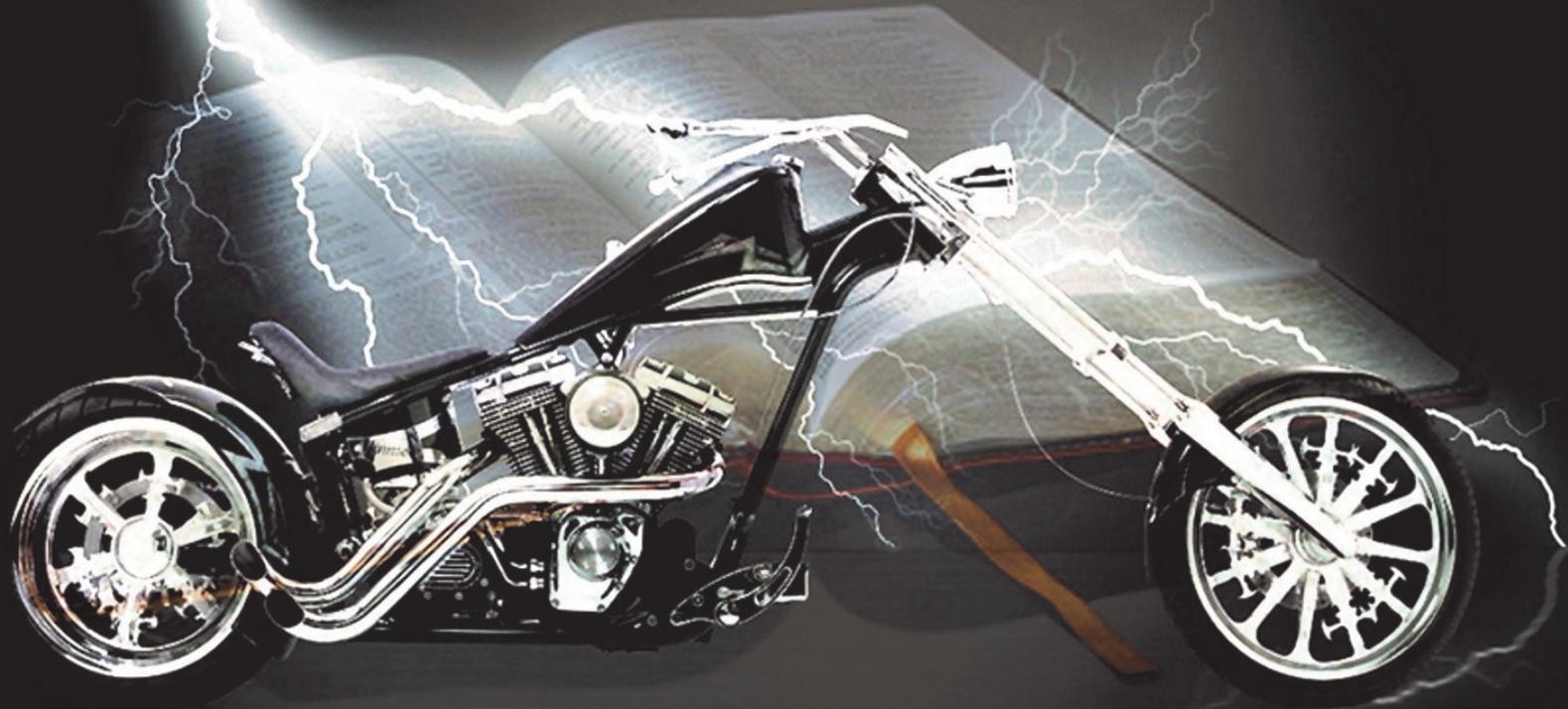


Full Throttle Discipleship



FULL THROTTLE STAGE—THREE MANUAL

This Manual Belongs to:



VICTORY BIKER CHURCH

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A Tool For Personal Discipleship

PHASE 3

AMPLIFIED DISCIPLESHIP CONCEPTS

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PHASE 3 DISCIPLESHIP CURRICULUM

“Amplified Discipleship Concepts”

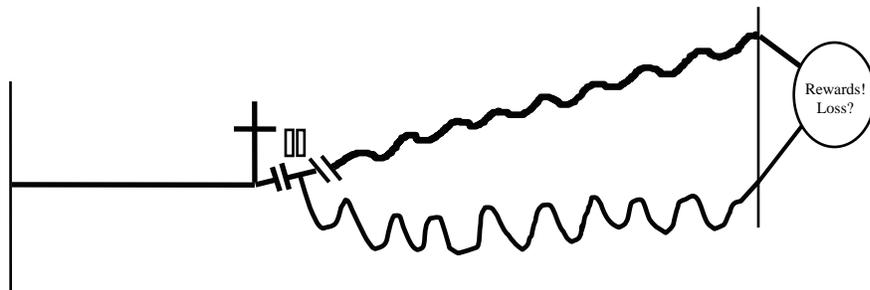
Part 1	An “Overview” of the Christian Life
Lesson 1	<i>A Summarized Review of the Christian Life</i>
Part 2	The Concept of “Lordship”
Lesson 2	<i>Several Human Predispositions that need to be understood</i>
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Lesson 15	<i>Discussion Points related to Abiding and The Bema Seat</i>
Part 4	“Christian Living”
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A Tool For Personal Discipleship

Phase 3
Amplified Discipleship Concepts

Part I

OVERVIEW



THE CHRISTIAN LIFE SUMMARIZED

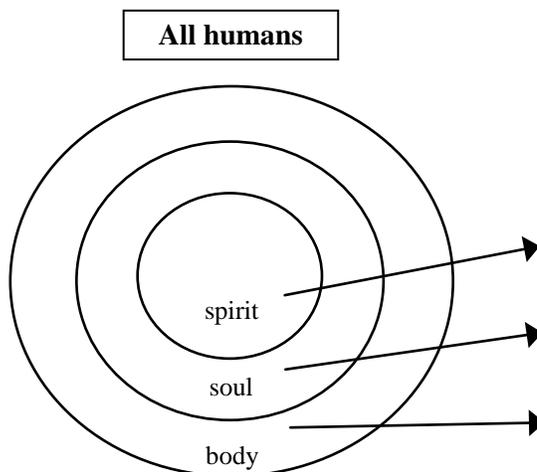
1. Salvation is more than just being saved from hell

God has a much greater purpose for our lives here on earth and into eternity. (Jesus said) "... I came that they might have life, and might have it **abundantly**." (John 10:10)

it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, **all that God has prepared for those who love Him.**" (1 Cor. 2:9)

2. Man is a special creation

God set man apart and put His spirit into him. *the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.* (Genesis 2:7)



Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Thess. 5:23)

spirit - **God** awareness. We interact with God through our spirit.

soul - **self** awareness. Personality, reasoning, emotions, mind, will, understanding.

body - **world** awareness. We interact with the physical world through our physical body senses.

Animals have **no spirit** - thus **no consciousness** of God.

3. The problem started with Adam and Eve

God gave a commandment (a law), which they disobeyed. As a result of their disobedience sin and death entered into the world. ... *Therefore, just as **through one man** sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—* (Romans 5:12)

The Bible describes God as: Loving, Perfect, Sovereign, Faithful, Holy, Just, Merciful, Forgiving. He can do no wrong. He cannot lie. He never changes. **He is totally trustworthy.**

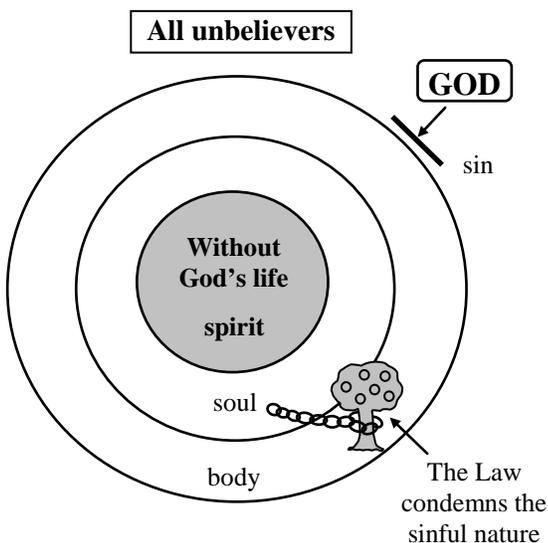
Satan portrays God as someone who cannot be trusted, nor counted on to do what is in my best interest. Satan's **lie** is that we can obtain peace, happiness, satisfaction, joy and lasting pleasure **independent of** God.

