

Living Life From A New Source

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Christ Is Life Ministries

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Lesson One

What Is The Truth About Living The Christian Life?

Introduction

How do I live the Christian life? What is involved? Why should I live the Christian life? What is God's part, and what is my part in living this life? What can I expect from God as I live the Christian life? If you are relatively new as a Christian, you might be asking these questions.

However, if you have been saved for some time, you might be asking questions such as, "Why am I not as satisfied as I would like to be with my Christian life? Why is my Christian life not meeting my expectations? What is missing from my Christian walk?"

Whether you have been a believer for a short time or for years, I believe that God is going to reveal some truths in this study that will encourage you, challenge you, and most importantly transform you. I have written this study in part because I have ministered to so many Christians who have missed some very vital truths in living the Christian life. I would like to share part of my personal story to give you a key truth that I missed for several years as a Christian.

My Story

When I first started my Christian journey at age 18, I was taught that I was to study God's Word and that I was to apply those truths to my life and make them work. I was also told that after all that God had done for me that I must do certain things so that He would be pleased with me. I was also told that God would help me live this life, but for the most part it

Where Do I Go From Here?

You have just finished Book One of the four part series called *Living A Transformed Life In Christ*. The second part of this study is called *Do You Know Your True Identity?*

If you would like this next study, please go to our ministry website which is www.christislifeministries.com and look under the **Store** section. You will find the series called *Living A Transformed Life In Christ*. You will see under this section the booklet and curriculum called *Do You Know Your True Identity?* You can purchase them online or email your order to our email address below. Or, you can download these materials for free and reproduce as many copies as you would like.

Do You Know Your True Identity? will focus on the following:

- **False beliefs we believe about ourselves.**
- **How our old identity was formed.**
- **What God accomplished at the cross to give us a new identity.**
- **What our true identity is in Christ.**
- **The process God uses to move us from living from our lies to living from our true identity.**

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(9-1-10)

Therefore, let me encourage you with the words of Paul in the first part of Philippians 3:14:

“I PRESS ON...”

My ongoing prayer for you is that you will press on and take another step of faith. Press on and don't give up and turn back to the flesh. Press on and experience the supernatural works of this awesome, loving God who lives within you. Press on to the place where you will say with Peter that you have no place else to go but to Jesus. Paul came to this place in Philippians 3:8:

“Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ.”

Knowing what you now know, I leave you with this final question:

***Will You Press On And
Take The NEXT Step Of Faith?***

If so, you will come to the place where you will say with Paul in Philippians 1:21:

“To live to me IS Christ”

was up to ME by my own self-effort to make it work. This made sense to me because this is exactly how I had been living life. This began a 30 year journey of what I call a “performance-driven” Christian life whereby I was using my own intellect and ability to try to produce happiness, fulfillment, and success in the Christian life.

My Personal Struggles

During this same time I had great struggles with inadequacy, fear, anger, and unworthiness. They became like “dictators” within me ordering my feelings and my choices. As a result, I felt that I could never measure up to being a “real” man because of these inner strongholds. The truth is that I wanted to be set free from the bondage of these struggles. After all, that is the promise in John 8:32:

“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you FREE.”

Believing that it was up to ME to produce this freedom, I tried every way possible to set myself free. I was told that God would help me in this pursuit of freedom, but I never really felt like He was doing much to help me. As hard as I tried, I was never able to be set free from feelings and beliefs of inadequacy and unworthiness. At some point I came to the conclusion that what I was doing was not working (and was not ever going to work).

Therefore, since I could not set myself free, and God was not going to help me, I then had to figure out my own ways to cope with my struggles. Since I did not want you to know that I believed that I was inadequate, fearful, and unworthy, I had to build a “false self” that projected a strong, adequate, and successful front. One of the ways that I tried to cope with my lying beliefs was to become a people-pleaser. I also had to always be in control of my environment, and I was always trying to put people down so that I could feel good about

myself. During those years I would say to myself, “This is not the abundant life that God has promised. What is the abundant life, and will I ever truly experience it?”

The Result After 30 Years

Where did those 30 years of my performance and coping lead to? The result after all those years of ME trying to make the Christian life work was that nothing changed. In fact, at the end of that time I was more miserable than ever. The truth be known, somewhere along that thirty year journey I gave up on the Christian life because it was not meeting my expectations. I never quit going to church or reading my Bible, but I simply did those things because that was what was expected to keep God from being displeased with me. I finally concluded that, “If this is as good as it gets in the Christian life, then I will continue in my own ability to do my best to stay out of trouble with God and to try to make my life a success.”

Is This The Life That God Intended For Me?

My life for those 30 years ended up being a lifeless, powerless, and an unchanged life. Was this the life that God intended for me to live all those years? Did I miss some key truth along the way? Was I believing something about the Christian life that may not have been true? What were God’s intentions for me? Now that you have heard my story, let me ask you a question.

What Do You Believe About Living The Christian Life?

- **It is, in part, about me keeping a set of rules.**
- **A life of doing something for God so that He will be pleased with me.**

When everything within you says, “turn back,” take another step of faith. You will demand answers from God, and when you don’t get them, take another step of faith. When you are in more pain than you can bear, take another step of faith. When you are perplexed, confused, and bewildered, take another step of faith. Because if you do, then you will experience all that God promises and much, much more.

*“...**much more** those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness **will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.**” Romans 5:17*

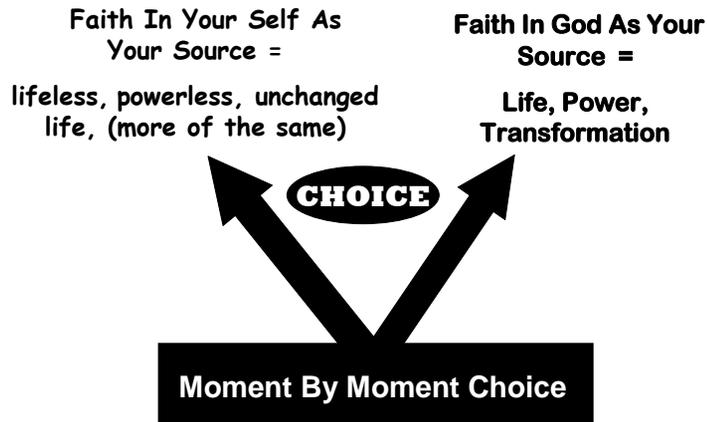
Final Words

*“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ‘**You do not want to leave too, do you?**’ Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, ‘**Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.** We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.’” John 6:66-69*

When many of Jesus’s followers turned and walked away from Him, he turned to the twelve disciples and asked them if they would leave as well. Look at Peter’s response: “To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” Peter and the rest of the twelve figured out that:

***Jesus is the only WAY to live the Christian life.
“I am the way....” John 14:6***

The disciples realized that there was no other way than to depend on Jesus. They had taken enough steps of faith in Christ so that they believed that He was the only Source from which to live life.



What Choice Will You Make?

You Will Be Tempted:

- To doubt God’s ability and willingness to transform your life.
- To get frustrated and angry with God.
- To condemn yourself.
- To give up on God.

Sadly, I have seen many people give up on their walk of faith. It grieves me greatly because when they do, they are turning away from the only Person Who can make a difference in their lives. All that is left when we turn away from God is to “cope” with life. I define coping as what man tries to do to deny, cover up, or anesthetize the pain when his efforts to fix the problems in his life fail. Therefore, when you are tempted to give up:

Take ANOTHER step of faith.

- A list of things I should do so that God will love me and accept me.
- Trying to live a righteous life.
- Trying to avoid or prevent sinning.
- Doing my best with God’s help.

What Are You Experiencing (or Not Experiencing) In Your Christian Life?

- Is your Christian life meeting your expectations?
- Is there a specific area in your life where you can’t seem to experience consistent victory?
- Is there some sin pattern that you cannot set yourself free from?
- If you experienced woundedness in your past, is that being healed?
- Is there some sinful behavior that you want to change, but it never seems to change?

Based upon your Christian experience so far, could it be possible that there is something MORE that you need to understand about living the Christian life?

If your answer to this question is “Yes,” then I would like to share with you the truths that God revealed to me starting in 1998 and through these truths God is setting me free and producing in me a happiness that I never thought would be possible.

What Is The TRUTH Concerning Living The Christian Life?

What Does Jesus Say Is The Christian Life?

Jesus says:

*“...I AM the way, the truth, and **the LIFE**...” John 14:6*

*“...I AM the resurrection and **the LIFE**.” John 11:25*

What is Jesus saying in these two passages? I believe it is clear that Jesus is saying that He Himself is the Life. What does He mean when He says He is the Life? For many years, I read these verses and concluded that they only meant that He was the source for my **eternal** life. However, is it possible that Jesus is telling us that He is more to you and me than eternal life? Let's further explore the answer to this question by looking at what Paul reveals to us.

What Paul Has To Say About Living The Christian Life

Paul takes the truth of Christ as “the Life” to a more personal level when he says in Colossians 3:4:

*“..Christ who is **YOUR** life...”*

What is Paul saying in this verse? He is saying that the life of Christ is more than the eternal life that He gave you at salvation. He is saying that Christ IS **your** life today, at this moment. At this point you might be scratching your head and asking, “What is Paul talking about? What does it mean that Christ is my life? Is the life that Paul is referring to the Christian life?” I believe that the answer is found in Philippians 1:21 when Paul says:

*“For me, to live **IS** Christ....”*

He is saying that life for him is Christ being his life. Paul is revealing to us an incredible truth and that is that the Christian life is a Person. It is Christ Himself.

*“He is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all we could ask or think according to the power that works within us.”
Ephesians 3:20*

**Ultimately, God's transformation process will bring
you to the place where
all you want is JESUS.
At that point He will be your ALL in ALL.**

EVERY Moment Of Your Life You Have A CHOICE To Make

EVERY moment for the rest of your life you will be making a moment by moment choice to have faith in YOURSELF or faith in GOD.

Faith In Yourself Will Result In:

- No victory
- No freedom
- No healing
- No transformation
- No joy
- No intimacy

Faith In God Will Result In:

- Victory
- Freedom
- Healing
- Transformation
- Joy
- Intimacy

emotions, and behavior as well. Therefore, I have listed some ways that God might use to confirm His work in your life:

1. **Your mind begins to think and believe God’s truth rather than believing your lies.**
2. **Your will begins to make choices based on the truth that you are now thinking and feeling. This will produce in you a greater willingness to come to God for Him to further renew your mind to the truth.**
3. **You begin to experience a supernatural change in your attitudes and behavior.**
4. **You will experience healing of your woundedness.**
5. **You will begin to experience freedom and victory in areas where you had only experienced bondage and defeat previously.**
6. **You will find your Christ-confidence in God’s ability growing.**
7. **Your desire to walk by faith in God will grow, and your desire to turn back to self will decrease.**
8. **You will find that your love and desire for God will take you to places that you never thought were possible.**
9. **You will find yourself more and more being stunned, overwhelmed, and in awe of Who God is and what He has done in your life.**

Remember once again Paul’s words as a reminder of where God is taking you:

Have you ever thought about the truth that Christ wants to be your life and that He Himself is the Christian life? Have you been taught this before, or have you been taught that the Christian life is something that you produce or that you are the source for living the Christian life? The key truth from this section is:

What Jesus and Paul are saying is that the Christian life is a Person: It is Christ HIMSELF!

What Does It Mean That Christ IS Your Life?

The next question that you may be asking is, “What does it mean that Christ is my life?” I believe that God sums up the meaning in 1 Corinthians 1:30:

“He is the SOURCE of YOUR life in Christ Jesus, ...”

God gives us the answer to our original question in the first part of this verse when He says that He is the SOURCE for your life in Christ. This may be a new truth for you because so many Christians have been taught falsely that they are to be the source for living the Christian life with God’s help. However, the truth is that GOD, not you, is the Source from which to live the Christian life.

Look at two other verses that reveal that God is your Source for living the Christian life:

“In Him we live and move and have our being.” Acts 17:28

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.....” Romans 11:36

These are just three of many verses in the Bible that reveal to us that God is to be our Source for living the

Christian life. You may be wondering what it means practically that God is your Source. Let's look at scriptural truths that will give you a better understanding of this truth.

- **God is your source to meet your needs. Philippians 4:19**
- **God is your source of power over the flesh, the power of sin and Satan. - 1 John 3:6**
- **God is your source to renew your mind to believe His truth. - Romans 12:2**
- **God is your source to work all your failures, conflicts, and struggles for good. - Romans 8:28**

God as your SOURCE for living the Christian life means that ONLY God can produce in you and through you what you CANNOT produce.

How Do We Know That God Is To Be Our Source?

I feel that it is important at this point of the lesson to look back at God's original design and plan for man. I believe that this will give you further proof of why God intends to be man's source for living life. Let's begin by looking at the condition of Adam and Eve before and after the Fall in the Garden of Eden.

Who Was Adam's and Eve's SOURCE Before The Fall?

*"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7*

At the creation of man, God breathed His life into Adam and Eve. Before the Fall of Adam and Eve, they lived in total dependence upon God (Genesis 2:16, 17). As a result, God was their SOURCE to meet all of their physical, spiritual, and

to experience God's supernatural work in renewing their minds to the truth and setting them free by the truth.

How would you feel if you began to experience a supernatural change in your life? What do you think that would do for your **Christ-confidence** in God's ability and desire to change your life? Would you strongly consider taking another step of faith in anticipation of what God might do next?

As you begin to experience supernatural changes, it will increase your Christ-confidence, and you will take another step of faith. This is why we must continue taking steps of faith. God is in the process of building your Christ-confidence in His ability and desire to transform your life. Here is your challenge:

THE CHALLENGE:

To take enough steps of faith to experience SUPERNATURAL changes in order to build your CHRIST-CONFIDENCE in God's ability and His desire to transform your life.

How Will I Know When Change Has Taken Place?

Since the process of transformation is primarily incremental, how will I know that change is taking place? In Romans 15:8, Paul tells us that God will confirm to us His promises:

*"For I tell you that Christ became a servant of the circumcised on behalf of God's truth in order to **confirm** the promises given to our forefathers."*

We know by faith that God is working in our lives. However, God wants to confirm it in your mind, will,

- There is a divine good purpose that God is about in the midst of pain and suffering.
- God will never leave you nor forsake you in the midst of your struggle.
- God loves you eternally, immeasurably and unconditionally.

God will give you EYES to see what the natural man is blinded to.

Truth #4 – You Can’t Connect A Step of Faith To Experiencing Transformation Tomorrow

Another key truth we need to understand is that we can’t connect a step of faith with transformation tomorrow. This is a struggle because we live in an instant gratification culture where we want to experience something as we take steps of faith. However, for the most part God wants you to walk by faith and He will transform our lives.

An analogy that I use is that if you are on a cruise ship that is leaving the dock and you are at the front of the ship, you cannot tell how far you have traveled. However, if you get at the back of the ship you will see clearly how far away from the dock you have come. Therefore, as you walk by faith, look back to where you started and you will begin to see how far you have traveled down the path of transformation.

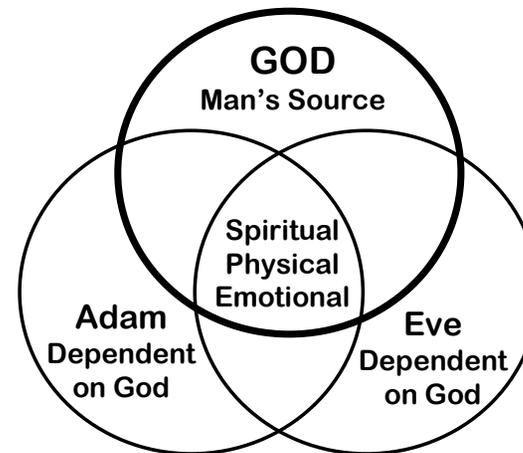
Truth #5 - God Is Building Christ-Confidence As We Walk By Faith.

