



Living Life From A New Source

BOOK 1

Bill Loveless
Christ Is Life Ministries

Living Life From A New Source

Book One of The Series:

Living A Transformed Life

In Christ

Bill Loveless

Christ Is Life Ministries

Copyright © 2010 by Bill Loveless

All rights reserved. This book may not be copied or reprinted for a commercial gain or profit. The use of this material for personal or group study is permitted.

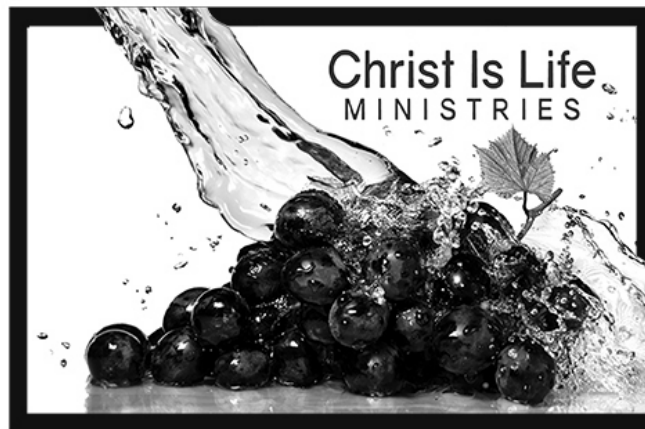
Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers.

Scripture taken from the New American Standard Bible®, copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version, copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked (GNT) are from the Good News Translation in Today's English Version—Second Edition, copyright ©1992 by American Bible Society. Used by permission.



Christ Is Life Ministries

Website: www.christislifeministries.com

Email: cilm@christislifeministries.com

Living Life From A New Source

Table of Contents

<i>Layout of The Study.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Lesson One - What Is The Difference Between Living “A” (Christian) Life Versus Living “THE (Christian) Life?</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Lesson Two – What Is God’s Part and Your Part In God Living His Life In You.....</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>Lesson Three – Key Truth About The Walk of Faiths – Understanding Christ As Your Life.....</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Lesson Four - Experiencing God’s Promises of Victory, Freedom and Healing.....</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>Lesson Five – The Fight of Faith.....</i>	<i>87</i>
<i>Lesson Six – Expectations Concerning Your Walk of Faith.....</i>	<i>107</i>

The Layout of This Study

I want to thank you for choosing to study *Living Life From A New Source*. Before you begin, I believe it would be helpful to give you the layout of the study. The study contains six lessons, and each lesson has five daily readings (Day One, Day Two, etc.). If you are meeting weekly, this will give you seven days to complete the five daily readings. Throughout each lesson will be **Questions, Scriptures for Meditation**, and an **Engaging God** section.

Questions

The questions are primarily designed for you to compare what you believe with the truth that you have just read. These questions are key to exposing any false beliefs that you may have.

Meditation of Scripture

Some people struggle with the word “meditation” because of the New Age connotations. However, it is a biblical word that we do not need to shy away from. The key is what and Who that we are meditating on. The focus of our meditation will be on God and His truth. My definition of the word “meditate” for this study is to think about the truths that you are reading.

Engaging God

The “Engaging God” sections in each lesson are the **most** important parts of this study. This section is designed for you to ask the Holy Spirit to give you personal revelation, understanding, and application of what you have just read. This is especially crucial when you come to truths that contradict what you believe. (If we don’t seek God to reveal His truth, then we will never move beyond the false beliefs that we may be believing.) Therefore, be sure and take the time to engage God as you go through the study.

Revelation

Since I will be using the word “revelation” throughout the study I want to define what I mean when I use this word. “Revelation” simply means that God **supernaturally** takes His truth and makes it personal to you and to your life situations. Revelation takes you from intellectual understanding to spiritual understanding of God’s truth.

Key Truth

Please remember this key truth as you go through this study:

**You will not live beyond what you believe.
If what you believe is a lie, then that is how you will live.**

This is key because what you believe affects what you think, your behavior, and the choices that you make. Therefore, one of God’s objectives through this study is to expose your false beliefs, renew your mind and set you free according to John 8:32. Therefore, my prayer for you is that you will seek Him throughout this study to set you free from your false beliefs and the adverse effects that those false beliefs are creating in your life.

Lesson One

What Is The Difference Between Living “A” (Christian) Life Versus Living “THE” (Christian) Life?

DAY ONE

Introduction

Before we get started, I feel it is important for you to know that the truths that I will be sharing are not just theological truths to me but are truths that continue to transform my thinking, my feelings, my beliefs, my behavior, and the choices that I am making. As I have ministered to hundreds of Christians, I have witnessed God setting them free with these truths. I trust this is something that you want for your life as well. The good news is that transformation is a promise by God for every Christian.

Overview of Lesson One

- Understanding the difference between living “A” (Christian) life versus living “THE” (Christian) life
- Seeing God’s truth about the meaning of “THE” Life
- What it means that God is our source
- Learning about the SIN side and the LIFE side of the cross
- Understanding how God will transform our lives as we live from Him as the Source

“A” Life Versus “THE” Life

The title of this lesson is a question because it is crucial to first know the difference between living “A” Christian life versus living “THE” Christian life. Why? It is because one life will lead to the fulfillment of God’s promises of victory, freedom, and transformation while the other will lead to more defeat, more bondage, and no change in your life. I would like to share my personal story to explain the difference between “A” life and “THE” life.

I Lived “A” Christian Life For Thirty Years.

Before I share my story, let me define “A” Christian life.

“A” Christian Life:

What I was taught that I needed to DO with God’s help to LIVE the Christian life and to be pleasing and acceptable to God and others

I became a Christian at age 18, but I did not get serious about my Christian walk until I was age 22. At that point, I asked the question, “What am I supposed to do to live the Christian life?” I asked this question because everything in my life was something that I learned and then went out and accomplished. Therefore, I thought this “learn and do” mentality applied to living the Christian life. Does my question seem logical to you?

Here are some of the answers to my question that other Christians have shared with me:

1. “I was told to take what I learn from the Bible and go out and try to accomplish what it says.”
2. “I was taught that I need to try to stop sinning.”
3. “I was taught to try to keep God’s rules and commands.”
4. “It was up to me with God’s help to try to change myself.”
5. “I needed to try to become more righteous.”
6. “I needed to try to transform my fleshly behavior into godly behavior.”
7. “I could attain freedom and victory if I tried hard enough.”

I believed that if I could accomplish these things with God’s help then I would be a “successful” Christian and would be pleasing to God and others. By the way, did you pick up on the word “try” in each of the examples above?

Question: Have you been told to do some of the things above to live the Christian life?

Being a “Type A” guy, I tried very hard to accomplish all of those things for thirty years as a Christian. The problem is that the more I tried the worse things eventually became. Instead of experiencing the freedom, victory, and transformation that God promises, I was getting more frustrated with my Christian walk because nothing seemed to change. I felt more and more like a failure because I could not get done what everyone was telling me that I needed to get done. In addition, I had some very personal struggles that I wanted to be set free from.

My Personal Struggles

During this 30-year period, I had great internal struggles with inadequacy, fear, anger, and unworthiness. These struggles were so strong in my life that they became like “dictators” within me ordering my feelings and my choices. 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.”

Here again, I was told that if I tried hard enough with God’s help that I could set myself free. As hard as I tried, I was never able to set myself free from the feelings and beliefs of fear, anger, inadequacy, and unworthiness. In fact, the feelings got worse. After several years of trying to be set free from these struggles, I came to the conclusion that what I was doing was not working (and was not ever going to work).

The truth be known, somewhere along that thirty year journey I gave up on the Christian life because it was not transforming me, it was not meeting my expectations, and it was not producing the promises of freedom and victory. I felt that God had let me down and that I was on my own. I was more miserable than before I was saved. In fact, I was so depressed that I had thoughts of suicide.

Was this the abundant life that God intended for me to live all those years? What was I doing wrong? Was there some key truth that I was missing in my understanding of the Christian life?

How about you? Have you been taught some of the things that I was taught to do and tried to make those happen in your life? If so, I have a few questions to ask you:

- Are you struggling with experiencing consistent victory in your Christian walk?
- Is there some sin pattern that you cannot set yourself free from?
- Is there some sinful behavior or attitude that you want changed, but it never seems to change no matter how hard you try?
- Do you believe that there is something missing or something more that you want out of your Christian life?

If you answered “Yes” to one or more of these questions, it is possible that you, like I was, have been living “A” Christian life. The truth is that living “A” Christian life will never produce a fulfilling, sustaining, or transformed life. If we continue to live “A” life, it will only produce:

- More frustration
- More defeat
- More bondage
- More disillusionment
- More inner turmoil
- More of the same or worse (i.e., no change or transformation)

When you look at the list above, I hope you will agree with me that this is not the kind of life that God intends for us to live.

Living “A” Christian Life

will only produce MORE defeat, MORE bondage, and NO transformation.

Is this the life God intended, or is there ANOTHER life we are to experience?

Question: Have you been living “A” Christian life? If so, how do you feel about your Christian life so far? Frustrated? Defeated? Disillusioned? Wanting more? Lacking something? Wanting to give up? Needing to try harder?

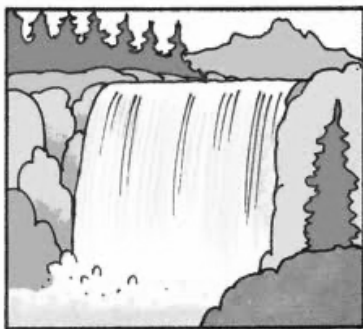
So when we look at the results of living “A” life, it begs the question, “Is there another life that God has for us to live?” The good news is that there is another life that God has called us to experience, and it is called “THE” life. Let’s look at the meaning of “THE” life.

What Is “THE” Christian Life?

I believe that we need to begin answering this question by understanding what Jesus and Paul had to say about “THE” life.

What Jesus Says Is “THE” Christian Life

Jesus said:



*“...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 that 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 something more in these passages? Let's further explore the answer to this question by looking at what Paul said.

What Paul Said About Living “THE” Christian Life

Paul took the truth of Christ as “THE” Life to a more personal level when he said 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 very 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....”*

Paul is saying that life for him is Christ being his life. Jesus and Paul are revealing to us an incredible truth, and that is:

“THE” Christian Life
is a PERSON: It is Christ HIMSELF!

Have you understood before now that Christ Himself is THE Christian life? Think about this for a moment. If “THE” Christian life is a Person, does that mean that “THE” Christian life is not about completing a checklist, trying to keep a set of rules, trying to keep from sinning, or trying to do your best to live for God? I believe what Jesus and Paul were saying is that THE Christian life is not a life that we are to produce. It is a life that only Christ can produce.

The truth is that the Christian life is not about living “A” life. It is about living “THE” life. The problem is that you and I cannot live “THE” life. Only Christ can do that. Let me share with you how I discovered “THE” life.

I Finally Understood What It Meant To Live “THE” Life.

Little did I know that during those thirty years God was in the process of bringing me to the end of myself trying to live the Christian life by my own efforts. On Sunday, October 4, 1998, while sitting in the parking lot of our church, a thought came rolling across my mind in the form of a question. The question was, **“Are you done trying, in your own strength and ability, to make the Christian life work?”** There was no doubt in my mind that the Spirit of God was asking the question. My response to God was, “I am done! I can’t do it.” God’s timing was perfect because on that day in church, God used a guest speaker named Ian Thomas to share the truth of “THE” life. When he got up to speak, 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 in thirty years as a Christian to ever tell me that it was not up to me to try to live the Christian life. What the Holy Spirit was telling me through Ian Thomas was this key truth:

KEY TRUTH:

***There is only ONE Person who truly lived “THE” PERFECT Christian life,
and that was Christ HIMSELF.***

This truth may be as startling to you as it was to me when I first heard it. However, isn’t it true? No one other than Jesus has lived a perfect Christian life. Therefore, what makes us think that we can do the same. Think about the following truth:

***All that we can do in our own strength and ability is live “A”
FORM of the Christian life.
Only Christ can live “THE” Life.***

The statement may create another question, and that is, “If only Christ can live ‘THE’ Life, how do I live ‘THE’ Christian life?” We will see how the Word of God answers that question later in this lesson.

Question: Do the biblical truths above about Christ being THE Christian life line up with what you believe? If not, how might it change how you live the Christian life if you believed that Christ is the only One who can live THE life?

Meditate: on the verses above and ask God to reveal to you if you have been living “A” life or allowing Christ to live “THE” life in you.

Engaging God: If this truth is new to you, please take a few moments to go to God and ask Him to make these truths real to you personally. Ask God to reveal to you in a deeper way what it means for Christ to be THE life. If this truth contradicts what you have believed about the Christian life so far, ask God to reveal to you if what you have just read is the truth or not. In this next section, we will look further into what it means that Christ is your life.

DAY TWO

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, ...” (RSV)

God gives us the answer in the first part of the verse when He says that He is the SOURCE of your life in Christ. One of the definitions for the word “source” is “the one who produces.” This may be a new truth for you because so many Christians have been taught falsely like I was that they are to be the source for living the Christian life with God’s help. You see, there can only be ONE true source from which to live the Christian life.

***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 two 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 four examples of what it means for God to be your Source.

- **God is your Source to meet your needs. Philippians 4:19**
- **God is your Source of power over your sin. 1 John 3:6**
- **God is your Source to renew your mind to believe His truth. Romans 12:2**
- **God is your Source to make all His promises of transformation for you an experiential reality in your life. Philippians 1:6**

Have you tried to be the source to accomplish any of the four things listed above? If so, how is that working for you? If we are honest with ourselves, we would have to say that it is not working. The truth is that if we try to be the source for living the Christian life, then we are destined to fail. If He is not the Source in our Christian walk (and in all other areas of our life), then we will never experience God’s truth and His promises in our lives.

God as your SOURCE for living THE Christian life means that ONLY God can make His truth and His promises an EXPERIENTIAL reality in your life.

Questions: Have you believed up to this point that YOU are to be the source with God's help to live the Christian life? If so, then how would believing the truth that HE is the Source change how you live the Christian life?

Meditate: on 1 Corinthians 1:30, Acts 17:28 and Romans 11:36.

Engaging God: Using these three verses, ask the Spirit to give you a deeper understanding of what it means for Him to be your Source for living THE Christian life.

Why Does God Not HELP Us To Be The Source?



I hear many Christians say, "God is going to help me." What they are unconsciously saying is that "**God is going to help me be the source to solve my problems, change myself, etc.**" Another way of saying it is, "God will help me help myself." This is a false teaching because God never intended for man to be the source for living life or to be transformed. Think about this question, "If God is the Source, then why would He help you be the source?" You see, God has it rigged! If He is not your Source for living the Christian life, then the result in your life will be more defeat, more bondage, and no transformation. God's design only works one way, and that is with Him being your Source.

Engaging God: If you have believed to this point that it is up to you with God's help to live the Christian life, ask God to give you deeper revelation that only He can be the Source from which to live THE Christian life.

The #1 FALSE BELIEF of The Christian Life:

Man can SUCCESSFULLY live the Christian life

by being the source and using his OWN intellect and ability with God's HELP.

Now that we have a better understanding of God being our Source, let's look further into what it means that Christ is your life.

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

To better understand the truth that God is our Source, I feel that it is important at this point in the lesson to look back at God's original design and plan for man. I believe that this will give you further proof that God's intention from the beginning was for God to be man's source for living life. In this next section we will look at four things.

- Who was Adam and Eve's source before the Fall?
- What happened to Adam and Eve at the Fall?
- What was man's spiritual condition at birth?
- What did God accomplish in man to become man's Source?

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?

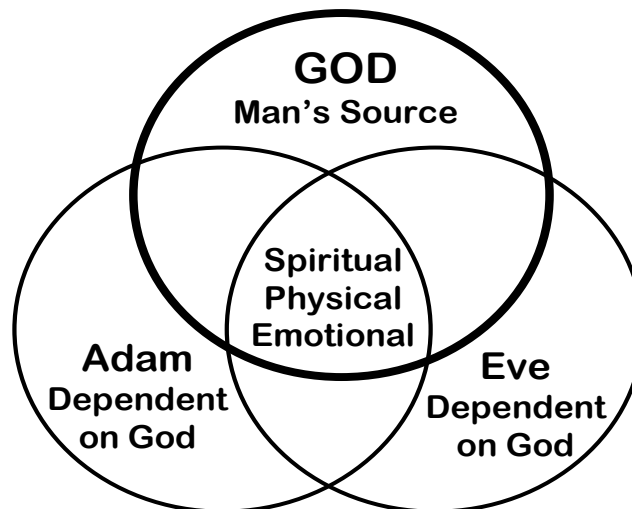
*"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**; and man became a living soul."* Genesis 2:7

*"And my **God shall supply all of your needs...** in Christ Jesus."* Philippians 4:19

At the creation of man, God was man's Source by breathing His life into Adam and Eve according to Genesis 2:7. In addition, God was their SOURCE to meet all of their physical, spiritual, and emotional needs. (Philippians 4:19) 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 following diagram illustrates man's relationship with God before the Fall:

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



***If God was the Source to meet all their needs, can we conclude that
Adam and Eve were **TOTALLY DEPENDENT** on God to meet those needs?***

“Dependence” is the key word to describe the relationship between God and Adam and Eve. They were totally dependent on God to meet their every need. We will end this section with the following key truth:

KEY TRUTH:

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

God Gave Adam and Eve A Free Will Choice To Be DEPENDENT

*“And the LORD God commanded the man, “**You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;** ¹⁷ but you **must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.**” Genesis 2:16, 17*



In order for man to have free will, God gave man a choice to be dependent or independent according to Genesis 2:16, 17. The choice was that they could eat from any tree in the garden but one. This choice was a test of man’s willingness to continue depending on God. If they chose to depend on God and eat of every other tree but the knowledge of good and evil, they would live. However, if they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they would die. We know the result in Genesis 3:6.

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.” Genesis 3:6

In that 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

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 experience God’s spiritual life. As a result, they died spiritually.

- **SEPARATION from God as the SOURCE**

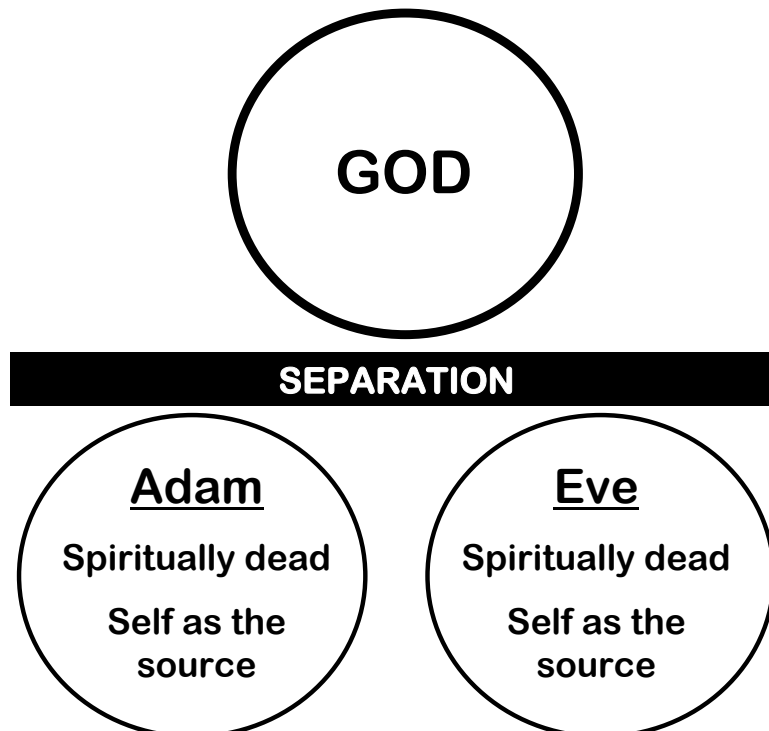
“But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.” Isaiah 59:2

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 was the result:

***Man was left 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.***

Look at the diagram below and see how man’s condition changed after the fall.