The joy and peace that God intends for every human is **only possible in companionship with Him**. (Jesus said) ... **My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.** ... John 14:27
*for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy **in the Holy Spirit**.* (Romans 14:17)

4. NOT EVERYTHING AN UNBELIEVER DOES IS EVIL

An unbeliever can do many good things from man's perspective. The problem is that man cannot do good that measures up to God's perfection.

All that man does is **blemished, distorted, and falls short**. **God cannot accept "my best"**.



Their works (fruits) have no life (eternal), are less than perfect, and cannot please God. Even their good deeds are **temporary, only for this life**.

Eph. 4:18 ... *being **darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God** ...*

Rom. 3:23 *for **all** have sinned and **fall short** ...*

Rom. 3:10-12 ... *"**THERE IS NONE** RIGHTEOUS, **NOT EVEN ONE**; ... **THERE IS NONE** WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ... **THERE IS NONE** WHO DOES GOOD, ..."*

Rom. 8:7-8 *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**, and those who are in the flesh **cannot please God**.*

 = The **human nature** is pictured as a **bad tree**: (Jesus said) ... **nor can a bad tree produce good fruit**. (Matt. 7:18)

The human nature can only produce **artificial** fruit. It may look good, but it has **no life**. How much nourishment would you get from eating a piece of artificial fruit? Would it be satisfying?

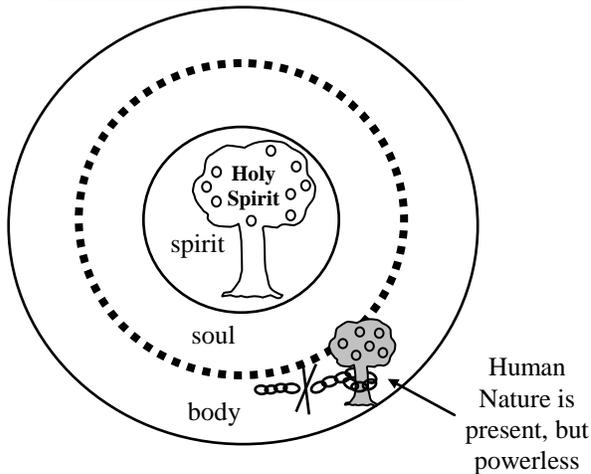
5. SALVATION

An unbeliever comes to the conclusion (after enough pressure) that things are hopeless and cries out to God. "**WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED**." (Romans 10:13)

Salvation is **just the beginning** of the Christian life. "Eternal life" is **not an object**, it is God's life, without end.

6. AT SALVATION I RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT AND A NEW LIFE WITH GOD

The Normal Christian Life



At salvation I was put into this position of fellowship with Him, by virtue of Jesus' righteousness, not through my own merits. *But **by His doing** you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us ... **righteousness** ...*, (1 Cor. 1:30)

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A PERSON!

1 Cor. 6:19-20 ... *do you not know that your body is a **temple of the Holy Spirit** ... ?*

John 16:13 (Jesus said) "... *the Spirit of truth, **He will guide you into all the truth;** ...*".

Romans 8:16 *The Spirit Himself **testifies with our spirit** that we are children of God,*

Before (as an unbeliever), I was a **guilty sinner** before a **holy Judge**. **Now** (as a believer), I am a **child** of the **Father**, cared for by a divine Person, the Holy Spirit.

Note: The circular "dotted line" represents the "conditional" aspect.

7. THERE IS GOOD NEWS and BAD NEWS!

Bad News! **Our human nature has not been changed**, it still cannot produce good fruit.

*"It is the Spirit who gives life; the **flesh profits nothing**;" (John 6:63)*

Good News! It doesn't matter that our old sinful human nature has not been changed, **because God has given us a new nature, His divine nature in the Person of the Holy Spirit.**

*... His divine power has granted to us **everything pertaining to life and godliness**, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, **so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature**, ... (2 Peter 1:3-4)*

MY HUMAN NATURE WAS NOT CHANGED WHEN I BECAME A CHRISTIAN!



= Same sinful human nature, not the least bit improved, still incapable of producing acceptable fruit.

*... Having begun by the Spirit, **are you now being perfected by the flesh?** (Gal. 3:3) for the flesh sets its desire **against the Spirit**, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are **in opposition to one another**, ... (Gal. 5:17)*

THE LAW EXPOSES THE CHARACTER OF OUR HUMAN NATURE.

... for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:19-20)

The human nature is pictured as a **salty spring, unable to support human life:**

*Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree ... produce olives, or a vine produce figs? **Nor can salt water produce fresh.** (James 3:11-12)*

Imagine the Law as a sign by a water hole in the desert;

"WARNING! This water is contaminated and unhealthy to drink."

8. MORE GOOD NEWS and MORE BAD NEWS

Good News = The Holy Spirit is permanent. He will never leave you.

... *the Father, ... will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever;* (John 14:16)

(Note: The Holy Spirit helps the believer to understand and follow Him, He should not be regarded as a Servant who waits for the believer to command Him.)

Bad News = The human nature will not leave you until you physically die. We all have the same sinful human nature.

9. ABIDING IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD

The condition of living in fellowship with Him is called ABIDING. Everyone starts the Christian life here.

Illustration of Abiding: If you are holding a small object and you let go of it, the force of gravity overcomes the object and it immediately falls. Think of gravity as a representation of the way in which your human nature attracts you away from God and towards sin. Now place that object on your open palm. Because the power of your hand is greater than the force of gravity, the object can safely “rest” on your palm. The object does not fall, even though the force of gravity has not diminished.

The Holy Spirit can be represented by your hand, and you can be represented by the object. For as ever long as you desire you can confidently “rest” in Him, that is, you can continually experience His power over your sinful nature.

This is a place of rest. This is the condition of a branch on a tree. (John 15)

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

10. SHOULD I EXPECT TO LIVE A SINLESS LIFE?

Continue to think of gravity as a picture of the way in which my sinful nature attracts me to fall. Do I go through the day expecting to physically fall? Of course not. Although I must always remain alert, I should not “expect” to be dominated by the sinful nature.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; (1 John 1:9, 2:1)

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16)

11. WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT DOING AS I ABIDE IN FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM?

» **He is increasingly producing His fruit through my life.**

Gal. 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

John 15:5 *“... he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, ...*

» **He glorifies the Father through me.**

John 15:8 *“My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, ...*

» **He is causing me to grow in spiritual maturity.**

John 15:2 *... every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.*

Rom. 12:2 *..., but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

» **He causes me to experience His joy.**

John 15:11 “*These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.*”

» **He is producing an eternal inheritance for me.**

John 15:16 “... *I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, ...*”

2 Cor. 4:17 ... producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,

» **He is attracting others to Himself through my life.**

Acts 1:8 (Jesus said) ... *you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”*

12. LIVING IN ABIDING FELLOWSHIP IS “CONDITIONAL”

I still have the sinful human nature, and God will not take away my right to choose. At any moment I can choose to remove myself from the condition of “rest” (“abiding”), and allow my human nature to reign as my master.

Going back to the hand illustration, if you are not resting on the hand it is because you have **chosen** to remove yourself. This has nothing to do with the issue of salvation, but rather with the fruitfulness of your life here on earth.

The **Christian husband - wife relationship** is meant to be a **model** for abiding fellowship.