*“And such **confidence** we have **through** Christ toward God.” 2 Corinthians 3:4*

What I see in so many Christians is a lack of “Christ-confidence.” Why? So few have walked long enough by faith

emotional needs. God’s design to be man’s Source was clear from the beginning because man cannot meet the needs that only God can meet. The result of Adam and Eve living with an attitude of dependence upon God was abundant life.

God Was The SOURCE To Meet Adam and Eve’s Needs Before The Fall



As long as Adam and Eve continued to live *DEPENDENTLY* upon God, He was their SOURCE to meet all of their needs.

However, in one moment Adam and Eve made a sinful, independent decision that resulted in **spiritual death** according to the first part of Romans 5:12:

*“Therefore, just as **sin** entered the world **through one man** (Adam), and **death** through sin...” (Parenthesis mine)*

What is the meaning of spiritual death? The key word in defining spiritual death is the word “**separation.**” In the

original Greek text the word “separation” means to “sever” or “cut off.”

SPIRITUAL DEATH is defined as being SEVERED or CUT OFF from God.

This separation was twofold:

- SEPARATION from the LIFE of God

“Being darkened in their understanding, separated from the life of God...” Ephesians 4:18

Before the Fall of Adam and Eve, God’s life was in them. At the moment that Adam and Eve chose independence from God and sinned, He **removed** or **separated** His life from them. Even though Adam and Eve would still be alive physically, they would no longer possess God’s spiritual life within them. They were now dead spiritually.

- SEPARATION from God as the SOURCE

“But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.” Isaiah 59:2

As I mentioned above, Adam and Eve totally depended upon God as their Source to meet every need. However, as a result of their sin God separated Himself from man with the result that He would no longer be the Source for meeting man’s every need. This left man on his own to be his own source to meet his own needs, to solve his own problems, and to try to make his life a success.

The Problem Is That We Inherited Adam’s and Eve’s Spiritual Condition.

As we see, experience, and are repulsed by the death of our flesh, we will turn back to Him for life. Therefore, God will use every event in your life, positive or negative, as a part of His divine surgery to expose the death of your flesh and to deliver you over to the death of your flesh.

God’s divine surgery is OFTEN without anesthesia. However, STAY on the surgical table and let God complete His work in you.

Truth #3 – As You Continue To Walk By Faith Then You Will Have SPIRITUAL Eyes To See What God Is About In Your Life

“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.” Colossians 3:2

*“because we are **not looking at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen**. For what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:18*

The blind man said “that once I was blind but now I see” (John 9:25). When we begin this walk of faith, we are much like the blind man. All we can see is what our five senses tell us. However, as we continue to walk by faith God gives us “spiritual” eyes to see with.

You will come to see that:

- God truly is sovereign and in control of your situation.
- God has known about the problem that you are facing for an eternity and has a solution.
- You are in “divine” surgery, and the pressure will not be off until God is through.

- His ability to transform your life. (Ephesians 3:20)
- His willingness to change the way you think, choose, believe, and behave. (Philippians 1:6)
- The truth that He is in control. He knows what He is doing, He is for you, and His plans will be accomplished. (Job 42:2)
- All things will work together for your good. (Romans 8:28)
- His love for you is unfailing. (Psalm 36:5)

If you take enough steps of faith, God WILL persuade you that He is Who He says He is and that He will do what He promises to do in your life.

Truth #2 - Your Transformation Is A Lifelong SURGICAL Procedure.

“For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:11

The minute that you trusted Christ, God began a lifelong surgical procedure of transforming your life. Many times it feels like surgery without anesthesia because of the pain involved. Many times you will want to (and will) jump off the surgical table. However, God loves you enough that He will constantly be drawing you back to Himself for continued surgery.

As “The Way,” God knows the exact path of your surgical process. As the divine surgeon, He understands what needs to occur next in your transformation process. As you continue your walk of faith, you will find yourself more and more staying on the table because you are persuaded that God knows what He is doing and that all of what He is doing is driven by His love for you.

What this means for you and me is that we inherited Adam and Eve’s spiritual condition at our physical birth. Look at Romans 5:12:

“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.” Romans 5:12 (Parenthesis mine)

We see in Romans 5:12 that through the sin of Adam, every one of us is born spiritually dead. In other words, we inherited Adam’s spiritual death the moment that we were born. Like Adam and Eve, we were born separated from God’s LIFE and from Him as our SOURCE.

Look at the following diagram to better understand spiritual death:

Man Inherited Adam’s Condition At Physical Birth



You inherited Adam's spiritual death which results in a SEPARATION from God's Life and a SEPARATION from God as the Source. Because of this separation, it was up to YOU to become the source to TRY to live life.

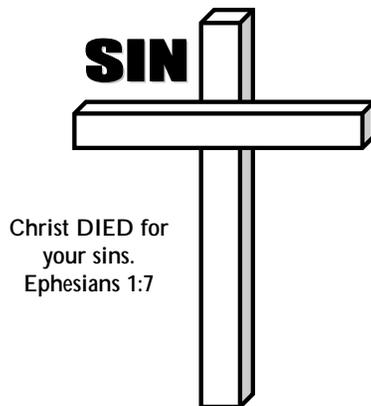
What Did God Do To Restore What Was Lost In The Garden After The Fall?

God knew that man would be eternally separated from Him if He did not provide a solution. In addition, man needed God to be his source for living life. Therefore, there were two things that God needed to do to give man salvation and life. The first thing God accomplished was to deal with our sin.

The SIN Side of the Cross - Christ Died For Our SINS To Give Us Eternal Life.

"He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven."
Ephesians 1:7 (NLT)

The SIN Side of The Cross



This does not mean that we all must suffer like Paul. We all have a unique journey. However, whatever your particular journey, if you persevere in your walk of faith God will bring you to several places along the way where you will experience an INEXPRESSIBLE JOY (1 Peter 1:8) and a peace that passes ALL understanding. (Philippians 4:7)

Summary

My friends, I have experienced all of the above and more. I turned back to the flesh many times. However, each time that I returned to my prodigal pigpen, I soon realized that nothing was going to improve (and usually got worse). I realized that my only real option was to come back to the Lord and to continue taking steps of faith. I still "wallow" from time to time, but I see more quickly the death of my flesh, and that turns me back again to a step of faith.

Remember:

You will choose to go to back to your prodigal pigpen (the flesh) MANY times. However, in the next moment you can REPENT of your flesh and continue your walk of faith.

Five Truths Concerning Your Walk Of Faith

Truth #1 - God Is In The Process of PERSUADING You.

"And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform." Romans 4:21

During your walk of faith God is in a life-long process of persuading you of:

- His eternal desire to transform your life and to have an intimate relationship with you. (Ephesians 1:5)

*another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”
Galatians 5:17*

*“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. **In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.**” John 16:33*

Even though you will never arrive at a point of no struggle, you will experience incredible victories over your flesh and the sin patterns which have continually defeated you. In addition, as you continue to walk by faith in Christ, you can experience radical transformation in your behavior and in what you are thinking, believing, and choosing to do. You truly can arrive at the same place that Paul did when he exclaimed in Ephesians 3:20:

*“**He is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all we can ask or think according to the power that works within us.**”*

Remember that Paul went through beatings, whippings, stonings, shipwrecks, etc., and yet God used all of those painful events to bring him to the truth of Ephesians 3:20. This is a promise that I hope will be used of the Lord to motivate you to take the next step of faith and then the next until you experience this verse.

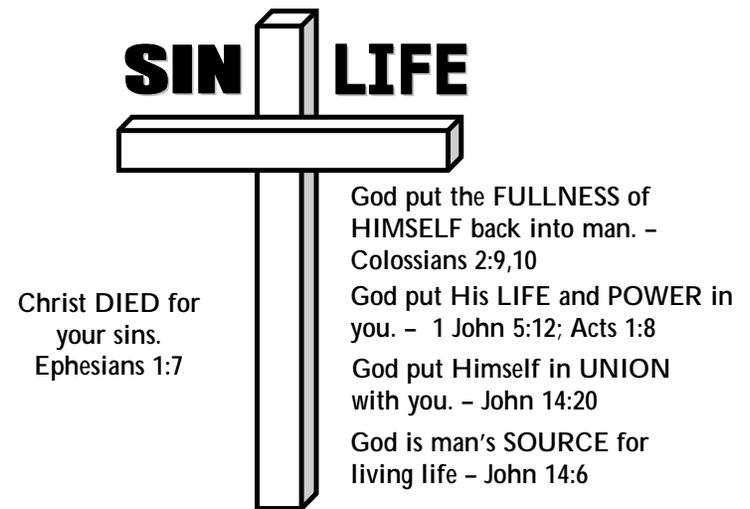
Paul also came to another place through his suffering. It was a place of great intimacy with God. We see this in Paul’s words in Philippians 3:8:

*“Yes, furthermore, I count everything as loss compared to the **possession of the priceless privilege of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and of progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him.** For His sake I have lost everything and consider it all to be mere rubbish, in order **that I may win Christ.**” Amplified Version*

The LIFE Side Of The Cross - God Put Himself In Man To Be Man’s SOURCE For Living Life.

Even though Christ died for man so that man could be saved, the problem still remained of man being separated from God as his life and source. What God did to resolve this separation is what I call the LIFE side of the cross. Let’s explore the meaning of the LIFE side of the cross.

The LIFE Side of The Cross



1. God put the FULLNESS of Himself back into man.

At the moment of salvation, you not only received Jesus as your Savior, but you also received the complete Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). We see this in Colossians 2:9, 10:

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.”

These verses are telling us that the fullness of the Godhead is in Christ and that Christ is now in you with the result that you have the fullness of God within you. You no longer have a God Who is separated from you. You now have the complete Godhead IN you!

2. You Now Have The Fullness Of God's LIFE and POWER IN You.

Christ's LIFE

In order for God to once again be man's Source, He had to put His life back inside man. We know that the life He put within us is eternal life and that life is in Christ according to the first part of 1 John 5:12:

"God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life...." 1 John 5:12a

God's POWER

"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...." Acts 1:8

In addition to Christ's life, you received all of God's power in you at the point of salvation. We will talk more in a future lesson about the magnitude of God's power that resides within us. The key truth to remember is that You are the container of ALL the fullness of God's LIFE and POWER.

3. God Put Himself in UNION With You.

Not only did God put Himself in you, but He also went even further. God put Himself in UNION with you. We see this truth in the following two verses:

"... (God) made us alive together with Christ." Ephesians 2:5 (Parenthesis mine)

then can we not trust our "heavenly Surgeon" who knows precisely what we need and why we need it. As we learn to trust Him, we will come to rest in the fact that He truly knows what He is doing and that it will be for our eternal benefit.

I know that answer might not be satisfactory, but I have come to a very important conclusion:

***If God believes that you need to know WHY or WHAT, then He will tell you. Otherwise, your part is to trust that He knows WHY and WHAT and to rest in that.
FAITH = REST!***

Expectation #7 – We Will Arrive At A Place Where The INTERNAL Struggle Will Be Over.

Unrealistic expectation: I will arrive at a point in my walk of faith where there will be no more internal struggles.

The Truth: There will be an ongoing internal struggle until you come face to face with Jesus. However, Christ in you has overcome all the internal and external struggles that you will ever face. As you walk by faith in God, you will experience more victory, more freedom, and more transformation through your internal and external struggles.

I would love to be able to tell you that if you walk long enough in faith that you will arrive at a place of no more struggle. We mentioned previously that external struggles will always be with us because we live in a fallen world. This holds true for internal struggles as well. The struggle with the flesh and the power of sin will last a lifetime.

"For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one

Are you perplexed about what God is doing or not doing in your life? I would imagine if you have walked with God for very long that you are always perplexed on some level concerning God. The truth is that God wants us in a constant state of perplexity. Why? One reason is that being perplexed means that we can't and won't understand all of what God is about in our lives. Especially when it goes against the grain of our expectations.

I find the further I walk down this path with the Lord the more perplexed I get. However, what God is teaching me in my perplexity is that I don't need to try and figure it out. He has it figured out. He knows the end from the beginning and all that He is asking you and me is to trust Him and die to our expectations. Die to trying to figure out His ways.

You can REST in your perplexity because God knows exactly why and what He is doing and He IS in control.

Other questions that we have all asked are, "WHY? Why is this happening or why is this not happening? Why won't You stop this or why don't You do this?" We all have "why" questions and want answers to those questions. There is something about our "humanness" that needs to know why. Therefore, what is a realistic expectation when it comes to those questions?

Many of our "why" questions go unanswered. Why is that? What we tend to forget during these times is that God is God, and He will reveal to us why or what He is about if He so chooses. It is God's prerogative to tell us why or what He is doing in our lives. God always has a divine purpose in giving you answers (or not).

If you go under anesthesia, trusting a brain surgeon who knows precisely what to do in brain surgery (and you don't),

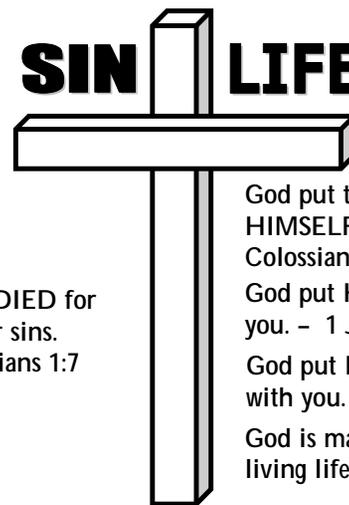
*"In that day you shall know that **I am in My Father**, and **you** (are in union) **in Me**, and **I** (am in union) **in you**." John 14:20 (Parentheses mine)*

What is the difference between containing all of the Godhead and being in union with God? Being in union with God means that we can NEVER be separated from God again. In other words, being in union means that you can never lose your salvation and that you entered into eternal life with Him the day when you were saved. This is why He says in the second part of Hebrews 13:5:

*"....I will **never** leave you or forsake you."*

What is the result of God putting His life and power in you? By God putting His life and power in you and putting Himself in union with you at salvation, it means that you no longer should be the Source for living life. God Himself becomes your source from which to live life. The LIFE side of the cross is illustrated again below.

The LIFE Side of The Cross



Christ DIED for your sins. Ephesians 1:7

God put the FULLNESS of HIMSELF back into man. - Colossians 2:9,10
 God put His LIFE and POWER in you. - 1 John 5:12; Acts 1:8
 God put Himself in UNION with you. - John 14:20
 God is man's SOURCE for living life - John 14:6

The GREAT news of the gospel is that in addition to being saved, you have God within you to be your LIFE and SOURCE. You NO LONGER have to be the Source to try to make life work!

The Problem For Most Christians

Like myself for so many years, the problem is that many Christians have been taught that they are to be the source with God's help to live the Christian life. This is a false teaching because God never intended for man to be the source for living life, and God is not going to help man be the source. As you saw in the verses above, God's design from the beginning was for Him to be man's source. If you were told falsely that God is going to help you be the source, let me ask you a question:

“Is your Christian life meeting your needs, solving your impossible problems and giving you the joy and fulfillment you desire?”

If you have been living under false teaching and are honest with yourself, your Christian life is not truly meeting your needs, solving your impossible problems, or giving you the joy and fulfillment that you want. God's design only works one way, and that is with Him being the Source.

The #1 LIE of The Christian Life:

Man can SUCCESSFULLY live the Christian life by using his own intellect and ability with God's help.

Christ As Your Life Means That He Wants To Live His Life IN You.

There is only one Person who has led a perfect Christian life, and that is Christ Himself. Now that He is in you, He

comfort, endurance, and hope in the midst of your suffering. I wish that I could promise you no more pain as you walk by faith but I can't make that promise. However, I can say with great Christ-confidence that suffering as a result of your faith walk will always have a divine good purpose.

“DIVINE GOOD”

God will use every bit of your pain and suffering to draw you into a GREATER DEPENDENCE on Him, to TRANSFORM your life, and to REVEAL to you what His grace and mercy looks like during your times of suffering.

Important Note: If you choose to walk in your flesh, God will use suffering as a way to discipline you and bring you back to Him as the source.

Expectation #6 – You Will Figure Out What God Is Doing In Your Life.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways. And My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8, 9

Unrealistic expectation: I have the right to know WHY and WHAT God is doing in my life.