Adam and Eve’s Condition AFTER The Fall



DAY THREE

The Problem Is That We Inherited Adam's and Eve's Spiritual Death

What this means for you and me is that we inherited Adam and Eve's spiritual death and separation at our physical birth. Romans 5:12 tells us this:

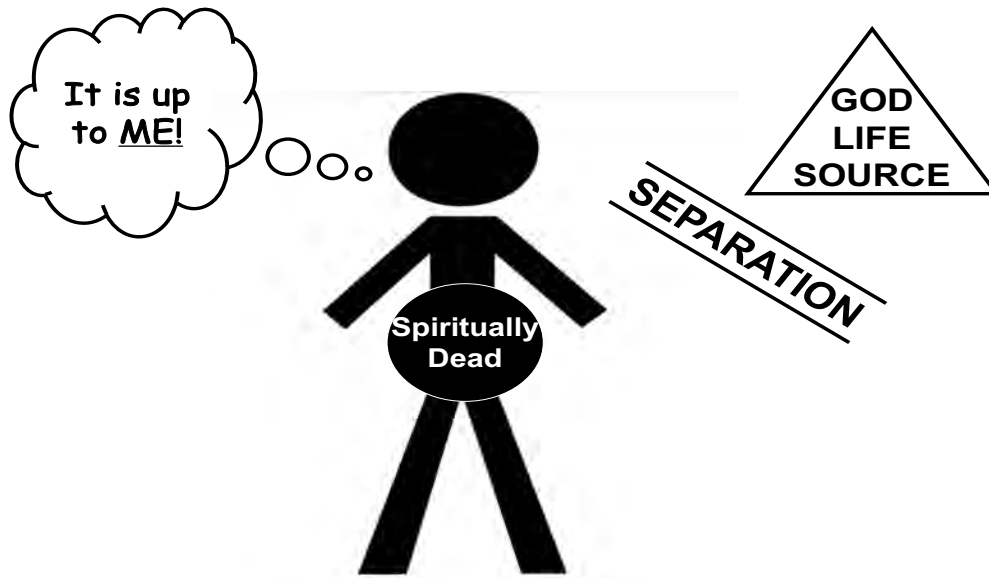
"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned." Romans 5:12 (Parenthesis mine)

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.***

The next diagram illustrates the truth that we inherited Adam's separation from God as our Life and Source with the result that we were spiritually dead.

Spiritual Death Means There Is A Separation From God As Man's Life and Source



***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.***

Question: If God's original design was for total dependence upon Him as our Source, can you and I live independently of God and truly have our needs met, solve our own problems, and be successful in living the Christian life?

Meditate: On the truth that God's design from the beginning was for man to totally depend upon God as the Source for living the Christian life.

Engaging God: Ask the Lord to give you further revelation of what it means that He is to be your Source for living life (i.e., in your marriage, in your job, and in your circumstances).

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. Therefore, there were two things that God needed to do to give man salvation and life (and to restore Himself as man's source). I want to illustrate these two things by using a diagram I call the Two Sides of The Cross. One side of the cross represents the SIN side, and the other represents the LIFE side. Let's first look at the SIN side of the cross to see what God accomplished in order to deal with our sin.

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

The "good news" of the gospel is that Jesus came to bear our sins because we were in need of a Savior. Through His death the penalty of our sins was dealt with, and by trusting Christ for salvation we receive eternal life.

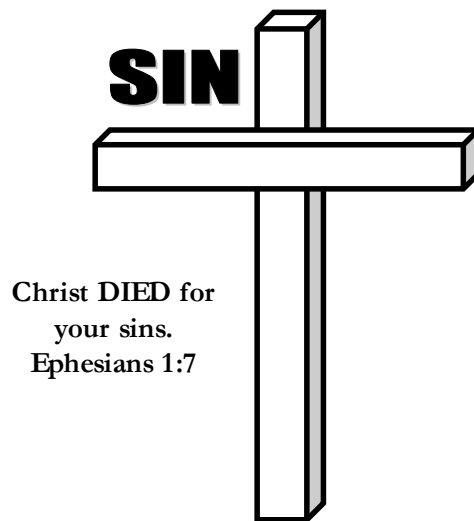
*"He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and **our sins are forgiven.**" Ephesians 1:7 (NLT)*

*"He who **believes in the Son has eternal life...**" John 3:36a*

Christ dying for our sins represents the SIN side of the cross.

The following diagram illustrates the SIN side of the cross.

The SIN Side of The Cross



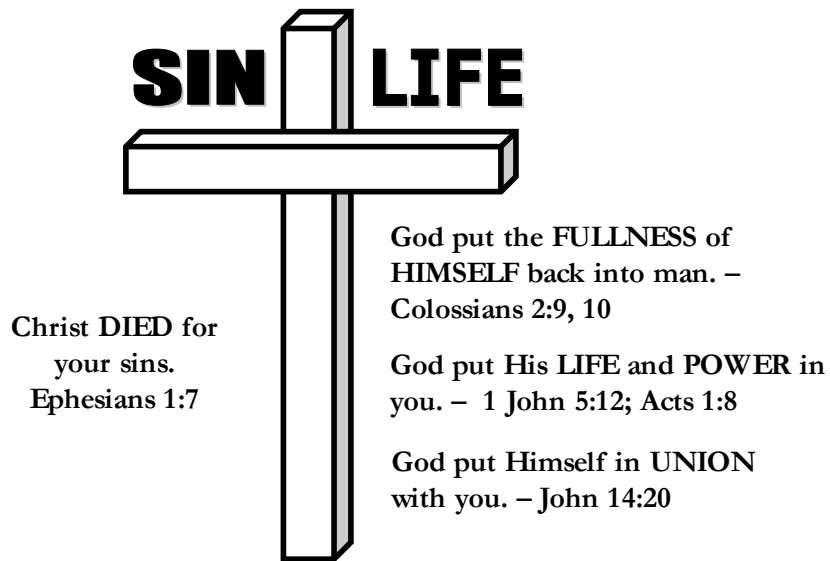
Note: If you are not sure that you have received Christ for salvation, you can do that right now. You can simply say the following prayer in faith and receive forgiveness and salvation. “Dear Lord, I recognize that I am a sinner in need of a Savior. As a result of You dying on the cross for my sins, I receive You by faith to be my Savior. Amen.”

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.

Since man was not designed to live separated from God, He accomplished three more things to restore Himself as man's Source. These three things make up 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



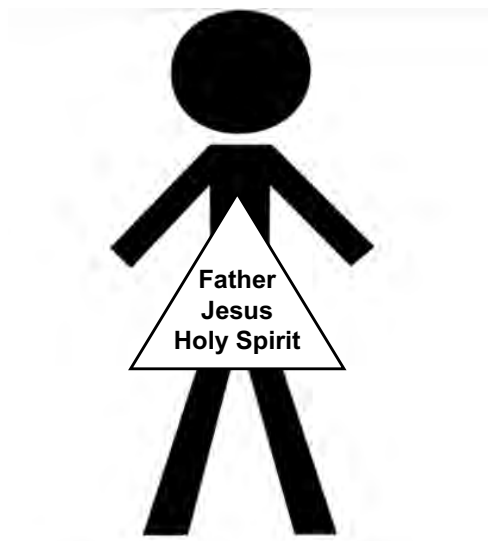
1. God put the FULLNESS of Himself back into man.

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 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit within you. You no longer have a God Who is separated from you. You now have the complete Godhead IN you!

God Put The Fullness of Himself In You



***It is critical to understand that if you have received Christ for salvation, you now
CONTAIN the fullness of the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.***

Question: If you have not understood that you contain the entire Godhead, what impact might it have on your life if you understood this truth?

Meditate: on Colossians 2:9, 10. Think about this question, “What am I lacking if I contain the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?”

Engaging God: Ask God to give you further revelation of the eternal significance of the fullness of Himself now being in you.

DAY FOUR

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

In addition, to receiving the fullness of God, you also received all of His Life and Power.

a. Christ's LIFE

*"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 (Emphasis mine)*

We see that at salvation that God gave us THE Life that is in Christ. What are some examples of THE Life that we now possess.

Christ as your life means that you contain ALL of Christ's:

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	Control	Faithfulness	Joy

Christ as your life means that Christ is your SOURCE to provide you

His peace, His acceptance, His joy, etc.

Since you contain the life of Christ, it means that you have available to you at any time all the Christ-life characteristics listed above. We will learn in Lesson Four the difference between Christ-life characteristics and human characteristics. (For example, the difference between Christ's love versus man's love.) However, for now I just want you to be aware that in this moment you already have available to you all of the above Christ-like characteristics.

Question: How might your life be different if you were living from Christ's peace, patience, victory, etc. listed above?

Engaging God: Pick one or two Christ-life characteristics above that you most want to experience and begin seeking God to make the Christ-like characteristics listed above an experiential reality in your life.

Meditate: on the following statement. The key word in this statement is "from."

God put the fullness of His LIFE in you so that you can live FROM His life.

b. God's POWER

In addition to Christ's life, you received all of God's supernatural power at the point of salvation according to Acts 1:8:

“you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you....”

Think about this for a moment. Since you contain all of the Godhead, then all of God's power resides in you. God knew that without His power in man, there would be no transformation in man. Therefore, He put the fullness of His power in us to transform our lives. We will talk more in Lesson Three about the magnitude and purpose of God's power that resides within us.

God put His POWER in you to transform you into Christ-likeness.

The diagram on the following page illustrates that you are the container of God's life and power.

God Put His Life and Power In You



Question: Why was it essential for God to put His power into you? What is it that you are trying to change about yourself, your spouse, your family, or your workplace in your own willpower? Is it working?

Meditate: on 1 John 5:12 and Acts 1:8 and think about this question, “Why was it necessary for God to put His life and power into me?”

Engaging God: Begin asking God to give you a greater experience of His power in you.

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 three verses:

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

“But the one (the believer) who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit (in union with) with Him.” 1 Corinthians 6:17 (Parentheses mine)

“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)

Being in union or “divinely connected” 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 that you were saved. This is why He says in the second part of Hebrews 13:5:

“... I will never leave you or forsake you.”

Meditate: on Ephesians 2:5, 1 Corinthians 6:17, and John 14:20 and think about the following question if you believe that you can lose your salvation. “If God is the One who put Himself in union with me, how can I separate myself from this union?”

Engaging God: If you struggle with the security of your salvation, seek God to persuade you that there is **nothing** that you can do to lose your salvation or be separated from God again.

What is the result of God putting His life and power in you?

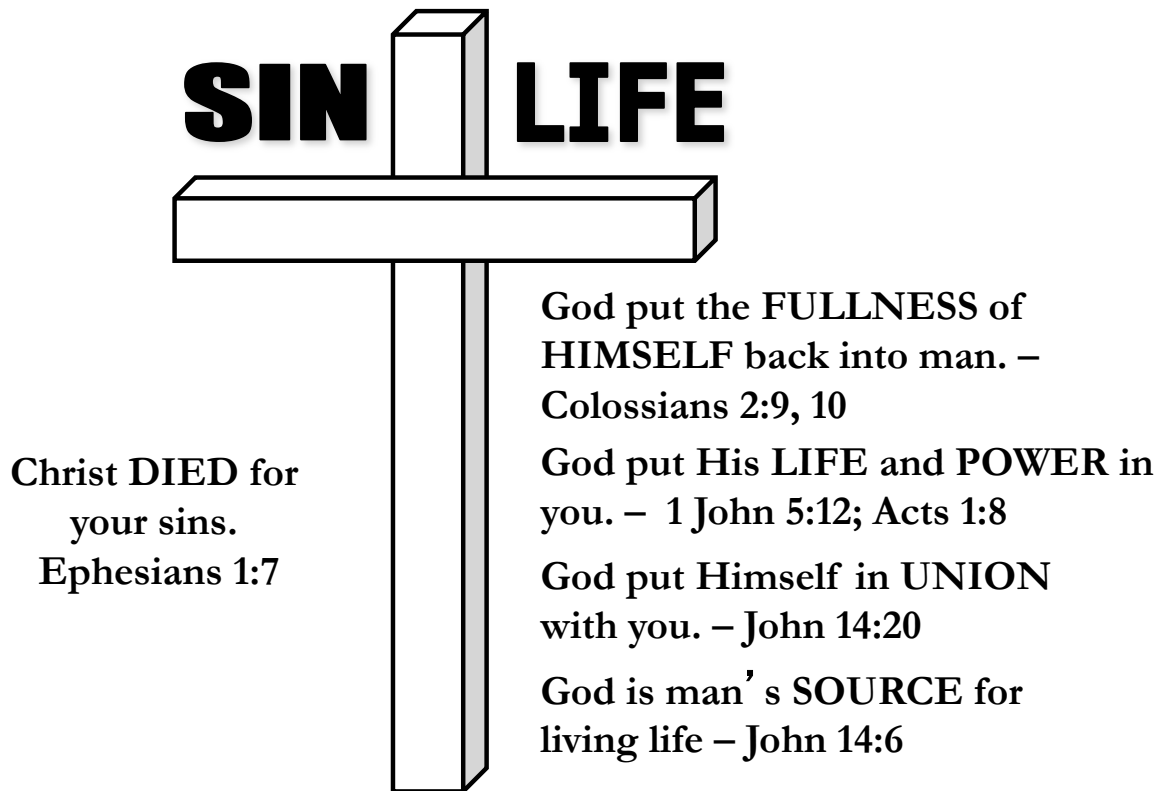
THE RESULT:

By God putting His LIFE and POWER in you and putting Himself in UNION with you at salvation, it means that YOU no longer have to be the Source for living life.

God HIMSELF becomes your SOURCE from which to live life.

Let's take one more look at the SIN side and LIFE side of the cross.

The Two Sides of The Cross



*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!*

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

*Since Christ put Himself in you, He wants to live **THE LIFE**
that **ONLY** He can live **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, “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 capability. 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.

Christ living His life in you may be a new concept for you. It was a radical concept for me, especially after trying (and failing) for thirty years to live the Christian life on my own. However, as the Lord gave me greater revelation of the meaning of Christ living in me, I became convinced that I cannot live THE life that only Christ can live.

The KEY to living THE Christian life is for Christ to live HIS life in you.

I hope even now that you will begin to ask the Lord to give you deeper revelation of this very crucial truth. For the rest of this study, we will explore the practical meaning of Christ living His life in us.

Questions: Have you realized before now that the Christian life is about Christ living His life in you? How might this truth change the way you think about how you are to live the Christian life?

Meditate: on the truth that you can’t live the Christian life. Only Christ living in you will ever create true change your life.

Engaging God: Ask God to give you revelation of what it means for Christ to live His life in you.

DAY FIVE

What Will God Accomplish In Your Life As He Lives His Life In You?

You may be asking, “What does it look like for God to live His life IN me?” Part of the answer lies in what He promises to accomplish in your life. Let’s look at a few of those promises.



VICTORY – God will give you experiential 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 – God will set you free from your false beliefs, your defeating sin patterns, and your 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 – God will heal you of your past and present woundedness.

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

SUPPLY - God will supply all of your needs.

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

INTIMACY – He will draw 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

These are just a few of the promises for you as a Christian as Christ lives His life in you.

God living His life in you results in you EXPERIENCING His promises!

Questions: Are you experiencing the promised freedom, victory, healing, and intimacy with God that you desire? If not, do you want to experience these promises?

Meditate: on the promises listed above. Think about which of these promises you most want to experience.

Engaging God: If you are not experiencing these promises to the extent that you would like, ask God to begin making these promises an experiential reality in your life.

One More Key Promise: Fulfillment of Your SPIRITUAL Destiny

You and I, as believers, have a spiritual destiny. Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, and Galatians 4:19 below tell us our spiritual destiny as Christians.

*“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*

*“My children, with whom I am again in labor until **Christ is formed in you**.” Galatians 4:19*

Based upon these three verses, let me share at a simple definition of your spiritual destiny.

Your Spiritual Destiny:

***Is to be TRANSFORMED into the LIKENESS of Christ,
which means that you will THINK, BELIEVE, CHOOSE and BEHAVE like Christ.***

Think about it for a moment. What would be different about your life if God transformed you so that you were thinking, believing, choosing, and behaving like Christ? How would it change how you relate to others or how you would deal with your circumstances?

My experience has been that many Christians that I have ministered to are not experiencing ongoing transformation into Christ-likeness. I fully understand because for the first thirty years of my life I was not experiencing any real transformation either. The reason was that I had been living from a false belief about what it meant to live the Christian life. The key is that without knowing, believing, and living from the truth of what it means to live the Christian life, there will be no major transformation.

Since you contain the fullness of God’s life and power in you, you can experience a supernatural transformation so that you will think, choose, believe, and behave more like Christ.

Remember: This is not a transformation that you can produce or experience apart from Christ living His life in you. This is also not about imitating or trying to be like Christ in your own ability.

Question: In what ways would it change your life if you were thinking, feeling, believing, choosing, and behaving like Christ?

Meditate: on Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 and think about this point: As Christ lives His life in you, He will change the way you think, feel, choose, and behave.

Engaging God: Ask God to begin transforming you in the areas where you want to experience transformation.

What Is The Result Of God Fulfilling His Promises In You?

The result of Christ 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 a better understanding of the meaning of abundant life. I will do this in the form of a question.

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
- **experiencing a personal, intimate relationship with God,**

would you consider that abundant living?

I believe that you, like me, would consider this abundant living. Consider this as well:

***If Christ is your life, and His life is ABUNDANT, then abundant living is allowing
Christ to live in you so that you will experience His promises of
FREEDOM, VICTORY, HEALING, TRANSFORMATION, and INTIMACY.***

Question: If someone were to ask you today if you are living an abundant life, what would your answer be?

We Live FROM God And Not FOR Him.

We have just learned that it is all about God living His life in us. However, as a result of living “A” life, I believed that the Christian life was about me living FOR God. By this I mean that I was taught that God needed me to evangelize, disciple, etc. Have you been taught this as well? The truth is that you are off the hook. God does not expect you to live THE life that only Christ can live. In other words, it is not up to you to do something FOR God. The truth is that God does not need anything from us since He is the provider and the producer according to Philippians 1:6:

*“For I am confident of this very thing, that **He who began a good work in you will perfect it**
until the day of Christ Jesus.”*

Since God is our provider and producer, then we are to live FROM Him and not FOR Him. Let's sum it up this way:

THE LIE:
We are to live FOR God because we NEED to do something for Him.

THE TRUTH:
We are to live FROM God because He is our Source FROM which to live life.

Questions: Do you believe that God needs for you to do something FOR Him? What do you think it means that you are to live from God as your Source? How would it change how you live your Christian life if you believed that you are to live from God versus living for Him?

The ULTIMATE Outcome of God Living In You

In order to understand the ultimate outcome of God living in you, we need to first understand His plan for man in Ephesians 1:5:

*“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.”*

**God’s UNCHANGING plan is to draw you to Himself
in order to experience a PERSONAL, INTIMATE relationship with Him.**

You see, you were created for relationship with God. Believe it or not, God wants an intimate, personal relationship with you. That is why He put Himself in this inseparable union with you. The truth is that God does not need a relationship with you. However, He wants a relationship with you. God’s motivation behind His desire for a deeper relationship with you is His unconditional love. We see this in Ephesians 1:4:

“Long ago, even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ...”

The truth according to this scripture is that God has loved you for an eternity. Think about this. God was waiting with great anticipation for you to be born so that He could pour out His love on you. I would like for you to think about this scientific fact: At conception, there were 500 MILLION possible genetic combinations, and out of all those combinations God chose YOU to be born! God has not only put His life in you to make His promises a reality in your life, but He also put His life in you to experience His great love for you and His desire to have a relationship with you.

Meditate: on Ephesians 1:5 and Ephesians 1:4 above. Meditate on the truth that God created you for relationship with Him. Think about the fact that God chose you to be born and was waiting for you to be born so that He could pour out His love upon you.

Engaging God: If you struggle on some level with your relationship with God, ask Him to confirm in you His immense and eternal love for you.

What Has Happened Since I First Heard These Truths?

Since I heard the truth about Christ being THE Life on October 4, 1998, I began a new journey of allowing Christ to live THE life in me. As a result, God began a work to change the way that I think, feel, choose, and behave. By trusting Christ to live in me, I have been set free (for the most part) from my strongholds of inadequacy, fear, anger, 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 like you who are wanting more from their Christian walk. My prayer from this point on for you is that you will engage the Holy Spirit to give you further revelation and understanding of what it means for Christ to live THE life in you.

“A” Life Versus “THE” Life Overview

To get an overview of what the difference is between “A” Life and “THE” Life look at the next page. We will be referring back to this page as we go through the rest of this study.

Summary Points Of Lesson One

- Christ **Himself** is the Christian life. John 14:6
- Christ as your life means that God is to be the **Source** for living life. Acts 17:28
- **God** was Adam’s and Eve’s Source for living life prior to the Fall. 1 Corinthians 1:30
- Adam and Eve made a **sinful, independent decision** to disobey God and died spiritually. Romans 5:12a
- Man **inherited** Adam’s and Eve’s separation from God as our Life and Source. Romans 5:12b
- God not only dealt with our sins, but He **put His life back into man** to once again be man’s source from which to live life. Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 5:12
- God’s **life** and **power** in us promises to transform our lives. 2 Corinthians 3:18
- God’s part in this transformation process is to be the **initiator** and the **cause and effect** for change. Philippians 1:6
- The ultimate outcome of your transformation is a **personal, intimate relationship** with God. Ephesians 1:5

The Difference Between “A” Life And “THE” Life

“A” LIFE (Living From Self As the Source)

Independent Life

Living independently of God to try to live the Christian life.