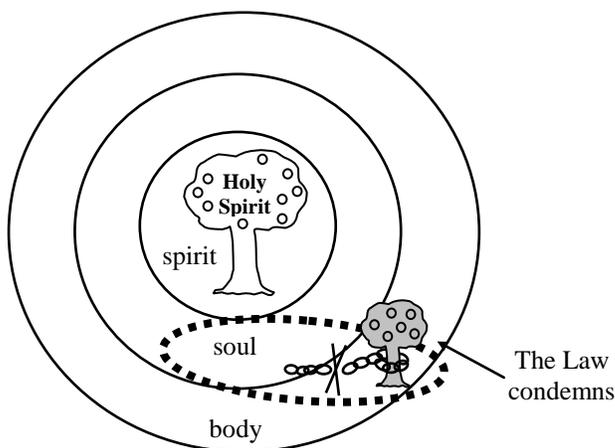
... *a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.* (Eph. 5:31-32)

Do not grieve (offend) the Holy Spirit of God, ... (Eph. 4:30)

As a Christian you have that living water **ready to flow** through your life. But when you are out of abiding fellowship, the **tap is turned off.** Jesus said in John 7:38-39 “*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ” But this He spoke of the Spirit, ...*

13. AS A CHRISTIAN YOU CAN LIVE UNRECONCILED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

A believer who is not abiding



IF I CHOOSE TO SUBMIT TO THE SINFUL NATURE I WILL FIND MYSELF HERE, BUT I DO NOT HAVE TO STAY HERE!

I do not need to be out of fellowship with the Holy Spirit **any longer than I choose** to be. Restoration to the position of abiding fellowship will take place **immediately** upon confession of the offense(s) for which the Holy Spirit is holding me accountable.

Note: The circular “dotted line” represents the “conditional” aspect.

How can I know if I am out of fellowship (not abiding)? Usually symptoms indicate an ailing body. Similarly look for “**on-going**” spiritual **symptoms** of the sinful nature, such as: **Worry, Anxiety, Stumbling, Striving, Critical or Judgmental attitude, Impatience, Lack of peace, Anger, Frustration, Sense of defeat, Complaining, Irritability, Addictive behavior, etc.**

IMPORTANT: In a healthy family the **oversight** of parent-child harmony is the responsibility of the parents, **not** the children. In the same way, the Holy Spirit oversees our abiding harmony with Him, and we need to be **continually** sensitive to His promptings, since our judgment is often flawed.

14. WHY DO SOME CHRISTIANS LIVE UNRECONCILED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Some are unwilling to give Him authority over their lives. Do you think of yourself as walking **side by side** with the Lord, but **you are in charge (that is, He’s your Partner?)**. Is He just there to help you when you think you have a need? Or do you see Him as **your Master**, the One you **follow** as **His servant**? That is **Lordship!**

He doesn’t ask you to design your future and let Him fit in at your convenience. It is the other way around. **He** has a personalized plan that He is willing for you to fit into if **you** are willing.

Some see God as the **Divine 911**. They call upon Him when things get out of hand. (Is God your co-pilot in case you get lost?) **Do you want God, or just His blessings?**

Some think that God’s greatest priority is **to make me happy here on earth!** As a matter of fact He does want our happiness, but not just temporary. God wants to give us lasting satisfaction. If left on our own we will usually accept temporary satisfaction. Because God loves us and wants what is best for us, **He will not let you be content with less** than what He has planned for you, in companionship with Him. **Your happiness** is a **by-product** of living in fellowship with Him. God loves you so much that He will only let you experience His true joy as you abide in fellowship with Him.

Who knows what will best satisfy me, me or God? We come into the Christian life with a perceived mental list of what is good and what is bad, what makes me happy and what doesn’t. We **need to unlearn** many habits and misconceptions that we brought into the Christian life, and some we’ve learned since we became Christians. As Christians we cannot expect God to fit into **our** program. He has **better** things, things that can only be experienced through trusting Him.

*Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2)*

Can you do “**good**” **spiritual deeds** while you are living out of fellowship with the Holy Spirit? Absolutely! You can attend **church services, read your Bible, pray, give money, do good deeds**, etc. **Doing good things is no guarantee** that you are abiding in Christ. Paul warns us in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a **noisy gong** or a **clanging cymbal**. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, **I am nothing**. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, **it profits me nothing**.*

15. HOW TO IDENTIFY “UNRESOLVED ISSUES”

Often, being overcome by sin is a symptom of a problem. There is a good chance that the **most troublesome areas** for you are **symptoms** and not the problem. That is, He will not allow me to abide in fellowship with Him and have victory in one area of my life while I am **consciously allowing** disobedience and defeat in another area.

What is keeping you from abiding in fellowship?

Unforgiveness?

Mark 11:25 “... **forgive, if you have anything against anyone,** ...

Unreconciled relationships?

Matthew 18:15 “**If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private;** if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

Matthew 5:23-24 “... **go; first be reconciled** to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

Restitution?

Numbers 5:5-7 ... “**When a man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the Lord, and that person is guilty, then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full** for his wrong and add to it one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged.

Unconfessed sin? (Consider “sin” to be “anything that is displeasing to the Lord”.)

Proverbs 28:13 **He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.**

1 John 1:9-10 **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.**

16. NEED FOR RESTORATION

Yes, it is true that sin is an offence against God’s holiness. However, the greatest effect that sin has on my relationship with God is that **it disrupts** my abiding fellowship with Him, and hinders Him from blessing and using me. God cannot bear His good fruit in my life while I am choosing to allow my human nature to reign.

(Jesus said) “**Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.** “**I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.** (nothing acceptable to God) (John 15:4-5)

Only what is motivated by the Holy Spirit has eternal value.

King David is an example of a believer living out of fellowship for about **9 months.** (2 Samuel 11:1 - 12:25)

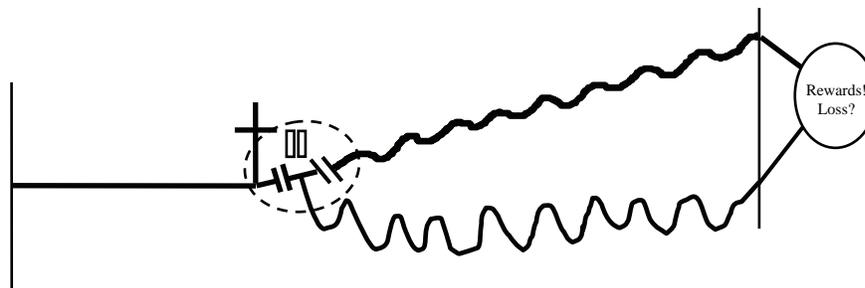
God’s desire is for you to be **restored** quickly. The Holy Spirit wants to reveal to you whatever disrupted your fellowship. You only need to be honest with Him and to acknowledge whatever He shows you. Ask the Lord to show you in what way(s) you have offended Him.