The Truth: God will determine if you need to know why or what He is doing or not doing in your life. He always has a purpose in telling you OR not telling you what He is doing.

Paul says this in 2 Corinthians 4:8:

“afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed but not despairing.”

kinds of people: those who have suffered, those who are suffering, and those who will suffer. Sooner or later we will fit in all three categories. We feel that God can (and perhaps should) stop all forms of suffering. However, there are consequences to living in a fallen world, and suffering is one of them.

However, for the Christian who is walking by faith during the suffering, God promises to supply your needs (Philippians 4:19), to work a divine good purpose through it (Romans 8:28), and to use it to draw you into a deeper dependence on Him (John 15:5).

*“And we know that **God causes all things to work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28*

As Christians, we must understand that suffering will ALWAYS have a DIVINE PURPOSE.

I have a chronic health condition that may never go away. Early on as I was experiencing this condition, I begged God to take this “thorn” away. When I began truly walking by faith I reasoned that God would remove this thorn. However, as of this writing I still suffer with this condition. The difference is that I have come to realize the divine good that is resulting from my thorn. God is using my suffering to teach me dependence, compassion, and perseverance, just to name a few. I no longer ask God to remove. On the contrary, I now embrace my “thorn” because through it I am experiencing a greater dependence on God and transformation that is as Paul says is: “exceeding abundantly beyond all I can ask or think.”

In the midst of suffering it is very easy to try to run from it, anesthetize it, or deny it. The truth is that there is no place to run but to God. He is the only One Who can be your

wants to live His life **IN** you. Paul confirms this for His own life in the first part of Galatians 2:20:

*“I am crucified with Christ, and **I no longer live, but Christ lives IN me...**”*

Think about what Paul is saying in this verse. When Paul says that “I no longer live,” he in effect is saying that he CANNOT be the source for living the Christian life. This is amazing considering all of Paul’s credentials, intellect, and ability. He clearly acknowledges that none of those things qualifies him to be the source. Therefore, since he admits that he cannot live the Christian life, he says, “Christ lives in me.” Paul recognizes his absolute need for Christ to live the Christian life in him.

**The KEY To Living The Christian Life:
To live the Christian life means to allow Christ to live HIS life IN you.**

What Does It Look Like For God To Live His Life In You?

You may be asking, “What does it look like for God to live His life **IN** me?” I want to share with you a few of God’s promises to gain a clearer understanding:

VICTORY - He will be your victory over the power of sin, the flesh, the world, and the power of Satan.

“but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:57

FREEDOM - He will be your freedom from defeating sin patterns and ongoing inner struggles.

“So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.” Galatians 5:1

HEALING - He will be your healing of your past and present woundedness.

*“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.”
Psalm 147:3*

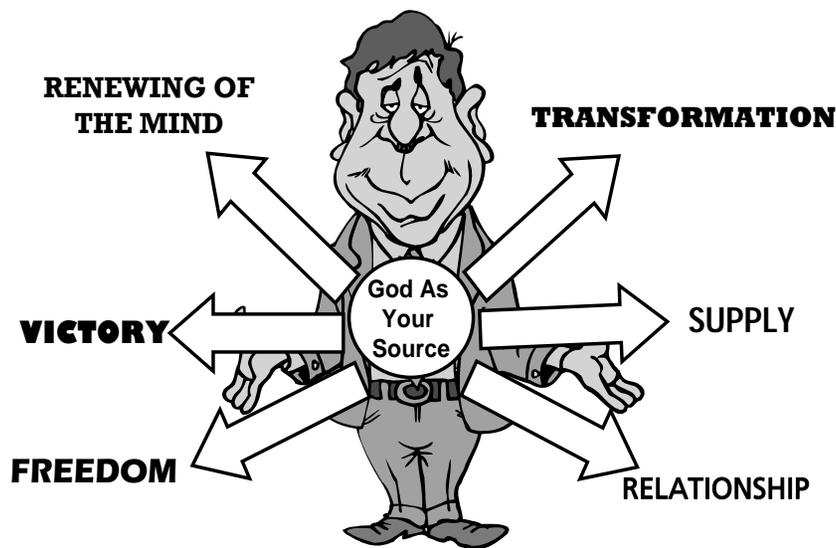
SUPPLY - God will supply all your needs.

*“My God shall supply all your needs.....in Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 4:19*

INTIMACY - He is your intimacy in that He is drawing you into a personal, intimate relationship with Himself.

“His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave Him great pleasure.” Ephesians 1:5

Living From The INSIDE Out



Remember:

Faith is believing that God is working even though there is no visible or experiential evidence of that work in our lives.

Faith is the key thing that God is teaching you as you wait on Him.

Expectation #5 – There Will Be No Pain Or Suffering.

“For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.” 2 Corinthians 1:5

*“Dear friends, **do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering**, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.” 1 Peter 4:12, 13*

Unrealistic expectation: If I do my part in walking by faith, God will prevent pain, suffering, and conflict in my life.

The Truth: There will be pain, suffering, or conflict, BUT God will supply your needs when those times arise in your life and will reveal to you in His timing the “divine good” that He is working through your suffering.

I don't like (nor will I ever like) pain, suffering, or conflict. I know that you feel the same way. However, God never promises that our walk of faith will be without pain or suffering. Why? We live in a fallen world, and in this fallen world there will always be pain and conflict. There are three

One of the questions that we tend to ask God is, “**Why is it taking so long to experience change?**” We need to understand that in some areas of our life we will be changed “quicker” than others. Why? The following are some of the reasons why change may come more slowly in some areas of your life than in others:

- Your lying beliefs are very entrenched because of the years of believing those lies.
- Your strongholds, addictions, etc. have a strong grip on you because of the length of time that they have held you in bondage.
- The depth of your woundedness and the length of time that you have lived with your woundedness may result in a slower healing process.
- Some areas of your flesh are stronger and more resistant to God’s work than others are.
- Your unbelief, doubt, and fears can cause you to resist and delay God’s transforming work in your life.

I believe when it comes to faith that the key question is this:

“How long can you continue to trust God WITHOUT Experiencing change in your life?”

The Result Of God Living In Us Is A CHANGED Life.

The focus of our study is experiencing a changed life. There is not one of us who does not want something about his life changed. The word of God confirms that this change can take place according to Romans 12:2:

*“do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed...**”*

Not only can we be changed, it is our **spiritual destiny** to be transformed according to Romans 8:29 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.

*“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to **become conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” Romans 8:29*

*“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being **transformed into His likeness** with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” 2 Corinthians 3:18*

Being TRANSFORMED into Christ-likeness means to think, feel, choose, believe, and behave LIKE Christ.

We will discuss in depth in a future lesson the meaning of being transformed into the likeness of Christ.

There Is Another Promise Concerning God Living His Life In You.

Another promise of God living His life in you is that you will experience abundant life. He makes this promise in John 10:10:

*“...I have come that they might have life and have it **abundantly.**”*

What do you think Jesus meant by an abundant life? I don't believe that He meant an external abundance because that can be easily taken away. Is it possible that the abundance that Jesus is talking about is an internal abundance? Let me use the promises listed in the previous section to give us a better understanding of the meaning of abundant life. I will do this in the form of a question for you.

If you were:

- **living in victory** over sin, the flesh, the world, and Satan,
- **experiencing freedom** from your defeating sin patterns,
- **being healed** of your past or present woundedness,
- **having your needs met,**
- **being transformed** to think, feel, choose, and behave like Christ, and are
- **experiencing a personal, intimate relationship with God,**

would you consider that abundant living?

I believe you, like me, would consider this abundant living.

Does This Mean That We Do Not Have To Live FOR God?

We have just learned that it is about God living His life in us. However, for many years I believed that it was about me living life FOR God. Have you been taught this as well? Based upon what Paul is telling us, the truth is that we are not to live FOR God. We are to allow God to live His life in us. If you have been under the false belief that it is all up to you, then I hope that this truth will set you free from the bondage that comes with that false belief of living for God.

Expectation #4 - God's Timetable Versus Your Timetable

Unrealistic expectation: When I begin the walk of faith then I expect to experience changes very soon.

The Truth: God has a perfect timetable for His will to be accomplished in your life (and He is not telling you what that timetable is).

I don't know about you, but I don't expect to have to wait a long time for anything. When I put the key in the ignition and turn it, I expect the car to start immediately. When I put the car in "Drive" and put the gas pedal down, I expect it to quickly respond. How about you? Unfortunately, for the most part, this is **not** how it works with God. As you walk down this path of faith, your desire will be for God to give you freedom, victory, and healing of your woundedness quickly. However, you will soon discover that God's timetable and your timetable may not be the same.

Let's assume that you continue seeking God for some time to transform you in some area, but nothing changes. You feel like you have logged enough time by faith that you should be experiencing some change. When God has not met your timetable, you may be tempted to give up or get angry with Him. Neither one of these options is going to bring about the change that you desire any faster. The key is to keep taking steps of faith long enough for you to experience the change that you desire. The key thing to remember when you are unhappy with God's timetable is this:

Even though God may not be working fast enough for you, He IS working!

"There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1

Realistic expectation: For the most part in your walk of faith, you will NOT feel or experience God’s process of transforming your life until you experience the results of that process (i.e. freedom, victory, healing, etc.). You will be “faith-ing” it more than you will experience or feel it.

I know that we talked about this earlier but it is so hard to understand that I feel we need to explore it further because it is such a stumbling block in our walk of faith. It is a stumbling block because we feel or experience life every moment through our senses. However, when it comes to living by faith we may not feel or experience God’s working in our lives.

I compare God’s work in your life like an IV. Let’s assume you are in the hospital and you are given an antibiotic through an IV. As you sit and watch the drip, drip, drip of the IV you can’t feel the antibiotic working initially. However, you believe it is working because you have faith in the doctor who promised you it would do what it was designed to do. Eventually, as you are being healed you will feel the effects of that healing on your body.

In much the same way, when you start walking by faith, God’s work in you is like the IV in that you may not feel Him working but you know by faith He is because that is what He promises. However, as you walk by faith for a time (I wish I could tell you how much time.) you will begin to feel the affects of God’s work in the form of freedom, victory, healing, transformation, or intimacy.

***As human beings we feel and experience all of life.
However, when it comes to faith we may NOT feel or
experience God’s transforming work.***

How Does God Live His Life In You?

This is an important part of the study because many Christians don’t understand their part or God’s part in God living His life in you. Therefore, I want to conclude this lesson by looking at what the Bible says is God’s part and then in the next lesson look at what man’s part is in God living His life in us.

God Is The INITIATOR And The CAUSE and EFFECT of Making His Promises An Experiential Reality In Your Life.

*“For I am confident of this very thing, that **He who began a good work in you...**” Philippians 1:6a*

What is Paul telling you in the first part of this verse? He is saying that God began the work that He wants to accomplish in you. He began or **initiated** this work in you at salvation. The Father accomplished this work by sending Jesus to die on the cross to save mankind from their sins. However, God promises to do much more than just saving you. Look at the second part of Philippians 1:6:

*“...He who began a good work in you **will carry it on to completion** until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:6b*

We see in the second part of Philippians 1:6 that God not only began the work but that He also WILL complete the work that He began in you at salvation. This verse reveals to us that God is the **initiator** and the **cause** and **effect** for real change in your life.

The false belief is that you are to be the initiator and the cause and effect of the transformation in your life. In other words if any change is to occur, it is up to you to transform yourself (with God’s help). It is because of this false belief

that so many believers have either given up or else keep trying harder to live the Christian life. The truth is that **only God** can be the cause and effect of change when it comes to fulfilling His promises.

What are some of the works that God wants to complete in you? He wants to:

- **FREE you from the sin strongholds that you can't overcome.** – Galatians 5:1
- **HEAL you of your past and present woundedness.** – Psalm 147:3
- **SUPPLY your needs.** – Philippians 4:19
- **Be your VICTORY over sin, the world, the flesh, and Satan.** – 1 Corinthians 15:57
- **TRANSFORM your life for you to experience Christ-likeness.** – Romans 8:29
- **Draw you into an INTIMATE relationship with Himself.** – Ephesians 1:5

One other point that I want to share along these lines is that I have heard many believers ask the question, “Is God truly willing to transform my life?” Look again at Philippians 1:6 because it clearly shows that God initiated His work in you at salvation and that He is continuously willing to transform your life.

*“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you **WILL** carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:6*

Without GOD being the INITIATOR of His work in you as well as the CAUSE and EFFECT of change, there will NEVER be any significant change in your life.

and will fail many times along the way. However, what did God say about David: “He was a man after God’s own heart.” Therefore, expect to fail often. (I simply define failure as turning back to self as the source.) You see, God expects you to fail because He is well aware of your unbelief, the strength of your flesh, the power of sin, and the power of Satan in your life.

Even though you will fail many times, this does not make you a failure and is no reason to condemn yourself. Why? Romans 8:37 says that you are not a failure in God’s eyes but are “more than a conqueror” in Christ. You do not have to condemn yourself when you fail because Romans 8:1 tells us:

*“There is now **no** condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus.**”*

Since you are in Christ, God no longer condemns you, and you no longer have to condemn yourself. (I hope that is good news for you since so many Christians spend so much time in self-condemnation.) When you fail, you simply confess your failure to God, and turn back in the next moment into dependence upon Him. The key truth is this:

Key Truth:

***It does not matter how many times you fail.
The key is to NOT stop SEEKING God by faith.***

Expectation #3 – Faithing It Versus Experience

“For we walk by faith not by sight.” 2 Corinthians 5:7

Unrealistic expectation: As you take steps of faith or walk in faith, you always will feel or experience God working in your life.

is your default position. By this I mean that living from the flesh is what you are familiar with. It is your natural tendency to want to use his intellect, ability and willpower to live life independent of God.

In addition, as you begin to walk by faith, you have what I call a “weak” faith or what Jesus calls “little” faith. Your weak faith is a result of the level of your unbelief in who God is and what He can and will do. Along with your weak faith is your “strong” flesh. Your flesh will have a strong grip on you early on but as you continue to exercise your faith then it will become stronger than the strength of your flesh.

In addition, as you learn to walk by faith in God, you will begin to experience His life and power transform your life and you will come to realize the truth that SELF has no real solutions, no power, and no ability to solve life’s problems. When the Holy Spirit reveals to you that you are walking by your flesh, simply confess that to God and turn back to Him in that moment.

Expectation #2 – Failure Is NOT An Option!

Unrealistic expectation: I cannot afford to fail in my walk of faith. If I do, I will condemn myself for failing and believe that I am a failure.

The Truth: Realistic expectation: You will fail many times in your walk of faith. However, this does not make you a failure or give you license to condemn yourself.

<p>THE TRUTH: God EXPECTS you to fail!</p>

There were many great saints in the Bible who failed many times but God used them in mighty ways. We don’t have to look any further than David to understand that we can

Only God In HIS Ability Is ABLE To Make His Promises A Reality In Your Life.

*“Now unto Him who is **able** to do **exceeding abundantly** above all that we ask or think, according to **the (God’s) power** that works in us.” Ephesians 3:20 (Parenthesis mine)*

What Paul is saying is that only through God’s power, He is able to make the promises of victory, freedom, healing, transformation and intimacy with Him an **experiential** reality in your life. We see in Ephesians 3:20 that Paul is bearing witness to what God had accomplished in his life. Through this verse He is relating to us God’s ability to do all that He has promised and more.

The Ending of My Story

I have told you about the first thirty years of my Christian life. I was worn out trying to live for God and was experiencing only more bondage and misery. However, little did I understand until October 4, 1998 that God was bringing me to the end of myself and my “performance-driven” life. On that day while sitting in the parking lot of our church, a thought came rolling across my mind in the form of two questions, “**Are you done yet?** Are you done trying to live a self-sufficient Christian life?” I knew those questions were being asked of me by God. The truth is that “I was done!” On that day, God began to set me free from my lying beliefs through a speaker at our church named Ian Thomas. The first words out of his mouth that Sunday were,

“God never intended for you to live the life that only Christ can live in and through you.” I was stunned by these words because he was the first person to ever tell me that it was not up to me to try to live the Christian life. In addition to what Ian Thomas was saying, I experienced the love, life, and power of God that was flowing from his life. I knew at

that moment that the life that he was experiencing was what I had desired to live all of my Christian life.