The Christian Life Is A Life Of Performance

The Christian life is a set of rules to follow
Or a checklist to complete.

You Are The Source To Live The Christian Life

It is up to you using your own strength and ability
with God's help to live the Christian life.

Living FOR God

Trying in your own strength to please God and to
earn something from God. (Love, acceptance, etc.)

Self-Transformation With God's Help

Trying by your own effort w/God's help to produce
victory, freedom, healing, and transformation.

Faith In Yourself With God's Help

Faith in your intellect, ability, self-discipline, and
willpower with God's help to produce the Christian
life.

Results In:

More flesh, sin, frustration, defeat, woundedness.
Disillusionment and walking away from the
Christian life or just trying harder to make life work
No transformation
Continuing to live a self-sufficient Christian life
Ongoing turmoil and conflict
More of the same or worse

“THE” LIFE (Living From Christ As The Source)

Dependent Life

Living in moment by moment dependence on God as
Your Source for living the Christian life. John 15:5

The Christian Life Is Christ

The Christian life is Christ Himself.
John 14:6; Philippians 1:21

God Is Source To Live The Christian Life

You live from God's life and power as the Source to
Live the Christian life. John 14:6; Acts 17:28

Living FROM God

Trusting Christ to live His life in and
through you. Galatians 2:20

God-Produced Transformation

Depending on God as the Source to produce,
Victory, freedom, healing, and transformation.
1 Corinthians 1:30

Faith In God

Faith in God alone with the result that His life and
power will flow in and through you to produce
Transformation into Christ-likeness. 1 John 5:12;
Ephesians 1:19, 20; Hebrews 11:6

Results In:

Freedom, victory, healing – Galatians 5:1;
1 Corinthians 15:57; Psalm 147:3
Greater dependence upon God – John 15:5
Deeper intimacy with Him – Philippians 3:8
Being transformed into Christ-likeness -
2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 8:29
Abundant life – John 10:10

Lesson Two

What Is God's Part and Your Part In God Living His Life In You?

DAY ONE

Overview of Lesson Two

- God's part in living His life in us
- Man's part in God living His life in us
- Understanding how Jesus lived in relationship to His Father
- Why we struggle with dependence
- Why we can't live independently of God
- Four meanings of the word faith
- The two objects of our faith
- Why we struggle with faith

Introduction

I hope that Lesson One gave you a clearer understanding of what the truth is about THE Life being Christ and that He wants to live His life in you. In this lesson, we are going to look at what is God's part and what is your part in order for Christ to live His life in you.

What Is God's Part In Living 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 them. Therefore, I want to look at what the Bible says is God's part, and then we will 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 save 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.

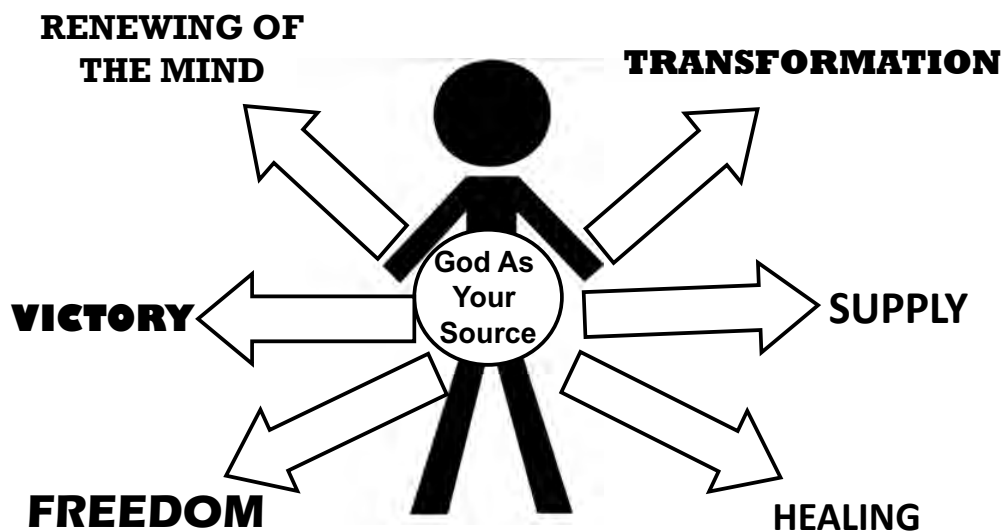
The false belief is that we are to be the initiator and the cause and effect of transformation in our lives. In other words, if any change is to occur, it is up to YOU to transform yourself (with God's help). It is because of this false belief that so many believers have either given up or else keep 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. Another way of saying it is that God will be the Producer of what He promises for you.

What are some of the things that God wants to produce 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. 2 Corinthians 3:18
- Draw you into an **INTIMATE** relationship with Himself. Ephesians 1:5

The next diagram illustrates that our life is to be lived from the inside out with God being the cause and effect to produce His promises of a renewed mind, victory, freedom, etc.

Living From The INSIDE Out



Question: What are some of the things listed above that you want to experience more of?

Engaging God: Ask God to begin accomplishing those things.

One other point that I want to share 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

What I have found to be true in many Christians’ lives is that it is NOT God who is unwilling. It is man’s UNWILLINGNESS to allow God to transform his life.

Questions: Have you believed that it is up to you to transform your life? How might it change how you live the Christian life if you believed that God is the cause and effect of your transformation?

Meditate: on Philippians 1:6. Think about the determined God within you who is more than willing to radically change your life.

Engaging God: If you struggle with God being able or willing to change your life, ask Him to persuade you that He is more than able and is willing.

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

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 upon 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.

The key word is “design.” Remember that in our first lesson we learned that God’s design from the beginning was for Adam and Eve to live totally dependent on Him to meet their every need. God’s design has not changed. You, too, are designed to live totally dependent on God. Doesn’t it stand to reason that if God is our Source that our part is to depend on Him to be our Source? That is why Jesus uses the perfect example of the branch being totally dependent on the vine for life.

Therefore, God’s design for you in Christ living His life in you is:

Living with an ATTITUDE of TOTAL DEPENDENCE upon God as your Source

Side note: The word “bears” in John 15:5 does not mean “produce.” The word “bears” means “to carry.” The key point is that the branch does not produce the fruit. The vine is the source for producing the fruit while the branch is the agent through which the fruit is produced.

KEY POINT

As you walk with an ATTITUDE of DEPENDENCE upon God, He, as your Source,

PRODUCES in you His promises of freedom, victory, healing, etc.

He fulfills your SPIRITUAL destiny of being transformed into Christ-likeness.

Questions: Have you believed up to this point that YOU are to produce the fruit? If so, how would it change your attitude toward your Christian walk if you believed that your part is “dependence,” and God’s part is “production” of the fruit in you? How does being dependent differ from what our culture is telling us?

Meditate: I know that John 15:5 is a very familiar verse, and Christians seem to give ascent to it without realizing the eternal depths of what Jesus is saying. Therefore, spend time going through the verse by meditating on it slowly and deliberately.

Engaging God: Ask God to give you a deeper spiritual understanding of the eternal implications of the branch-Vine relationship as it relates to your dependence on God.

DAY TWO

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 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 regard to His relationship with the Father?

Let's look at three scriptures that describe Jesus's relationship to His Father:

*"Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, the **Son can do nothing of Himself**, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.'*" John 5:19

*"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 while He was living on earth. What does it mean that Jesus was living from 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 lived dependently on the Father, with the result 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?***

Key Point: Jesus not only came to die for our sins. He also came to show us how to live.

Question: Referring back to God's promises of victory, freedom, healing, and transformation that we discussed in Lesson One, what do you believe that God will produce in your life if you choose to live dependently upon Him?

Meditate: on the verses from John and think about this question, "If Jesus as our example lived totally dependent on His Father's life and power, then how does God expect us to live?"

Engaging God: You may not have understood until now the relationship between Jesus and His Father and the application of this relationship to your relationship with God. Therefore, ask God to reveal to you how Jesus's relationship with the Father applies to you in your daily life.

Why Do We STRUGGLE With Dependence On God?

As I started my new journey of allowing Christ to live His life in me, I struggled with being totally dependent on Him. As a result of ministering to many Christians, I have found that we all struggle with living dependently upon God. Why? Let me give you three of the most common reasons why we all 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, self-sufficient, and self-reliant." We are so inundated and brainwashed with the message of independence from the world that we struggle when it comes to living dependently upon God.

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



Not only does the world scream “independence,” but it also sends the message that “dependence” equals “weakness.” Since no one wants to be perceived as weak (especially men), then they choose to be “strong” in their independence. (FYI: Dependence = weakness is a false belief.)

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

Until we were saved, we were living independently of God. Therefore, when we learn that the Christian life is about dependence, there is something within us called the “flesh” (see Romans 7:18) which resists living dependently upon God. The flesh is simply an attitude within us that says, “I don’t need God to live life because I can do it on my own.”

***Living from the FLESH is the #1 reason why we RESIST
living dependently upon God.***

We will talk more about the flesh in Lesson Four, but it is important to know that there is a part of us that will ALWAYS resist being dependent upon God.

The Truth Is That 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 depending on the vine and is no longer drawing life from the vine. 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.

You might want to read this list again slowly and let the results sink in if you choose to live independently of God.

Meditate: on John 15:5b and think about how this verse might apply to unresolved struggles that you may be facing in your relationships, to sin patterns that you want victory over, or change that you want to take place in your life.

Engaging God: Ask God to expose the areas in your life (job, marriage, family, etc.) where you might be living independently of Him. Ask Him to persuade you that apart from living dependently upon His life and power you will not experience His freedom, victory, healing, and transformation.

KEY POINT

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

DAY THREE

Dependence ON God = FAITH IN God.

*“Without **faith** it is impossible to please God.” Hebrews 11:6*

I equate depending **on** God with walking by faith **in** God. If you have been a Christian for any length of time, you know that our part in our Christian walk is faith. However, what I am finding out is that people have either some misunderstandings or false beliefs regarding the issue of faith.

The reason I say this is because what they believe about faith is not resulting in consistent freedom, victory, healing, or transformation. Therefore, as you go through the rest of this lesson, take a closer look at what you believe about faith and ask the Lord to reveal any false beliefs that you may have about faith. Here is the first question that you might ask yourself:

Is what I BELIEVE about walking by faith TRANSFORMING my life?



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. It is the same with God. Faith is simply depending upon God to accomplish in your life what He promises to accomplish (and you cannot).

Take another look at 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 Christ to live in Him is by **faith**. In essence, what Paul is saying is that he must depend totally on Christ to do what only Christ can do. You see, many Christians have asked me, “How do **I** live the Christian life?” This is the wrong question. The truth is that since Christ is the One to live His life in you, the question should be,

“How do I ALLOW Christ to live His life in me?”

The answer is through depending upon or having faith in Christ. We are going to see toward the end of this lesson why so many Christians are not being transformed because of their false beliefs about faith.

***Walking by faith results in Christ living His life in you to produce
the abundant life that He promises for you.
Faith is the “HOW TO” for the Christian.***

Living by faith allows the Holy Spirit to produce in you:

- **FREEDOM** from defeating sin patterns.
- **VICTORY** over the flesh, the power of sin, Satan, and the demonic.
- **HEALING** of past or present woundedness.
- **TRANSFORMATION** into Christ-likeness.
- **INTIMACY** with God.

Four Ways To Define FAITH

In order to gain a deeper understanding of faith, I want to give you four practical definitions that have helped me over the years. I hope they will do the same for you.

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 is 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.***

Application: An application of this definition might be, “I am confident that I cannot lose my salvation because God is Who He says He is and has promised me that I cannot lose my salvation according to John 6:37-40.”

Questions: How much assurance and confidence do you have in God concerning Who He is and what He is willing and able to accomplish in your life? Would your lack of dependence on God be an indicator of your lack of assurance and confidence?

Meditate: on Hebrews 11:1 and think about the situations where you are not totally assured and may lack confidence that God is working in those areas.

Engaging God: In those areas, ask God to give you greater assurance and confidence that He is Who He says that He is and that He will accomplish in your life what He promises.

2. Faith Is A PERSUASION and An EXPECTATION.

FAITH

(as defined in Matthew Henry's Commentary)

"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 that 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."

Application: An application of this definition might be, "As I walk in dependence on God, I am being persuaded by God that He loves me and that He will transform my life."

Questions: How persuaded are you of God's ability and willingness to transform your life? Do you need further Godly persuasion?

Meditate: on Romans 4:21 and Philippians 1:20. Think about this question, "What areas in your life do you need further persuasion concerning God's love, character, and/or promises?"

Engaging God: Begin asking God to further persuade you in those areas that you thought about.

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

We must first come to the place of "I Can't" because the truth is that only "God can" produce His promises of transformation in our lives. Another passage that points to the truth that God can is Psalm 37:5:

*"Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He **WILL** do it." (Emphasis mine)*

FAITH

***is coming to the realization that you CAN'T do what only God CAN do
in your life and then BELIEVE that He can.***

God tells us over and over again in His word that He can, and He will complete the work that He has begun.

Application: An application of this definition might be, "I can't set myself free from my fear, but as I walk by faith, God can (and will) set me free."

Question: What are three things that you know that you cannot do, but God promises to do?

Meditate: on John 15:5b and Philippians 1:6 and think about what it is that you are trying to do concerning living the Christian life but cannot do.

Engaging God: Begin trusting God to do what it is that you cannot do.

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 to transform your life
according to His will.***

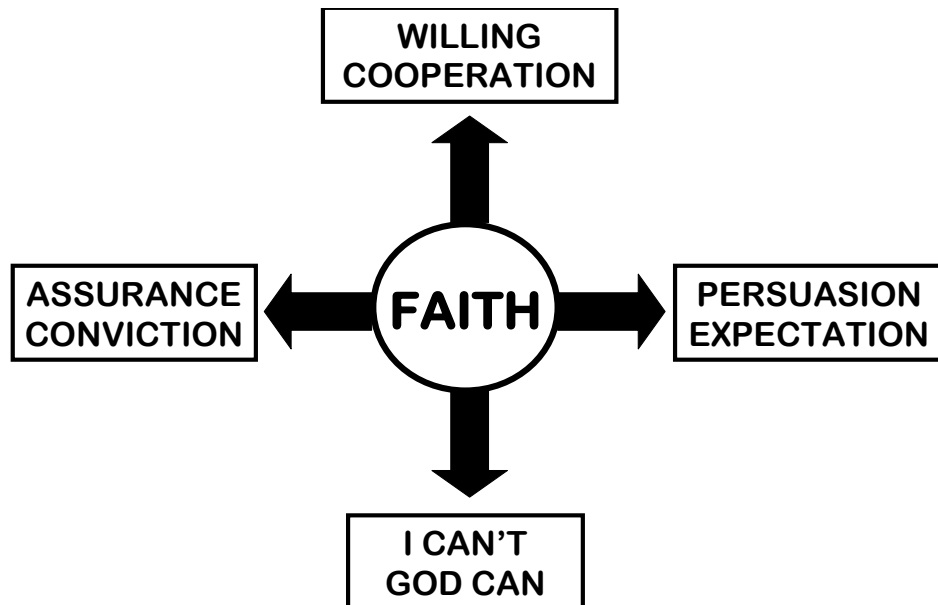
Application: Let's assume that you struggle with inadequacy. Cooperation with the Lord might look like this, "Lord, I am asking You to give me a willingness to cooperate with You and to not resist Your work in freeing me from my inadequacy."

Question: In what areas of your life are you possibly not cooperating with God or resisting His work in you?

Meditate: on John 5:30 above and ask yourself, "Why am I resisting God's work in these areas of my life when He promises to set me free, give me victory, and supply my needs?"

Engaging God: Begin asking God to give you a willingness to drop your resistance to His transforming work in your life.

The next diagram summarizes the four definitions of faith.



Questions: Which one of the definitions of faith are most practical to you? Why?

Meditate: on the four definitions of faith and ask God to give you deeper revelation and willingness to walk by faith.

DAY FOUR

Three Key Truths Concerning Faith

Before we finish our study on faith, let's look at three more key truths about faith.

1. Is It Up To You To Produce Faith?

This is a key question to answer because so many Christians believe it is up to them to produce the faith necessary to live the Christian life. Let's begin looking at the answer to this question by looking at Jesus's last three words on the cross in John 19:30:

"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 below is simply to RECEIVE:

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

How does this apply to faith? Look at Colossians 2:9, 10 that we studied in 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."*

The following is a key truth based on Colossians 2:9, 10:

<i>If you have been given fullness <u>IN Christ</u>, this means that you have the <u>FULLNESS</u> of Christ's <u>FAITH</u> in you.</i>
--

Couple this verse with Philippians 4:19:

*"And My **God shall supply ALL your needs** according to His riches in glory **IN Christ** Jesus."*

Since God is the Source to supply your faith, then it is not up to you to produce or manufacture faith. Since Christ is in you, and you are in Christ, you contain all the faith that you will ever need. Your part according to Colossians 2:6 is to RECEIVE the faith that is already yours.

Good News!

God does NOT expect you to produce the faith.

He expects you to RECEIVE His SUPPLY of faith.

Questions: Have you believed that it is up to you to produce the faith required to live the Christian life? How much easier would it be for you to simply receive the faith that is already yours in Christ rather than trying to produce the faith required?

2. What Does Jesus Mean By “LITTLE” Faith?



“He replied, ‘You of little faith, why are you so afraid?’ Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm.” Matthew 8:26

What Jesus meant by “little” faith in this verse was that the disciples were not **exercising** their faith to full capacity. Why? At this point, the disciples did not have all of Christ’s faith because they would not receive within them the fullness of the Godhead until the day of Pentecost.

You, on the other hand, have the fullness of Christ’s life within you, with the result that you contain all of His faith. The question is, “Will you exercise more and more of the fullness of the faith within you, or will you be like the disciples and live from ‘little faith?’”

The question is NOT “How much faith do you have?” The question is:

***“Are you EXERCISING the fullness of the faith that
you already possess IN Christ?”***

Question: How might it change your outlook about faith knowing that you contain within you all the faith that you need in Christ?

Engaging God: Seek the Lord for a deeper understanding that you contain all the faith that you need and that your part is to exercise the fullness of the faith that you already possess.

3. God’s Work In Your Life 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 necessarily contingent upon you exercising 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. Even when we may not be walking by faith, that does not prevent God from working in

our lives. (I call that “grace.”) 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:

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

“And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus...” Acts 3:16

The Problem Is That There Is ANOTHER Object of Our Faith.

I know that if you have been living the Christian life for some time, you know that the object of our faith should be Jesus Christ. As a result of ministering to many Christians (who have been Christians for 10, 20, 30+ years), I have personally experienced and witnessed that there is another object to their faith. That object is **their own IQ, ability and willpower**. Think about this statement:

***If you believe that 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 IQ, ability and willpower?***



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

In essence, what you have done is to put faith in yourself, and you have asked God to help YOU be the source for making those promises real 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 that He is not going to help us be the Source. At this point I want to make it personal by asking you this question:

***If you are TRYING in your OWN strength and willpower to live the Christian life
are you experiencing any real transformation?***

So many Christians today have been taught as I was that we must “apply” God’s truth to our lives. While that sounds very spiritual, how I see it interpreted is that I must take God’s truth and try to make it work in my life using my own IQ, ability, self-discipline and willpower. The problem with this is that if it is up to me to make it work, and I will **fail** because I will not be able to make it work!

***The truth is that we are TOTALLY dependent upon God for Him to take His truth
and make it work in our lives.***

The following questions may help you determine how your walk of faith is going.