A Tool For Personal Discipleship

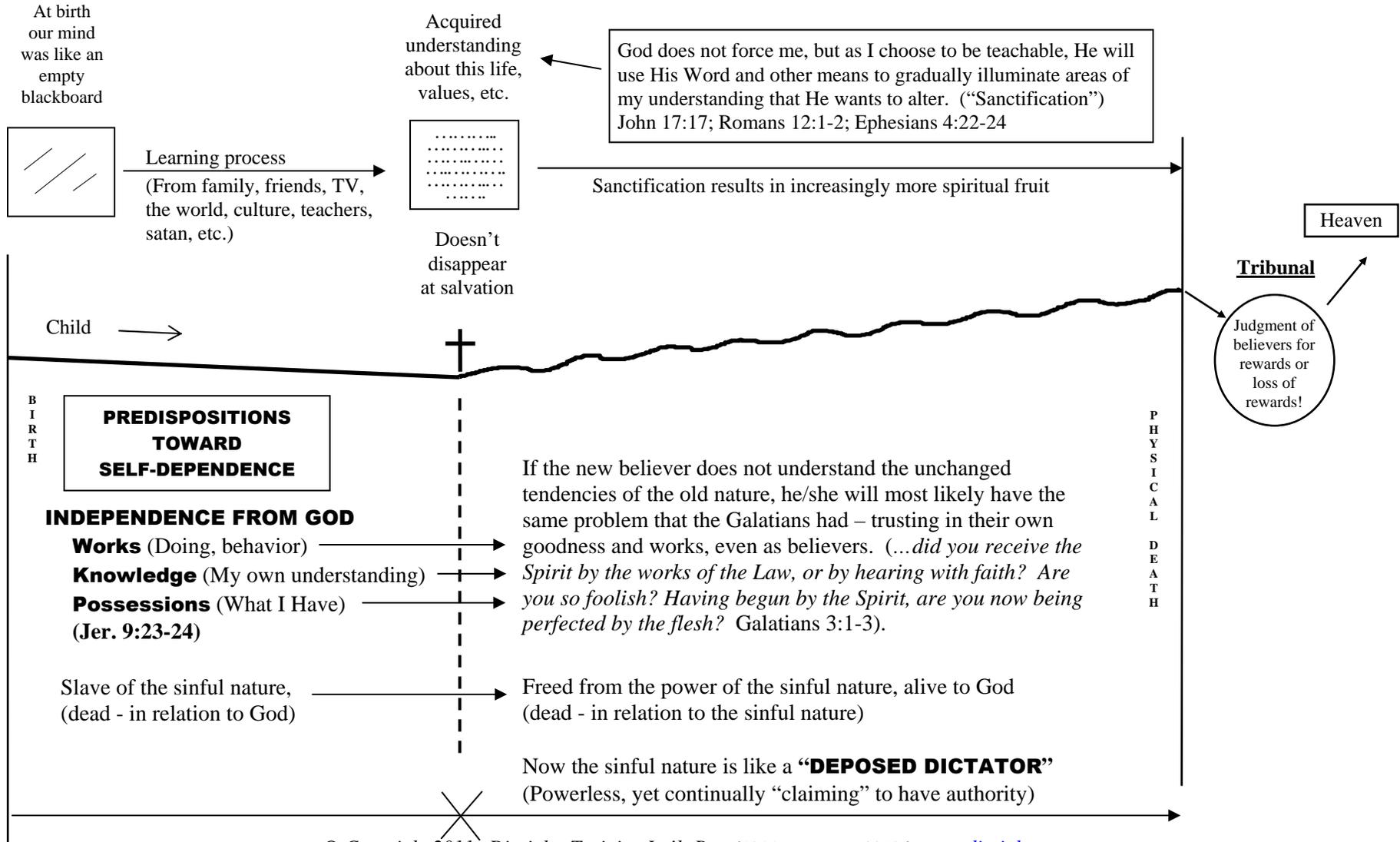
Phase 3
Amplified Discipleship Concepts

Part II

LORDSHIP



UNDERSTANDING THE PREDISPOSITIONS OF THE HUMAN NATURE (THAT IS, IDENTIFYING THE ENEMY) WILL HELP THE NEW BELIEVER TO NOT CONTINUE TO DEPEND ON SELF.



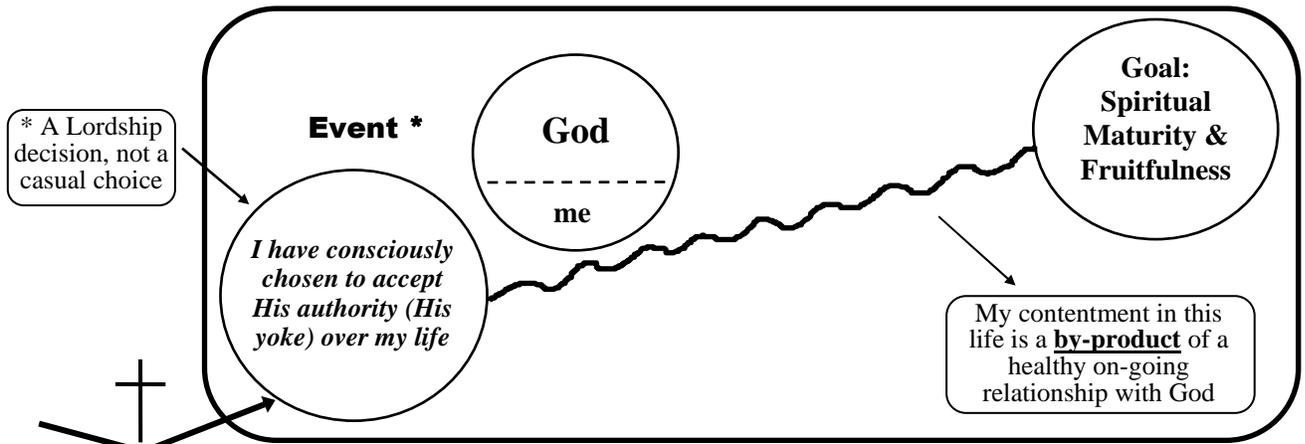
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THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS DIVIDED INTO TWO DIFFERENT CAMPS

THE “NORMAL” CHRISTIAN LIFE (God is my “Master”)

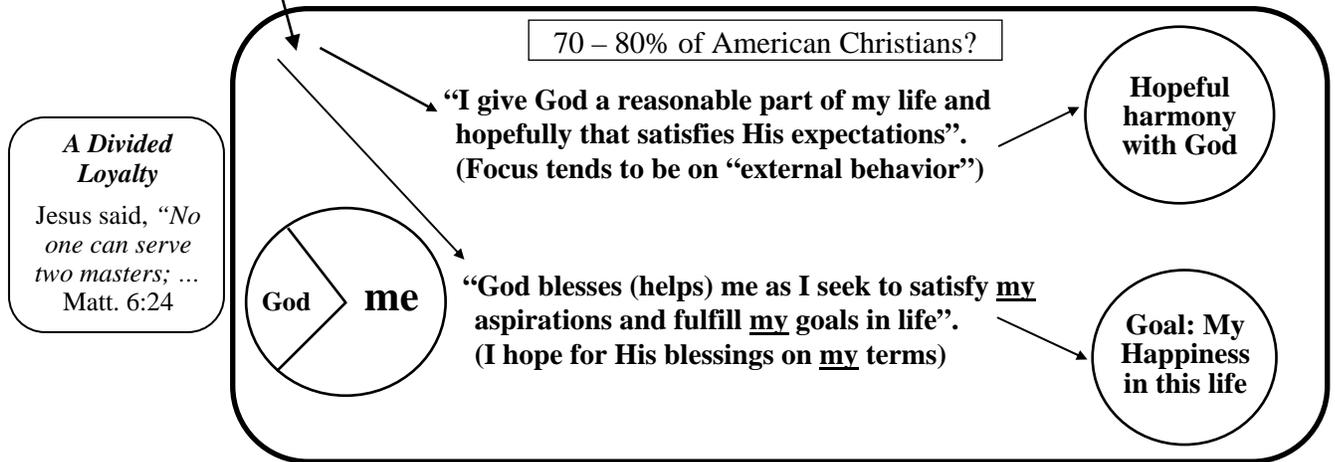
This on-going process includes: “Abiding”, “Pruning”. “Sanctification”, Learning what is pleasing to Him. (Focus tends to be on “inward transformation”)



“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.” Matthew 13:23

King David is an O.T. example

THE “ABNORMAL” CHRISTIAN LIFE (God is my “Partner”)



“The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. Luke 8:14, Matt. 13:22

King Saul is an O.T. example

LESSON GUIDE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS LESSON IS:

- To present the concept of there being two camps within the Christian community.
- To contrast a “spiritual” disposition with a “self-dependent” disposition (see also Proverbs 3:5-6).
- To change the focus of attention from “outward behavior” to “inward transformation”.