That day I began a new journey of allowing God to live His life in me. God began radically changing the way that I think, feel, choose, and behave. As a result, God has set me free from my strongholds of inadequacy, fear, and unworthiness. He so transformed my life that I left a very good business to go into ministry to share these same truths with Christians who are wanting more from their Christian walk. Therefore, if your Christian life does not line up with what God promises you, I pray that God will give you new revelation about how He intends for you to live the Christian life.

How About You?

Where are you in your journey today? Are you experiencing the abundant life that Jesus promises? If not, I trust that what you have learned in this lesson alone will encourage you to read on and hear more about God's desire and process to transform your life.

Lesson Six

Expectations About The Walk Of Faith

Final Truths About The Walk of Faith

Introduction

The final truth that it is critical to understand about the walk of faith are the expectations we attach to it. Without understanding some of these expectations, you may be tempted to give up and turn back to yourself as the source. We will look at the expectations in the following areas:

- **Having A Consistent Walk of Faith**
- **Experiencing Failure**
- **Faith Versus Feelings**
- **God's Timing**
- **Pain and Suffering**
- **Figuring Out What God Is Doing**
- **Reaching A Point of No Struggle**

Expectation #1 – You Will Consistently Make The Choice To Walk By Faith In God.

Unrealistic expectation: You will consistently choose to walk by faith in God.

The Truth: Early on in your walk of faith, you will choose many times to go back to your self (the flesh) as the source to try to deal with your problems, to find solutions, and to make your life work.

This is the most critical unrealistic expectation to dispel. Early on in your walk of faith, you will go back to your self (the flesh) many times as the source to either solve your problems or to cope with your problems. Why? First of all, it

faith. As we experience freedom, victory, healing, etc., it will build our Christ-confidence to keep walking in faith and to keep fighting the fight of faith. As you persevere in fighting the fight of faith and eventually experience a supernatural change by God, your Christ-confidence increases and allows you to take another step of faith.

Where Will You End Up If You Give Up The Fight?

“Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.’” 2 Peter 2:22

The truth is that if we give up the fight, then all we have left is to turn back to the flesh as our source. We go back to the “prodigal pigpen” of self by depending on and wallowing in our own ability and willpower to transform our lives, to solve our problems, and to meet our needs. If we turn to that option, remember that it will result in more of the same or worse.

Key Truth:

If you don’t engage God to fight the fight of faith, you have ALREADY lost. However, if you ask God to fight, and you STAY in the fight, you will eventually experience His VICTORY over all the obstacles to your walk of faith.

Therefore, keep fighting the fight of faith so that you can say with Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7:

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.”

Lesson Two

What Is Your Part In God Living His Life In You?

Introduction

I trust that God is beginning to reveal to you or at least is giving you a spiritual curiosity about what you have read so far. I know that you may have more questions than answers, but I trust that you will continue to ask God to give you further revelation in this lesson about what it means for Him to live His life in you. The first part of this lesson will reveal your part in God’s process of living in you and transforming your life. If you have been a Christian for some time, these verses I will be sharing may not be new to you. If this is the case, I would ask that you take a deeper look at these verses and ask yourself: Am I walking in and being transformed by these truths?

The Vine-Branch Relationship Reveals Your Part.

Even though God is the cause and effect of transformation in your life, you have a vital part to play in order for Him to live His life in you. Let’s look at John 15:5 to give you a better idea of what that part is:

“I AM the VINE, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit...”
John 15:5a



Jesus is saying that as the physical branch is designed to be totally dependent on the physical vine for life, you, as a spiritual branch, are designed to live totally dependent upon

God, the spiritual Vine, for life. The word “abide” is another word for **dependence**. It is important to understand at this point a very key truth:

KEY TRUTH:

God created man to be DEPENDENT upon Him. His design from the beginning was for you to depend upon Him.

We saw this in the first lesson with Adam and Eve who were totally dependent upon God to meet their every need. God reveals this as well in John 15:5. As we abide in Christ, we are living dependently upon Him.

Your Part In Living The Christian Life:

Live with an ATTITUDE of DEPENDENCE upon God as the Source for living life.

To Better Understand Dependence, Let's See How Jesus Lived.

You may be wondering at this point what dependence looks like. To gain a fuller understanding of dependence, let's look at how Jesus lived His life on earth. We need to first understand that Jesus as the “God-man” laid aside His privileges of deity. We see this in Philippians 2:6, 7:

“He (Jesus) had equal status with God but didn't think so much of Himself that He had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, He set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave and became human!” NLT (Parenthesis mine)

It doesn't mean that at any time while Jesus was on this earth that He was not fully deity. What it means specifically

Let's assume you have an ongoing addiction to eating, alcohol, pornography, etc. When you start down a path to freedom from these addictions, you will be met with all types of opposition. The lust of your flesh will continue to draw you to your addiction. Satan or his demonic forces will be constantly tempting you. When you decide to engage God to fight this fight and to be set free, it can be a very long, hard, drawn-out battle. Therefore, you may need to be continuously engaging God to do battle with these obstacles that will not give up easily.

You Will Be Tempted To Give Up The Fight.

“How long will you forget me, Lord? Forever? How long will you hide from me? How long must I worry and feel sad in my heart all day? How long will my enemy win over me?” Psalm 13:1, 2

Have you ever felt like David did in Psalm 13? Can't you hear the struggle in his words? The truth is that many times you will want to give up the fight of faith as well, especially when you are in a very difficult situation that seems to never end. However, it is during those times that you need to **persevere** in engaging God's power to fight for you. What you need to know is that YOU can't provide the perseverance. Only God can! Therefore, ask Him to be your perseverance to stay in the fight.

*“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now may **the God who gives perseverance and encouragement...**” Romans 15:4, 5a*

Romans 8:25 is telling us that if we have “hope” (which is translated “confident expectation”) concerning what God promises to do, then we will persevere in our walk or fight of

God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” Genesis 3:1

I believe that doubt is the #1 killer of faith. Doubt was the first tactic of Satan in the garden of Eden with Eve. He knew that if he could get Eve to doubt God then he could tempt her to make an independent decision to sin against God. I am further convinced through my counseling of others that doubt can quickly move us away from living by faith.

I hear over and over again doubts about God’s love, His power, His desire to set us free, etc. As long as Christians live in doubt, they will not walk by faith. These doubts begin as thoughts so what does it look like to seek God to take those doubtful thoughts captive.

Example: Let’s assume you have been walking by faith in some area but you have yet to experience any change. Thoughts of doubt begin to creep into your mind.

Fight of faith: “Lord, I am beginning to doubt whether or not You are really working in my life because I am not experiencing any changes. Take those thoughts captive and BE my patience and endurance to take another step of faith.”

Living in DOUBT leaves no room for faith.

In Some Fights You May Have To Continue To Fight For Some Time.

The duration of the fight of faith is always different. Some obstacles that you may face may be destroyed immediately upon engaging God to fight. However, many situations that we face may involve a longer fight of faith. Let me give an example to illustrate:

is that Jesus laid aside His right to be **co-equal** with the Father in order to live as a man. How then did Jesus live in regards to His relationship with the Father?

Let’s look at two scriptures that describe Jesus’s relationship to His Father:

*“I can do **nothing on My own initiative.** As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 5:30*

*“Jesus therefore said, ‘When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do **nothing on My own initiative,** but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.’” John 8:28*

The common theme in each of these verses is that Jesus said that He could do **nothing apart from** the Father. In other words, Jesus lived in moment by moment dependence upon the Father as His Source.

This means that Jesus was not functioning out of His OWN life and power but out of the life and power of His FATHER.

Could this mean that the Father, not Jesus, was the Source for all that Jesus accomplished while He was on earth? We see the answer in John 14:10 when Jesus says:

*“Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I say are not my own, but **my Father who lives in Me does His work through Me.**”*

What this verse is telling us is that it was the Father’s **life and power** through Jesus healing the lame, giving sight to the blind, and raising Lazarus from the dead. In other words, Jesus was dependent, and the result of His dependence was

that the Father **produced** the miracles through Christ. Jesus's life in relationship to His Father was a perfect example of the branch-vine relationship.

If through Jesus's dependence the Father's life and power flowed through Him to perform miracles, what could that same life and power do in you if you walk dependently upon God? This leads us to the following question:

If Jesus, as a man, lived in total DEPENDENCE upon His Father as the Source with the result that the FATHER lived His life in and through Jesus, then

HOW SHOULD YOU LIVE LIFE?

Why Do We Struggle With Dependence?

1. The world says that you are to be INDEPENDENT.

Part of our struggle with dependence is that we live in a world that screams "be independent" We are so inundated and brainwashed with the message of independence that we struggle with being dependent.

2. The world also sends the message that dependence is WEAKNESS.

Not only does the world scream independence. It also sends the message that dependence = weakness. Since no one wants to be perceived as weak, we focus on being independent.

3. There is a part of man's makeup that resists being dependent on God: THE FLESH

Until we were saved, we were living totally independent of God. Therefore, when we learn that the Christian life is about dependence, there is something within us (called the

The "giant" that could keep you from believing and experiencing transformation is **unbelief**. Unbelief keeps us locked in our lying beliefs and in the bondage of our fleshly attitudes and behaviors.

I have said before that we are all "unbelieving believers." By that I mean that we have believed in Christ for salvation but there are many things about God that we do not believe. Remember that there is a difference between "knowing" (intellectual knowledge of) the truth and "believing" (personal revelation that leads to transformation) the truth. When we start a walk of faith there is great unbelief about several issues but I believe that unbelief primarily falls into two areas:

***Unbelief about WHO God is.
Unbelief about WHAT God can (or is willing to) do in your life.***

Therefore, when unbelieving thoughts come into mind, we must engage God to do battle with these thoughts.

Example: Let's assume that you struggle with believing that God is truly willing to work in your life.

Fight of faith: "Lord, I am struggling with the thoughts of unbelief that You really will transform my life. I am asking You to take those thoughts captive and renew my mind to the truth that You are eternally willing to transform my life."

An attitude of unbelief will move you to a place where you QUIT walking by faith.

Doubting Thoughts

"Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did

time in self-condemnation after they sin than the time they are in the sin itself. I know that was true in my life.

What is the truth: Self-condemnation comes from not knowing or believing that Christ took all your condemnation on Himself when He went to the cross. That is why a crucial truth to understand for Christians is Romans 8:1.

*“Therefore, there is now **no** condemnation for those who are **in Christ** Jesus.” Romans 8:1*

Because you have been delivered from EVERY form of condemnation through Christ, then you NO longer have to condemn yourself.

However, this is easier said than done. Therefore, let’s look at what it looks like to bring God’s power to bear to fight these self-condemning thoughts.

Example: You continue to fail in an area of your life that brings on thoughts of self-condemnation. You decide to engage God to deal with those thoughts.

Fight of faith: “Lord, I have been taking ownership of these condemning thoughts. I am **entrusting** these condemning thoughts to You and **asking** You to take these thoughts captive and to set me free from condemnation.”

Unbelieving Thoughts

*“Immediately the boy’s father cried out and said, “I do believe; **help my unbelief.**” Mark 9:24*

The Jews in Hebrews 3:19 were promised a “promised land.” However, in their unbelief they chose not to enter. It was a land of God’s abundant provision and protection, but they said, “No!” What was the problem? They saw the “giants” in the land as a greater reality than God’s promise.

flesh) which resists walking dependently upon God. The flesh is simply an attitude within us that says, “I don’t need God to live life.” We will talk more about the flesh in a future lesson, but it is important to know that there is a part of you that will ALWAYS resist being dependent upon God.

Man Was NOT Designed To Live Independently of God.

Let’s go back to John 15:5 and look at the last few words in this verse where Jesus says:

*“.....**apart** from **Me** you can do **nothing.**”*

Let me ask you a question. “What happens to a branch when it is separated from the vine?” It begins to die because it is no longer abiding in or living dependently upon the vine for life. If you, as a spiritual branch, decide to try to live independently of Christ, the spiritual Vine, then what can you expect?

What does Jesus mean when He says that “apart from Me you can do nothing?” This part of John 15:5 creates problems for many Christians. Why? It is because man is capable of doing many things apart from God. As we discussed in the first lesson, man learns how to do a job, to master a hobby or a sport, or to manage his finances. So what does Jesus mean?

Jesus means that APART from Him you CANNOT PRODUCE the life that God promises you.

Apart from dependence upon God there will be:

- **NO power** over sin.
- **NO victory** over your flesh.
- **NO freedom** from your defeating sin patterns.
- **NO healing** of your past or present woundedness.

- **NO fruit** of the Spirit produced in your life.
- **NO transformation** of your life.
- **NO intimacy** with God.

KEY POINT

The problem is that living from your OWN power, strength, and ability CANNOT produce the Christian life that only God can produce.

Dependence = Faith

Why do I say that dependence = faith? Let me give you an example. When you have a dental problem, it creates a need for a dentist. You are totally dependent upon that dentist to deal with your problem. Another way of saying that you are dependent is that you have **faith** in your dentist's ability to do what you cannot do for yourself. Therefore, another word for dependence is **faith**.

Let's return to Galatians 2:20 to see Paul's part in order for Christ to live in Him:

*"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by **faith** in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me." Galatians 2:20*

Paul says that his part in allowing God to live in Him is by **faith**. Many Christians have asked me, "How do I live the Christian life?" The truth is that you can't live it. The real question should be, "How do I allow Christ to live His life in me?" The answer is by faith.

Walking with an attitude of DEPENDENCE upon God is called FAITH. Faith is the "HOW TO" for the Christian.

What is the truth: The truth is that we live in a fallen world full of pain and suffering. You may not be suffering today, but you probably will be experiencing pain or suffering sometime in the future whether or not you ever take a step of faith. The truth is that it is not a step of faith that will bring pain and suffering because God is not the author of it. What God promises if you walk by faith is to deliver you from the suffering OR to transform your attitude in the midst of the suffering.

Fight of faith in dealing with fear of pain and suffering:

"I am fearful that there will be pain or suffering if I take a step of faith. Persuade me that if I experience pain and suffering you will deliver me through it or transform my life in the midst of the suffering. Also persuade me in those times of suffering that I need You more than ever."

Giving In To Fear Robs You Of:

1. Victory over the flesh, sin and Satan/demons.
2. Freedom from defeating sin patterns.
3. Healing of your past woundedness.
4. Transformation of you, your marriage, and your family.
5. Transformation into Christ-likeness.
6. Personal relationship with God.

Your fears can take OWNERSHIP of your life and ROB you of your faith walk.

Self-Condemning Thoughts

We know from our discussion about Satan that Satan/demons can insert lying, deceiving, tempting and condemning thoughts. However, we can produce our own self-condemning thoughts without Satan's help. After many years of discipling, I find that many Christians spend more

what will happen when we take steps of faith. The catch is that we will never experience trust in God's character unless we do take a step of faith.

Fight of faith in dealing with fear of the unknown:

“Lord, I am fearful about taking a step of faith because I don't know what to expect. Persuade me that You are the sovereign God of the universe and I have nothing to fear.”

Fear of FAILURE

Another question that I hear often is, “What if I take steps of faith, and nothing happens, or God does not come through?” Fear of failure is a very common fear in the walk of faith. We won't take steps of faith because we fear that God may fail us or that we might fail God.

What is the truth: The truth is that God will not fail you, and you cannot unless you decide NOT take a step of faith. Since it is not up to you to produce the results, then you cannot fail if you are walking by faith. As we have studied previously, we know by faith that God is working in every step of faith whether we feel it or not.

Fight of faith in dealing with fear of failure:

Step of faith: “I am fearful that I will fail if I take a step of faith. Lord, I am entrusting my fear to You and am asking You to persuade me that I cannot fail if I walk by faith.”