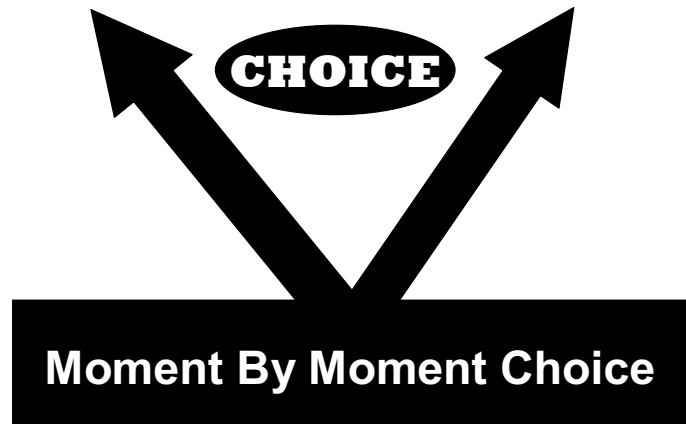
Is your walk of faith producing:

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

If you can’t answer “Yes” to each of the previous questions, is it possible that you have been putting faith in your own ability versus faith in God’s ability? I am not asking this to guilt or shame you. The reason that I ask these questions is because when we walk by faith in Christ, He will produce and we will experience ongoing victory, freedom, healing, and transformation. Look at the following diagram to see the results of putting faith in your ability versus putting faith in God.

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?

The consequences of putting faith in yourself will mean that you will not experience Christ's life or His power and that real transformation will never take place in your life. However, living by faith in God as your Source will result in experiencing Christ's life and power with the result that you will experience radical transformation.

Engaging God: Ask the Spirit to reveal to you whether or not the true object of your faith is in your ability and/or your willpower or in God's ability.

Question: What does the diagram above reveal as to what the consequences will be if you are the object of your faith?

Engaging God: If you discover that you are really walking by faith in your ability versus God's ability, then ask Him to give you the willingness to walk dependently upon Him as your Source.

DAY FIVE

Why Do We STRUGGLE With Having Faith In God?

*“Then they asked Him, ‘What must we do to do the works God requires?’ Jesus answered, ‘The work of God is this, to **BELIEVE** in the One Whom He has sent.’” John 6:28-29*

Before we go on, I believe that it is important to look at three reasons that I have discovered over the years as to why we as Christians struggle with having faith in God.

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



I believe this is the #1 reason why we struggle with the issue of faith. Why? Because it is so easy to walk by faith in our own abilities because that 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 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?” Think about this question:

Do you believe that you are to LEARN God’s truth about living the Christian life and then in your own ability (with God’s help) go out and DO what God says?

The Truth: The “learn and do” mindset does not work in living THE Christian life. Why? Because we cannot do what only the Holy Spirit can do and promises to do in our lives. Remember Philippians 1:6? As we learned in the first lesson, it is God’s power and His alone that will create spiritual transformation. As I shared with you about my story, I tried to live the “learn and do” Christian life and I failed miserably. The problem was that it never produced the life-transformation that God promises. It has only been through dependence upon the Lord that true change has taken place.

2. We want to be part of the CAUSE and EFFECT of our spiritual transformation.

Another problem that we have concerning faith is that we can’t bring our intellect, abilities, and talents to be the cause and/or effect of spiritual transformation. This is a problem because we always use our intellect, abilities, and talents in our jobs, in our marriages, and in raising our families. It is natural to want to try to transform ourselves or to help God through our efforts to be transformed, but we cannot produce what only God can produce.

The Truth: In our walk of faith we are depending upon God to bring His intellect, power, and ability to do in us what we cannot do for ourselves. Remember John 15:5b? This presents a struggle

when it comes to setting aside our abilities and drawing 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.

Note: This does not mean we are not to use our intellect and abilities. However, those things will do you no good when it comes to spiritual transformation.

3. LEGALISM nurtures “learn and do” Christianity.

If you spent much time in a legalistic church environment like I did, then you have probably been living a “learn and do” Christian life. What do I mean by “legalism?” Legalism is trying to live the Christian life using your own ability to keep or follow certain rules to produce spiritual transformation. Legalism promotes the false belief that you are to be the source for trying to keep certain standards or rules to become a good Christian or to please God. For me legalism produced a life of striving in my own strength to try to please God and to set myself free. Can you identify with this?

The Truth: Trying to live up to a set of standards or rules will never produce any real transformation. Trying harder or doing more for God will not bring about the changes that you desire. It will only result in either giving up or trying harder to live the Christian life. True freedom only comes when you put your faith in God's power and ability to produce in you His promises of transformation.

Does This Mean That I Live A PASSIVE Life And Do Nothing?

*“that your **faith** should not be in the wisdom of men but in the **power of God.**” 1 Corinthians 2:5*



I often hear this comment from folks when they are trying to understand about walking by faith in Christ to live His life in them: “Does living by faith mean that I am supposed to do nothing?” Or comments like, “This walk of faith seems very passive” Or “What is my responsibility?” The truth is that the walk of faith is anything but passive.

KEY TRUTH:

***is that the Christian life is very ACTIVE, but GOD is
the SOURCE of the ACTIVITY (spiritual transformation) taking place.***

To understand the above truth, let's look at Jesus's life and ministry. Would you say that Jesus was passive? I don't believe that any of us 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. Therefore, you do have a responsibility.

***Your responsibility is to **DEPEND** on Christ
moment by moment to live His life in you.***

As you do, God releases His life and power in you to radically change the way that you think, feel, choose, and behave.

Meditate: on the thought that as you actively depend on God that He is the Source of the activity (spiritual transformation) taking place in you.

Engaging God: Seek God to give you revelation of this issue of passivity, responsibility and activity.

Summary Points In Lesson Two

I hope that this lesson has given you a better understanding of your part in God's transforming process. The key points that I hope you remember from this study are:

- Your part in living the Christian life is DEPENDENCE upon God as your Source.
- Dependence is another word for FAITH.
- It is not up to you to produce the faith. Your part is to RECEIVE the faith that you have in Christ.
- The OBJECT of your faith will either be in YOURSELF as the source or in GOD as the Source.
- We struggle with the true meaning of faith because of a "learn and do" mindset, your not being able to use your talents and abilities, and from embracing any legalism that you might be experiencing.
- The Christian life is not passive. God is the Source of His activity in you to transform every area of your life.
- The result of a life lived by faith in Christ results in changes in our thinking, beliefs, behavior, and our choices.

***Look again at the diagram on page 28 concerning the differences
between "A" Life and "THE" Life***

Lesson Three

Key Truths About The Walk of Faith

And Understanding Christ As Your Life

DAY ONE

Overview of Lesson Three

- What happens in you when you take steps of faith?
- The results of living from God's power
- The meaning of a supernatural work of God
- Understanding faith versus feelings and experiences
- The meaning of Christ-confidence
- Understanding how Christ as our life applies to our everyday life

Introduction

I hope that the last lesson gave you a clearer understanding of the issues of dependence and faith. Now that we understand our part in God's transformation process, let's look at what happens when we take a step of faith. At the end of our lesson, we will start applying what we have learned in order to see what it looks like to draw on Christ as our life in everyday life.

The Journey of Faith Begins With A STEP of Faith.

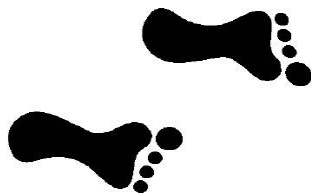
"The mind of a man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." Proverbs 16:9

Imagine that you have 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. In the same way, God is moving you away from the "self" culture of living from your own abilities to a new "spiritual" culture of living from His infinite ability. It too is a very difficult transition. However, God promises that as we take steps of faith, He will make real to us the transformation and abundant life that He promises. Therefore, let me begin by defining a step of faith:

STEP OF FAITH

is a MOMENT in time where you

ENGAGE God and His LIFE and POWER by faith.



If you have been a Christian for any length of time, you know that the Christian walk is a walk of faith. However, there are two key things that I want to emphasize about our walk of faith. One, I would like for us to look at what happens when we take a step of faith. The second is to take a look at the object of our faith.

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

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.**

We will talk more about God's life released in us at the end of this lesson. However, let's take a closer look at God's power and what happens when it is released in us. 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

*"To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and **the work of faith with power**."* 2 Thessalonians 1:11

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 "surpassing greatness of the power of God." What kind of 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!

In addition, 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 or simply tried not to sin. 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 RADICALLY change the way that you think, believe, choose, and behave.

Question: Have you realized up to this point the greatness of God's power that resides in you?

Meditate: on 2 Corinthians 4:7 and Ephesians 1:19, 20 and think about the magnitude of God's power that lives in you.

Engaging God: Ask God to persuade you in a deeper way concerning His divine power that you possess and how He wants to use that power to set you free.

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)*

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 were possible. If God's power can accomplish this in his life, what do you think God's power could accomplish in 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**

Question: When was the last time that you experienced God's power in changing the way that you think, believe, choose, or behave? Write down three changes that you would like to experience in these four areas.

Meditate: on Ephesians 3:20 and think about what changes that God would need to make in your life so that you would be able to say with Paul, "He is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we could ask or think?"

Engaging God: Begin asking God to transform your life concerning the changes that you would like to experience.

Over the years in ministry, I have come to the conclusion that MOST Christians don't truly understand the MAGNITUDE of God's power because they have not taken enough steps of faith to experience God's power.

"Say to God, 'How awesome are your deeds! So GREAT is your power that your enemies cringe before you.'" Psalm 66:3

DAY TWO

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

I recently bought a laptop computer. Compared to the one that I bought two years ago, it had so much more RAM and power. As with all computers, I have access to all the information that I need through the Internet. However, all that power and access will do me no good if I do not turn the computer on. Until I do that, it will only be an expensive paperweight!

The same holds true for the power of God. 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.

The way that you TAP into God's power is through STEPS of faith.



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 upon 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 behavior.

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 their 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 by faith, there will be NO
SIGNIFICANT transformation in your life.***

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

A word that is crucial to understand concerning God's work in our lives is the word "supernatural." The reason that it is so important to understand the word "supernatural" is because everything that God accomplishes in your life is a "supernatural" work. Therefore, before we go any further let me 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.*

Let me illustrate a “supernatural” work with the story of the fall of Jericho in Joshua 6:3-5:



*“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.”*

I would like for you to read this passage again and put yourself into the story. What if God told you to march around Jericho for seven days, to blow trumpets on the seventh day, shout, and then the walls would fall down? (FYI - God did not tell the Jews to bring a crane with a wrecking ball.) Well, we know from the passage that is what they did with the result that the walls of the city collapsed. The key point to understand is that their part was to march, blow trumpets, and then shout. They did all of this by faith. However, none of those things caused the walls to fall. In God’s perfect timing, He, in His power, supernaturally knocked the walls down.

Think about this: 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? Therefore, your part is to walk by faith and to trust in His supernatural power to do just that. As He does, you will, like the Jews when the walls fell, stand in awe of Him.

Question: What supernatural work do you want God to accomplish in your life? Is it victory over an inner struggle, freedom from a defeating sin pattern, transformation of fleshly behavior, etc.?

Meditate: on Joshua 6:3-5 above and think about this question, “If God can knock down the physical walls of Jericho, will He not knock down the walls of your lying beliefs, sin patterns, and strongholds if you walk by faith?”

Engaging God: Begin taking steps of faith, and ask God to begin knocking down those walls.

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? Let’s look at two key truths to answer this question.

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

If you will participate with me for a moment, I think that 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.

A Personal Example

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 this: "Lord, I am asking You to heal the woundedness caused by my father's verbal, emotional, physical abuse." At that very moment all of God's power to heal me was being released into me.

However, I was not feeling or experiencing any of God's healing power. Even though I was not feeling God's power, 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 was not experiencing God's healing power, it does not change the fact that God was working in that moment to heal me. Therefore, here is a very key truth to the walk of faith:

A KEY To The Walk of Faith:

BELIEVE that God is working in you as you walk by faith whether or not you FEEL or EXPERIENCE His life and power working in you.

Questions: Have you tried to walk by faith in the past, but you got discouraged and quit walking because you were not feeling or experiencing God's work in your life? Does it help you to better understand the walk of faith by knowing the truth that you may not feel or experience His life and power working even though He is working?

Meditate: on the truth that even when we don't feel or experience God's power, He is working as we walk by faith.

Engaging God: Ask God to give you a deeper revelation of the truth that you may not feel or experience His life and power in you the moment when you take a step of faith. Begin taking steps of faith in an area you want changed. Even though you may not feel the change taking place, seek God to confirm in you that He is working.

***Not KNOWING and BELIEVING this truth is one of the main reasons why
people QUIT walking by faith.***

DAY THREE

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



*“Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it.”
Psalm 37:5*

In addition, we don't and won't know how God's power works in us to change us. The military has a phrase that I use often. It is, “You are on a need-to-know basis.” This is the same way with God. Since God is not telling us how He is transforming us, we don't need to know. This can be very frustrating because we are always wanting to know how anything and everything works. However, for the most part God will not tell you how He is working. He only promises to work in you 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 there are no formulas or checklists for walking by faith since God's work in you will be unique to you and to no one else.

***Because God's work is a SUPERNATURAL work and is tailored individually,
we CAN'T make the Christian life a formula or a checklist.***

**Think about this question: Is it possible that God is not telling us how
He is working in order to build our faith?**

Questions: Why do you think that we have a need to know what God is doing in our lives rather not knowing? What could be some of the negative results if we hold on to our need to know?

Do you have a better understanding of why we can't make formulas or checklists for people to follow to live the Christian life?

Meditate: on Psalm 37:5 and ask God to move you away from needing to know how He is working in your life.

Engaging God: As you are taking steps of faith in an area that you want changed, ask the Lord to give you the desire to be at peace in not knowing how He is working.

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.



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 set you free from the fear of failure. As you walk by faith, God's power is working in you to set you free, but you may not experience the process of freedom taking place. However, in God's perfect timing you will one day find yourself no longer fearing failure. The key is that you must walk long enough by faith in order to experience the desired change.

Therefore, the key question in your walk of faith is this:

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 that 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?

Transformation Produces CHRIST-CONFIDENCE.

"For I am (Christ) 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 (Parenthesis mine)*

What kind of confidence is Paul talking about? He is not talking about a self-confidence. Rather, Paul is talking about a God-produced Christ-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 Christ-confidence in God's ability that Paul is speaking about.

CHRIST-CONFIDENCE results when you begin to EXPERIENCE supernatural changes in your life.

I will be honest with you that I don't see that much God-confidence among many Christians because so many have not walked long enough by faith to experience supernatural changes.

Therefore, my encouragement to you is that you continue to walk by faith long enough so that you will experience Christ-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 Christ-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.***

Question: If you could experience the changes that God’s power promises, what would that do for your confidence in God’s ability and desire to change your life?

Meditate: on 2 Timothy 1:12 and ask the Spirit to reveal to you the depth of your God-confidence.

Engaging God: Ask God to begin persuading you in a deeper way of His ability and desire to transform your life. Ask Him to give you greater God-confidence in Who He is and what He promises to do.

Example: “Lord, my God-confidence is not very high. I am asking You to transform my life to build my confidence in Your ability to change me.”

DAY FOUR

Living From Christ As Your (THE) LIFE

We looked at the truth that God's power is released in us as we walk by faith. In addition, Christ's life is released in us as well when we take a step of faith. Therefore, in this section, I want us to look deeper into the meaning and the practical application of Christ being our life and being released in our lives.

Remember these two verses from Lesson One that reveal that Christ is life?

*".... **Christ**, who is **YOUR life**" Colossians 3:4*

*"**I am** the way, the truth, and **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-life
CHARACTERISTICS that can ONLY be supplied by Christ.***

To give you examples of 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, 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 the strength of His might." Ephesians 6:10*

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 as Ephesians 6:10 states are all examples of Christ-life characteristics.

Let's look again at the list of some of the Christ-life characteristics from Lesson One concerning what it means for Christ to be your life.

Christ as your life means that Christ **IS** your:

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

Think about this for a moment: All of these things listed above are available to you through Christ every moment. Therefore, go back and take time reading through this list.

Which of these Christ-life characteristics do you want to experience more of?

What Is The Difference Between Christ-Life Characteristics and Human Characteristics?

To better understand the meaning of Christ-life characteristics, we need to first understand that there is a **human** connotation to these characteristics as well as a **spiritual** one. We know that in the human realm we can also experience feelings of peace, patience, security, etc. Therefore, let's contrast human characteristics with Christ-life characteristics:

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 a **human** peace, joy, and security. However, you come home to find that someone has broken into your house, your house is flooded due to 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 quickly! What would this same situation look like living from Christ-life characteristics? Before I answer that question, let's define Christ-life characteristics.

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

"I am overflowing with JOY in the midst of all our suffering...." Colossians 1:24

Through Paul's walk of faith he came to a place where he was experiencing great joy even in the midst of his suffering. This was not a human joy because it is nearly impossible to experience human joy when we are suffering. Paul was experiencing a Christ-life joy that even suffering could not rob him of.

Using the same example as above, let's assume that when you are faced with the robbery, the flooding, and the crying child that you start feeling anger, frustration, or impatience. In that moment by faith, you can draw upon Christ-life characteristics of peace, joy, and patience.

(Remember that since you contain the fullness of Christ, you have available to you all of the Christ-life characteristics.) What does that look like practically?



“Lord, I am losing my human joy and I am beginning to feel anger, frustration, and impatience. I am asking You, in Your power, to replace those feelings with Christ-life peace, joy, and patience at this moment.”

In that very moment, the Spirit’s power is suppressing your anger, frustration, and impatience as Christ is pouring His peace and patience into you. You may not immediately feel it, but as you continue to draw upon His peace and patience, your feelings of anger, frustration, and impatience will subside.

The KEY difference between a HUMAN characteristic and a CHRIST-LIFE characteristic is that neither relationships nor adverse circumstances can ROB you of experiencing Christ-life characteristics.

Question: How would it impact the struggles and conflicts that you are facing today if you could live from Christ-life characteristics of peace, rest, joy, patience, forgiveness, etc.?

Meditate: on how your life would be different if you were experiencing the Christ-life characteristics that you desire to experience.

Engaging God: Begin taking steps of faith and seek God to transform you so that you will experience Christ’s peace, joy, forgiveness, etc.

Example: “Lord, my desire is to walk in Your peace. I am trusting You to transform my life so that I will experience Your peace.”

Let’s look further into what it looks like to draw upon Christ as our life in the midst of the daily struggles that we face.

Drawing On Christ As Your Life In The Midst of Your INTERNAL and EXTERNAL Struggles

Before we talk about drawing on Christ as our life, I wanted to share some key thoughts about the struggles we face. The first one is this:

God will USE your negative circumstances or difficult struggles to REMIND you of your ongoing NEED for Christ as your 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 their struggle. However, it is important to know that God is using that struggle to draw them back to dependence upon Him and so that they will draw upon Christ as their life in those situations. Without recognizing our need for Christ as our life in those situations, we will turn to our own ability to try to resolve or get past the struggles. I have often shared this about our struggles:

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.

Question: What fix are you experiencing today that you can't seem to fix concerning your internal struggles, your relationships or your adverse circumstances?

DAY FIVE

Drawing On Christ As The “I AM.”

All struggles create a need. For example, your struggles could create a need for peace, patience, wisdom, etc. The Lord says through Paul in Philippians 4:19:

*“And my God shall **supply** all your needs IN Christ Jesus.”*

Paul is saying that Jesus is our need-meter. Jesus meets those needs with His very life. In addition, Jesus says in John 14:6:

“I AM the way, the truth, and the life...”

When it comes to Christ meeting our needs, He is saying that He is the “I AM” to meet every one of our needs. To understand what I mean, please look at the page titled “I AM” at the end of this lesson. As you can see from the list, Christ is the “I AM” for whatever we need. Let me give you some practical examples of that and how we might appropriate Christ as the “I AM.”

Example #1: Let’s assume that you are experiencing rejection from your spouse. The need is for Christ’s acceptance. Jesus says, “I AM your acceptance.” Therefore, an example of how you draw on Christ’s acceptance might look like, “Lord, I am feeling rejection by my spouse. I am trusting You to BE my acceptance.”

Example #2: Let’s assume that your job is in jeopardy due to cutbacks in the company. You are feeling anxious. Your need is for Christ’s peace. Jesus says, “I AM your peace.” Therefore, an example of how you draw on Christ’s peace might look like, “Lord, I am worried and anxious about losing my job. I am trusting You to BE my peace.”

Meditate: on the truth that Christ is the “I AM”

Exercise: What is it that you need based on the internal and external struggles that you are facing today? Go to the “I AM” list and find the “I AM” that most applies to your struggle.

Engaging God: Seek Christ to BE what you need concerning your struggle. Depending on the severity of the struggle, you may have to continually seek Christ to BE what it is that you need Him to be concerning your situation.

A Final Thought About Christ As Our Life



I hear Christians say that they ask Christ to **give** them such things as patience, peace, etc. It is a little like asking a pharmacist for a prescription. However, since we contain all of Christ’s peace, joy, and rest in us (Colossians 2:9), then do we really need to ask for something that we already possess? In other words, Jesus is not a divine pharmacist giving us what we need. Rather, He is saying that “I AM” what you need. (i.e., I AM your peace, joy, and rest.) Therefore, as we saw in the examples above, you don’t need to ask Christ to “give” you His peace, joy, and wisdom. You simply need to “trust” Him to **BE** your peace, joy, and wisdom.