1. The objective of this lesson is to lay a foundation for the concept of the Christian community being divided into two camps, the main difference being that of a disposition / attitude toward the authority (Lordship) of Jesus in a Christian’s life.
2. Most Christians perceive that there is a divided authority, with God governing in some areas while the Christian has authority over other areas, and that it is the Christian’s right, or privilege, to decide over what areas God should rule. The problem arises in that Jesus stated clearly that there can only be one master in a Christian’s life. (Matt. 6:24)
3. Unless a Christian is taught otherwise, the natural tendency is for him/her to assume authority over their life, while granting to God limited “spiritual” areas.
4. Many churches and Christians convey to new believers that the relinquishing of authority over their life (accepting His yoke) is a long process rather than a one-time conscious choice. The problem with the idea of presenting Lordship as a process is that it results in the Christian, often unknowingly, assuming that their own priorities have a rightful place of supremacy over God’s priorities. There is a long-term daily aspect of surrender, just as marriage partners need to daily reinforce their initial vow.
5. The disciple needs to discern how the disciple (apprentice) perceives God’s authority over his life. Christians who have acknowledged Christ’s Lordship over their life will often be able to identify the approximate time and circumstances surrounding that event. The reason for this is that the choice to accept His rightful authority (His yoke) is not a casual decision.
6. A Christian needs to understand that God’s stated ownership is an absolute, which is not at all dependent on the believer’s acceptance or acknowledgment of it. An acceptance or acknowledgment of what God says is truth simply removes a major obstacle to God using and blessing the Christian in the way He desires. To reject His Lordship is to usurp authority that is not theirs. Jesus asked, “*why do you call Me Lord and don’t do what I tell you?*” (Luke 6:46).
7. The Christian who tries to serve two masters (God and himself) has a divided loyalty (double minded), attempting to satisfy God while at the same time perceiving God as someone who will help them to achieve their goals and aspirations in this life.
8. King Saul is an Old Testament example of a believer who was unwilling to surrender his will to God, but rather chose to rely on his human understanding (self-dependence). In stark contrast king David is an example of a believer who accepted God’s authority over his life. Obviously David was guilty of grave sins, yet God testifies of his disposition of submission in Acts 13:22. King Saul’s sins may not outwardly seem as grievous to man, yet God’s disapproval is very evident, due to Saul’s unwillingness to accept His authority. **KING SAUL’S PROBLEM WAS ONE OF THE WILL (LORDSHIP), WHILE KING DAVID’S WAS ONE OF BEHAVIOR.**
9. Each believer will either perceive himself as a servant to God, or he will perceive God as a helper/partner to him.

Maturity has to be factored in also. **A CHRISTIAN MAY BE SPIRITUAL, YET IMMATURE.**

KING SAUL (“SELF-DEPENDENT”) AND KING DAVID (“SPIRITUAL”)

Both kings were chosen by God, and God’s presence was evident in both of them. Each was disobedient to God and each was confronted by a prophet of God. Their responses to God’s spokesmen, Samuel and Nathan, reveal their distinct heart dispositions towards God. Man tends to look at outward appearance (easier to be misled), but God looks at the heart attitude (and is never misled). ... *for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.*” (1 Sam. 16:7)

KING SAUL – A SELF-DEPENDENT BELIEVER

(King Saul reigned for 40 years – Acts 13:21)

1. King Saul was chosen by God, and the Holy Spirit was evidenced in his life. (1 Sam. 9-10 & 28:19)

1 Sam. 9:17 *When Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, “Behold, the man of whom I spoke to you! This one shall rule over My people.”*

1 Sam. 10:6-7 (Samuel said) *Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily, and you shall prophesy with them and be changed into another man. ... for God is with you.*

1 Sam. 10:9-10 *Then it happened when he turned his back to leave Samuel, God changed his heart; and all those signs came about on that day. When they came to the hill there, behold, a group of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came upon him mightily, so that he prophesied among them.*

2. King Saul’s outward appearance was very attractive and acceptable to the people.

1 Sam. 9:2 ... *Saul, a choice and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any ...*

1 Sam. 10:22-24 ... *he was taller than any of the people from his shoulders upward. Samuel said to all the people, “Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen? Surely there is no one like him among all the people.” ...*

3. King Saul was given a simple command - to wait for Samuel to come to offer the sacrifice to God.

1 Sam. 10:8 (Samuel said) *“And you shall go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and sacrifice peace offerings. You shall wait seven days until I come to you and show you what you should do.”*

Note: On the seventh day, the day Samuel was to arrive, Saul decided he could wait no longer and unlawfully took on himself the priestly responsibility of **offering** community sacrifice. (See Lev. 6:8-13)

1 Sam. 13:8-14

:8 *Now he waited seven days, according to the appointed time set by Samuel, but Samuel did not come to Gilgal; and the people were scattering from him.*

:9 *So Saul said, “Bring to me the burnt offering and the peace offerings.” And he offered the burnt offering.*

- :10** *As soon as he finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him and to greet him.*
- :11** *But Samuel said, “What have you done?” And Saul said, “**Because I saw** that the people were scattering from me, **and** that you did not come within the appointed days, **and** that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash,*
- :12** ***therefore** I said, ‘Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the Lord.’ So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering.”*
- :13** *Samuel said to Saul, “You have acted **foolishly**; you have **not kept** the commandment of the Lord your God, which He commanded you, for now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.*
- :14** *“But now your kingdom shall not endure. The Lord has sought out for Himself **a man after His own heart**, and the Lord has appointed him as ruler over His people, **because you have not kept** what the Lord commanded you.”*

4. King Saul was given another command, but disobeyed again and was confronted by Samuel. (1 Sam. 15:1-35)

- :1-3** *Then Samuel said to Saul, ... “Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘I will punish Amalek ... ‘Now go and strike Amalek and utterly **destroy all** that he has, and **do not spare him**; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’ ”*
- :4-7** *... Saul came to the city of Amalek and set an ambush in the valley. ... Saul defeated the Amalekites, ...*

a. Saul once again chose to follow his own reasoning rather than follow instructions that didn’t seem to concur with his human understanding.

- :8-9** *He captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But **Saul and the people spared Agag** and the **best of the sheep**, the **oxen**, the **fatlings**, the **lambs**, and all that was **good**, and were **not willing** to destroy them utterly; but everything **despised** and **worthless**, that they utterly destroyed.*

Note: What was wrong with Saul’s reasoning?

b. Saul was more concerned about the approval of men than the approval of God.

- :10-12** *Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, “... Saul ... has **not** carried out My commands.” ... Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a **monument for himself**, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal.”*

Note: What is the purpose of a monument? One could ask, why was he not repentive and responsive to the Lord?

c. When confronted by Samuel, Saul defends his reasoning.

:13-15 Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "... **I have carried out** the command of the Lord." But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul said, "**They** have brought them from the Amalekites, for the **people** spared the **best of** the sheep and oxen, **to sacrifice** to the Lord **your** God; but the rest **we** have utterly destroyed."

:16-19 Then Samuel said to Saul, "Wait, and let me tell you what the Lord said to me last night." And he said to him, "Speak!" Samuel said, "Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel? And the Lord anointed you king over Israel, and the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.' "Why then did you **not obey** the voice of the Lord, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was **evil** in the sight of the Lord?"

:20-21 Then Saul said to Samuel, "**I did obey** the voice of the Lord, and went on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. "But **the people** took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, **the choicest** of the things devoted to destruction, **to sacrifice** to the Lord **your** God at Gilgal."

:22-23 Samuel said, "Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, **to obey** is better than sacrifice, and **to heed** than the fat of rams. "For **rebellion** is as the sin of divination, and **insubordination** is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have **rejected** the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king."

Note: What are the flaws in Saul's reasoning? How does God describe Saul's attitude?

d. Saul finally acknowledges his sin, but is still focused on men's approval, rather than God's approval.

:24-25 Then Saul said to Samuel, "**I have sinned**; I have indeed transgressed the command of the Lord and your words, because **I feared the people** and listened to their voice. "Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the Lord."

:26-29 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you; for you have **rejected** the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel." As Samuel turned to go, Saul seized the edge of his robe, and it tore. So Samuel said to him, "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today and has given it to your neighbor (David), who is better than you. ..."

:30-35 Then he said, "**I have sinned**; **but** please **honor me** now **before the elders** of my people and **before Israel**, and go back with me, that I may worship the Lord **your** God." So Samuel went back following Saul, and Saul worshiped the Lord. ... Then Samuel went to Ramah, ...

e. God tells us why Saul died.

1 Chron. 10:13 Saul died **because he was unfaithful** to the LORD; he did not keep the word of the LORD and even consulted a medium for guidance, **and did not inquire of the LORD**. So the LORD put him to death and turned the kingdom over to David son of Jesse. (NIV)

KING DAVID – A SPIRITUAL BELIEVER

(King David reigned for 40 years – 2 Sam. 5:4-5)

1. David offended God and lived out of fellowship with Him for a period of months. (2 Samuel 11)

2 Sam. 11:1 ... in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, ... David stayed at Jerusalem.

:2-5 Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; ... The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant."

:6-13 Then David sent to Joab, saying, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." ... When Uriah came to him, ... David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him. But Uriah ... did not go down to his house. So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; ... but he did not go down to his house.