Fear of PAIN or SUFFERING

I hear it said so many times about the walk of faith, “I don't want to take a step of faith because I might experience pain and suffering from God.” This is one of Satan's greatest ploys with Christian men. If he can convince you that a step of faith involves pain and suffering, you will NOT take the first step.

Four Ways To Define FAITH

1. Faith Is An ASSURANCE And A CONVICTION.

“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1

Some of the meanings of the word “assurance” in Hebrews 11:1 in Strong's Lexicon are steadfastness of mind, resolution, confidence, and firm trust. “Conviction” connotes certainty. Distilling all these words down, one definition of faith is as follows:

FAITH

is an assurance, confidence, and certainty that God is Who He says that He is and that He will accomplish what He promises.

2. Faith Is A PERSUASION and An EXPECTATION.

FAITH

“is a firm PERSUASION and EXPECTATION that God will perform all that He has promised to us in Christ.”

I like this definition because of the words **persuasion** and **expectation**. Why do we come to God in the first place? We come to God because we believe on some level that God is Who He says He is and that He will do what He promises to do.

In other words, we are persuaded to some degree of God's ability to produce His promises in us. However, for the rest of our lives we will need God to further persuade us because of our unbelief. Divine persuasion is a necessary part of our transformation. Paul talked about Abraham being persuaded

of God's ability and power to do what He promises in Romans 4:21:

*“being fully persuaded that **God had the power to do what He had promised.**”*

Since God made the promises, we can expect Him to make them an experiential reality in us based upon His character and His power. Paul talks about “expectation” in Philippians 1:20:

“I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage (in Christ) so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”(Parenthesis mine)

3. Faith Is Believing That “I CAN’T,” BUT “GOD CAN.”

I CAN’T - *“...apart from Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5b*

GOD CAN - *“He who began a good work in your life will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 1:6*

As we discussed previously, we must first come to the place of “I Can’t” because only “God Can.” Faith is coming to the realization that you **can’t** do what only God **can** do in your life and then **believing** that He can. He tells us over and over again that He can, and He will complete the work that He has begun.

FAITH

***Is trusting God to do what only He CAN do,
and I CANNOT.***

Enemy #4 – Your Thought Life

*“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and **we are taking every thought captive** to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:5*

One of the greatest obstacles to your walk of faith is your thought life. As you have seen in several of the examples, your mind can be deceived by the enemy. In addition, your mind contains lying, unbelieving, and condemning thoughts. These thoughts can flood your mind and keep you hostage. Therefore, let’s look at four roadblocks in your mind that can draw you away from walking by faith: fear, self-condemning thoughts, unbelief, and doubt.

Fearful Thoughts

*“For God has **not given us a spirit of fear**, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7*

I think that the main hindrance to the walk of faith is fear. What are some of the fears that we have concerning our walk of faith?

Fear of the UNKNOWN

The question that I hear most often is, “What will happen when I take a step of faith?” This is a valid fear because we may not know exactly what will happen when we take steps of faith. This fear of the unknown can keep us from ever taking the first step. The source of this fear is not being in control about what will happen when you take a step of faith.

What is the truth: The truth is that God knows what is going to happen when we take steps of faith. If we trust God’s character and His promises, we will no longer fear

anything to solve it. He probably isn't really concerned with my problem, so I better use my own intellect and ability (APART from God) to try to figure out how to get myself out of this mess."

Remember: When Satan/demonic forces insert thoughts into your mind. they will always come in the form of first person (I, me, myself, etc.) and sound like your own voice.

If you take ownership of those thoughts, then the enemy's strategy has worked, and he has successfully turned you back to yourself (the flesh) as the source. However, you can choose to take steps of faith to walk in God's power over Satan/demons.

Fight of faith: "Lord, I know that the enemy is tempting me to give up on You and Your ability to solve this financial problem. I am asking You to do battle with the enemy and to remove him from tempting me in this area."

Truths To Remember In The Walk of Faith In Dealing With Satan/Demons

1. Don't try to deal with Satan in your own power. You are powerless against him.
2. Satan is always looking for a fight. Remember that you must engage God's power to win that fight.
3. You may have to continuously take steps of faith to remove the Satanic/demonic influence in your life, especially in areas where your fleshly behavior is the strongest. The enemy will not give up easily.
4. Remember that in God's power the enemy is defeated. However, he is constantly trying to deceive you into believing he is all-powerful and that you are powerless.

4. Faith Is COOPERATION With God.

*"I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because **I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.**" John 5:30*

Faith means that you have made a decision to cooperate with God. This means that you are no longer resisting God's work or that you are not trying to do what only God can do. Cooperation is a faith attitude that says, "Lord, I am trusting You to live Your life in me and to transform my life according to Your will."

FAITH

Is your WILLING COOPERATION with God's life and power within you to transform you according to His will.

Is It Up To You To Produce Faith?

Jesus's last three words on the cross in John 19:30 were:

"It Is Finished."

These last three words of our Lord on the cross have eternal significance to you and me as Christians. One of the meanings is that Christ once and for all has dealt with our sins. However, there is another meaning that pertains to our Christian walk. Let me ask you a question. "What do you add to a finished work?" Nothing! In other words, God is not asking you to add anything to His completed work. God does not need for you to achieve anything for Him. Your part as it says in Colossians 2:6 is simply to RECEIVE:

*"As you therefore **have received** Christ Jesus the Lord, **so walk in Him**" Colossians 2:6*

How does this apply to faith? Look at Colossians 2:9, 10 from Lesson One:

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness IN Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.”

If you have been given fullness IN Christ, this means that you have the fullness of Christ’s faith in you.

God does NOT expect you to produce the faith. He expects you to RECEIVE His SUPPLY of faith.

Remember: God’s Work Is NOT Necessarily Contingent Upon Your Faith.

*“Our God is in heaven; He does whatever pleases him.”
Psalm 115:3*

God’s work in your life is not contingent upon your faith. God is sovereign, and He can do what He desires in your life regardless of whether or not you are walking by faith. However, I can tell you from personal experience that as I have more intentionally walked by faith these last several years versus the first thirty years of my Christian life, God has accelerated His changes in my life. A key truth to remember is God’s transformation process in your life will be accelerated as you walk by faith.

Faith Must Always Have An Object.

Faith can have many objects. When you drive your car, you have faith in your brakes, or you have faith in the construction of the building that you work in every day, or faith in the chair that you sit in. It is not faith that is the key. The key is the **object** of your faith. The object of our faith as Christians should be Jesus. We see this in the following verses:

“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

Key Point: Satan and his demons CANNOT INDWELL you as a Christian. Because you are in union with God, Satan and his demons can now only try to INFLUENCE your soul, but they cannot indwell it.

We see in 2 Corinthians 12:7 that Satan can bring his demons against us. This is what happened to Paul when Satan sent him a demon (messenger of Satan) to torment him:

“To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.” 2 Corinthians 12:7

Satan is your only historian. He has kept very meticulous records on your entire life. He and his demonic forces know your weaknesses, your flesh patterns, and your lying beliefs. They know exactly the areas where you are most vulnerable. Therefore, they attempt to draw you away from your walk with God by triggering the power of sin and your flesh patterns. Satan and his demonic forces are ruthless in that they will use lies, temptation, deceit, and condemnation to draw you away from your faith walk.

Examples of What It Looks Like To Engage God’s Power To Experience Victory Over Satan/Demons

Example #1: Let’s assume you are struggling with your finances. Your spiritual desire is to trust God to provide the necessary finances, but after several steps of faith your financial situation has not changed. Satan or his demonic forces enter the picture and insert thoughts such as, “I have given God a week to solve this problem, and He hasn’t done

- **Keep you focused on yourself to try and solve your impossible problems.**

Satan’s first objective was to keep you from being saved. Now that you are saved, his next objective is to keep you from seeking God by faith as the Source to transform your life. Satan knows God’s truth and the power of it. That is why he and his demonic forces will do everything in their power to keep you from knowing, believing, and being set free by God’s truth.

***The GREATEST threat to Satan is God’s truth!
The greatest threat to Satan concerning you is that you choose to walk IN and BELIEVE IN God’s truth.***

We are in a fierce battle with Satan and his demons. These enemies are formidable foes. The problem is that we are dealing with an unseen enemy who knows the Bible only too well and knows what God can and will do in our lives if we walk by faith.

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12

Therefore, Satan’s and his demons’ objective is to prevent us from walking by faith in God’s power so that we will continue to live in the prison of our lying beliefs, fleshly behaviors, and the power of sin. Satan knows that if he can keep you believing the lies, you will never experience the transformation and the abundant life that God promises.

KEY TRUTH:
You, in your own power, are no match for Satan and his power.

“We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on Whom our faith depends from start to finish.” Hebrews 12:2 (NLT)

However, Is It Possible There ANOTHER Object To Your Faith?

I know that if you have been living the Christian life for some time, you know the object of your faith is Jesus Christ. However, as a result of ministering to many Christians (who have been Christians for 10, 20, or 30 years) I have personally experienced and witnessed in several people I have ministered to that there is another object to their faith. The reason I say this is that so many Christians believe that it is up to them with God’s help to live the Christian life.

If you believe it is up to you with God’s help to live the Christian life, is it possible that the REAL object of your faith is YOUR ability and willpower?

Let me give you an example. If you believe it is up to you with God’s help to live the Christian life then you will take God’s promises of victory, freedom, and transformation and try in your own ability and power to make those promises a reality in your life.

In essence, what you have done is put faith in yourself and have asked God to help you be the source for making those promises true in your life. However, what do we know is true? We know from Lesson One that 1 Corinthians 1:30 tells us that God is the Source for living life in us and He is not going to help us be the Source. Therefore, take another look at your faith walk and answer the following question:

Are you truly walking by faith in Christ, or are you walking by faith in your OWN strength and abilities to produce the Christian life with God's help?

Before you go any further in this study, this is a pivotal question to answer. It is crucial to know the truth because you might be deceiving yourself into believing that you are walking by faith in Christ when the truth is that you are trusting in your own abilities. Here are the questions that might help you determine the answer:

Is your Christian life producing:

- **Consistent victory over your defeating sin patterns and Satan?**
- **Consistent freedom from your sinful behaviors?**
- **Healing of your past or present woundedness?**
- **Ongoing transformation into the likeness of Christ?**

If you can't answer "Yes" to each of these questions, then it is possible that you need to re-examine your walk of faith. As Christians we have a moment by moment choice. I have illustrated that choice below.

Fight of faith: "Lord, I know that I deserve that promotion, and I want to be mad at my boss. However, I am trusting Your power in me to defeat the power of sin within me and to move me away from wanting to be angry."

THE POWER OF SIN

will continue to be an obstacle by CONSTANTLY tempting you to give in to your flesh.

Enemy #3 - Satan/His Demonic Forces

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy..." John 10:10a

"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour." 1 Peter 5:8

I must be honest with you that early on in my Christian life in my church we did not talk much about Satan. We spent even less time talking about demonic forces. However, in my Christian walk, I have come to discover that Satan and his demonic forces are very real and have an ONGOING strategy:

To STEAL, KILL, and DESTROY your walk with God, your marriage, and your family.

Satan and his demons come against you to:

- **Constantly try to DESTROY your faith walk.**
- **Keep you in BONDAGE to your lying beliefs.**
- **Keep you in bondage to your defeating sin patterns and strongholds.**
- **Turning you back to yourself to be the source for life.**

THE POWER OF SIN:

an INTERNAL and ONGOING power in your life that seeks to TEMPT you to live independently of God.

The power of sin within you is always tempting you to live life in your own intellect and ability versus God's life and power. **This is a power that you cannot have victory over because your willpower is no match for the power of sin.** Therefore, if you do not engage God's power by faith then you will always give in to the power of sin.

Another key truth is that the power of sin is in "partnership" with your flesh. To give you a picture of how they work together, imagine eating at your favorite restaurant. The server brings you the dessert tray with all of your favorite desserts. You can't resist, so you take one or more of the desserts. The power of sin is the server in this example, and the desserts are your personal flesh patterns. The power of sin is always serving up a flesh pattern for you to choose to live from.

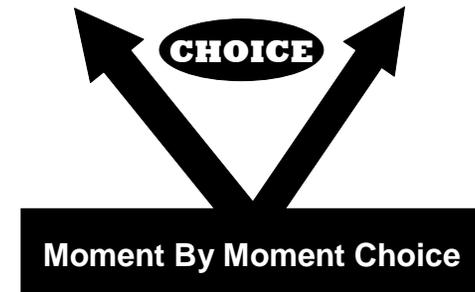
Examples of What It Looks Like To Engage God's Power To Experience Victory Over The Power of Sin

Let's see what it looks like to engage God's power to deal with the power of sin:

Example #1: You walk into the office today, and you find that someone else got the promotion that you worked so hard for. At that point, the power of sin serves up to you the flesh pattern of anger. You have a choice to make. You can either give in to the power of sin which leads you to get angry at your boss, or you can engage God's power over the power of sin. This is what a fight of faith looks like if you decided to take a step of faith:

Faith In Yourself As
Your Source w/God's Help =
lifeless, powerless, unchanged
life, (more of the same)

Faith In God As
Your Source =
Life, Power,
Transformation



What Choice Will You Make?

Summary note: The consequences of faith in yourself will mean that no significant transformation will take place in your life. However, as we will explore further in this study, living by faith in God as your Source will mean a life of radical transformation because of the divine power that is working in you as a result of your faith in God.

Why Is Faith In God As The "HOW TO" So Hard To Grasp?

1. We bring the "LEARN and DO" mindset into the Christian life.

It is so easy to walk by faith in our own abilities because it is how we live life. Think about your life. How have you lived life thus far? For most of us, we learn about life, and then we go about the business of accomplishing what we have learned. For example, you learn how to do your job, and then you do it. You learn how to play golf, fish, or hunt, and you go and do them. You learn how to raise your kids and use what you have learned to raise them. The key is that you

are using your own intellect and ability to “learn” and then to “do.” This is the way that we have all lived our lives. The question is, “Does this ‘learn and do’ mindset work in living the Christian life?”

As I shared with you about my story, the first thirty years of my Christian life were what I would call the “learn and do” Christian life. The problem was that it never produced the life-transformation that God promises.

2. We want to be part of the cause and effect of our spiritual transformation.

A problem that we have concerning faith is that we want to live by faith, but we can’t bring our intellect, ability, and talents to be the cause and/or effect of spiritual transformation. This is a problem because we use our intellect, ability and talents in doing our jobs, in our marriages, and in raising our families.

However, in our walk of faith we are depending upon God to bring His intellect and ability to do in us what we cannot do for ourselves. This presents a struggle when it comes to setting aside our ability and to draw upon God’s ability. I hope to some degree that you are in the process of being persuaded that only God, as your Source, can bring about any significant change in the way that you think, feel, choose, or behave.

3. Legalism nurtures “learn” and “do” Christianity.

If you were raised in a legalistic church environment, then you have probably been living a “learn” and “do” Christian life. Why? Living a legalistic Christian life means that you are to be the source for trying to meet man’s standards for being a good Christian. It means that it is up to you to take God’s truth and try to make it work using your own intellect

asking You in Your power to move my will so that I will no longer desire to control my wife.”

What Will Happen As You Release God’s Power To Deal With Your Flesh?

1. God begins working by showing you the “**death**” or misery that your flesh is causing you and to those around you.
2. As you take multiple steps of faith, God will reveal to you in what ways He is moving you away from (**dying to**) living from your flesh.
3. You will, over time, begin to experience God’s power moving your **desire** to a place where you no longer want to live from your fleshly behavior.
4. Remember that some fleshly behavior is more entrenched and will take longer than others for you to experience victory.

Key Truth:

You will choose to go back to the flesh many times during your walk of faith. However, during those times God wants to expose the DEATH of your flesh as you **WALLOW** in your “prodigal pigpen.”

Enemy #2 - The Power of Sin

*“But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but **(the power of) sin** which dwells in me.” Romans 7:20 (Parenthesis mine)*

What is the power of sin?

also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:11

What Paul is saying is that God is constantly exposing the death OF our flesh so that we will walk in the death TO our flesh. Paul goes on to further say that when we turn away from our flesh, we can once again walk in Christ as our life.