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

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

Let's look at some examples of what it looks like to draw on Christ as the "I AM" in the workplace, in marriage, and in circumstances.

In Your 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 upon 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 **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 begin to experience Christ's peace but eventually you will experience His peace.

Example #2: You have just lost your job, and you start feeling fearful, anxious, or angry. At that moment, you have a need for Christ's courage, rest, and confidence.

Step of faith: "Lord, I have just lost my job. I am feeling anxious and worried. I am **trusting** You to **BE** my peace and rest in the midst of this situation."

Exercise: Look at the "I AM" page. What is your job creating a need for that Christ can be the "I AM" to meet that need? Begin asking Christ to be the "I AM" to meet that need.

In Your 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 spouse 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.

Challenge: Take this step of faith as many times as it comes to mind in the next thirty days, and take note of any changes in how you see your spouse or how he or she sees you. You will begin to see a supernatural change in your marriage relationship.

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.

Exercise: Look at your marriage and think about what it is that you need from Christ as your life in the area of marital conflict. Begin taking steps of faith by drawing upon Christ as the "I AM." Once again you can refer to the "I AM" page.

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."

Exercise: Look at any negative or adverse circumstances that you are facing (finances, health, etc.) and determine what needs are being created as a result of those circumstances. Again, refer to the "I AM" page and begin taking steps of faith in these areas.

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 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 supplying His peace, patience, etc.

Summary of Lesson Three

1. A step of faith RELEASES God's power into us.
2. This power within us is the same power that RAISED Jesus from the dead.
3. It is through this power being released in us that we will begin to EXPERIENCE the renewing of the mind, victory, freedom, and transformation.
4. God's power is a SUPERNATURAL power in that there is no man-made explanation for the changes that take place.
5. Supernatural means that we will NOT necessarily FEEL or EXPERIENCE God's power in us nor will we understand how God is working.
6. However, even though we may not feel God's power working, we will EVENTUALLY experience the transformation that God promises.
7. As we experience those changes, God will produce in us a GOD-CONFIDENCE.
8. We can draw upon CHRIST-LIKE characteristics moment by moment concerning struggles that we face in the workplace, in marriage, in family or in adverse circumstances

“I AM Your Life”

As needs arise in your life, Christ is the “I AM” to meet your needs. Insert your personal needs and find from the list how Christ will be your Supply.

Your need _____? Jesus says, “I AM your _____.”

I AM your love – Galatians 5:22
I AM your joy – John 15:11
I AM your adequacy – 2 Corinthians 3:5
I AM your wisdom – 1 Corinthians 1:30
I AM your way – John 14:6
I AM your truth – John 14:6
I AM your rest – Matthew 11:28
I AM your mind – 1 Corinthians 2:16
I AM your desire – Psalm 73:25
I AM your completion – Colossians 2:10
I AM your sanctification – 1 Cor. 1:30
I AM your purpose – Ephesians 1:10
I AM your identity – 2 Corinthians 5:17
I AM your security – Proverbs 1:33
I AM your goodness – Galatians 5:22
I AM your confidence – 2 Corinthians 3:4
I AM your compassion – Psalm 25:6
I AM your forgiveness – Daniel 9:9
I AM your success – Romans 8:37
I AM your endurance – Hebrews 10:36
I AM your peace – Ephesians 2:14
I AM your perseverance - Hebrews 12:2
I AM your trust – Romans 15:5
I AM your strength – Romans 6:10
I AM your sovereignty – 1 Timothy 6:15
I AM your intimacy – Psalm 139:3
I AM your kindness – Galatians 5:22
I AM your humility – Matthew 11:29
I AM your acceptance – Romans 15:7
I AM your faithfulness – Galatians 5:22
I AM your need-meter – Galatians 4:19
I AM your deliverer – Psalm 18:2
I AM your freedom – John 8:32
I AM your victory – 1 Corinthians 15:57
I AM your gentleness – Galatians 5:23
I AM your patience – Galatians 5:22
I AM your courage – John 16:33
I AM your conqueror – Romans 8:37
I AM your holiness – Colossians 3:12
I AM your self-control - 2 Timothy 1:7

I AM your salvation – Psalm 27:1
I AM your trust – Jeremiah 17:7
I AM your guide – Psalm 48:14
I AM your shepherd – Psalm 23:1
I AM your comforter – John 14:16
I AM your Abba – Galatians 4:5-6
I AM your hope – Colossians 1:27
I AM your life – John 14:6

Lesson Four

Experiencing God's Promises of Victory, Freedom and Healing

DAY ONE

Overview of Lesson Four

- Understanding “faithing it” versus experiencing transformation.
- God’s process of renewing our minds to His truth.
- Experiencing victory and freedom from defeating sin patterns and strongholds.
- God’s process of healing us from past or present woundedness.

Introduction

By this point in the study, I trust that you have begun to take steps of faith concerning an area in your life where you want to experience transformation. If you have, I hope that you have experienced some degree of change in your thoughts, feelings, or choices. In this lesson we are going to see how our walk of faith will produce the following changes in our lives:

- Having our mind renewed to believe God’s truth versus our lying beliefs. Romans 12:2
- Experiencing victory and freedom from our fleshly behaviors and defeating sin patterns. 1 Corinthians 15:57
- Experiencing healing from past woundedness. Psalm 147:3

Before we address these issues, I would like to share with you a very critical truth concerning your faith walk.

“Faithing It” Versus Experience

I believe that this is one of the most crucial parts of this entire study. Therefore, take some time to think and meditate on what you are about to read.

Remember 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 that you want changed. 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 the walk of faith up until we actually experience the changes “faithing it.” What does “faithing it” mean?

“FAITHING IT”

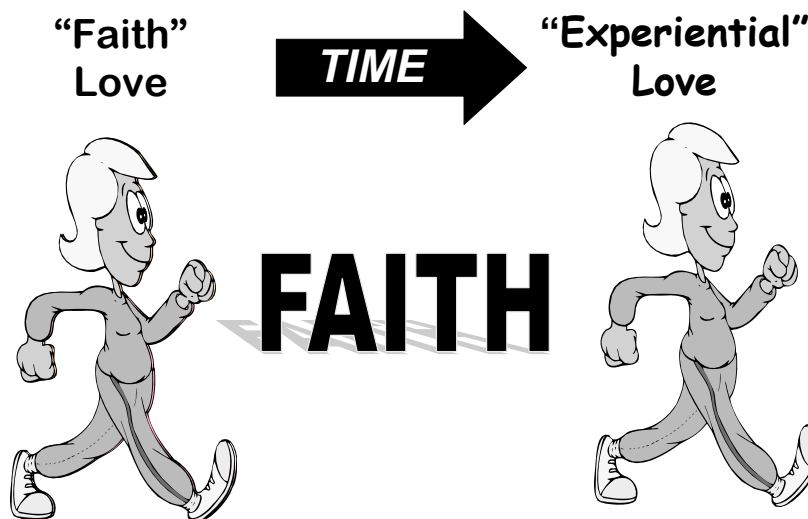
***means that up until you ACTUALLY experience a change, you
CONTINUE to believe that God is working even though you
are NOT feeling or experiencing Him working in you.***

The key to the walk of faith is to continue “faithing it” long enough until you experience changes in your thoughts, choices, beliefs, or behaviors. Let me give you an example to illustrate.

Let’s assume that you are struggling with loving someone. As you discovered in the last lesson, you have available to you all of Christ’s love. Therefore, you begin taking steps of faith in receiving Christ’s love.

A step of faith might look like this, “Lord, I can’t love this person. I am drawing on Your love from which to love this person.”

Early on in this process you are not feeling or experiencing Christ’s love. However, if you are walking by faith, what do we know is true? Christ is continually supplying His love in you for this person. Since at this point you are not experiencing Christ’s love, I call this a “faith” love. However, IF you continue “faithing it,” then you will eventually come to a place where you will begin to experience Christ’s love for this person. Remember that moving from faith to experience is a supernatural work of the Spirit that may take time. Below is an illustration of what it looks like to move from “faith” to “experience.”



The Process of Moving From Faith To Experience

Personal Story

Let me share with you a personal story of how God took me from “faith” love to “experiential” love. There was a relative of mine that I just could not love. There were things about this person that caused me to stiff arm them when I was around them. (Do you know anyone like that?) After

some time of teaching these truths, the Lord brought this person to mind, and He put these thoughts in my mind: “What about this relative of yours that you don’t love? Will you apply what you have been teaching others to this person?” My first reaction was, “I don’t think so.” My problem was that I was unwilling to love this relative. The Lord then put another thought into my mind. “I know that you are unwilling to love this person, but will you let Me love this person through you?” I said, “Yes, I am willing for You to love them through me.”

Therefore, I began “faithing it” by taking steps of faith and trusting the Lord to love this relative through me. The “faithing it” process went on for 18 months. All during that time I was not feeling any love for this person, but I continued walking by faith. The interesting part of this story is that during that 18 months I saw changes in how this person related to me. They become more responsive and more loving to me. I was stunned because I was still not feeling any love for this person.

However, one day 18 months later when I walked into this relative’s home, I began to feel in me God’s unconditional love for this person. I will never forget that day as long as I live because I had just experienced one of the most supernatural works that God has ever accomplished in my life. I was stunned and amazed at God’s transforming power. Can you imagine what this change in me (and them) did for my God-confidence?

Question: Is there someone in your life that you just can’t seem to love? Are you willing to let God love this person through you? If so, begin taking steps of faith, and if you “faith” it long enough, you too will experience (like I did) Christ’s love for this person. If you are unwilling to ask God to love this person through you, ask Him to move your will to a place where you are willing for Him to love this person through you.

Two Reasons Why We Struggle With “Faithing It” Long Enough

1. We live in a culture of INSTANT gratification.



One reason that we struggle with “faithing it” is that we live in a culture of “instant” gratification that says, “I want ‘it,’ and I want ‘it’ now!” I call it the “microwave” culture. We bring that same mindset into our walk of faith, and we want to experience change and to experience it quickly. The truth is that for the most part your faith walk will be a journey and not a sprint. It may take some length of time before you experience transformation.

I will be honest with you. **I believe that this is the #1 reason why most Christians never experience supernatural transformation.** They are so geared for wanting to experience change quickly that they are unwilling to take enough steps of faith in order to experience change.

That is why the key question concerning your walk of faith is:

Will you “FAITH IT” long enough to EXPERIENCE transformation?

2. Satan will tempt you to QUIT walking by faith.

The second reason that we struggle with “faithing it” is that the last thing that Satan wants is for you to be transformed and set free. Therefore, as you are “faithing it,” he will be tempting you to quit your faith walk by inserting thoughts of discouragement and doubt. The reason is that you are more likely to give up when you are discouraged or are doubting God. We will talk more about Satan’s part in obstructing our faith walk in Lesson Five.

One final thought on this subject:

During the “faithing it” period remember to draw on Christ’s PATIENCE and PERSEVERANCE until you experience change.

I know that several times in my faith walk that I would get impatient, or I would want to give up because nothing seemed to be changing fast enough. When those times would come up (and they will), I would seek Christ to be my patience and perseverance. Here is an example of what that looked like:

Example: “Lord, I have been walking by faith for some time now, but I am not experiencing any change. I feel impatient. I am trusting You to BE my patience and perseverance. Move my will so that I will continue taking steps of faith.”

I wish that I could tell you how long that we have to “faith it” before we experience changes, but I can’t. (If God tells you, please let me know.) One thing that I have learned is that God is growing our faith during the time when we are waiting to be changed. Therefore, as you go through the rest of this lesson, apply this principal of moving from “faithing it” to experiencing God’s transforming work. Before we go into the application of the truths concerning our lying beliefs, defeating sin patterns, and woundedness, let’s look at a key “faith” word that I use over and over again in my personal walk.

DAY TWO

A Key FAITH Word In The Transformation Process: ENTRUST



*“and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept **entrusting** Himself to Him who judges righteously” 1 Peter 2:23*

If you are a Christian, you know “faith” words such as trust, ask, etc. However, there is another word that I believe is one of the most active faith words available to us, and that is the word “**entrust.**” What does entrust mean?

ENTRUST

***Giving over to God for safekeeping something or someone
that you are holding on to.***

The problem with many Christians is that they are holding on to relational conflicts and circumstantial struggles that God never intended for them to own. This results in ongoing pain, suffering, and heartache. God never intends for you to take ownership of your struggles. His desire is for you to entrust every struggle, every conflict, and every adverse circumstance to Him. Why? It is because He is the only One who can truly deal with your struggles.

An example that I use many times to make this point is that I have a favorite Mexican restaurant that I like to go to. When they bring the food, they are wearing hot pads and tell me that the plate is hot. However, one day I forgot and grabbed the plate. It didn’t take long to feel the pain. Imagine that this hot plate represents every internal and external conflict that you are experiencing. What if you hold on to the plate? You will continue to experience the pain and the misery that goes with that. The point is that you must treat every struggle or conflict like that hot plate. God does not want you to hold on to it. He wants you to entrust it to Him for Him to resolve for you.

***The truth is that you were NOT designed to take ownership of any
of your internal and external struggles. God intends for you to
ENTRUST every one of those issues to Him.***

Concerning the rest of this lesson, God wants you to entrust your false beliefs, defeating sin patterns, and woundedness to Him for Him to transform. Therefore, as we look at the steps of faith regarding God’s promises of transformation, I will be using the word “entrust” to give you an application of this word to those promises.

What Does A Step Of Faith Look Like To Experience 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 and fleshly behaviors. 1 Corinthians 15:57; John 8:32
- **HEAL** you of your woundedness. Psalm 147:3

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 about the faith walk and the promises that we will be studying. 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. As a result 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. 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 result in sinful behavior, doubt, unbelief, and can even cause us to quit walking by faith. Let's define a lying belief:

A LYING BELIEF

is any belief that CONTRADICTS or does not line up with God's truth.

Remember what I said earlier that “you will not live beyond what you believe. If you are believing lies, then that is how you will live.” If we don’t allow God to renew our minds to the truth, then we will stay in bondage to our lying beliefs. This bondage will keep us locked into continual false thinking, wrong choices and fleshly behaviors. Therefore, God’s objective in renewing your mind is to set you free by replacing your lying beliefs with His truth. As He does this, it will change your thinking, your choices, and your fleshly behaviors.

This is why the promise of having our minds renewed according to Romans 12:2 is so crucial to our walk of faith and transformation. There is one key truth for you to understand before we continue:

KEY TRUTH:

YOU cannot RENEW your own mind to God’s truth.

ONLY God can accomplish that renewal and transformation.

This is important because many Christians believe that they can renew their own minds. The truth is that only God can accomplish that. This is one more thing that Jesus is referring to when He says in John 15:5 that, “apart from Me you can do nothing.” Therefore, 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: Let’s assume that you have a lying belief that God is judging or condemning you when you sin or when you fail. The truth found in Romans 8:1 is that there is no more condemnation from God concerning your sins because all of your past, present, and future sins are forgiven. They have been paid for by Christ’s death on the cross, are forgiven, and are remembered no more.

Step of faith: “Lord, I am still believing the lie that You are condemning me when I sin or fail. I confess and repent* of that sin, and I am **entrusting** this lying belief to You. I am trusting You to renew my mind to the truth that You are not condemning or judging me when I sin.”

***Important note:** When you do sin, it is necessary to confess and repent of that sin. To confess is simply to agree with God that you sinned, and to repent acknowledges that you are sorry for what you have done and that you are turning away from the sin and are turning back to God.

Example #3: You believe the lie that it is up to your spouse to unconditionally accept you. We can't do that in and of ourselves because we tend to accept one another only if certain conditions are met. The truth is that our unconditional acceptance can only come from Christ.

Step of faith: "Lord, I am believing the lie that it is up to my spouse to unconditionally accept me. I am **entrusting** that lie to You and am **asking** You to renew my mind to the truth that the need for unconditional acceptance can only be met from You."

Exercise: Look at the list titled "**Lying Beliefs**" at the end of this lesson. Choose some of those lying beliefs that you want your mind renewed to or ask God to reveal to you a particular lying belief that He wants to set you free from. Then begin taking steps of faith for Him to renew your mind. You can use the example below.

Example: "Lord, I am believing the lie that _____. I am **entrusting** my lie to You and am asking You to renew my mind and to **replace** this lie with Your truth."

As you seek God to renew your mind to the truth, ask Him to reveal the changes He is making in your thoughts, beliefs, and choices.

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 behaviors.
4. You may not be aware of some of your lying beliefs, so ask God to REVEAL to you your 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. (This is important because the changes can be very subtle.)

DAY THREE

The Walk Of Faith To Experience VICTORY and FREEDOM From Your Fleshly Behaviors and Strongholds

“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. However, the tendency is to try to gain that victory and freedom through our own capability. Isn't it interesting that John in the verse above did not say that it was our strength, capability, and willpower that produces victory. Victory comes through faith. Christ is our victory and freedom, and by trusting Him by faith, He produces the victory over our defeating sin patterns and fleshly behaviors. Before we look at God's process of gaining victory and freedom, I would like to look at the meanings of the flesh, fleshly behaviors, and strongholds.

What Is 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*

“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

How do we define flesh?

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

Prior to salvation, we learned that we had no choice but to depend upon 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.” I simply define our “self-life” as that attitude within us that says, “It is all about ME!”

(Note: It is worth noting at this point that God gave every one of us IQ, talents, abilities, etc. However, God never intended for us to live from those talents and abilities **independently** of Him.)

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 two questions, “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?” “Are you trying in your own self-effort to live the Christian life?” If so, I have another question:

“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 life will truly NEVER work unless you live in DEPENDENCE upon Him.

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.

Living From The Flesh Produces Fleshly Behavior.

As you live from the flesh, FLESHLY BEHAVIORS will result.

“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. I simply define fleshly behavior as follows:

Fleshly Behavior:

***Any behavior that we exhibit as a result of
living life INDEPENDENTLY of God.***



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

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.”

Exercise: Go to the list of fleshly behaviors at the end of this lesson and write down five fleshly behaviors that most apply to you.

DAY FOUR

What Are The RESULTS From Living From Your Fleshly Behaviors?

If we choose to live from our fleshly behaviors, 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 from your fleshly behaviors and attitudes, the inevitable result will be “misery” in your soul.

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

Condemnation	Stress	Anxiety	Shame	Unforgiveness
Unhappiness	Anger	Guilt	Arrogance	Bitterness
Self-pity	Inadequacy	Fear	Worry	Frustration
Unworthiness	Blame	Rejection	Insecurity	Dissatisfaction

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

When I give in to my fleshly behavior 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 living from fleshly behaviors 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 wants to set you FREE from your fleshly behaviors.

Walking by faith in His power is your only WAY out of the prodigal pigpen!

Let’s now look at the meaning of strongholds.

STRONGHOLD – A repeated and reinforced pattern of fleshy thinking, believing, or behaving.

We all have fleshy behaviors, and each of those fleshy behaviors has differing degrees of a grip upon our lives. Those fleshy behaviors that have a very strong grip on us I call “strongholds.” I simply define a stronghold as follows:

STRONGHOLDS:

Fleshy behaviors that have such a grip on you that you don’t believe that you can ever be set free from them.

Some more obvious examples of strongholds are pornography, overeating, and drugs. However, chronic fear, anxiety, pride, self-confidence, and anger are examples of strongholds as well. Therefore, let’s look at God’s truth concerning setting us free from these strongholds.

God’s Promise For Freedom

God’s promise concerning our fleshy behaviors and strongholds is found 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. “Know” means that the Holy Spirit has given you personal revelation of biblical truth. 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.

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

The good news is that there is no stronghold greater than the power of God to set you free. I can bear witness of this because God has set me free from the strongholds of pornography, chronic fear, anxiety, and a critical and judgmental attitude. He will do the same for you. Let’s look at some examples of steps of faith to experience freedom from fleshy behaviors and strongholds

Steps of Faith Concerning Freedom From Fleshy Behaviors and Strongholds

Example #1: Let’s assume that you have a fleshy behavior of anger. God’s promise is to set you free from your anger. Therefore, what would a step of faith look like to bring God’s power to bear to set you free?

Step of Faith: “Lord, I struggle with being angry. I am **entrusting** my fleshy behavior of anger to You, and I am **trusting** You to set me free from it. Move my will away from being angry.”