:14-25 Now in the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. He had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die." ... and Uriah the Hittite also died. Then Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war. ... The messenger said to David, "... your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead." Then David said ... "you shall say to Joab, ... the sword devours one as well as another; ..."

:26-27 ... David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the Lord.

a. Just as Samuel had confronted Saul, the prophet Nathan confronted David.

2 Samuel 12:1-4 Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. "The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. "But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb which he bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, and was like a daughter to him. "Now a traveler came to the rich man, and he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, to prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; rather he took the poor man's ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

:5-6 Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. ..."

:7-12 Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! 'Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' "Thus says the Lord, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in broad daylight. 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.' "

b. But unlike Saul, David immediately accepted full blame for his sin, and was immediately forgiven. (See Psa. 51)

12:13 *Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.*

:14 *“However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die.”*

2. David’s forgiveness by God was complete.

12:24 *Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her; and she gave birth to a son, and he named him Solomon. Now the Lord loved him ...*

(Note: God chose Solomon to build His temple. Solomon was used by God to write some portions of Scripture. Solomon is also listed in the genealogy of Jesus.)

3. Discussion:

Both Saul and David were believers. One had not surrendered his will (Lordship) to the Lord, and sinned; the other had surrendered his will to the Lord, and sinned.

As a characteristic of life, David sought the approval of God.

As a characteristic of life, Saul sought the approval of other people.

In a poll, (court of public opinion) whose sin would people consider more grievous? Why?

Whose sin did the Lord consider more grievous? Why?

What were the consequences of their sins?

“Self-dependence” (carnal) does not mean everything you do is wrong (before people), and “spiritual” does not mean everything you do is right (before God).

*Someone has said, “Character is what you are when no one else is around”
(when there’s only God and you).*

“THE ISRAELITE JOURNEY AS AN ANALOGY TO THE CHRISTIAN JOURNEY”

LESSON GUIDE

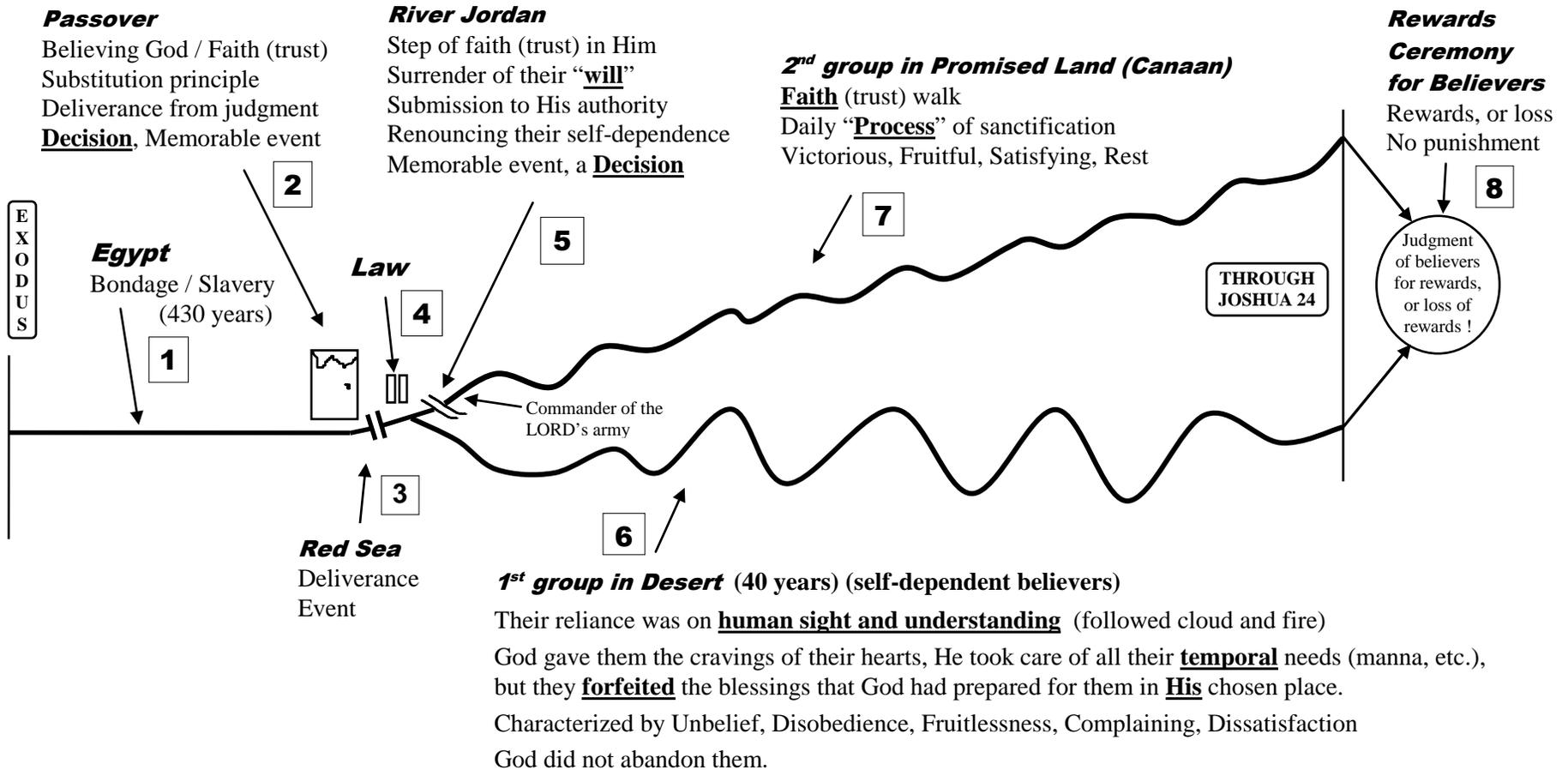
NOTE: The discipler should carefully read these teaching suggestions beforehand.

- I. The main purpose of this lesson is to acquaint the disciple with the journey of the Israelites from their enslavement in Egypt to the conquest of Canaan (through the book of Joshua). The Israelite journey should serve as an illustration and model to help us better understand our personal relationship with God. (1 Cor. 10:11 *Now these things happened to them as an **example**, and they were written **for our instruction**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.*)
- II. Focus on the Israelites, that is, on their attitude towards God and God’s perspective of them. As a result of having understood Lesson 3-3, the individual being discipled may begin on his own to draw parallels with his personal life and that of other Christians.
- III. As you proceed through this overview, emphasize the events, attitudes and principles that will serve to illustrate in subsequent lessons characteristics of the Christian life and a Christian’s attitude towards God.
- IV. As needed, discuss the enslavement of the Israelites in Egypt.
- V. Regarding Exodus 3:7-8a - A detail often overlooked in the episode of the burning bush, is what God revealed to Moses about His intended dealing with the Israelites. He had a two-step plan for them. The **first** step was to take them **OUT OF** Egypt. The **second** step was to take them directly **INTO** the Promised Land, the chosen place of His blessings. **It was never God’s intention for them to forfeit His blessings in Canaan and consequently spend a fruitless time in the desert.**
- VI. As you read together from Exodus 12, (Point 2) discuss the Passover event, emphasizing the substitutionary principle.
- VII. If needed, discuss the crossing of the Red Sea and the giving of the Law (10 Commandments).
- VIII. God’s dealing with the Israelites at the Jordan River and their attitude towards Him are very significant. As you read Numbers 13 and 14, (Point 5) emphasize God’s desire for the Israelites to trust His promises about His good intentions and plans for them in Canaan, the special destination where He wanted to bless them. It needs to be understood from the Scriptures that God only wanted to bless His children, the Israelites. There is no evidence of any wrongdoing on God’s part, yet the Israelites, as believers, still refused to consider Him trustworthy. Their unwillingness to trust in His character was based on illogical human reasoning. (Prov. 3:5-6)

OVERVIEW OF THE ISRAELITE JOURNEY

“HE BROUGHT US OUT ... IN ORDER TO BRING US IN, TO GIVE US THE LAND ...” (Deut. 6:23)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Ex. 1 - 10 Ex. 12:40	Ex. 11-12 Ex. 12:41 Heb. 11:28	Ex. 14:1-15:21 1 Cor. 10:1-2 Heb 11:29	Ex. 19-20	Gen. 15:1-21 Num. 13-14	Deut. 8:1-5 Neh. 9:7-21 Acts 7:39	Deut. 8:6-10 Josh. 1 - 4 Josh. 21:44-45	Heb. 11



VERSES RELATED TO THE ISRAELITE JOURNEY

1. **The Israelites had been in bondage in Egypt for about 400 years, when God spoke to Moses at the burning bush and revealed to him His two-step plan.**

Exodus 3:7-8 The Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. “So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, ...