Walking in the death TO your flesh is another way of saying that you are walking in victory OVER your flesh.

Examples of What It Looks Like To Engage God’s Power To Experience Victory Over Your Flesh

To experience victory over the flesh:

1. Ask God to continually expose your fleshly behavior when you are experiencing it.
2. Ask God to reveal the “death” (misery) that your flesh is causing you and others around you.
3. Ask God, in His power, to give you the willingness to “die” TO your fleshly behavior by moving you away from living from it.

Let’s look at an example of how to engage God by faith to experience victory over our fleshly behavior:

Example #1: Let’s assume that you struggle with the fleshly behavior of wanting to control your spouse. The Holy Spirit exposes this fleshly desire to control. What does a step of faith look like to engage God’s power to deal with your controlling flesh?

Fight of faith: “Lord, You have exposed my fleshly behavior of controlling. I am asking You to expose to me the ‘death’ that my controlling is causing my wife and my marriage. I am

and ability. In other words, you are putting faith in yourself with God’s help to live the Christian life. If you have been living this kind of life, then it will be a tougher transition to move from having faith in yourself versus having faith in God.

Does This Mean I Live A Passive Life And Do Nothing?

I often hear these comments from Christians about faith: “Does living by faith mean that I am supposed to do nothing?” Or, “This walk of faith seems very passive.” The truth is that the Christian life is very active, but God is the Source of the activity taking place.

When you look at Jesus’s life and ministry, would you say that He was passive? I don’t believe you would. However, what did we learn about how Jesus lived? He was totally DEPENDENT upon the Father. As He walked in dependence, what happened? The Father released His life and power THROUGH Jesus to transform lives.

In the same way, as you walk dependently upon God, He RELEASES His life and power in you to RADICALLY change the way that you think, feel, choose, and behave.

I do have one final question based upon this last point:

Even though you struggle with the truth about faith, are you WILLING to walk by faith to bring God’s LIFE and POWER to bear in your life to TRANSFORM it?

Lesson Three

Key Truths About The Walk of Faith

The Walk of Faith and God's Promises – Part One

The Journey of Faith Begins With A STEP of Faith.

Imagine if you moved from your home to Indonesia. You would be moving from a very familiar culture to one that is 180 degrees different from the one that you have been living in. You will now have to learn how to live in this new culture. So, too, we need to understand how to live in the realm of faith in God's ability versus faith in our own limited ability or inability. The journey begins with one step of faith.

*“The mind of a man plans his way, but the **Lord directs his steps.**” Proverbs 16:9*

STEP OF FAITH

is a MOMENT in time where you ACTIVELY engage God and His power by faith.

I use the word “actively” because it is an active choice that you must make when you take a step of faith. **A step of faith is an acknowledgement of your need for God.** Without understanding your need, you will never see your need to walk by faith in God. What do we know is true? Man was created to be a dependent being. The very nature of dependence means that you are in need of God every moment whether you realize it or not. Let's look at what happens the moment when you take a step of faith.

What Happens At That Moment When You Take A Step of Faith?

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Psalm 139:23, 24.

2. Show you the death OF your flesh.

“Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit.....’ 2 Peter 2:22

The key truth to understand is this:

Before you walk in the death TO your flesh you must first recognize the death OF your flesh.

What I mean by this statement is that it is difficult if not impossible to turn away from fleshly behaviors that we have been experiencing for some time. The problem is two-fold: One is that we are unwilling to turn away from our flesh and two, we don't have the power in and of ourselves to set ourselves free from the grip of our flesh. Therefore, God has to reveal the death of our flesh before we are willing to allow God to set us free from it. Otherwise, we will be like the dog returning to it's vomit, lapping it up and throwing it up.

As you continue to walk in your flesh, you will experience ongoing misery of the soul. The question is: How much misery can you live with?

3. Walk in the death TO your flesh.

Death TO your flesh means that you turn away from the flesh and turn to God as your SOURCE for living life.

Look at 2 Corinthians 4:11:

*“For we who live are **constantly** being delivered over to death (to our flesh) for Jesus' sake, so that the **life** of Jesus*

When I give in to my flesh and live there for awhile, I call that going to the “prodigal pigpen.” Remember the prodigal son who decided to live independently and ended up in a pigpen? This is what happens to us when we go to the flesh. We end up like the prodigal son “wallowing” in the mud and muck of our flesh. Peter addresses this truth in 2 Peter 2:22:

“Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit’ and, ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.’”

The dog returning to its vomit or a pig returning to wallowing in the mud are great pictures of what going back to the flesh is like. If this is the case, why do we keep going back to the flesh? Here again, it is what we are used to. As sick as it sounds, we have learned to be at home and to be comfortable with the misery of our flesh.

Does that sound troublesome to you? I hope so. God in His grace and love is offering you a way OUT of your “prodigal pigpen.” Walking by faith in His power is your only WAY out! The good news is that God offers you a way out of your flesh through His power.

The Fight of Faith And The Flesh

There are three things God wants to accomplish concerning the fight of faith and the flesh.

1. EXPOSE your fleshly behavior.

Sometimes we have lived in our flesh so long that it may not be readily apparent what the flesh patterns are that we face. Therefore, what God wants to do is to expose any and all of your fleshly behavior. Look at what David said to God about this issue:

Remember from Lesson One the truth that at this very moment **within you** is ALL of God’s life and power according to Colossians 2:9, 10:

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness IN Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.”

Since you contain all of God’s life and power, what happens when you take a step of faith?

When you take a step of faith, ALL of God’s LIFE and POWER is RELEASED in you to transform your thinking, your beliefs, and your behavior.

Look at how Paul ties faith in with the power of God:

“so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:5

When you take a step of faith, God is not giving you just a part of His life and power. He releases the full force of His power in you to transform every area of your life.

What Kind Of Power Is God’s Power?

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.”
2 Corinthians 4:7*

The treasure that you and I have is the very life of God which contains the fullness of His power. If I have all of God’s power within me, how much power is that? Look at Ephesians 1:19, 20:

*“I pray that you will begin to understand the **incredible greatness of His power** for us who believe him. This is the **same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead** and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms.”*

Think of it!
The SAME power that resurrected Jesus from the dead is IN YOU!

God’s power in you is the same power that:

- **Created the heavens and the earth.**
- **Opened the Red Sea.**
- **Is holding the universe together.**

It is absolutely necessary for us to live from God’s power because without it we would never experience God’s promises for transformation. You probably have tried in your own willpower and strength to overcome some defeating sin pattern. If so, how has that been working for you? The truth is that we must live from this indwelling power of God in order to experience any real significant transformation.

Living FROM God’s power within you will CHANGE the way that you think, believe, choose, and behave.

What Is God’s Power Able To Do When It Is Released In You?

What can God’s power accomplish within us? Paul makes it clear in Ephesians 3:20:

*“Now to Him who is able to **do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think**, according to the (God’s) **power** that works within us...” Ephesians 3:20 (Parenthesis mine)*

Examples of positive flesh: self-confidence, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, success, strong in self.

Note: Positive flesh is harder to recognize because it can look very appealing, but it is still the flesh. The key word in defining positive flesh is “self.”

Living From the Flesh Leads To Living In “The PRODIGAL PIGPEN.”

When you move from living by faith in God to living by faith in the flesh, the Bible tells us in Romans 8:6 that it results in “death:”

*“.. the **mind set on the flesh is DEATH**, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.”*

This “death” is defined in Strong’s Lexicon as “**the misery of our soul as a result of sin.**” If you continue to live independently of God and out of your own resources, the inevitable result will be “misery” in your soul. This misery can be caused internally by your own flesh or externally by circumstances or relationships.

What are some examples of “misery” of the soul?

Condemnation	Stress	Anxiety
Shame	Unforgiveness	Unhappiness
Anger	Guilt	Arrogance
Bitterness	Self-pity	Inadequacy
Unworthiness	Blame	Rejection

Question: As you read through this list, are you experiencing any of these characteristics of the misery of the soul?

*“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”
Galatians 5:17*

We will struggle the rest of our life with the flesh and it’s desires. The bad news is that going back to our fleshly, independent living is the “default” position for all of us. In other words, it is easy to go back to the flesh because that is what we are used to living. However, now that we are Christians, we have another option. Since we have the fullness of God’s power in us, we can now choose to walk dependently on God’s power (which ALWAYS overpowers the flesh).

The DEFAULT position for every Christian is the FLESH.

Living From The Flesh Produces Fleshly Behavior.

*“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these……”
Galatians 5:19-21a*

There is another downside to living from the flesh. It will only produce the “works of the flesh” which are **fleshly attitudes** or **fleshly behaviors** like those listed in Galatians 5:19-21.

Fleshly behaviors and attitudes are the outflow from your lying beliefs. They come in two forms: **positive** flesh and **negative** flesh. Below are some examples of negative and positive flesh.

Examples of negative flesh: anger, inadequacy, unforgiveness, envy, controlling, fear, worry.

Think about this verse for a moment. Paul is making a very bold proclamation when he says that what God can accomplish through His power is “abundantly beyond all that we ask or think.” Paul is exclaiming this truth because he has experienced this power so mightily working in him that it has taken him to places of transformation that he never thought was possible. What is it that God’s power in you can do regarding changing your life?

God’s Power IN You:

- **RENEWS** your mind to believe His truth. Romans 12:2
- Sets you **FREE** from your sin strongholds. John 8:32
- **HEALS** your woundedness. Psalm 147:3
- Gives you **VICTORY** over the flesh, sin, Satan, and the world. 1 Corinthians 15:57
- **TRANSFORMS** the way that you think, feel, choose, and behave. 2 Corinthians 3:18
- Will **DRAW** you into an intimate relationship with Himself. Ephesians 1:5

When you take a STEP of FAITH, God releases His life and power IN you To RADICALLY change your life.

Remember That God’s Power Within You Will Do You NO Good If YOU Choose Not To Walk By Faith.

At this moment you contain all of God’s power. However, God’s power is of no avail to you unless you tap into that power.

Let me give you a visual image to explain this. Imagine a plastic water bottle that is full of water and has a cap. The water in the bottle represents the fullness of the Godhead and all of God’s POWER. Imagine that full bottle entering into

you at the point of salvation (because at salvation you received the fullness of God's life and power in you).

However, without the cap off the bottle you will never be able to drink from or to draw on God's power. As you take steps of faith, God unscrews the cap and pours His power into you to transform your thinking, your beliefs, and your behaviors.

What grieves me is that so many Christians are living like I lived for thirty years. They are carrying around within them the power to transform their lives, and they either do not really understand the magnitude of God's power or do not understand how to access His power.

The result is that lives remain unchanged. They are living in defeat in the midst of victory. The power that can set them free, heal them, and transform them is to no avail. They live like non-Christians by living life in their own intellect, ability, and willpower instead of from God's power.

Without tapping into God's power, there will be NO SIGNIFICANT transformation in your life.

God's Power Will Accomplish A SUPERNATURAL Work In You.

*"March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. ⁴ Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. ⁵ When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then **the wall of the city will collapse** and the people will go up, every man straight in."*
Joshua 6:3-5

"How well is it working for you?"

For some of us it may have the appearance that it is working. But, the truth is:

God has it RIGGED in that He has designed man to live DEPENDENTLY upon Him.

Life truly works only as we live with an attitude of dependence upon God.

Characteristics of The Flesh

To give us a better understanding of our flesh, let's explore some of the characteristics of the flesh.

The "flesh" is an **independent attitude** that says:

- I can be in control.
- I can meet my needs.
- I can handle or overcome all problems.
- I can deal with every circumstance concerning marriage, family, job, finances, etc.
- I can be a success.
- I can be my own god.

Because the DESIRE to live in the flesh is so strong, fleshly desires always bring us to the place of "I CAN" live INDEPENDENTLY of God.

Your Flesh Will ALWAYS Resist Your Walk of Faith

Your flesh will always be resisting your walk of faith. We see this in Galatians 5:17

*“For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my **flesh**; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.” Romans 7:18*

The biblical meaning of the word “flesh” is man’s DESIRE to live life with HIMSELF as the source, INDEPENDENT or APART from God as the Source.

Prior to salvation, we learned that we had no choice but to depend on ourselves (our flesh) as the source for solving our problems, dealing with life, and becoming a success. We were living life out of our own resources (such as education, IQ, personality, looks, talents, abilities, capabilities, self-discipline, and self-strength) **apart from** God as our Source. As we did this, it reinforced our desire to BE the source for life.

When we were saved, God had two purposes in that salvation. He first wanted to save us from our sins. Secondly, He put His life and power in us to save us from ourselves or our “self-life” which the Bible calls the flesh.

Living from our flesh will ALWAYS create the desire to live independently of God. Since we were DESIGNED to live dependently upon God, we will NEVER produce the life that God promises if we CHOOSE to live from our flesh.

Let me ask you a question, “Is it possible that you are using your God-given talents, abilities, strength, and willpower apart from God to deal with your external problems, your internal struggles, and other areas of your life?” If so, I have another question:

You probably know the story of the fall of Jericho. I would like you to read this passage again and put yourself into the story. What if God told you to march around Jericho for seven days, blow trumpets on the seventh day, and the walls would fall down? (FYI - God did not tell the Jews to bring a crane with a wrecking ball.) Your part in the “fall of Jericho” is to simply respond to God by faith, and He will do the work. Imagine standing there as the walls came down. Would you not be in awe of God’s supernatural work?

Is it possible that God wants to accomplish this same supernatural work in you? Does He not promise to knock down the walls of your lying beliefs, your defeating sin patterns, and your woundedness in order to set you free? As with the Jews, your part is to depend upon God and walk by faith. He will do the rest. This is called the supernatural work of God. How do I define a supernatural work?

A SUPERNATURAL WORK

is a work that God accomplishes in and through us as we walk by faith for which there is NO natural or man-made explanation.

What We Need To Understand About God’s Supernatural Work In Us

It is probably safe to say that most Christians understand that God’s power is supernatural. However, when I say that God wants to accomplish a supernatural work in them, they tend to have a more difficult time understanding that concept. So what does supernatural mean when it comes to God’s power working in us?

1. You, for the most part, will NOT FEEL or EXPERIENCE God’s supernatural power working in you.

If you will participate with me for a moment, I think I can show you what I mean. Take a step of faith with me right now. Simply say, “Lord, I am trusting You this moment for Your power to flow in me.” If you did that by faith, are you feeling anything? Are you experiencing a rush of God’s power pouring into you? For the most part you will not be feeling God’s power in you as you walk by faith. Why is this? Look at 2 Corinthians 5:7 for the answer:

“For we walk by faith, NOT by sight.”

Paul is telling us in this verse that it is a walk of faith and not one of feeling or experience. More often than not you will **not** be feeling or experiencing either God’s life or His power. Why can this be frustrating? As human beings we feel and experience life through one or more of our five senses every moment. Since feeling and experiencing are such integral parts of our life, it is easy to conclude that we will feel or experience God’s work when we take a step of faith.

The truth is that for the MOST part you will NOT feel or experience God’s life and power flowing into you when you take a step of faith.

Let’s look at an example to make this truth easier to understand:

When I began my journey of faith, one of the things that I desired was for God to heal me from the woundedness caused by my father. My path toward healing began with a step of faith that looked like, “Lord, I am asking You to heal the woundedness caused by my father.” At that very moment, all of God’s power to heal me was being released in me.

However, I was not feeling or experiencing God’s healing power. Even though I was not feeling God’s healing power,

want to take control, you ask God by faith to intercede on your behalf to bring His supernatural power to bear on those obstacles and to destroy them. “Being still” means that you can rest in God’s ability and power to destroy the obstacles to your walk of faith. We see this truth in Psalm 46:10: *“Be still and know that I am God...”*

Your faith ACTIVATES God’s power to destroy the enemies to your walk of faith.

#3 – Use God’s Word As Part Of The Fight of Faith.

