, not everyone who says, 'Lord, Lord.' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who do the will of the Father Who is in heaven (Matt. 7:21). God set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later He spoke through David (Heb. 4:5). So encourage yourself and others daily, as long as it is called Today, so that you won't be hardened by sin's deceitfulness (Heb. 3:13-14).

Beware of your own heart lest you find that it is evil and unbelieving and is leading you away from the living God, blinding you by the lure

and glamor of sin. If we are faithful to the end trusting God we will share in all that belongs to Christ (Heb. 3:12-14 TLB).

So Today do as Jesus said:

“Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for you soul. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Matt. 11:28-30



We come to share in Christ and His eternal glory if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we first had. Today, if you hear His voice, don't harden your hearts (Heb. 3:13-15). Then you too can say as the Psalmist did:

“Be at rest once more, O my soul, for the Lord has been good to you.  
“

“The Lord has delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the Lord in the land

of the living. I believed; therefore I said, 'I am greatly afflicted. 'And in my dismay I said, 'All men are liars.'"

"How can I repay the Lord for all His goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord. I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people," Ps. 116:7-14.



A wonderful message that was given - God wants to save. A message not beneficial for those who don't believe for faith is the most essential building block. Yes, there remains a Sabbath rest for those who believe this Good News - Christ has already entered. And those who also enter will rest from their labors through faith that has grown into trust then blossomed into a heart-felt belief in what Jesus has done. So let us do our best, making every effort to enter God's rest with complete trust in God's Word, instead of following the way of disobedience (Heb. 4:3).

For when the kindness and love of God our Savior was revealed, He saved us (Titus 3:4-5). Though rich as kings, no man can redeem the life of another nor give to God a ransom for the penalty of sin. Doing is not the way God's forgiveness is received. A soul is far too precious to

be ransomed, a life too costly no payment would suffice. The earth and all its wealth could not remove one soul from the depths of hell (Ps. 49:7-9).

But God, His mercy washes sins away. A new life, a new birth given through Holy Spirit Whom God pours out through Christ Jesus. Declaring us righteous by His grace; giving us confidence - eternal life will be inherited (Titus 4-6).

Binding Himself with an oath, so never a need to wonder has salvation come am I truly an heir of God's promise? Instead, be perfectly sure God would never change His mind. Count completely on these two things God's promise and His oath. How impossible for Him to tell a lie.



And those who seek from God salvation be encouraged; know without doubt this certain hope is a strong, trustworthy anchor for our soul, firmly and securely connecting us with God behind Heaven's curtains. Where Jesus went before us, into the inner sanctuary of God, to be crowned the "King of Righteousness" the "King of Peace" our eternal High Priest (Heb. 6:17-20 & 7:2).

So stay clear of silly religious stories. Instead, train daily with the Word of God. Working out is useful; however, a disciplined life in God will be of far more value. So exercise spiritually and be fit today and forever. Practice BEING better (1 Tim. 4:7-8) no longer doing things to feel right with God. For the works of human effort could never clear your debt to the Father; instead, it cuts you off from Jesus away from the grace of God. For His promise of righteousness can only be received by faith in Christ. And, the fruit of righteousness will be peace, its effect quietness and confidence forever (Isa. 32:17).

So if you are trying to be made right with God through religion, your life with Christ is finished – you have left God’s grace. Our hope of being right with God comes through faith. It is Holy Spirit Who helps us feel confident that when someone belongs to Christ Jesus, religious rules and regulations and ceremonies are not important. The important thing is faith – the kind of faith that works through Love (Gal. 5:4-6 TLB).



God is looking for this kind of fervor changed hearts and minds (Rom. 2:29). And He will keep in perfect peace the mind steadfastly trusting

in the Lord, the Rock eternal (Isa. 26:3). Being strong and courageous not afraid and discouraged. Knowing there is a greater Power with you than with the arm of flesh. The Lord God, will surely help and fight for you (2 Chron. 32:7-8). For those who dwell in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. Confident the Lord is their refuge and their fortress, their God, in whom they trust (Ps. 91:11-2).