Ezekiel 20:5-6 ... ‘Thus says the Lord God, “On the day when I chose Israel and swore to the descendants of the house of Jacob and made Myself known to them in the land of Egypt, when I swore to them, saying, I am the Lord your God, on that day I swore to them, to bring them out from the land of Egypt into a land that I had selected for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands.”

2. **God sent judgments against the Egyptians. The last one was the “Passover”**

Exodus 12:21-23 Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. “You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. “For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on

the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you.

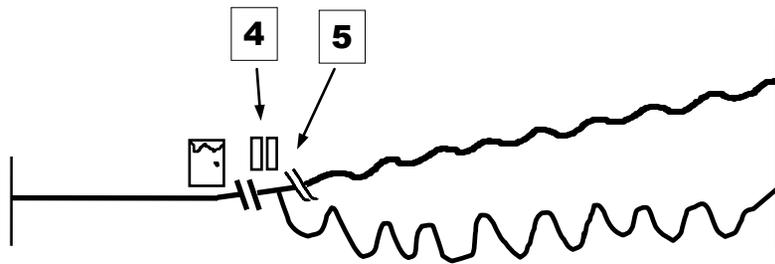
Exodus 12:29-31 Now it came about at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead. Then he called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, “Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel; and go, worship the Lord, as you have said.

3. **God divided the Red Sea and delivered Israel from Pharaoh’s army.**

Exodus 14:21-22 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

:23-25 Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. At the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians said, “Let us flee from Israel, for the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians.”

:26-28 Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen.” So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh’s entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained.



4. God appeared at Mt. Sinai, and gave the Ten Commandments and the Law 4

Exodus 19:18-20 Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. ...

Exodus 24:12 Now the Lord said to Moses, “Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction.”

5. The Israelites arrived at the River Jordan, where they had to make a decision. Was God trustworthy? Would He take care of them? Could they believe His promises, or was the risk too great?

Twelve men, one from each tribe of Israel, were graciously given a preview of Canaan by God. 5

Numbers 13

:1-3 Then the Lord spoke to Moses saying, “Send out for yourself men so that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I am going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers’ tribes, ...

:23 Then they came to the valley of Eshcol and from there cut down a branch with a single cluster of grapes; and they carried it on a pole between two men, with some of the pomegranates and the figs.

:25-29 When they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days, they ... brought back word to them and to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. ... they ... said, “We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. “Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; ...

:30 Then Caleb ... said, “We should by all means go up and take possession of it, ...”

:31-33 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.” So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land ... saying, “The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size. ...”

Numbers 14

- :1-4** Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept **that night**. All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! “**Why is the Lord bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder**; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” So they said to one another, “Let us appoint a leader and **return to Egypt**.”
- :5-9** ... **Joshua** ... and **Caleb** ... tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation ... saying, “The land which we passed through to spy out is an **exceedingly good land**. “If the Lord is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and **give** it to us—a land which flows with milk and honey. “Only **do not rebel** against the Lord; and **do not fear** the people of the land, for they will be our prey. **Their protection has been removed** from them, and **the Lord is with us; do not fear** them.”
- :10-12** But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the glory of the Lord appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel. The Lord said to Moses, “How long will this people **spurn** Me? And how long will they **not believe** in Me, **despite all the signs** which I have performed in their midst? “I will smite them with pestilence and dispossess them, ...”
- :13-16** But Moses said to the Lord, “Then the Egyptians will hear of it, for by Your strength You brought up this people from their midst, and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. **They have heard** that You, O Lord, are in the midst of this people, ... “Now if You slay this people as one man, then the nations who have heard of Your fame will say, ‘Because the Lord could not bring this people into the land which **He promised** them by oath, therefore He slaughtered them in the wilderness.’”

- :17-19** “But now, I pray, let the power of the Lord be great, ... “**Pardon**, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your lovingkindness, just as **You also have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now**.”
- :20-25** So the Lord said, “**I have pardoned them** ... “Surely all the **men who have seen** My glory and My signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these **ten times** and have **not listened** to My voice, shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who spurned Me see it. “But My servant **Caleb**, because he has had a **different spirit** and has **followed Me fully**, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.
- :26-35** The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation who are **grumbling** against Me? I have heard the **complaints** of the sons of Israel, which they are making against Me. “Say to them, ‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will surely do to you; your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from **twenty years old and upward**, who have **grumbled** against Me. ‘Surely you shall not come into the land in which I swore to settle you, except **Caleb** ... and **Joshua** ‘Your children, however, whom you said would become a prey—I will bring them in, and they will know the land which you have **rejected**. ‘But as for you, your corpses will fall in this wilderness. ‘Your sons shall be shepherds for forty years in the wilderness, and they will **suffer for your unfaithfulness**, until your corpses lie in the wilderness. ‘According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, **for every day you shall bear your guilt a year**, even forty years, ...’ ”
- :36-40** As for the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land and who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing out a bad report concerning the land, even

those men who brought out the very bad report of the land died by a plague before the Lord. But Joshua ... and Caleb ... remained alive out of those men who went to spy out the land. When Moses spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, the people mourned greatly. In the morning, however, they rose up early and went up to the ridge of the hill country, saying, “Here we are; we have indeed sinned, but we will go up to the place which the Lord has promised.”

:41-45 But Moses said, “Why then are you transgressing the commandment of the Lord, when it will not succeed? “Do not go up, or you will be struck down before your enemies, for the Lord is not among you. “For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there in front of you, and you will fall by the sword,” But they went up heedlessly to the ridge of the hill country; neither the ark of the covenant of the Lord nor Moses left the camp. Then the Amalekites and the Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down, and struck them and beat them down as far as Hormah.

6. The following passages express God’s perspective of the Israelites, and the Israelite’s perspective of God.

6 a. Nehemiah relates God’s faithfulness and the Israelites’ self-dependent disposition (carnality).

Nehemiah 9:7-12 “You are the Lord God, Who chose Abram “You found his heart faithful before You, and made a covenant with him to give him the land of the Canaanite, of the Hittite and the Amorite, of the Perizzite, the Jebusite and the Girgashite — to give it to his descendants. And You have fulfilled Your promise, for You are righteous. “You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heard their cry by the Red Sea. “Then You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his servants and all the people of his land; for You knew that they

acted arrogantly toward them, and made a name for Yourself as it is this day. “You divided the sea before them, so they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground; and their pursuers You hurled into the depths, like a stone into raging waters. “And with a pillar of cloud You led them by day, and with a pillar of fire by night to light for them the way in which they were to go.

:13-15 “Then You came down on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven; ... “You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger, You brought forth water from a rock for them for their thirst, and You told them to enter in order to possess the land which You swore to give them.

:16-21 “But they, our fathers, acted arrogantly; they became stubborn and would not listen to Your commandments. “They refused to listen, and did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them; so they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God of forgiveness, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; and You did not forsake them. “Even when they made for themselves a calf of molten metal and said, ‘This is your God Who brought you up from Egypt,’ and committed great blasphemies, You, in Your great compassion, did not forsake them in the wilderness; the pillar of cloud did not leave them by day, to guide them on their way, nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go. “You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, and You gave them water for their thirst. “Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness and they were not in want; their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell.

b. The Psalmists relate God's faithfulness and the Israelites' self-dependent disposition (carnality).