Key Point: The degree and depth of your anger will (for the most part) determine how long it may take to be set free from it. The greater the depth of anger, the more time it may take to begin to be set free from it.

Let's look at an example of a **stronghold** and what it looks like to walk by faith to be set free.

Example #2: Let's assume that you have a stronghold 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 real degree of 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 am not being 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."

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."

As you continue down this walk of faith, you begin to find yourself not going to the pornography. However, you may succumb and go back to it. In those times remember that you will, as for most of our struggles, be experiencing degrees of victory followed by failures. Don't beat yourself up when you fail. It is expected. We will talk more about this in the next lesson. When you do have some success and then fail, take another step of faith that might look like this:

Step of Faith: "Lord, thank You for beginning to set me free. However, I failed and went back to pornography. I confess that to You and repent of it. Continue to remind me that this walk to freedom is a journey and that it will take time to be completely set free."

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 from them.
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, as you continue to walk by faith you will INCREMENTALLY experience Christ's freedom.
4. Be spiritually VIGILANT and ask God to reveal to you how that He is setting you free.

A Personal Story of Being Set Free From My Chronic Anxiety

Because chronic 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 incrementally 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 continued to persuade me that He is my peace and is sovereign and in control, I no longer believe that I have to live in chronic anxiety. 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 was worth continuing to walk by faith.

Exercise: Write down at least three of your fleshly behaviors and reinforced strongholds that you want to be set free from.

Engaging God: Begin taking steps of faith and ask God to begin setting you free. Ask Him to be your strength, patience, and perseverance during those times along the way when you want to give up or don't believe that God is working. Ask Him to make you aware of the subtle changes that may be occurring in setting you free.

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. Woundedness can come in many forms:

- **Abuse** – which comes in the form of physical, emotional, sexual, or verbal.
- **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 very godly husband and treated her very well.

However, because of her lying beliefs of feeling dirty and worthless, she could never experience any degree of sexual intimacy. This eventually caused the marriage to fail because she was never healed from the lying beliefs surrounding her abuse.

God promises to heal your woundedness by renewing your MIND to the truth and setting you FREE from the lying beliefs surrounding your woundedness.

Therefore, let's look at God's process of healing. As you do remember that it is not the wounding event that is the problem. It is the lying beliefs that result from these wounding events.

DAY FIVE

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 upon God's power to heal you.

Step of Faith: "Lord, I was verbally abused as a child, and I am deeply wounded. As a result, I believe that I am rejected and unacceptable. I am **entrusting** my woundedness to You and I am **asking** You by faith 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 an abusive spouse which led to a divorce.

Step of Faith: "Lord, as a result of my marriage and divorce I feel worthless. I am **trusting** You to BE my healing and to persuade me that my worth can only be found in you."

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.

Engaging God: Have you experienced any woundedness in your past? If so, begin taking steps of faith for God to renew your mind to the truth concerning the lying beliefs surrounding your woundedness.

Important note: You may not know the lying beliefs associated with your woundedness but God does. Therefore, simply seek Him to renew your mind and set you free.

Woundedness and Unforgiveness

Woundedness and unforgiveness go hand in hand when you have been wounded by another person. Because of the 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. I know this because of my unwillingness to forgive my dad for 48 years. However, God showed to me in a very supernatural way His ability to move me from unforgiveness to forgiveness. Let me share with you how God healed me.

Personal Example Of Unforgiveness Toward My Dad

Because of the deep woundedness from my dad's verbal, physical, and emotional abuse, I was angry, bitter, and unwilling to forgive him. The Lord obviously 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?" At that point, 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. I am trusting You to move me from unwillingness to willingness to forgive.”

Over an 18-month period of intentionally seeking God by faith to forgive my dad through me, God began changing my attitude. He supernaturally transformed my will to a point where at the end of the 18 months, God asked me if I was willing to forgive my dad. I said, “Yes.” As I continued to be willing to forgive my dad (it was not a one-time event), God removed the anger and bitterness and replaced it with His love. Not only have I forgiven my dad, I can now love him because of how the Holy Spirit changed my heart. 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 my dad for what he did. He will do the same for you regardless of the depth of the woundedness that you have or are experiencing.

KEY TRUTH

God will move you from unwillingness to forgive to becoming willing to forgive.

Note: Here is something to remember concerning forgiveness. Neither God nor I were excusing the abuse of my father. It was very real and very wounding. However, God says that He will work all things together for good in Romans 8:28. The divine good was that He changed my will by moving me to a place of forgiveness. There are still some effects of the woundedness, but for the most part God has set me free from the lying beliefs surrounding it.

Engaging God: Think of a person that you don’t believe that you can forgive. Are you willing to trust God to forgive that person through you? Then, begin taking steps of faith similar to mine above and ask God to forgive that person through you. Also, begin trusting God to change your will so that you will be willing to forgive.

FINAL THOUGHT

Unforgiveness CUTS OFF the flow of Christ’s life in you.

Key Truths Concerning The Walk of Faith And Healing From Woundedness

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. You will have to DRAW upon Christ as your perseverance and patience during the healing process.
4. It may take TIME for God to move you from unwillingness to willingness to forgive, especially if you have lived with unforgiveness for a long time.
5. However, as God renews your mind you will begin to EXPERIENCE His healing.

Early On In Your Walk Of Faith You Will Need To Be INTENTIONAL.

As you begin the walk of faith you will need to be INTENTIONAL about taking steps of faith.

Look at Matthew 7:8 to make this point:

“He who seeks finds...”

The tense of the word “seeks” means continuous action. In other words, what Jesus is saying in this verse is that your seeking must be ongoing and intentional. Early on in my walk of faith I was intentional about taking steps of faith.

Let me give you a personal example to explain. When I first learned these truths that I am sharing with you, the one thing about my life that I wanted the Lord to change was my fleshly behavior of being critical and judgmental. Therefore, I became very intentional by asking the Lord as many times as it came to mind, to transform my critical and judgmental attitudes. Another way of defining “intentional” is that I had a determined willingness to seek God to change me in these areas.

The analogy might be like when you first learned to drive. Early on you had to be very focused and intentional about your steering, braking, and turning. You had to continuously think about all that was involved in doing that. However, as you continued doing those things, they became a habit that came automatically. That is what God wants to do in you early on in your walk of faith. He wants to develop a “holy habit” of you continuously seeking Him to transform your life.

Therefore, whether it is seeking Christ as life, seeking to have your mind renewed, seeking freedom or victory, or seeking healing, it is important to be very intentional to develop an ongoing attitude or “holy habit” of seeking and depending upon Him.

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.

- As you continue to walk by faith, you will deepen your relationship with God with the result that **you will enjoy being in His presence** and will **be more in tune with His plan, purpose, and will** for your life.

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.

LYING BELIEFS

Lying Beliefs About God:

I believe that God **is**

or, in the past in a very stressful situation I felt like God was:

Angry
Cold and distant
Indifferent
Not really in control

Judgmental
Condemning
Punishing
Uncaring

Unloving
Unable
Unwilling
Uncompassionate

Lying Beliefs About Others:

I have the right not to forgive others.
Others must meet my needs.
Others must love me unconditionally.

I must earn others' acceptance to be accepted.
Others' opinions determine my value.
Others must meet my standards to be accepted.

Lying Beliefs About How To Live the Christian Life:

1. I must work for God:
 - a. to gain His love.
 - b. for God to be happy with me.
 - c. to earn His acceptance.
 - d. to escape His condemnation.
 - e. to feel good about myself.
 - f. to please others.
2. It is up to me using my intellect and ability (with God's help):
 - a. to keep His commands.
 - b. to make His promises real in my life.
 - c. to transform myself.
 - d. to be happy.
 - e. to be successful.

Fleshly Behaviors

Be self-absorbed

become overly introspective
feel sorry for myself
get depressed
beat up on myself
play the role of victim/martyr
focus on my suffering to get
attention and sympathy
be jealous of another's
success and happiness

Withdraw (isolate myself)

be aloof (pull away)
distance myself from others
avoid others (be a loner)
go into a shell
become unapproachable
give them the silent
treatment
refuse to communicate

Escape (pain/pressure) by using:

promiscuity	carousing
drugs and alcohol	talking
staying busy	school
hobbies/games	reading
computers	fantasy
television	movies
pornography	sleep
overeating	religion
work/career	sex

Be anxious (worry and fret)

be fearful (apprehensive)
lack peace and rest
become paralyzed (numb)
be paranoid (overly
suspicious)
refuse to see the positive
assume the worst

Seek guidance from:

astrology/horoscopes,
fortune telling and/or
the occult

Be self-disciplined (self-reliant)

base acceptance of self and
others on performance
become a perfectionist
try hard so as not to fail
fear making mistakes
be legalistic:
live "by the book"
feel obligated (have to,
should, ought to)
be too hard on
myself/others
set unrealistic standards
for myself/others

Become obsessed with:

accomplishments
recognition/status
acquiring material things
what others think of me
how I look physically
my physical health
the past (especially past hurts
and failures)
a devotion to a cause
structure, order and
regulations

Become dominant

be dictatorial (bossy)
be demanding (pushy)
be overbearing (controlling)
intimidate others
refuse to give in

Stay in control through:

blackmail (making threats)
manipulation (use of guilt,
pity, silence, flattery, etc.)
coercion (physical threats)
profanity (swearing)
passivity (playing helpless)
not eating (anorexia/bulimia)

Lack compassion, gentleness

understanding, kindness, love,
become defensive

Be self-righteous (self- justifying)

make excuses (rationalize)
cover up and hide mistakes
have to prove my point
assume I am never the
problem
blame someone or something
else as the problem
avoid taking responsibility
for failure or problems
have difficulty: apologizing,
admitting I was wrong,
asking for forgiveness,
asking for help, and/or
expressing gratitude
have a superior attitude
(saying in effect):
"I know what is best"
"My way is the right way"

Be critical (judgmental)

find fault with others, myself
and everything around me
nit-pick things to death
be prejudiced (intolerant)
complain a lot (nothing is
ever good enough)

Be self-assured (self- confident)

depend on myself instead of
God or others
become proud (haughty)
be egocentric (act pompous)
brag (be boastful)
become arrogant (cocky)
become conceited (smug)

Come across as insensitive,

uncaring, unsympathetic,
indifferent or unconcerned

Be complacent (nonchalant)

say things like, "it's okay" or
"it doesn't matter."

Fleshly Behaviors (Continued)

Be pessimistic (negative)
lack confidence and optimism
be skeptical (suspicious)
distrust others, myself, God,
church and/or government
expect the worst
never pleased with self
or others
never be satisfied or content

Become hostile
be unfriendly
be sarcastic (caustic)
be cynical (contemptuous)
be hateful (mean-spirited)
be cruel (malicious)
have a quick temper
rant and rave to vent my anger
be physically abusive
be verbally abusive
break things

Hold a grudge (be resentful)
become moody (sulk)
harbor bitterness
be unforgiving
keep a scorecard of offenses
try to get even (seek revenge)
want others to fail or get hurt
punish myself or others

Fight unfair
be slanderous
misrepresent the situation
gossip (talk behind their back)
engage in passive-aggressive
behavior: use humor to hide
real feelings, forget things,
refuse to communicate, be
late, procrastinate, etc.)

Be self-deprecating
assume I am always the
problem
become overly apologetic
be too hard on myself
uncomfortable with success

have difficulty receiving: love,
compliments, forgiveness
be unable to forgive myself

Challenge others
resist authority
be uncooperative (inflexible)
be unteachable (close-minded)
cause dissention (strife)
be irritating (aggravate others)
be argumentative
be stubborn (unyielding)
be unreasonable

Deny reality
ignore problems and hope they
will go away
deny anything is bad or wrong
be subjective
deceive others and myself
lie to self and others
exaggerate (overstate matters)
play games to hide real intent

Put up a front
hide what I really think
pretend
try to impress others
and/or get attention
fake it (act like I know
something even when I don't)
be pretentious (phony, unreal)
be superficial (never let
anyone
get too close)

Be passive (lack initiative)
quit too easily (give up)
don't take chances
wait for someone to tell me
how to think and what to do
vacillate (be too changeable)
be indecisive
avoid failure at all costs
procrastinate (put things off)
be irresponsible (unreliable)
be lazy (apathetic, lethargic)

Be tense ("on guard")
find it hard to relax
be restless
become impatient
be easily agitated

Become emotionally insulated
avoid intimacy
have difficulty expressing
feelings and opinions
suppress (stuff) emotions
be inhibited (restrained)

Live by my feelings
believe that truth is what I feel
be too sensitive to criticism
be hypersensitive
be touchy (irritable)
be controlled by fear, anger,
doubts and insecurities
automatically read in rejection

Be a pleaser (be nice)
try to keep everyone happy
avoid conflict/keep the peace
say what I think others want
overly submissive
have difficulty saying "no"
can't stand up for myself
afraid to disappoint others
give in to others too easily

Be a caretaker (rescuer)
be overprotective
be overly responsible
become too involved with
other's affairs/concerns
be possessive (too invested)
talk too much and listen poorly
make decisions for others

Be too serious (intense)
be overly analytical
not be able to have fun
lack joy or life

Lesson Five

The Fight Of Faith

DAY ONE

Overview Of Lesson Five

- What is the fight of faith?
- Truths about the fight of faith.
- The enemies in the battle.
- Winning the battle over the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan/demons.
- The fight of faith and your thought life.

Introduction

When you are intentional about your walk of faith, it does not take long to encounter resistance. If you have already been taking steps of faith, you probably know what I am talking about. This resistance is caused when you run up against certain internal and external enemies that are seeking to derail your walk of faith. What we will discuss in this lesson are the enemies that we face in this battle and how we can engage God to do battle with these enemies in order to win the fight of faith.

What Is 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:

***Is the result 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 question that I want to ask you at this point is two-fold:

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

What I find is that many Christians do not truly understand that there is a huge battle being waged against them. Peter confirms this battle in 1 Peter 2:11:

*“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which **wage war against the soul.**”*

The first thing that we must be aware of is that there is a battle. If we don’t know that there is a battle, we will live as if no battle is taking place. In addition, if we know that there is a fight, and we don’t fight the fight of faith according to 1 Timothy 6:12, three things will result:

First, we will eventually GIVE UP on God and our walk of faith.

Secondly, we will TURN BACK to self as the source from which to live our life.

Thirdly, NO transformation will ever take place.

Therefore, it is crucial that we fully understand the fight of faith, the enemies that we face in the battle, and how to win the fight. Let’s first talk about some key truths that we need to know about the fight of faith.

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 the power of the enemies that you will be facing. You will lose the fight **every** time when you choose to engage the fight of faith **apart** from God’s power. The good news is that God promises to fight the fight **FOR** you by overpowering every enemy that you face!

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 to continue trusting the Lord by faith to fight the fight with the result.

“Being still” means that you can rest because you are depending on God’s ability and power to overcome the enemies to your walk of faith. We see this same truth in Psalm 46:10: “**Be still and**

know that I am God... ” If I am persuaded in God’s ability to be the Victor over my enemies, I can experience rest as He does battle for me.

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.

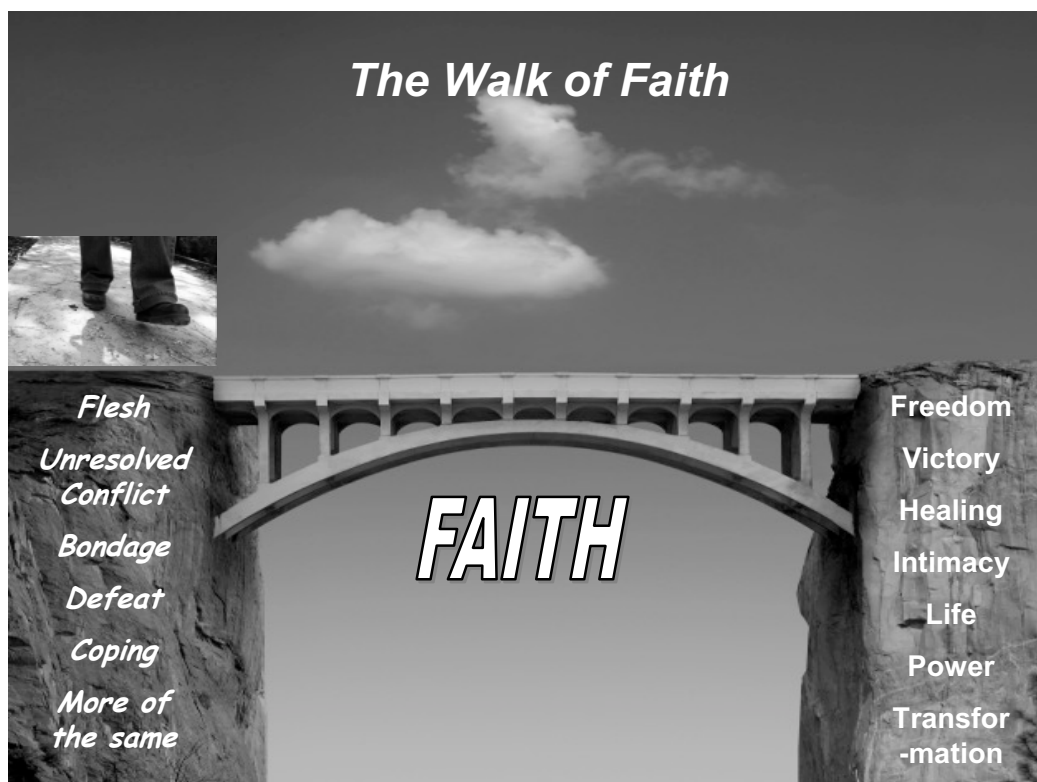
“My soul weeps because of grief. Strengthen me according to Your word.” Psalm 119:28

“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 engaging God with His 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 enemies to your faith walk and to set you free. We will see how this practically works in the next section of this study.

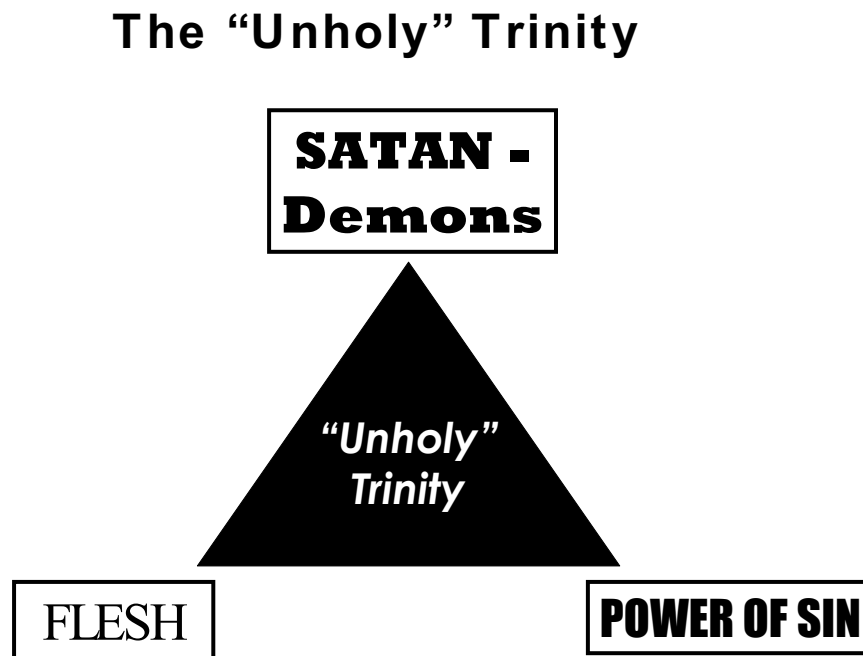
Visual Example of The Walk of Faith

In the diagram below, we see on the left side is where we begin our Christian walk. In the beginning we are mostly living from the flesh, experiencing unresolved conflict, being in bondage to defeating sin patterns, etc. On the right side are God’s promises of transformation that we want to experience. The bridge between the two is faith. We will continue use this diagram as we go through this lesson.