For it is known the Word of God is full of living power. Sharper than the sharpest dagger; swiftly and deeply cutting into our innermost thoughts and desires; exposing who and what we really are. Everyone everywhere is known to Him. All we are is bare, wide open to the eyes of the all-seeing living God. Nothing hidden, all we've done will need to be explained.

But, our help comes from Jesus, the Son of God, our great High Priest; therefore, let us never stop trusting in Him. For He understands our weaknesses since He had the same temptations, though never once gave way to them and sinned. So let us come boldly to the very throne of God, and stay there to receive His mercy and find grace to help us in our times of need (Heb. 4:12 TLB).





Rest for your soul is found in God alone; from Him comes hope. Your salvation and honor depend on God. So trust in Him at all times your mighty Rock your Refuge, and you will not be shaken (Ps. 62:5).

And remember, in repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength (Isa. 30:15). Yes, find rest for your soul in God for He alone is your Rock and salvation a strong Fortress so you'll never be swayed (Ps. 62: 1).

So never forget, the One Who calls you is faithful and He will do it (1 Thess. 5:24). Of this you can be certain the Son of Man did what no other human being could ever do. So be still and know that Jesus is God. He will be exalted among the nations. He will be exalted in the earth for He became Surety of a better covenant for you (Heb. 7:22).



My hope for sharing knowledge of God's Word is to reveal Jesus, Who reveals God's character making Him known to us. And He continues to make God known so the love He has for Jesus may be in us (felt in our hearts through personal experience) and that Jesus Himself may be

in us (John 17:26 AMP). For this love that Jesus emanates surpasses our understanding of strong affection, admiration or attraction.

Jesus exudes a love so great no other could compare to laying down One's life for His friends (John 15:13). To offer yet another glimpse of the greatness of His love, Jesus said to Judas:

“Friend, do what you came for.”

Matt. 26:50

Knowing the betrayer was confronting Him, Jesus confronted Judas and Death (1 Cor. 15:26), God's enemy, with an imperishable love. A love so powerful and enduring that neither opposition or shame or crucifixion could cause Him to lose heart and give up (Heb. 12:2-3).



A very unique love that forever bleeds from Jesus for God reconciles those who were once His enemies through the death of His very precious Son (Rom. 5:10). Death has been swallowed up in victory. “Where, O Death, is your victory,” 1 Cor. 15:54-55? You see, when we were powerless, Christ died for the ungodly (Rom. 5:6).

An integral key to our renewal and recovery is received when God's Surety (Word, Covenant, Security), Christ Jesus, is accepted, for He has opened a way to God, Who will do for us what He has promised: Restore the years the swarming locust have eaten (Joel 2:25 NKJV).

Yes, God has made known the Way so we can live in vital union with Jesus; letting our roots grow down into the Word of Life, so we can receive healthy, healing nourishment from heaven's Manna. That we can go on growing in the Lord and seeing ourselves becoming strong and vigorous in the Truth He serves. While allowing our lives to overflow with joy and thanksgiving for all that He has accomplished (Col. 2:6-7 TLB).



Somewhere along this spiritual journey with God, I recognized the wisdom and miraculous power of this Man for which the Bible speaks, Christ Jesus (Matt. 13:54), Who rose before me as God. For just as miraculously as God parted the Red Sea revealing waters packed with life, but more importantly gives entrance to a life packed with every single Promise; the Word of God, Christ Jesus, Who stripped off the veil from my mind and heart (2 Cor. 3:15) to reveal the River, Holy Spirit, whose waters are flowing with Life.

"Flow down, thou stream of life Divine,  
Thy quickening streams deliver;  
Oh, flow throughout this soul of mine  
Forever and forever!

"Flow down, and cause this heart to glow  
With love to God the Giver -  
That love in which all virtues grow  
Forever and forever.

"Flow down, as flow the ray and rain,  
In vital work together,  
Refreshing roots and quickening grain  
Forever and forever.

"Flow down, as flows the living sun  
Upon the sparkling river,  
Which, chanting to the boundless, run  
Forever and forever.

"Flow down, revive this famished soul,  
And bear away all error;

And I will praise thee, God of all,  
Forever and forever."