“My soul weeps because of grief. Strengthen me according to Your word.” Psalm 119:28

“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32

An essential part of fighting the fight of faith is knowing and using God’s truth. The word “knowing” in John 8:32 means more than intellectual knowledge. It means “to believe.” We also know that Christ Himself is the truth according to John 14:6. Therefore, as we believe God’s truth and engage God by faith, He will use His truth to destroy the obstacles to your faith walk and set you free. We will see how this practically works in the next section of this study.

Who Are The ENEMIES In This Battle?

Enemy #1 – The FLESH

Paul describes his flesh in the following ways in Romans 7:

“For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.” Romans 7:14

The first thing we must be aware of is that there is a fight. If we know there is a fight, then we will live as if no fight is taking place. In addition, if we know there is a fight and/or don't fight the fight of faith according to 1 Timothy 6:12, then two things will happen: First, we will eventually give up on God and our walk of faith. Second, we will turn back to self as the source from which to live our life.

Truths About The Fight of Faith

#1 - You Can't Fight This Fight.

*“For the LORD your God is the One who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.”
Deuteronomy 20:4*

The truth about the fight of faith is that you **can't** fight this fight apart from God. Why? It is because your strength and willpower is no match for your flesh, the power of sin, and Satan. You will lose the fight every time when you choose to engage the fight of faith **apart** from God's power. God promises to fight the fight FOR you!

God NEVER intended for you to fight a fight that you CANNOT win apart from Him.

#2 - Your Part In The Fight of Faith

*“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”
Exodus 14:14*

Even though God must ultimately fight this fight, you do have a crucial part to play: “Be still.” At first this may sound very passive, but the truth is that “be still” is a very active phrase in that you are trusting the Lord by faith to fight the fight with the result that you can be still. When the obstacles of the flesh, the power of sin, Satan, doubt, etc. surface and

what does God's truth tell us? Whether I felt it or not, God's power was pouring into me. The truth is that just because I am not experiencing God's power, it does not change the fact that God is working in that moment to heal me. Therefore, here is the key truth to the walk of faith:

The Key To the Walk of Faith:

BELIEVE that God is working in you the moment that you take a step of faith whether or not you feel or experience His life and power working in you.

2. You won't know HOW God's power is working in you.

In addition, we don't and won't know how God's power works in us to change us. This can be a struggle for all Christians because we are always wanting to know how anything and everything works. However, God will not tell you how He is working. He only promises TO work as you walk by faith.

SUPERNATURAL also means that God is not telling you His PROCESS for transforming your life.

One of the greatest struggles that I have in sharing these truths is that I can't describe to you God's process in transforming your life. He has not (nor will He) let you or me in on how He does His work. He simply wants you to take steps of faith in Him and know by faith that He is accomplishing His supernatural work in you. That is why we cannot formulize the Christian life because God's work in you will be unique to you and to no one else.

This Does Not Mean That You Won't Experience Changes.

Even though you MAY not feel or experience God's process, you will EVENTUALLY experience changes in your thinking, in what you believe, in your behavior, and in the choices that you make.

"...I am overflowing with joy in the midst of all our suffering." 2 Corinthians 7:4b

Through Paul's walk of faith he came to a place where he was experiencing great joy even in the midst of his suffering. God wants you to experience the changes that He brings about in your life, and you will. However, you may not be feeling or experiencing His work in you prior to the actual change taking place.

For example, you begin seeking God by faith to move you from fear in a certain area to becoming fearless in that area. As you walk by faith, God's power is working in you to move you to a place of fearlessness, but you may not experience the process taking place. Rather, you will one day find yourself not fearing in a circumstance where once before you experienced fear. The key question for you in your walk of faith is:

Will you walk long enough by faith to EXPERIENCE changes in your life?

Since we do not know (and God is not telling us) how long after we start walking by faith in an area it will take to experience change, we must continue to walk by faith until we do experience some transformation in our life. We will talk more about what to expect in our walk of faith later in this study. What happens when you do experience supernatural changes?

Lesson Five

The Fight Of Faith

Introduction

Now that you have a better understanding of what the walk of faith looks like, we need to talk about the resistance that you will face as you walk by faith. It will not take long in our walk of faith to experience resistance. This resistance will create a fight of faith. What we will discuss in this lesson are the enemies we face in this battle and how we engage God to do battle with these enemies. Here are the major enemies we will face in our fight of faith.

- **The Flesh**
- **The Power of Sin**
- **Satan/Demons**
- **Your Thoughts**

The Fight of Faith

"Fight the good fight of faith..."
1 Timothy 6:12

I define the fight of faith as follows:

FIGHT OF FAITH:
Occurs when you meet RESISTANCE from your enemies to your walk of faith.

The truth is that from the first step of faith you will meet resistance. The fight begins. The question I want to ask is two-fold:

- Are you aware there is a fight?
- Are you engaged in the fight?

Summary

1. God can give you immediate victory, freedom, healing, etc., or it may be a LONGER term process BEFORE you experience those things. (This is the case most of the time.)
2. Know by faith, whether you feel it or not, that as you walk by faith God IS working in your life to free you, to give you victory, to heal you, and to transform your life.
3. From time to time you may run out of patience with God's timetable. Ask Him to BE your PATIENCE and PERSEVERANCE when those times arise.
4. Be spiritually AWARE every day of God's working in your life. It may be a SUBTLE change or a series of subtle changes. Ask Him to make you aware of the changes that He is making.

Final Truths About The Walk Of Faith

- It is through the walk of faith that you **learn how to live by faith.**
- Through your walk of faith the reality of living by faith will become **a greater reality** to you than living by feelings and experiences.
- The more that you walk in faith, the more you will begin to **see every situation through God's eyes** with the result that you will better understand what His purposes are.
- The longer that you walk in faith, the more **at rest you will be in not knowing** what happens next in your life because you will have a greater confidence in God's sovereignty and control.
- **If you persevere in your walk of faith,** you will experience a supernatural work of God that will change how you think, believe, choose, and behave.

Experiencing Transformation Produces GOD-CONFIDENCE.

*“For I am confident of this very thing that He who began a work in you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 1:6*

What kind of confidence is Paul talking about? This is a God-produced confidence. Why? Paul is testifying that he has experienced such supernatural changes from God that his confidence is not a self-confidence in his ability. Rather it is a God-confidence in God's ability.

GOD-CONFIDENCE is the result when you experience supernatural changes in your life for which there is NO OTHER explanation than that God was the Source for those changes.

I will be honest with you that I don't see that much God-confidence because many Christians have not walked long enough by faith to experience those changes. Therefore, my encouragement to you is that you continue to walk by faith long enough so that you will experience God-confidence and be able to say one day with Paul:

*“Now to Him who is able to **do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think,** according to the (God's) power that works within us...” Ephesians 3:20 (Parenthesis mine)*

However, remember that developing God-confidence is a process. Paul uses the word “persuaded” to reveal that process in 2 Timothy 1:12:

*“For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and **am persuaded that He is able** to keep what I have committed to Him until that day.”*

The same will be true of us as we walk by faith and experience God's transforming work in our lives. Just like Paul, we will be persuaded concerning God's desire and ability in moving and working in our lives.

Therefore, as we walk by faith long enough to experience change in our lives, our CONFIDENCE in GOD will grow.

What Does A Step Of Faith Look Like To Experience God's Promises?

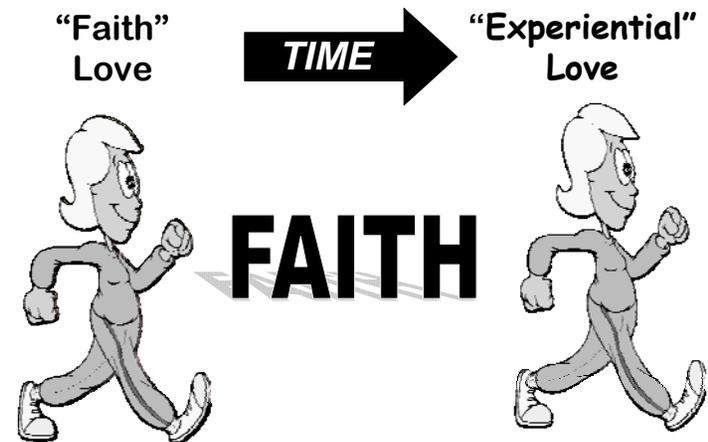
Now that we understand the power that is available to us when we take steps of faith, let's gain a better understanding of the walk of faith in relationship to God's promises of transformation. For the rest of this lesson and the next lesson we are going to see what it looks like in the walk of faith to experience God's power to:

- **RENEW your minds to believe the truth rather than your lying beliefs. - Romans 12:2**
- **Give you VICTORY and FREEDOM from your defeating sin patterns. 1 Corinthians 15:57; John 8:32**
- **HEAL you of your woundedness. - Psalm 147:3**
- **TRANSFORM you into Christ-likeness. 2 Corinthians 3:18**

Key Truths To Understand About The Walk of Faith and God's Promises

Before we begin applying the walk of faith to God's promises, it is important to understand some keys truths

receiving Christ's unconditional love. Steps of faith might look like, "Lord, I can't love this person. I am drawing on Your unconditional love from which to love this person." Early on you don't experience unconditional love, but you have what I call a "faith" love. After several steps of "faithing it," you will eventually come to a place where you will begin to experience God's unconditional love for this person. Perhaps the diagram below will help.



The Process of Moving From Faith To Experience

As you go through the rest of the lesson, apply this principal of moving from "faithing it" to experiencing God's transforming work. I wish that I could tell you how long we have to faith it before we experience these changes, but God has not told me the answer to that question. If He tells you, please let me know.

KEY TRUTH:
You may have to "FAITH IT" for some length of time in your walk of faith before you EXPERIENCE God's transformation.

The result is that you may be tempted to give up walking by faith because you aren't experiencing changes as soon as you want to. It is crucial to understand that as you begin the walk of faith that you are learning how to live in a realm that you are not used to living in. Look at the words of Paul in Philippians 4:11:

*“Not that I speak from want, for **I have learned to be content** in whatever circumstances I am.”*

Paul is telling us that the Christian life is a process of learning. He was learning how to live from Christ's contentment regardless of circumstances. As Paul had to learn, so do you. It will take time walking by faith to learn to live in the unseen realm of faith and to experience supernatural transformation.

The key to LEARNING how to walk by faith is to keep walking. The longer you walk by faith and experience changes, the more your God-confidence will grow in living in the unseen realm.

“Faithing It” Versus Experience

Remember that we talked about the fact that you will, for the most part, not feel or experience God's life and power working in you when you begin a walk of faith in an area of your life. However, after some length of time of walking by faith, you will begin to experience changes in your thinking, beliefs, choices, and behaviors. I call up until we experience the changes “faithing it.” If I continue “faithing it” long enough, I will begin to experience transformation. Let me give you an example.

Let's assume that you are struggling with loving someone unconditionally. You know from the early part of this lesson that you have available to you in Christ all of His unconditional love. Therefore, you begin taking steps of faith

about the faith walk and those promises. I will repeat these a number of times throughout the rest of the study.

1. It is crucial to understand that a walk of faith is a **PROCESS**. It is a journey and not a sprint.
2. You may have to take **SEVERAL** steps of faith before you experience any changes in the way that you think, feel, choose, or behave.
3. Remember that you will not necessarily **FEEL** or **EXPERIENCE** God's power flowing in you as you begin taking steps of faith.
4. What God is teaching you as you **WAIT** on Him to make changes in your life is faith.
5. If you don't take steps of faith, then you will **NEVER** experience God's promises of transformation.

The Walk of Faith And The RENEWING Of Your Mind

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**”*
Romans 12:2

We all struggle with lying beliefs when it comes to the Christian life.

A LYING BELIEF
is any thought, attitude, or behavior that CONTRADICTS God's truth.

We all have lying beliefs about God, others, marriage, and living the Christian life just to name a few. (Look at some of those lying beliefs at the end of this lesson.) These lying beliefs can cause sinful behavior, doubt, unbelief, and can even cause us to quit walking by faith. Therefore, the promise

of having our minds renewed according to Romans 12:2 above is so crucial to our walk of faith and transformation.

There is one key truth for you to understand before we continue: you cannot renew your own mind to God's truth. only God can accomplish that renewal and transformation.

God wants to renew your mind to His truth because He knows that on the other side of a renewed mind is freedom, victory, healing, and transformation.

Let's look at some examples of lying beliefs and what steps of faith that we can take to engage God's power to renew our minds.

Example #1: Let's assume that up until now you have been believing the lie that it is up to you with God's help to live the Christian life. Now that you know the truth that only Christ in you can live the Christian life according to Galatians 2:20, you can engage God by faith to renew your mind to the truth.

Step of faith:

"Lord, I have been believing the lie that I can live the Christian life with Your help. The truth is that I can't live it. Therefore, I am **entrusting** my lying belief to You and am **asking** You to renew my mind to the truth that only You can live the Christian life in and through me."

Example #2: You believe the lie that it is up to your spouse to unconditionally love you. The truth is that we are incapable of unconditionally loving anyone. Only God can meet that need.

Step of faith: "Lord, I am believing the lie that it is up to my spouse to unconditionally love me. I am **presenting** that lie

His peace, strength, unconditional love, etc.) in that moment.

2. Remember that Christ pouring His life into you is a supernatural process.
3. Since it is supernatural, you may not immediately feel or experience what you are trusting Christ to BE (i.e. peace, adequacy, patience).
4. However, that does not change the truth that Christ is pouring the fullness of His peace, patience, etc. into you at that moment.
5. Whether or not we feel or experience Christ's life in the moment when we ask for it, we know by faith that He is providing it at that moment.

Remember That The Walk Of Faith Occurs In A SUPERNATURAL Unseen Realm.

*"So we **fix our eyes** not on what is seen, but on what is **unseen**. For what is seen is temporary, but **what is unseen is eternal**." 2 Corinthians 4:18*

It is important to understand that as you walk by faith, you are entering another realm of living. It is a supernatural realm where God transforms your life. It is much different than the experiential realm of your five senses. In the experiential realm, you are always experiencing life, emotions, changes, etc., but in the supernatural realm it is a different story. In the supernatural realm:

1. You can't visibly see God's process of changing your life take place.
2. You don't feel Christ's life filling you when you draw on Him as the "I AM."
3. You don't feel the power of God renewing your mind and transforming your life.

Example #2: Let's assume that there are things that your spouse does to you to rob you of your patience. At those moments, you can draw on Christ's patience by taking a step of faith:

Step of Faith: "Lord, my spouse is trying my patience. I am **asking** You to BE my patience toward my spouse."

Note: Do you see that I am not saying: "Jesus, help ME be patient." Jesus does not want to help YOU be patient. HE IS your patience.

Application To Your Circumstances

Example #1: Let's assume that you are struggling with your finances. You become anxious and worried about what you are going to do. Rather than taking ownership of that anxiety and worry, you engage God by faith to deal with it:

Step of faith: "Lord, I am really anxious and worried about what I am going to do to pay my bills. I am **trusting** your sovereignty and am **asking** You to BE my peace, rest, and confidence that You will provide a way to accomplish that."

Example #2: Let's assume that you found out at the doctor's office that you have a serious illness. Fear is beginning to take over, but you decide to take a step of faith:

Step of faith: "Lord, I am fearful about what may happen to me with this condition. I am **trusting** You to BE my courage and my strength and to remove this fear from me."

Key Points To Remember When You Draw Upon Christ As Your Life:

1. When you trust Christ to BE those things that you need, you receive the fullness of Christ's life (all of

to You and am **asking** You to renew my mind to the truth that the need for unconditional love can only be met from You."

KEY TRUTHS: Concerning The Walk of Faith and The Renewing of Your Mind

1. Remember that the renewing of your mind is a PROCESS. It will not happen overnight.
2. Some of your lying beliefs are STRONGER than others because you have believed them for a longer time.
3. Therefore, it may take walking by faith for SOME TIME before you experience any change in your thinking or behavior.
4. You may not be aware of some of your lying beliefs, so ask God to REVEAL to you those lying beliefs.
5. Seek God to reveal to you a thought, choice, or behavior that is CHANGING as you seek Him to renew your mind.