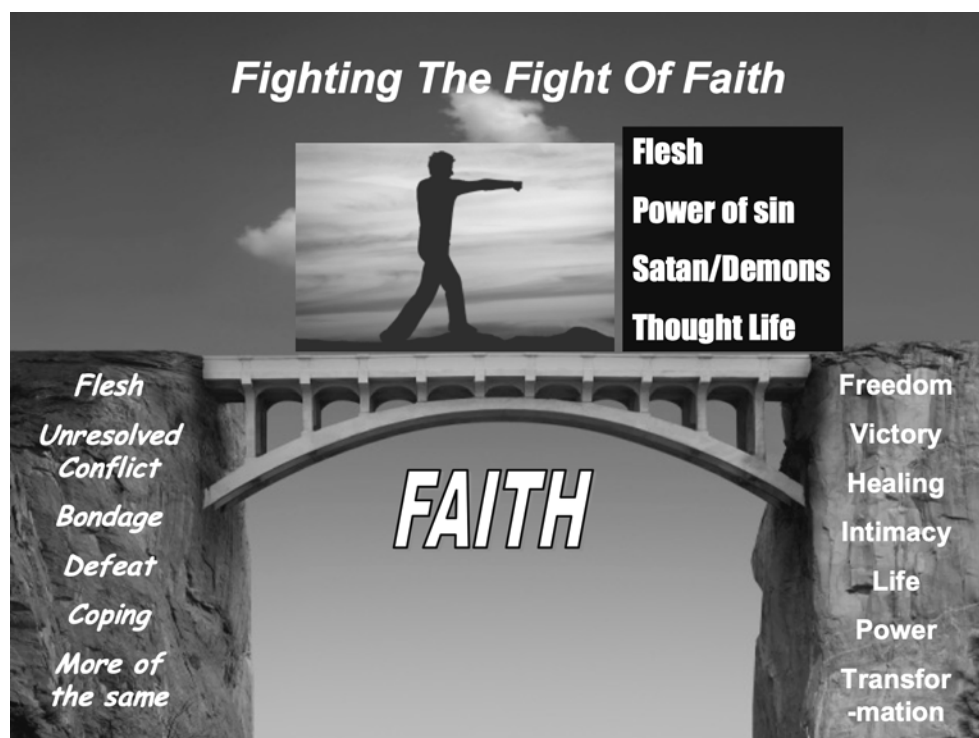


Who Are The ENEMIES In This Battle?

As we begin the walk of faith, we will face internal and external enemies and obstacles. The three main enemies in our fight of faith are the flesh, the power of sin, and Satan and his demons. I call these enemies the “unholy” trinity. The diagram below illustrates this.



In addition to the “unholy” trinity there is another potential enemy that we face, and that is our own thought life. When we start walking by faith, we will run into these four enemies which will result in a fight of faith. See that illustrated below.



Let's look at each of the enemies individually and see how we engage God to fight the fight of faith and win the battle.

KEY TRUTH

Your strength, ability, and willpower are NO match for the POWER of your enemies. Trying to defeat them apart from God will ALWAYS result in defeat.

DAY TWO

Enemy #1 – The FLESH

From our last lesson, you should have a good understanding of the flesh and fleshly behaviors that result. In this lesson we will see how the flesh creates resistance to your walk of faith.

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 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 for the rest of our life with the flesh and its 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 how 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 upon God’s power (which ALWAYS overpowers the flesh).

The DEFAULT position for every Christian is the FLESH.

Here are some of the ways that the flesh resists your walk of faith. The flesh wants you to:

1. Use your own abilities to transform yourself.
2. Doubt God and give up on Him and His ability to transform you.
3. Go back to your “fleshly pigpen” behaviors.
4. Give in to the power of sin and the temptations by Satan/demons.

Questions: Based on Romans 7:15, what are some things that you would like to be doing but are not doing or vice versa? Have you tried to not do or do these things using your own willpower? Is it working?

The Fight of Faith And The Flesh

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

1. EXPOSE when your flesh is resisting your walk of faith.

Since our default position is the flesh, we may not readily see when our flesh is resisting God's work in us. Therefore, what God wants to do is to expose that fleshly resistance. We see in the following verse how David sought God to expose His flesh.

***"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*

Therefore, let's look at what a step of faith might look like for God to expose our fleshly resistance.

Step of faith: "Lord, I am asking You to reveal how my flesh is resisting Your work in my life."

2. Show you the death OF your flesh.

***"For what I am doing, I do not understand; for **I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.**"** Romans 7:15*

The problem with the flesh is two-fold. First, we are unwilling to turn away from our flesh. Secondly, 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 to us before we are willing to allow God to set us free from it. (Remember that the "death" of the flesh is the misery of the soul that results when our flesh resists God's transforming work in us.)

***Showing you the death OF your flesh is simply the Spirit revealing to you
the MISERY that your fleshly resistance is causing within you.***



The problem for many Christians is that they have been living in the misery that their flesh causes for so long that they can't even see that it is misery. That is why we seek God to expose the misery. Otherwise, we continue to be like the dog in 2 Peter 2:22 returning to its vomit, lapping it up, and throwing it up. (Sorry about the graphic analogy, but it is an image that I hope that the Lord will use to make this point.)

For example, let's assume you, in your flesh, are resisting God's desire to set you free from your anger. What God will do is reveal the "death" of your anger and how it creates ongoing conflict with your spouse, kids, co-workers, and friends. He will rub your nose in the "vomit" your anger is creating so that you will find yourself turning away from your anger.

3. Give you the desire to walk in the death TO your flesh.

Once we see the death (smell the vomit) that our flesh is causing, we will turn away from it and will turn back to walking dependently on God. 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 also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.” 2 Corinthians 4:11*

What Paul is saying in this verse is that God is constantly exposing the death OF our flesh so that we will walk in the death TO our flesh. Walking in the death to our flesh means that we realize the misery that our fleshly resistance is causing us, and we turn back to God to continue His transforming work in us. When we walk in the death TO our flesh, it is like nailing our flesh (self-life) to the cross.

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

Engaging God: Ask God to expose the areas where your flesh is resisting His work in your life. Ask Him to show you the death and misery that is creating and trust Him to give you the desire to turn back to Him and continue walking by faith.

DAY THREE

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 resistance when you are experiencing it.
2. Ask God to REVEAL the “death” (misery) that your flesh is causing you and affecting 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 two examples of how to engage God by faith to experience victory over our fleshly behaviors:

Example #1: Let's assume that you are engaging God to experience forgiveness for a person who has hurt you in the past. You take several steps of faith, and then that person shows up in your life. The flesh will try to resist your walk of faith by trying to take you back to the fleshly pigpen of anger, bitterness, or unforgiveness. How do we engage God to overpower the flesh?

Fight of faith: “Lord, I am beginning to get angry toward this person. I am asking You in Your power to show me the death OF my anger and to give me a willingness to turn away from it.”

Example #2: Let's assume that you have been rejecting your spouse. You are now seeking God to renew your mind so that you will accept him or her unconditionally. As you take steps of faith, he or she says something that causes that rejection to bubble up within you. In that moment, the fight of faith begins. What does it look like to engage God to fight the fight of faith for you?

Fight of faith: “Lord, I am feeling rejection toward my spouse. I am asking You to reveal to me the death that my rejection causes in me and him (or her). I am asking You in Your power to overpower this fleshly feeling and to move me away from wanting to reject.”

Final Thoughts On Engaging God To Overpower Your Flesh

1. If you are not INTENTIONALLY seeking God to overpower your fleshly resistance, you will be defeated by it every time.
2. Early on as you are seeking victory, freedom, or healing in a particular area of your life, the resistance by your flesh will be very STRONG.
3. The more that you engage God's power to defeat your flesh, the more you will find your fleshly resistance will LESSEN over time.

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 to you so that you will walk in the death TO it.

Engaging God: If you are seeking God for victory or healing in a particular area and are experiencing fleshly resistance to your walk of faith, engage God to defeat your fleshly resistance.

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?

THE POWER OF SIN:

Is an INTERNAL and ONGOING power in your life that seeks to DRAW you or 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, 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 and your fleshly behaviors. 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 fleshly behaviors. If you are not engaging God’s power, you will give in to the power of sin every time and will choose to express a fleshly behavior. Let’s look at some examples of how the power of sin works and how we engage God’s power to overpower the power of sin.

Examples of What It Looks Like To Engage God’s Power To Experience Victory Over 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 fleshly behaviors of anger or revenge. You now have a choice to make at that point. You can either give in to the power of sin (which leads you to angry or revengeful behaviors), or you can engage God’s power over the power of sin. This is what a fight of faith looks like if you decide to bring God into the battle.

Fight of faith: “Lord, I know that I deserve that promotion, and I am beginning to have feelings of anger, rejection, and revenge. However, I am **entrusting** those feelings to you and am **asking** You in Your power to defeat the power of sin within me and to move me away from wanting to express these fleshly behaviors.”

Example #2: You find out that a friend has been talking about you behind your back. At the time that you hear that news, the power of sin is right there serving up the fleshly behavior of rejection. If you give in to the power of sin, you will find fleshly ways to reject this person. Here is what it would look like to engage God’s power over the power of sin:

Fight of faith: “Lord, I am asking You to suppress the power of sin in me so that I won’t give in to retaliating against or rejecting my friend.”

Exercise: Write down some of the fleshly behaviors that you consistently struggle with. Think about how those behaviors are being served up to you by the power of sin when those fleshly behaviors are triggered.

Engaging God: Seek God to suppress the power of sin and to move you away from expressing these fleshly behaviors.

Final Thoughts About Walking In Victory Over The Power of Sin

1. Early on in your walk of faith, the power of sin in you will have the UPPER hand. You will find yourself being defeated by the power of sin in your fight of faith.
2. DON’T let this discourage you. When you give in to sin, confess and repent of it, and keep walking by faith.
3. The good news is that as you continue to engage God to defeat the power of sin, it will have LESS and LESS a grip on you, and you will find yourself not giving in as quickly or not giving in at all to the power of sin.

THE POWER OF SIN

***will continue to be an obstacle by CONSTANTLY tempting you to
give in to your fleshly behaviors..***

Enemy #3 - Satan/His Demonic Forces

*“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*

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 demons. However, during these last several years, I have come to discover that Satan and his demons are very real and have an ONGOING strategy:

To STEAL, KILL, and DESTROY your walk of faith.

We see this in the first part of John 10:10:

*“The thief comes only to **steal and kill and destroy...**” John 10:10a*

We are not going to go into an exhaustive study on Satan and the demonic, but I think that it is important that you understand at the very least how these enemies create resistance in our faith walk. Let’s look at three of Satan’s objectives for Christians: He wants to:



1. **Keep you from knowing Christ as your life.**
2. **Keep you from understanding what it means for Christ to live His life in you.**
3. **Keep you from seeking God by faith as the Source to transform your life.**

You see, Satan knows God’s truth and what the result is if Christians become transformed by 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.***

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 us believing the lies, we will never experience the transformation and the abundant life that God promises. His primary strategy to do this is through our thoughts.

Satan/demon’s primary strategy against Christians is to INSERT lying, deceiving, tempting, condemning, and fleshly THOUGHTS into their minds.

We know that Satan/demons have this capability because of what happened between Peter and Jesus in Matthew 16: 21-23. Peter was telling Jesus that He would never go to the cross. Jesus’s response was, “Get behind me Satan.” Jesus was talking directly to Satan because He knows that Satan inserted that lying thought into Peter’s mind. Therefore, let’s take a look at how the enemy inserts thoughts into our minds to try to get us to give up on the walk of faith.

DAY FOUR

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



Example #1: Let's assume that 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 anything to solve it. He probably isn't really concerned with my problem, so I better figure out how to (APART from God) get myself out of this mess."

Remember: When Satan/demonic forces insert thoughts into your mind, the thoughts will always come in the form of **first person** (I, me, myself, etc.) and will sound like your 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 engage God to fight the fight of faith and defeat Satan/demons. Here is an example of what that might look like using this example:

Fight of faith: "Lord, I know that the enemy is tempting me to give up on You and Your ability to resolve my financial problems. I am trusting in Your power over this temptation. Continue to remind me that You are in control and that you have a solution to this problem."

Example #2: You are continually defeated by your anger. When you fall prey to your anger, Satan/demons insert thoughts into your mind such as, "I call myself a Christian, but look at how angry I get. I feel so condemned about my anger. I might as well give up on ever having victory over it."

It is important to know God's truth because Romans 8:1 says, "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Therefore, since God no longer condemns you, you no longer have to condemn yourself by taking ownership of those Satanic/demonic induced condemning thoughts. Therefore, what would the fight of faith look like using this example?

Fight of faith: "Lord, the truth is that according to Romans 8:1, I do not have to condemn myself. Therefore, I am trusting in Your power to overpower these condemning thoughts and to persuade me that I truly no longer have to take ownership of these condemning thoughts.

Questions: Do you have recurring negative, lying, or condemning thoughts? Is it possible that Satan or his demonic forces could be inserting those thoughts into your mind?

Engaging God: Ask God to reveal to you the origin of those thoughts. Seek Him in His power to take those thoughts captive and to keep you from taking ownership or giving in to those thoughts.

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

1. Satan's greatest strategy is that he is a DECEIVER. When he inserts thoughts into your mind, he wants to deceive you by making you think that those are YOUR thoughts.
2. Early on in your walk of faith, you will CONTINUE to take ownership of thoughts that Satan/demons insert into your mind because your discernment is not that strong.
3. However, as you continue to walk by faith, your DISCERNMENT will GROW and you will have a greater sensitivity to where those thoughts are coming from.

Enemy #4 – Your Thought Life

*“because **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God**; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.” Romans 8:7*

One of the greatest obstacles to your walk of faith is your thought life. As you have seen in several of the examples above, your mind can be deceived by Satan/demons. In addition, your mind can produce lying, unbelieving, and condemning thoughts in and of itself. These thoughts can continually flood your mind and keep you in bondage to them. Let's look at four types of thoughts in your mind that can draw you away from walking by faith.

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 one of the main hindrances to the walk of faith is **fear**. Why? It is because it can so easily paralyze us and keep us from walking by faith. Therefore, let's look at some of the fears that we face concerning our faith walk and how to engage God to do battle with those thoughts.

1. 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 we take a step of faith.

The truth: The truth is that God knows what is going to happen when we take steps of faith. As our trust in God's character and His promises grows, our fears about what might happen when we take steps of faith will lessen. The “catch” is that we will never grow our trust in God's character and ability unless we do take steps of faith.

Fight of faith: “Lord, I am fearful about taking a step of faith because I don't know what to expect. Reveal to me that I have nothing to fear because You have my best interests at heart, and You are in control. Remove this fear and give me a willingness to walk by faith.”

2. 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 (and in life). We won’t take steps of faith because we fear that God may fail us or that we might fail God.



The truth: The truth is that God will not fail you, and you cannot fail unless you decide NOT to continue taking steps of faith. Yes, you will turn back to the flesh many times, but don’t look at that as a failure. Just realize that turning back to the flesh is part of the transformation process, and that does not make you a failure. Since it is not up to YOU to produce the changes that you desire, you cannot fail if you are walking by faith.

Fight of faith: “Lord, 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 continue to walk by faith.”

Fight of faith: “Lord, I confess that I went back to my flesh. Remind me that You nor I need to look at that as a failure. In Your power, give me a willingness to continue moving forward.”

3. Fear of PAIN or SUFFERING

I hear it said so many times about the walk of faith, “I don’t want to walk by faith because I might experience pain and suffering from God.”

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 cause 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:

“Lord, I am fearful that there will be pain or suffering if I take a step of faith. **Persuade** me that pain and suffering is part of this fallen world. When I do suffer, I am **trusting** You to deliver me through it or to transform my life in the midst of the suffering. Also persuade me in those times of suffering that I need You every moment.”

Engaging God: What are the fears that you are facing concerning your walk of faith? Begin taking steps of faith and ask God to overcome your fears with His peace and confidence.

When you take OWNERSHIP of your fears, they will ROB you of your faith walk.

Self-Condemning Thoughts



We know from our discussion about Satan that Satan/demons can insert condemning thoughts into our minds. 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 time in self-condemnation after they sin than in the time that they are in the sin itself. I know that was true in my life.

The truth: Self-condemnation comes from not knowing or believing that Christ took all of your condemnation upon Himself when He went to the cross. As a result of what Jesus did, we are no longer condemned. Remember Romans 8:1?

*"Therefore, there is now **no** condemnation for those who are **in Christ** Jesus."*

Because you have been delivered from EVERY form of condemnation through Christ, 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 our 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 am **asking** You to take these thoughts captive and to set me free from condemnation. Renew my mind to the truth that I am no longer condemned."

Engaging God: Are there any areas where you feel that you are failing in life that bring on self-condemning thoughts? Begin seeking God to take those thoughts captive and to renew your mind to the truth of Romans 8:1.

DAY FIVE

Unbelieving Thoughts

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



*“And so we see that they were not able to enter because of **unbelief.**” Hebrews 3:19*

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. One of the key “giants” that could keep you from believing and experiencing transformation is **unbelief**. Why?

Unbelief keeps us LOCKED IN to our lying beliefs and keeps us in BONDAGE to 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 and His truth 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 our unbelief primarily falls into two areas:

#1 - Unbelief about WHO God is.

#2 - Unbelief about WHAT God can (or is willing to) do in our life.

Therefore, when unbelieving thoughts come to 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.

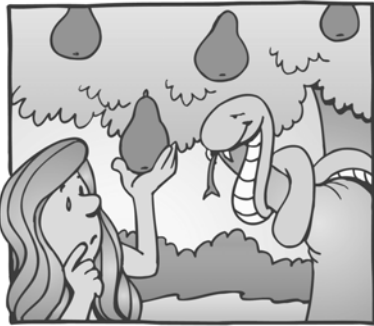
Fight of faith: “Lord, I am struggling with the thoughts of unbelief that You really will transform my life. I am asking You to take those thoughts captive and to renew my mind to the truth that You are more than willing to transform my life.”

Fight of faith: “Lord, I have been in bondage to this stronghold so long that I don’t really believe that You can set me free from it. I am entrusting that unbelieving thought to You, and I am **asking** You to **persuade** me that if I walk long enough by faith that You will truly set me free.”

Engaging God: Pick one area of your unbelief. Ask God to begin moving you from unbelief to belief in that area.

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

*“But when he asks, **he must believe and not doubt**, because **he who doubts is like a wave of the sea**, blown and tossed by the wind.” James 1:6*

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, 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. Therefore, what does it look like to seek God to take those doubtful thoughts captive?

Example: Let’s assume that 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. I am trusting You to take those thoughts captive and BE my patience and endurance to take another step of faith.”

Engaging God: In what areas of your life are you doubting God’s desire or ability to change? Ask Him to remove your doubt and to replace it with His confidence. Ask Him to BE your perseverance in the midst of your doubt.

Living in DOUBT leaves no room for faith.

Final Truths About The Fight of Faith

As we end this lesson, I want to finish by sharing some final truths about the fight of faith.

1. 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:

Let's assume that 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.

2. 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.

*"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*

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.

"But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it." Romans 8:25

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 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.

KEY POINT

As you PERSEVERE in fighting the fight of faith and eventually experience a supernatural change by God, your CHRIST-CONFIDENCE increases and gives you the DESIRE to take another step of faith.

3. Remember Where You Will 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, 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 upon 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 only 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.

Summary

I trust that you have a better idea of the meaning of the fight of faith and the enemies that are working against you non-stop to destroy your walk of faith. The good news is that the battle can be won and the result will be freedom, victory, healing, and transformation. Therefore, my encouragement to you is to keep fighting the fight of faith so that you can say with Paul:

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.”
2 Timothy 4:7



Lesson Six

Expectations About The Walk Of Faith

Final Truths About The Walk of Faith

DAY ONE

Overview of Lesson Six

In this final lesson I think it is important to look at some of the expectations that we will encounter concerning our walk of faith. Below are the expectations we will be discussing.

Expectations About Our Walk of Faith

- **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**

Introduction

What you will find as your walk by faith is that you will have expectations about what it should look like. We will have realistic and unrealistic expectations. In this lesson we are going to look at seven of the most common unrealistic expectations that I run into. I will contrast unrealistic expectations with the truth. I will then finish this lesson by sharing some final truths about the walk of faith.

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 (Realistic expectation): 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. However, as you continue to walk by faith, you will find yourself going back to the flesh less and less.



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, remember that your flesh 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 your intellect, ability, and willpower to live life independently 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, 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 transforming 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. As you exercise your faith, you will find yourself going back to the flesh fewer times and remaining there less and less.

REMEMBER:

The truth is that you will turn back to self (the flesh) as the source MANY times, but remember that in the NEXT MOMENT you can repent of your flesh and turn back to God as your Source.

Engaging God: If you have been seeking God to transform an area of your life, have you discovered how easy it is to turn away from God and turn back to the flesh? If so, ask God to continue to give you a willingness to walk by faith.

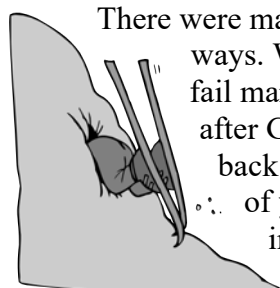
Expectation #2 - Failure Is NOT An Option!