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Holy Spirit, the River of the water of Life, overflowing with Grace and Mercy and Compassion throughout the pages of God's book; but, more amazingly every single entry fills us with Promise:

"The water I give will become in you a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

John 4:14

For the Word of which the Lord speaks, and the Wisdom that He shares is Life, and that Life is the Light of men (John 1:4), shining from its pages so the most breath-taking and glorious Son-rise can dawn before us.

When a decision is made to turn to the One Who knows all things, this willingness to yield initiates a shifting process so any opinion or belief that is actually working to derail us can be exchanged for God's faithful Word of assurance that will make us strong and steady in the Lord (Rom. 16:25). By turning to the Lord mercy is received (so anger, guilt, shame and condemnation can be released); turning to God is to

be freely pardoned (completely forgiven) (Isa. 55:7) for He casts all our sins into the depths of the sea (Mic. 7:18).



There were many discoveries waiting to be made as I allowed Truth to reveal and bring healing. The revelation He shared was life-changing for it addressed my need for spiritual growth and reasons it was being stunted. For example, Co-Dependency, which results in human conditioning, a behavioral process that begins at the most vulnerable of times – the innocence of childhood.

No one is free from its influences for there is no other choice than to lean on, rely on and place our trust and care in others. We cannot choose the others, nor can we know their life struggles or gain control. Therefore, a lot of adapting is being done during those immature years.

The ongoing development of tendencies, behaviors, opinions, feelings and beliefs raise a self-supporting structure we like to think as being invincible. Rigid walls built by a prideful heart possessing harmful desires. Making its offensive ways known with arrogance and ignorance so stubborn stances of superiority can take hold.

An ego inflated by the honor, respect and trust we give to self. Yet, remarkably quite fragile for when the approval, validation and acceptance of others is not received self-esteem is quite easily diminished.



This is no surprise to God as revealed in Proverbs 22:6, "Raise up, train a child in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart from it." Naturally, we set off to experience independence and self-reliance. Only to become prodigals unable to truly recognize or know the depths of God's Love.

Each and every one no exceptions, for no matter the course we set, life draws us astray by turning us toward our own way of thinking and feeling, so our own means and our own devices (Isa. 53:6) would be applied instead of God's Word.

With what may seem the best of intention and sound reasoning, agendas plotted by self-interest cause justice to be perverted whenever dishonesty, greed and corruption are included. No matter the collaboration involved, we will stand alone before God accountable for

mismanaging, ignoring, or abandoning the knowledge of Good, which enables all type of evil to spread.

The best example to be given, the first act of rebellion stripped mankind of their robes of innocence when the Knowledge of Good and Evil came into our possession. Though anger and blame were shifted in an attempt to explain why Good seemed not to be enough, within the span of a few verses defiance and rejection so rankled emotions that murderous desire was played out when Cain killed Abel.



This brings me to the next reason for speaking out, in order for change to occur we must look inward because the only person we have the ability to change is ourselves. As evidenced by the numerous news broadcasts of civil unrest and violent outbursts, change is desperately needed, for ALL lives matter, but especially the welfare of our Spiritual Lives.

However, neither the hope for change nor the making of quickly fading resolutions will bring about true and lasting transformations. Without willingness to seek God's assistance to re-adjust thoughts, beliefs, and opinions that have been nurtured by our fallen nature, we



remain as fools suffering the lack of Truth instead of delighting in the bountiful provisions of Love and Grace and total Absolution that is only God-given.

God says being willing is to not only to listen, but to follow His Word so you can eat the best the land has to offer (Isa. 1:19). Being willful resisting and rebelling; obstinate and often perversely self-indulgent and stubborn brings about disaster that is earned for what our own hands do (Isa. 3:11).



Not only have we experienced the anger, upset and disappointment when Good is neglected, we each share responsibility for the effects of neglecting to do what we know to be good. There is no better time than now for the voice of the only One Who is Good (Matt. 19:17) to be heard:

“You have neglected the more important matters – justice, mercy and faithfulness.”

“Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit within you – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,

faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control – such things have no conflict with My Word.”

“When your own wrong inclinations are followed, the acts of the sinful nature are obvious – sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies... I warn, as I did before, anyone living this sort of life will not receive an inheritance in My Kingdom.”