As you take steps of faith concerning your lying beliefs, God will (over time)RENEW your mind to believe His truth and to live from His truth.

Lesson Four

Understanding Christ As Your Life

The Walk of Faith and God's Promises – Part Two

Understanding Christ As Your Life

We talked in the last lesson about the power of God that is within you. I think it is crucial at this point to let you know what it means that Christ is your life. I am introducing it at this point because it will apply to the rest of the lesson. We learned in the first lesson that Christ is our life from the following verses:

“...**Christ**, who is **your life**” Colossians 3:4

“I am ...**the life**...” John 14:6

What does it mean that Christ is your life?

Christ As Your Life

means that you have AVAILABLE to you supernatural, Christ-like characteristics and attitudes that can only be SUPPLIED by Christ.

To give you an idea of what is meant by Christ-life characteristics let's look at the following verses:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is (Christ's) **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**²³ **gentleness, and self-control...**” Galatians 5:22, 23a (Parenthesis mine)

“Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with (Christ's) **compassion, kindness,**

upon Christ to supply your needs in the workplace, marriage, and circumstances.

In The Workplace

Example #1: Let's assume that you have a stressful job (doesn't everybody?). You get to work one day, and you find yourself taking ownership of the stress which is robbing you of your peace and rest in Christ. A step of faith in drawing on Christ as your life might look like this:

Step of faith: “Lord, I am taking ownership and being weighed down by the stress of my job. I am **entrusting** that stress to You, and I am **trusting** You to BE my peace and rest.”

Key Truth: It may take several steps of faith before you are able to truly offload the stress and experience Christ's peace.

In Marriage

Example #1: I assume that you want to love your spouse with Christ's love. (If not, let's talk.) You know that in and of yourself you cannot produce the unconditional love of Christ that your spouse needs. Therefore, a step of faith in drawing on Christ's love for your wife might look like this:

Step of faith: “Lord, I can't produce unconditional love for my spouse. I am **asking** You in faith to love my spouse THROUGH me with Christ's unconditional love.”

Remember: As you pray this prayer, you will most likely not feel Christ's love flowing through you, but know by faith that it is. Remember that as you walk by faith, God is truly supernaturally loving your spouse through you.

God may allow you to be involved in a struggle that you CAN'T fix because He wants you to come to Him to fix the fix that ONLY He can fix.

Christ Is The "I AM."

In many of our struggles we ask Christ to give us peace, joy, or rest. However, Christ is not a divine pharmacist dispensing these things. Rather, since Christ is our peace, joy, and rest, He is giving you Himself.

The truth is that Christ IS your life. He is NOT dispensing His life to you. Rather, He is supplying HIMSELF as your life continually.

In other words, we are not asking Christ to **give** us His love, peace, etc. We are asking Christ to **BE** that which we need. Take just a moment to go to the page titled "I AM" at the end of this lesson to give you a better idea of what it means practically that Christ is your life.

One More Key Truth About Christ Being Our Life

In the moment when you are drawing on Christ as your peace, freedom, strength, etc., you may not initially feel those things flowing in you. However, know by faith that whether or not you feel Christ's life flowing in you, His supernatural peace, strength, etc. is flowing.

As you continually draw upon Christ as your life, you will EVENTUALLY experience His life MEETING your need.

Steps of Faith In Drawing On Christ To Meet Your Needs In The Circumstances That You Face

We will look at what steps of faith look like in drawing

humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ *Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.* ¹⁴ *And over all these virtues put on (Christ's) love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." Colossians 3:12-14 (Parentheses mine)*

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."
Ephesians 5:10

The fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22, 23, what we are to clothe ourselves with in Colossians 3:12-14 (i.e., compassion, kindness, humility, etc.), and to be strong in Christ (Ephesians 5:10) are all examples of Christ-life characteristics.

Below is a list of more of the Christ-life characteristics that are available to you:

Unconditional love	Victory	Worth
Acceptance	Faith	Freedom
Patience	Strength	Peace
Power	Forgiveness	Understanding
Security	Fearlessness	Wisdom
Discernment	Adequacy	Humility
Christ-confidence	Boldness	Righteousness
Selflessness	Rest	Compassion
Courage	Hope	Gentleness
Christ-control	Faithfulness	Joy

What Are Christ-Life Characteristics?

When we look at the characteristics above, we need to first understand that there is a **human** connotation as well as a **spiritual** one. We know that in the human realm we can also experience feelings of peace, patience, security, etc.

Human characteristics – feelings or experiences generated by man that CAN be changed by our circumstances and/or our relationships.

For example, let's assume that you are having a good day. You are feeling peace, joy, and security. However, you come home to find that someone has broken into your house, your house is flooded from a broken pipe, and your two- year old son is throwing a temper tantrum. What quickly happens to your human feelings of peace, joy, and security? They evaporate in just a few moments.

Christ-life characteristics – supernatural characteristics of Christ's life that are supplied by Christ and CANNOT be changed by circumstances or relationships.

Christ-life characteristics differ from human characteristics in that they are **supernatural** characteristics that can only be supplied by Christ Himself. In addition, neither circumstances nor relationships can ever change those characteristics. Let me explain using scripture. Paul says this in 2 Corinthians 12:10:

*“Therefore, **I am well content** with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecution, with difficulties.....”*

Paul is telling us that in spite of his adverse circumstances he is experiencing a supernatural, Christ-life contentment. In other words, Paul's circumstances did not rob him of his contentment “in Christ.” Think for a moment about what Paul tells us that he went through in this verse and in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Only a “spiritual” contentment provided by Christ could withstand all that Paul went through on a daily basis.

Using the same examples as above, whether it is a broken pipe, a break-in at your home or a two-year old throwing a tantrum, living from Christ as your life means that you are

our needs? Part of the answer is that God provides our physical needs. However, when Paul says “all” of our needs, then what God provides goes beyond our physical needs. To give you a better understanding, look at the internal or external struggles that you are facing today. What are they creating a need for? Peace? Hope? Perseverance? Forgiveness?

Now take another look at Philippians 4:19. It says that all your needs will be met “in Christ.” Remember from the first part of this lesson that “in Christ” refers to what is available to us with Christ as our life.

Every one of us has struggles on some level. They can be internal struggles such as anger, fear, insecurity, or inadequacy. Or they can be financial, relational, or job-related struggles. Even though these struggles are very real, they all have a divine purpose.

God will USE our negative or difficult struggles and circumstances to REMIND us of our ongoing NEED for Christ as our life.

Whenever I disciple an individual or a couple who are struggling they just want to focus on getting past the struggle or the pain that is resulting from the struggle. However, it is important to know that God is using that struggle to draw them back to dependence upon Him and draw upon Christ as their life in those situations.

Without recognizing our need for Christ as our life in the midst of those situations, we will turn to our own ability to try to get past the struggle. I have often shared this about our struggles:

KEY TRUTH

God NEVER does a work THROUGH you without doing a work IN you.

Key Truths Concerning The Walk of Faith And Healing From Woundedness

1. There is no “quick” fix for long term woundedness. It may take a long time to heal from woundedness that you might have been carrying for years.
2. You will have to draw upon Christ as your perseverance and patience during the healing process.
3. Remember that it is not the wounding event or events that are the main issue in woundedness. It is the lying beliefs that come from those events.
4. You may or may not be able to tie your lying beliefs back to the woundedness. That is okay, because God can.
5. Your part is to seek Him by faith to heal the woundedness and renew your mind to the truth.
6. Therefore, not only is it important to take steps of faith to seek God for healing, but it is also important to seek Him to renew your mind with His truth to replace the lying beliefs associated with your woundedness.

Steps of Faith In Drawing On Christ As Your SUPPLY For Life In The Midst of Your INTERNAL and EXTERNAL Struggles

“and my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19

This is probably not the first time that you have heard this verse. However, what is the real meaning of God supplying

drawing on Christ to be your peace and rest and are not allowing these events to rob you of your Christ-like peace and rest.

Another way of saying Christ-like characteristics is the phrase “in Christ.”

“In Christ” means that you have Christ’s peace, rest, security, adequacy, etc.

As we go through these next examples of walking by faith, we will see more about what it means to draw on Christ as our life.

The Walk Of Faith To Experience VICTORY and FREEDOM From Your Defeating Sin Patterns and Fleshly Behavior

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” 1 John 5:4

All of us have sin patterns and fleshly behaviors that we want victory over or freedom from. As we walk by faith we will eventually experience that freedom and victory. God’s promise concerning our sin patterns and fleshly behavior is in John 8:32:

“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

“Know” in this verse is not just intellectual knowledge. It is God’s truth that has become personal revelation to you. Think about this as well. Jesus says in John 14:6, “I am the truth.” Therefore, as the Holy Spirit gives us revelation of His word, and we take steps of faith, Christ as our truth will set us free. Look at Galatians 5:1:

*“So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.”
Galatians 5:1*

What is Paul saying? He is using past tense. He is saying that we have been (past tense) set free. How can Paul make such a bold statement? Now that the fullness of God resides in us, how much of His freedom is available to us? ALL of it is available!

As we take steps of faith by DRAWING on Christ’s FREEDOM and God’s POWER to set us free, we will EVENTUALLY experience the freedom that we desire.

Let’s look at some examples of steps of faith to experience freedom from defeating sin patterns and fleshly behaviors.

Steps of Faith Concerning Freedom From Defeating Sin Patterns and Fleshly Behavior

Example #1: Let’s assume that you have a fleshly behavior of inadequacy, You feel inadequate about yourself as a spouse. The truth is that one of the Christ-life characteristics is the adequacy we have “in Christ.” Therefore, what would a step of faith look like to bring God’s power to bear to set you free from your inadequacy?

Step of Faith: “Lord, I believe that I am inadequate as a spouse. I am entrusting my fleshly behavior of inadequacy to You, and I am trusting You to BE my adequacy. Continue to renew my mind to the truth that You are my adequacy.”

Note: If you have been believing that you are inadequate for a long time then it will take some time before you experience Christ’s supernatural adequacy.

depth of the woundedness, the lie is that you could not possibly forgive this person for what they did. However, this is a lie because all of Christ’s forgiveness is available to you to forgive the person that wounded you. The problem is in our unwillingness to forgive. We know from the Bible that we are to forgive, but our will is resistant to forgiving that person.

Personal Example Of Unforgiveness Toward My Dad

Let me give you a personal example of how God moved me from unwillingness to willingness to forgive my dad. Because of the deep woundedness from my dad’s verbal, physical, and emotional abuse, I was unwilling to forgive him. The Lord knew that I was unwilling to forgive.

However, He spoke to me through my thoughts and said, “I know that you are unwilling to forgive your dad. Are you willing to LET Me forgive your dad through you?” I was unwilling to forgive my dad, but I was willing to allow God to forgive my dad through me. Here are some examples of the steps of faith that I took:

Step of Faith: “Lord, I can’t forgive my dad who abused and wounded me. I am **asking** You to BE my forgiveness and to forgive my dad through me.”

Over an 18 month period of intentionally seeking God by faith to forgive my dad through me, God transformed my heart by giving me a willingness to forgive my dad. He first supernaturally did a work through me and then supernaturally transformed my will so that I would be willing to forgive my dad. This is one of the greatest supernatural works that God has accomplished in my life because I never thought that it would ever be possible to forgive this man for what he did.

of her lying beliefs of feeling dirty and worthless, she could never experience any degree of sexual intimacy. The result of her lying beliefs was that the marriage ended in divorce.

Steps of Faith Concerning Healing From Your Woundedness

Example #1: Let's assume that you experienced woundedness from your mom or dad when you were growing up, and it has left you believing that you are rejected or unacceptable. Below are some steps of faith that you might take in drawing on God's power to heal you.

Step of Faith: "Lord, I was abused as a child, and I am deeply wounded. As a result, I believe that I am rejected and unacceptable. I am asking You to renew my mind to the truth that You accept me unconditionally and that I no longer have to believe that I am unacceptable."

Example #2: You may have been wounded through a divorce.

Step of Faith: "Lord, this divorce has wounded me, and I feel hopeless. I am **trusting** You to BE my healing and to persuade me that You will work Your divine good out of this situation."

Remember: If your woundedness has gone on for years, it will take time to feel or experience God's healing. If you are in a situation today that is creating woundedness, you may have to be more intentional in taking steps of faith in asking God to be your protection and strength in that situation.

Woundedness and Unforgiveness

Woundedness and unforgiveness go hand in hand when you have been wounded by another person. Because of the

Let's look at an example of a very entrenched sin pattern and what it looks like to walk by faith to be set free.

Example #2: Let's assume that you have a defeating sin pattern of pornography. What would steps of faith look like in being set free from this struggle?

Step of Faith: "Lord, I am powerless to set myself free from this stronghold of pornography. I am **asking** You in Your power to begin setting me free."

Note: Let's assume that you take several steps of faith, but you have not experienced any freedom. (Remember that God's power is always working through our faith even though we may not be experiencing His power moment by moment.) A step of faith at this point might look like this:

Step of Faith: "Lord, I have taken several steps of faith, and I have not been set free from my struggle with pornography. I am asking You to BE my strength and perseverance so that I will keep taking steps of faith."

As you continue down this walk of faith, and nothing changes, you then begin to struggle with your belief in God's desire, ability, or willingness to set you free. A step of faith at that point may be:

Step of Faith: "Lord, I am struggling with believing that You can (or will) set me free. I am **entrusting** my unbelief to You, and I am **asking** You to replace my unbelief with the belief that You will set me free."

Another step of faith during this process might look like this:

Step of Faith: "Lord, persuade me that You are working to set me free from pornography even though I can't feel Your power at work."

Note: The key is to continue walking by faith until you do experience supernatural changes. Remember that the freedom most likely will come incrementally.

Key Truths Concerning The Walk of Faith And Experiencing Christ's Freedom

1. The depth of the grip of your defeating sin patterns or fleshly behaviors will determine to some degree how long it might take to feel or experience any freedom.
2. You will find yourself being defeated by your sin patterns or fleshly behaviors many times as you walk by faith. This is okay in that you cannot expect instant freedom. In those moments when you sin, repent of that sin and continue walking by faith.
3. The truth is that you will fail many times in your walk toward experiential freedom. However, over time you will begin to incrementally experience Christ's freedom.
4. Satan/demonic forces will continue to try to persuade you when you fail that you will never be set free. We will talk more about how to deal with Satan/demons in the next lesson.
5. Be spiritually vigilant and ask God to reveal to you how that He is setting you free.

My Walk of Faith Concerning Being Set Free From My Anxiety

Because my anxiety had consumed me for over 40 years, it took several steps of faith to begin experiencing freedom. I went from knowing God's truth that He is my peace to believing it, then slowly my anxiety began to subside. Many times in the process I was overwhelmed by my anxiety. In those times, I confessed and repented of my anxiety and kept taking steps of faith. As God continues to persuade me that

He is my peace and is sovereign and in control, I no longer believe that I have anything to be anxious about. This does not mean that I don't feel anxious about certain situations. It means that I no longer live in a chronic state or attitude of anxiety. It has been a journey, but the freedom that I am experiencing now is worth it.

The Walk Of Faith To Experience Healing Of WOUNDEDNESS

*"He **heals** the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."*
Psalm 147:3

*"For I will restore you to health, and I will **heal** you of your wounds....."* Jeremiah 30:17

Many Christians today are suffering from some degree of woundedness in their lives. Living in a fallen world, it is almost impossible not to experience woundedness along the way. Woundedness can come in many forms:

- **Abuse** – which comes in the form of physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, or spiritual abuse.
- **Trauma** – divorce, death, or abandonment.
- **Accidents** – creating long-term health or mobility problems.

The key to understanding woundedness is that it is not the event or events that caused the woundedness that is the problem. Rather, **it is the lying beliefs that result from the wounding events.**

Let me give you an example. I was discipling a lady who had been sexually abused by her father. From that abuse she came away believing that she was dirty and worthless. She met and married a Christian man. She said that he was a godly husband and treated her very well. However, because