Unrealistic expectation: I cannot afford to fail in my walk of faith. If I do, I have to 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.

THE TRUTH:

God EXPECTS you to fail!



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 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. When you fail, you simply confess your failure to God, and repent (turn back) in the next moment to depend on Him.

Another key point to remember is that God does not see what you call a failure as a failure. He sees you turning back to the flesh as an "opportunity" to show you the death of your flesh and your need to come back to Him. I hope that when you fail, you will hear the Lord's voice saying:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

The key truth to remember is this:

Key Truth:

It does not matter how many times that you fail. It will happen.

However, God will use your failures as an OPPORTUNITY to show you the death OF your flesh and your NEED to depend on Him moment by moment.

Meditate: on the truth that God does not see you as a failure when you turn back to the flesh.

Engaging God: If you struggle with feeling like a failure in your walk of faith, seek God to persuade you that it is not a failure. Rather it is an opportunity to see the death of your flesh and to turn back to God.

Expectation #3 – You Will Feel Or Experience Transformation

"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 will feel or experience God working in your life.

The Truth (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 "faithing" it more than you will experience or feel it.

I know that we talked about this earlier, but because this expectation is such a major struggle in the walk of faith, I want to discuss it a little further. It is a stumbling block because we feel or experience life every moment through our human senses. However, when it comes to living by faith, we may not feel or experience God working in our lives.



I compare God's work in your life to an IV. Let's assume that 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 that it is working because you have faith in the doctor

who promised you that it would heal you. Eventually, as you are being healed, you will feel the effects of that healing in 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 that He is because that is what He promises. If you walk long enough, you will begin to feel the effects of God's work in the form of freedom, victory, healing, transformation, and intimacy. The key is to keep the "spiritual IV" in long enough to experience God's promises.

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.

Engaging God: When you are feeling doubt or discouragement in your faith walk, seek God to remind you that it is a process. Ask Him to move you to a place of greater belief that He is working even though you may not feel or experience His work.

DAY TWO

Expectation #4 - God's Timetable Versus Your Timetable

Unrealistic expectation: When I begin the walk of faith, God will meet my timetable for the changes that I want to experience.

The Truth (Realistic Expectation): 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 that 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 on your faith walk or to get frustrated 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

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 or addictions 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?”

Question: What are some things you would be tempted to do if God is not meeting your timetable?

Engaging God: If you have been in a walk of faith for some time with an issue, and you have not experienced any change, ask Him to be your patience and perseverance until you experience the change.

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 upon 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 (Realistic Expectation): 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 suffering on some level.

There are three kinds of people: those who have suffered, those who are suffering, and those who will suffer. Sooner or later we will fit into all three categories. 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 upon 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*

What I find to be true in my personal walk is that:

***My GREATEST periods of transformation have occurred when
I am in pain or in suffering.***

Here again it does not mean that I invite pain and suffering. However, when I look back at God's work in my life, the “divine good” has been the changes in my life as a result of the pain or suffering. Let me share a personal story to explain.

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 the thorn. On the contrary, I now embrace my “thorn” because through it I am experiencing a greater dependence upon God and a transformation that is, as Paul says, “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 try to deny it. The truth is that there is no place to run but to God. He is the only One Who can be your 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 upon 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 dependence on Him.

Engaging God: In what area(s) of your life are you experiencing some conflict or suffering that seems unending? Ask God to draw you into a deeper dependence upon Him concerning this suffering. Ask Him to reveal to you what “divine good” is being worked out. If the pain does not go away ask Him to transform your attitude in the midst of the pain.

DAY THREE

Expectation #6 - You Will Figure Out What God Is Doing In The Transformation Process.

“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

*“He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, He has put eternity in their hearts, except that **no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.**” Ecclesiastes 3:11*



Unrealistic Expectation: I will understand WHY and WHAT God is doing in my life.

The Truth (Realistic Expectation): Many times you will not understand why God is doing what He is doing in your life. Ultimately, what God is about is to fulfill your spiritual destiny of being transformed into Christ-likeness. 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.”*

I believe that we can all identify with Paul. I know that I am perplexed about why God is doing something or why He is not doing something. The truth is that we will all, at different points of our journey, be perplexed when it comes to God's working in our lives.

Part of God's plan is for us to be perplexed because perplexity creates a need for dependence upon God. Through my perplexity God is teaching me that I don't need to try to figure out what He is doing. 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 to quit trying to figure out why and what He is doing. (Is it possible that we need to know “what” and “why” because we want to be in control?)

***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. However, many of our “why” questions do go unanswered, because we tend to forget during these times is that God is God, and that 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 can go under anesthesia and trust a brain surgeon who knows precisely what to do in brain surgery, 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!

Engaging God: What is going on in your life where you don’t understand why or what God is doing? Ask God to persuade you that you don’t really need to know unless He chooses to tell you. Ask Him to give you an attitude of peace and rest concerning those issues.

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 (Realistic Expectation): 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.



Many Christians are under the false impression that if they walk long enough by faith, they will reach a place where there is no more struggle. I would love to be able to tell you that is the truth, but unfortunately that won’t happen until we get to heaven. The internal struggles with our flesh, the power of sin, and our fleshly behaviors will last a lifetime.

However, before you get depressed, let me assure you that you can experience incredible victories over your flesh and real freedom from your sin patterns which have continually defeated you. You can experience great healing of your woundedness. In addition, as you continue to walk by faith in

Christ, you can experience radical transformation as God transforms your fleshly behavior into Christ-like behavior. In fact, you will reach a place where 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.”

The good news is that 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).

Engaging God: Seek God to give you His confidence that you will at some point truly experience His promises of freedom, victory, healing and transformation.

Summary

My friends, I have experienced all of these expectations above and more. I have 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 it 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.

DAY FOUR

Final Truths Concerning Your Walk Of Faith

Truth #1 – The Walk of Faith Will Become More NATURAL.

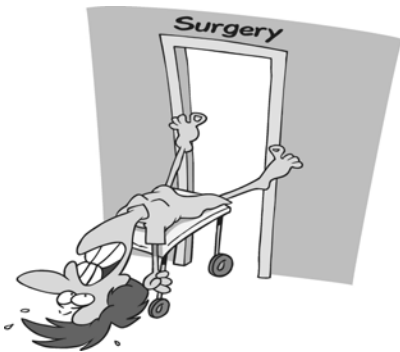
We have already talked about the fact that early on you must be intentional about your walk of faith. You are learning how to live by faith, and like I said before is it like moving to a new country and learning a new language and culture. I hope you know by this point that it is a journey like you have never experienced before. It is difficult. There will be resistance, but the reward of being transformed is well worth it. The good news is that learning to walk by faith will become easier the longer you continue to walk by faith.

An example that I would use to illustrate this is when I was learning how to drive a standard or stick shift transmission vehicle. When I first started driving down the road, I understood how the clutch and gas pedal worked, but I hadn't actually tried them before. Early on I got about ten feet down the road before I killed the engine. Then I went about twenty feet before killing it the next time. The more I drove, the easier it was to use the clutch and shift gears. It is the same way in the Christian walk. Initially you have to be intentional about taking steps of faith. You will kill your "spiritual" engine by going back to the flesh many times. However, at some point walking by faith will become like breathing. It will become more natural. You will find yourself:

- **Going back to the flesh less often.**
- **Spending less time in your fleshly "prodigal pigpen" when you do go back to the flesh.**
- **More quickly recognizing the death of your flesh and turning back to God.**
- **More willing to walk by faith.**

Engaging God: When you find yourself becoming frustrated by your walk of faith, seek the Lord for patience and perseverance and as you do you will find your walk of faith will become more "spiritually" natural.

Truth #2 - Your Transformation Is A Life-long 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 life-long surgical procedure of transforming your life. He is in the process of moving you away from living from your flesh, your lying beliefs, and your fleshly behaviors. However, there is no anesthesia for the pain associated with this process. At different points along this surgery you will want to (and you will) jump off the surgical table and go back to the flesh. However, God loves you enough that He will constantly be drawing you back to Himself for continued surgery.

The Holy Spirit 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 experiencing the freedom, victory, and healing that He promises. You will also be persuaded more and more that God knows what He is doing and that all of what He is doing is driven by His love for you.

God's divine surgery is OFTEN without anesthesia.

However, STAY on the surgical table and let God work.

Engaging God: What spiritual surgery are you going through today that would cause you to jump off the surgical table? Ask God to give you the willingness to stay on the table so that He can complete the surgery in this area.

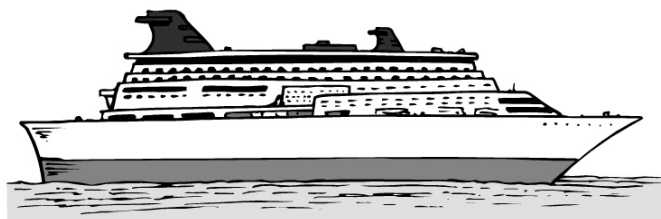
Truth #3 – The Tendency Will Be To MEASURE Your Progress. Don't!

I am afraid that we don't know what an ingrained "performance" mindset we all have. By that I mean that in many areas of our lives we tend to measure or compare ourselves against some standard or someone else. In your walk of faith, you will be tempted to measure your progress and to compare your spiritual walk with that of others. Please don't do that. The reason is two-fold:

1. You can't really measure your spiritual progress. Only God can.
2. Each person's journey is unique to them. Therefore, you have no basis for comparing your journey with theirs.

Unfortunately, early on you most likely will give in to the temptation to start measuring and comparing your faith walk. The result will be that you will either go into self-condemnation if you are not progressing according to your timetable or else you will experience self-commendation (i.e. pride) if you think that you are progressing faster than others. You will soon figure out that measuring and comparing will only take you back to the fleshly pigpens of condemnation or pride. Therefore, put down your "spiritual" tape measure and enjoy the journey.

Even though you will not be able to measure your progress, think about your spiritual journey like being on a cruise ship. 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 that 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. You will be amazed how quickly God moves you away from the dock.

Note: At some point, you will be able to look back and see where God has brought you.

Engaging God: Have you been tempted to measure your spiritual progress? If so, ask God to persuade you that you will never be able to measure it. As you walk by faith, go to the back of your boat and you will begin to see how far you have traveled in your journey of transformation.

Truth #4 – As You Continue To Walk By Faith, You Will Have SPIRITUAL Eyes To See What God Is About In Your Life.

*“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, “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, much like eyeglasses give us clearer vision, as we continue to walk by faith God gives us “spiritual” eyeglasses from which to see our life. What are some things that we begin to see through these “spiritual” glasses?

We begin to see the “divine good” that is going on even in the midst of pain and conflict. We see more clearly God’s purposes and how He is fulfilling our spiritual destiny of being transformed. We see the enemies to our walk as powerless when we walk in God’s power. We also see God’s love for us even when everything in our circumstances would say otherwise.

Another analogy I use is seeing your life from God’s perspective from 30,000 feet. Early on in your walk of faith it is like being on ground level. However, as you grow in your faith you gain altitude and can see more and more of what God is doing and why He is doing it. What is going on in your life will be much clearer to see at 30,000 feet.

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

Exercise: What problem are you currently facing that you need to see from 30,000 feet? Ask God to make all of the truths above concerning your problem a reality.

Truth #5– You Can’t Connect A Step of Faith To Experiencing Transformation Tomorrow.

Another key truth that we need to understand is that we can’t connect a step of faith with transformation tomorrow. This is a struggle because we want to connect the “spiritual” dots and figure out how everything that is going on in our lives is connected. The truth is that God knows, and our part is to trust Him and rest in that fact. Part of the faith journey is to learn how to rest in the fact that God knows how the dots are connected, and we don’t have to know.

DAY FIVE

Truth #6 – Your Walk of Faith Will Build MOMENTUM As Your Christ-Confidence Grows

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

As I have said before, I see so many Christians living with a lack of “Christ-confidence.” As I mentioned before, it is because so few have walked long enough by faith to experience God’s supernatural work in renewing their minds to the truth that is setting them free.

However, as you continue to walk by faith, your spiritual walk will be like a snowball rolling downhill. As your Christ-confidence grows, you gain spiritual momentum because your desire and willingness grows to experience more and more of God’s transformation.

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.

Truth #7 – Transformation Will Come INCREMENTALLY.

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 the changes in your thinking, your choices, your behaviors, and your feelings. Therefore, I have listed some ways that God might use to confirm His work in your life:

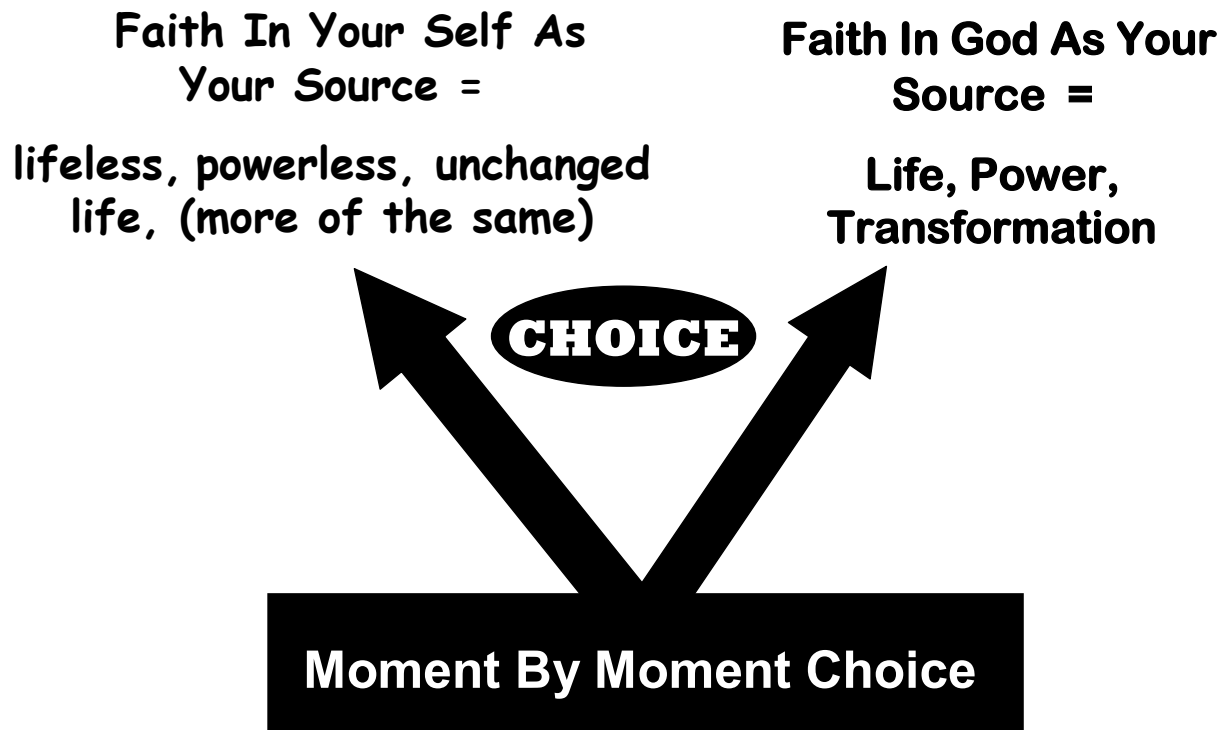
- 1. Your mind begins to think and believe God’s truth rather than believing your lies.**
- 2. Your will begins to make choices based upon His truth that you are now thinking and feeling. This will produce in you a greater willingness to come to God for Him to further renew your mind to His truth.**
- 3. You begin to experience a supernatural change in your attitudes and behaviors.**
- 4. You will begin to 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. Your desire to walk by faith in God will grow, and your desire to turn back to self will decrease.
7. You will find that your love and desire for God will grow.
8. 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.

As these things begin to take place in your life, then your God-confidence will grow which will increase your momentum and desire to continue walking by faith.

Truth #8 - Your Spiritual Journey Simply Boils Down To A Moment By Moment CHOICE

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



What Choice Will You Make?

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

Remember That There Will Be Times In Your Journey Where You Will:

- **Doubt God's ability and willingness to transform your life.**
- **Get frustrated and angry with God.**
- **Condemn yourself.**
- **Want to give up.**

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.

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. If you do, then you will experience all that God promises and much, much more. Part of the “much more” is found in Romans 5:17:

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

REIGNING in life is living from, drawing upon, and being transformed by the very life of Christ.

Will You Become A John 6:66 or a John 6:68 Christian?

I want to end this study by comparing a John 6:66 Christian with a John 6:68 Christian. First let's look at John 6:66-68.

“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him (Jesus). ‘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. John 6:66-68 (Parenthesis mine)

What Is A John 6:66 Christian?

“From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him (Jesus).

Unfortunately, many Christians do end up turning away from Christ and turn back to themselves as the source. These are what I call “John 6:66” Christians. What causes a person to be a John 6:66 Christian?

- They don't know the truth of Christ living His life in them, so they continue living from their flesh instead of living from Christ.
- They don't know how to truly walk by faith in Christ, so they continue walking in faith in their own abilities with God's help.
- They have walked by faith in Christ, but they have not walked long enough to experience any transformation and get discouraged and turn back to self as the source.

A John 6:66 Christian is one who ultimately concludes that the walk of faith does not work and will give up walking by faith and turn back to self as the SOURCE.

What Is A John 6:68 Christian?

“Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

What did Peter and the rest of the twelve disciples conclude:

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 upon 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.

Therefore, I would define a John 6:68 Christian as one who:

- **KNOWS** the truth that the Christian life is about Christ living His life in them.
- **IS** walking by faith in Christ.
- **Is EXPERIENCING** ongoing spiritual transformation.
- Realizes that there is **NO OTHER** alternative to live life than to live it in Christ.

***A John 6:68 Christian is one where they experience enough transformation
that all they want is JESUS.***

At that point He will be their ALL in ALL.

The last point is key because there will be a time in your journey when you will realize that the only way to truly live the Christian life is through Christ. This is the place where Paul came to in Philippians 3:8 when he says:

“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.”

I trust by this point that you see clearly the difference between a John 6:66 Christian and a John 6:68 Christian. I pray that God will bring you to the same conclusion that Peter and Paul did when they were persuaded that there was no other way than “THE WAY” Who is Christ.

Final Word of Encouragement

I want to thank you for going through this study. I trust that the Holy Spirit is taking these truths and revealing and transforming your life. My ongoing desire and prayer for you are the two words that Paul used Philippians 3:14:

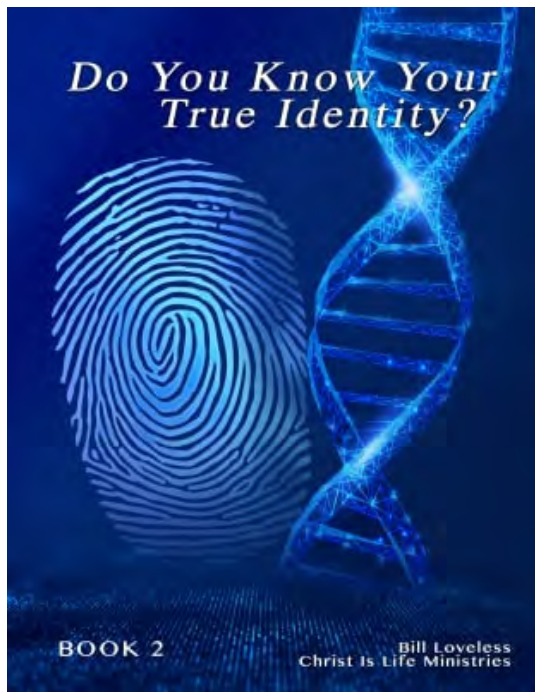
“PRESS ON”

My 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 Paul in Philippians 1:21:

“To live to me IS Christ”

Where Do I Go From Here?

You have just finished Book One of the two-part discipleship series called ***Living a Transformed Life in Christ***. We encourage you to continue on with Book Two of this series called ***Do You Know Your True Identity***.



The focus of the Book 2 study is:

- Is What You Believe About Yourself the Truth?
- What Did God Accomplish to Give You a New Identity?
- What is Your True Identity?
- God's Process of Transforming You to Live from Your True Identity.
- The Resistance to God's Transforming Process: The Line and Your True Identity.

CILM DISCIPLESHIP MATERIALS

CILM has this book and many other studies, booklets and videos at our website listed below. To purchase ready-to-use copies from **Amazon** or **download for free** and do your own printing, copying and binding, please go to the **Discipleship** tab of our website. We hope you will take advantage of these materials.

Christ Is Life Ministries (CILM)

Website: www.christislifeministries.com

Email: cilm@christislifeministries.com

(2025-07-03)