“My counsel is this: walk and live in Holy Spirit responding to His guidance. Then you won’t gratify compulsive selfishness. Self-interest is rooted deeply and opposes Holy Spirit, just as He is in opposition of the godless human nature.”

“People who are well don’t need a doctor; instead, the sick. Now go, learn the meaning of what My Word says – “It isn’t your sacrifices and your gifts I

desire, I want you to be merciful.' Jesus came to urge sinners, including the self-righteous, back to God."

"All mankind alike are sinners. As it is written in My Word, None are righteous or upright, just and truthful; how can they view themselves as good, when no one is innocent. Everyone has turned away to go in a wrong direction."

Matthew 23:23, Galatians 5:19-25, Matthew 9:12-13, Romans 3:10



BUT GOD, Who is so rich in mercy and love for us made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in all our transgressions (Eph. 2:4-5a). He knew the evil knowledge that pride possesses hardens hearts, make ears dull and closes eyes causing our heart to become desensitized (Isa. 6:10).

However, God never stops the knowledge of Good from caressing each and every heart. For every good and perfect gift that we ever receive is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, Who does not change (James 1:17) like the shifting of our

thoughts, opinions and feelings. God made the choice to give us opportunity to be born again through His Word of Truth (James 1:18).

God has instructed:

“Fix My Word in your heart and in your mind, for there needs to be care taken, or you will be enticed to turn away to worship other gods and bow down to them. Or yourself for ‘You are as gods,’ meant to **BE** My representatives, judging on My behalf; not trying to **DO** without Me.”

“Indeed, you all are children of the Most High, but you shall die as mere men, and fall as any prince would, for you know nothing, you understand nothing. Your foolishness and ignorance causes you to walk about in darkness; all the foundations of society are shaken to the core,”

Deut. 11:15-17, Ps. 82:6-7



You may not be aware rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft and stubbornness as the evil of idolatry (1 Sam. 15:23). They only lead to

mayhem and sorrow. For the prideful inclination to manipulate and control is the source of your confusion, stealth and destruction.

However, a High Priest has been seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, Christ Jesus. He has become a Surety (Vow, Word, Seal) of a better covenant Heb. 7:22-8:1).

A covenant is an agreement, a promise sealed between two or more parties especially for the performance of some action, definition taken from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. As a marriage is a covenant relationship for action has been taken. Vows are exchanged a promise, a pledge of love and commitment, of faithfulness and hope, of trust and loyalty, a new way of life between two who agree to enter a union of becoming one flesh.

Becoming one flesh has much more significance than physical intercourse. Souls connect as thoughts and feelings are exchanged through this bond to honor and respect, to listen and empathize, to support and honor with Love being the binding force.

There is commitment involved that requires entrusting one another to consult together (to carry on to completion) together with one accord

and one heart for the welfare of their shared covenant (Ps. 83:5). For they have put their entire being into the possession and safekeeping of one another.



Eccl. 4:9 -12 speaks of such relationships, “Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone could find themselves in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, bound by God’s Word, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken,” (NLT).

When Jesus told the parable of the ten virgins He was speaking of covenant relationship with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Vows are spoken acknowledging God’s Word His Oath is accepted, Jesus is Surety of this covenant. A pledge is given to honor and respect the Lord as Savior, to listen and obey the Word of God for He is Lord with authority and power to lead us into a new way of life and new experiences as Truth is learned.

A covenant means we agree to be united with the Lord becoming one in spirit with Him. Putting all of who we are into His possession and safekeeping for He has proven to the eyes of the world He gave His all so we could enjoy eternity with Him. Do as His mother Mary instructed, Listen to what He says:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and also trust in Me. In my Father’s house there are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I have gone there to prepare a place for you. And since I have gone ahead to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me so you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

John 14:1-4



There is commitment within this shared covenant that requires entrusting thought will be given, for the feelings of another are involved. Acknowledgment is required for this relationship of unity not disconnectedness, of thoughtfulness not one of indifference, of compassion and empathy not being selfish and self-centered. Covenant relationships are not meant to be easy that would be a pact. Covenant

relationships are challenging for their intent is to consider the best for another (Phil. 2:4).

God offered us His heart by sending Jesus so we can be confident when His hand is taken in faith, He will always give you His very best. He's given you His Surety, His Word, His Oath and His Seal - Holy Spirit - together in unity to work with you and in you so God's best gifts and blessings can flow from you. And together Father, Son and Holy Spirit will carry on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6). Showing you the most excellent Way far better, and the highest of them all - LOVE (1 Cor. 12:31 AMP).



Agreeing to do as the Lord instructs as in first Cor. 6:16-20 means we are to shun immorality and all sexual looseness, to flee from impurity in thought, word and deed. While sin is missing the mark by doing something other than what the Lord instructs, sins of sexual immorality hit a very personal mark - our very own bodies.

A covenant relationship with Jesus is to be betrothed - joined together as spouses. Yes, a marriage is meant to bring a hand, a heart and a body together as one flesh so new life can fill the earth. However,



when a marriage is made in heaven a hand and a heart and a soul are united together with Jesus so new life of Promise and Potential and Purpose can fill our earthen bodies.

Like any other marriage we look to Jesus as our Husband for His tenderness and compassion will help us be like-minded, enjoying the same bond with Love, while becoming one in spirit and purpose. For the sweet taste of Good cannot be rendered from selfish ambition or vain conceit; however, practicing humility gives us the courage and the strength to consider others as better than ourselves. In other words, thinking not only about our own interests, but also being concerned about the welfare and interests of others (Phil. 2:1-4).



For any marriage to be successful there must be a willingness to work at putting certain things about ourselves to rest. However, we are not to sleep being shut-off to communicating; instead, remaining alert and prepared to engage in the necessary discussions that not only considers but values the needs and hopes of one another.

The differences and diversity of people our genders, race, nationalities and creeds point to the need for unity and the very reason a triple-

braided cord is not easily broken. Father, Son and Holy Spirit bring awareness to our differences so better and more mutually beneficial choices can be made. For it is the Lord Who will make you the head, and not the tail, when attention is given to His teachings and instructions; when God's Word is heeded with the heartfelt desire to please your loving Spouse, you shall be at the top, not at the bottom (Deut. 28:13).

Yes, three are definitely better, a triple-braided cord not easily broken. Like God's Truth as enduring as the heavens (Ps. 89:2), and no matter where your journey of life the sheer beauty of God's view of Life with all the magnificence and brilliance of His glorious Way, when truly understood will never cease to take your breath away.

For all power and authority, all splendor and majesty are the Lord's from the beginning; His they are and His they evermore shall be. Christ Jesus through Whom God saves is able to keep you from slipping and falling away and will bring you with great joy into His glorious presence miraculously without a single fault (Jude 24-25).



God's eternal Word stands firm in heaven. The Lord gazes down and sees the entire human race. From His throne He observes all who live on earth. He has made their hearts and understands everything they do (Ps. 33:13-15). Many volumes of His Word have been placed in hands so the multi-faceted wisdom of God could be placed in hearts so Truth may be known (Eph. 3:10). Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might for the glory of God; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where many people are going (Eccl. 9:10).

So consider the outcome of your way of life, and the Way and Truth and Life that is God's Word: the Surety that God exists and is the Creator and Ruler of all things; that God is the Provider and Bestower of eternal salvation through His Son, Christ Jesus; that it is essential to learn and to train one's self to lean their entire human personality with all its faults and flaws on God with absolute trust and confidence in the His power, wisdom and goodness (Heb. 13:7 AMP).

The Word of God, Christ Jesus, remains the same yesterday and today and forever (Heb. 13:8). This message was uploaded by Penny Richardson:

If you base your life on God's Word, the truth never changes. Truth is always true. So if God says something was wrong 10,000 years ago, it was also be wrong 500 years ago, it's wrong today, and it will be wrong 1,000 years from today. I don't care what opinion polls or political correctness or the media says. If God says it's wrong, it's wrong. With all this in mind, you can be confident in your decision. If God says it's OK, then you do it. If God says "no," then you don't do it. Rick Warren said: Good decisions always agree with God's Word. His Word is a lamp to guide our feet and a light for our path (Ps. 119:105).

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Father, Son and Holy Spirit are totally committed to placing their triple braided cord of Faith and Hope and Love around your finger, and your heart and soul and spirit become a bond with God not easily broken. So seek friendship with Jesus and make a searching and fearless moral inventory of yourself. Doing as Lamentations 3:40 instructs, "Examine your ways and test them, and turn to the Lord." For happy are the pure in heart they will see God (Matthew 5:8). So be

courageous! Openly examine and confess your faults to yourself, to God and to someone who can be trusted.

The prayer that is of faith will save those who are sick, and the Lord will restore them; the sins they have committed will be forgiven.

Therefore, confess to one another your faults, your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins, and pray for one another, that you may be healed and restored to a spiritual tone of mind and heart. For the earnest, heartfelt prayer of a righteous person makes tremendous power available dynamic and miraculous in its working (James 5:15-16 AMP).



God has given the Church His Surety, Christ Jesus, as a Sponsor, an Advocate, a Mentor Who will support and encourage as you navigate through what stymies: confusion, pain, hurts, habits, addictions, compulsions, fears and hang-ups.

Many in the Church have strayed from that spiritual tone of mind and heart that unites us in becoming one with Jesus. Having and holding onto God's Word as our Surety our Sponsor our Mentor, Who bestows the key to the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 16:19): Faith!

So I encourage you to go forward taking steps and renewing commitments during this process of renewal and recovery, and be freed from the effects of stupor or slumber or sleep.

- The first key is to maintain an honest view of reality not only considering particular circumstances and events as substantial, but recognizing the substance of Truth – the Life, the Alpha and Omega, the heart and the spirit as we work on taking steps of faith acknowledging -
  - God exists and I matter to Him
  - We admit we are powerless
  - We admit in certain areas our lives have become unmanageable
  - We believe God will restore us with Love, a Sound Mind and Power
  - We believe He will help us stay committed to this decision to put all of who we are into His possession and safekeeping
  - We believe the Word of God will encourage, support and strengthen us as we make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves

- Because of God's loving-kindness we are willing to admit to God, to ourselves and another person the exact nature of our wrongs
- With Truth as our solid foundation we are entirely ready to have God remove all our defects of character
- Having received faith and hope and love for the Surety God has given we humbly ask Him to remove our shortcomings
- Having gained knowledge and insight and understanding we make a list of anyone we have harmed, and become willing to make an amends to them all
- Having gained confidence and trust in God's refuge we step out with the mindset we are doing this with and for God 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 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



- Some people give up on this process of renewal and recovery, because they couldn't step out of the grave wrappings of denial to clothe themselves with God's Truth
- Having someone to help keep us honest is a real plus in successfully working and applying the knowledge we receive from these steps
- The second key element attending at Church, ministries and programs for this will help to ensure your success
- The third key element is maintaining our spiritual growth and progress with our Higher Power, Jesus Christ, through prayer, meditation and studying God's Word
- The last key element to success is getting involved in service
- Service is nothing but love in work clothes, and there are plenty of opportunities to "Suit Up"
- Having and holding on to God's Surety, and also a trusted companion is the best Guard against Relapsing or Back-Sliding



- They can help us see and identify old dysfunctional, self-defeating patterns that may begin to surface, and point them out to us
- They confront us with truth and love without placing shame and guilt
- Be aware of the role of a companion, sponsor or confidante
- They listen as personal issues are detailed
- They are to model Christ's grace, forgiveness, and compassion
- They are willing to make themselves available in times of crisis or potential relapse
- They serve as a sounding board by providing an objective point of view
- They are there to encourage you to continue taking these steps and working at your own speed
- They can resign or be fired
- Most importantly, they attempt to model a lifestyle that results from following these steps and principles
- Having a Sponsor or Accountability Partner is Biblical
- Eccl. 4:9-12 tells us, "Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other

can help him up. But if someone is alone..., there is no one to help him...”

- Prov. 27:17 tells us, “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
- The main goal of this relationship is to choose someone to support and guide you
- Someone you ask to hold you accountable in certain areas where you struggle or are having issues



- Leaning on, trusting in and relying on another individual describes a relationship between two people, which allows one another’s behavior to profoundly affect them both
- In an attempt to “Feel Good” about themselves, one or both will try to control the physical, emotional and spiritual behavior of the other
- One or both will compromise physical, emotional and spiritual well-being for the sake of the other
- These are Co-Dependent behaviors
- We need to Be God-Dependent so we Don’t Do harm to one another

- During this Step, we acknowledge the road to renewal and recovery is not meant to be traveled alone
- We may come to acknowledge the most important relationship we can have is with our Higher Power, Jesus Christ
- The relationship of a support group or a church family is not only needed it is essential
- The relationship of a confidante, sponsor and/or accountability partner/s is also both needed and essential because it is so easy to pull and be pulled in the wrong direction
- The account of Chicken Little could definitely be relevant to those struggling with the emotional effects of Trauma - facing an overwhelming sense of impending doom, it may feel as though the sky is falling around you
- Though we cannot challenge a physical hurricane, we can talk back to our inner tempests and find calm in the midst of turmoil and upheaval
- We can speak peace to the howling winds of emotional pain and despair
- On the other side of the storm is Hope
- However, with Faith it is not only known but completely trusted that Love is walking through the storm with us

- Bringing us through our tragedies and life's disappointments is what God is really great at doing
- Renewal and recovery is God's answer to our pain, our hurts, our habits and addictive personalities
- Our trauma may have knocked us down, but we don't have to stay down
- Renewal and recovery does something incredibly wonderful
- While on the one hand we can acknowledge that something horrific has happened in our lives, we can also affirm that God's love for us is stronger than our trauma
- The good news about Post-Traumatic Stress is the "Post"
- The word post suggests the trauma is over -- the danger is over

Thank You, God, for being the Calmer of my storms. Because You are in the boat with me, I no longer have to be overwhelmed. You can tell my storms to "hush now," and the winds of my life will obey. So replace my fear that "the sky is falling" with faith that You are in control. Help me today to relax in Your love. Amen.

- During a storm the wisest thing to do is to take refuge -- find shelter -- call for help

- Cleaning up during a storm is dangerous, but after the storm, we assess the damage and start putting the pieces of our lives back together again
- When a person goes through years of abuse, it has a profound effect on self-esteem
- It can be difficult to receive feedback from others whenever there is a conflict
- Any disagreement may feel like a searing attack
- A moral inventory has to be done -- an evaluation of our weaknesses (shortcomings) and strengths
- To attempt an inventory by yourself can be as futile as peeling an onion to find the core - when finished, there is nothing left but peelings and tears
- Taking this step helps to rid us of our "Truth Decay"
- This step is about coming clean
- This step helps us realize the roots of our self-defeating behaviors have grabbed hold of the soil of our heart so firmly that pulling them up and destroying them is a phenomenal task
- It takes time, determination and an unshakable faith in God, and His power to intervene in our lives

- As a participant in any of our significant relationships, we often try to control the behavior of another
- Both the control and the compromise stem from the belief --- our relationships provide us personal esteem, security and intimacy
- There is a clinical description of a heart-rending, destructive situation that kills many relationships and breaks the spirits of people who had nothing but good intentions when they first met
- Sadly, one of the laws of human relationship is -- if we look to another person for security, intimacy and esteem and can't receive enough, the relationship will crumble
- No one can sustain the unrealistic expectations of another, no matter how dear that person is, if they feel responsible to give the impossible
- The demands will eventually crush the relationship's life and spontaneity, leaving only obligation and resentment
- For the person who feels so needy, disappointment after disappointment will set up a track record for failure in every significant relationship

- Misery will only compound their search for security, intimacy and esteem
- Everyone has dependency needs and feelings
- For most these desires do not rule our lives – they are not the predominant theme of our existence

Our heavenly Father, we thank you for these vast truths.  
We pray that our understanding may be made equal to them.  
We can't grasp them properly apart from the work of Your Spirit,  
And we pray that You will open our eyes,  
And help us to see that these things are true indeed,  
That they undergird our lives.  
And as we take steps to venture out upon them,  
As we dare to apply them to ourselves,  
You will take them,  
And make them lead us into liberty  
Freedom as the children of God,  
So that we will be free,  
Free despite the circumstances under which we live,  
And despite the people with whom we have to share  
In a relationship.  
We are a free people.

We thank you in Jesus' name, Amen.