Psalm 78:12-16 *He wrought wonders before their fathers in the land of Egypt ... He divided the sea and caused them to pass through, ... Then He led them with the cloud by day and all the night with a light of fire. He split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them abundant drink like the ocean depths. He brought forth streams also from the rock and caused waters to run down like rivers.*

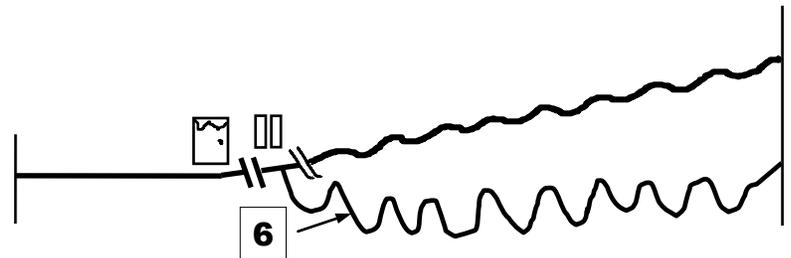
:17-19 *Yet they still continued to sin against Him, to rebel against the Most High in the desert. And in their heart they put God to the test by asking food according to their desire. Then they spoke against God; they said, "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness?"*

:20-25 *"Behold, He struck the rock so that waters gushed out, and streams were overflowing; can He give bread also? Will He provide meat for His people?" Therefore the Lord heard and was full of wrath; and a fire was kindled against Jacob and anger also mounted against Israel, because they did not believe in God and did not trust in His salvation. Yet He commanded the clouds above and opened the doors of heaven; He rained down manna upon them to eat and gave them food from heaven. Man did eat the bread of angels; He sent them food in abundance.*

:26-31 *He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens and by His power He directed the south wind. When He rained meat upon them like the dust, even winged fowl like the sand of the seas, then He let them fall in the midst of their camp, round about their dwellings. So they ate and were well filled, and their desire He gave to them. Before they had satisfied their desire, while their food was in their mouths, the anger of God rose against them and killed some of their stoutest ones, and subdued the choice men of Israel.*

:32-37 *In spite of all this they still sinned and did not believe in His wonderful works. So He brought their days to an end in futility and their years in sudden terror. When He killed them, then they sought Him, and returned and searched diligently for God; and they remembered that God was their rock, and the Most High God their Redeemer. But they deceived Him with their mouth and lied to Him with their tongue. For their heart was not steadfast toward Him, nor were they faithful in His covenant.*

:38-43 *But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; and often He restrained His anger and did not arouse all His wrath. Thus He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and does not return. How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness and grieved Him in the desert! Again and again they tempted God, and pained the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember His power, the day when He redeemed them from the adversary, when He performed His signs in Egypt and His marvels in the field of Zoan,*



Psalm 81:10-16 *"I, the Lord, am your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt; Open your mouth wide and I will fill it. "But My people did not listen to My voice, and Israel did not obey Me. "So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart, to walk in their own devices. "Oh that My people would listen to Me, that Israel would walk in My ways! "I would*

quickly subdue their enemies and turn My hand against their adversaries. ... “But I would feed you with the finest of the wheat, and with honey from the rock **I would satisfy you.**”

Psalm 105:36-45 ... He brought them out with silver and gold, and among His tribes there was not one who stumbled. Egypt was glad when they departed, for the dread of them had fallen upon them. He spread a **cloud** for a covering, and **fire** to illumine by night. They asked, and **He brought quail**, and **satisfied them with the bread of heaven.** **He opened the rock** and water flowed out; it ran in the dry places like a river. For He remembered His holy word with Abraham His servant; and He brought forth His people **with joy**, His chosen ones with a joyful shout. He gave them also the lands of the nations, **that they might take possession** of the fruit of the peoples’ labor, ...

Psalm 106:7-27

:7-12 Our fathers in Egypt **did not understand** Your wonders; they **did not remember** Your abundant kindnesses, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea. **Nevertheless He saved them** for the sake of His name, that He might make His power known. Thus He rebuked **the Red Sea** and it **dried up**, and He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness. So **He saved them** from the hand of the one who hated them, and **redeemed them** from the hand of the enemy. The waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left. **Then they believed His words; they sang His praise.**

:13-18 They **quickly forgot** His works; they **did not wait for His counsel**, but **craved intensely** in the wilderness, and **tempted God** in the desert. So **He gave them their request**, but sent a **wasting disease among them.** ...

:19-20 They made a calf in Horeb and **worshipped a molten image**. Thus they exchanged their glory for the image of an ox that eats grass.

:21-23 **They forgot God their Savior**, Who had done **great things** in Egypt, **wonders** in the land of Ham and **awesome things** by the Red Sea. Therefore He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him, to turn away His wrath from destroying them.

:24-27 Then they **despised the pleasant land**; they **did not believe in His word**, but **grumbled** in their tents; they **did not listen** to the voice of the Lord. Therefore He swore to them that He would cast them down in the wilderness, and that He would cast their seed among the nations and scatter them in the lands.

c. Isaiah relates God’s faithfulness.

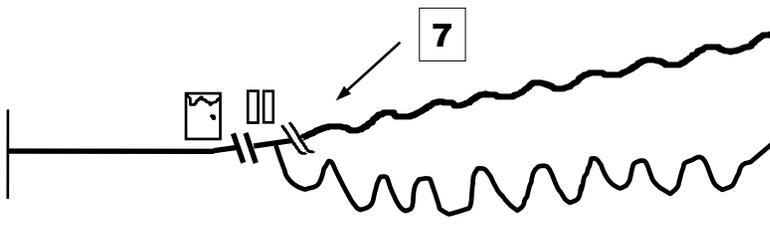
Isaiah 63:11-14 Then His people remembered the days of old, of Moses. Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of His flock? Where is He who put **His Holy Spirit in the midst of them**, who caused His glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for Himself an everlasting name, who led them through the depths? Like the horse in the wilderness, they did not stumble; as the cattle which go down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gave them **rest**. So You led Your people, to make for Yourself a glorious name.

d. Stephen relates God’s faithfulness and the Israelites’ self-dependent disposition (carnality).

Acts 7:36-44 “This man (Moses) led them out, performing **wonders and signs** in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years. ... ; he received living oracles to pass on to you. “Our fathers were unwilling to be obedient to him, but repudiated him and **in their hearts** turned back to Egypt, ... “Our fathers had the **tabernacle** of testimony in the wilderness, ...

e. Paul relates God's faithfulness and the Israelites' self-dependent disposition (carnality).

1 Cor. 10:1-5 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.



7. THE SECOND GROUP OF ISRAELITES CHOSE TO ENTER INTO CANAAN 7

a. God had made a covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, promising to give the chosen land of Canaan to them and their descendants forever.

Genesis 12:1-9

:1-3 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; ...”

:7-9 The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” ...

Gen. 13:14-18 The Lord said to Abram, ..., “Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. ... “Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you.” ...

Gen. 17:1-8 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram ... “I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. “I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; ...”

Gen. 26:1-6 ... The Lord appeared to him (Isaac) and said, ... “Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. ... and will give your descendants all these lands;

Gen. 28:10-22 Then Jacob ... came to a certain place and spent the night there, He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, “I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. ... Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.” He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” ... He called the name of that place Bethel;

Gen. 35:9-15

:9-11 Then God appeared to Jacob again ... and He blessed him. God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; you shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." Thus He called him Israel. ...
:12-15 "The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, and I will give the land to your descendants after you."
...

b. Moses reminded them of where they had been and where they were going.

Deut. 8:1-10

:1-6 ... "Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. "Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. "Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.
:7-10 "For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; a land where you will eat food without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. "When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.

Deut. 11:10-12 "For the land, into which you are entering to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, where you used to sow your seed and water it with your foot like a vegetable garden. "**But the land into which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven, a land for which the Lord**

your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year.

c. From the beginning they needed to rely on God, not on self. This was an important step of faith.

Joshua 3:13-16 "It shall come about when the soles of the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan will be cut off, and the waters which are flowing down from above will stand in one heap." So when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people, and when those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest), the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, ... So the people crossed opposite Jericho.

d. The crossing was memorialized. (Symbolic.)

Joshua 4:1-9 (See also 4:19-24)

:1-4 Now when all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the Lord spoke to Joshua, saying, "Take for yourselves twelve men from the people, one man from each tribe, and command them, saying, 'Take up for yourselves twelve stones from here out of the middle of the Jordan, from the place where the priests' feet are standing firm, and carry them over with you and lay them down in the lodging place where you will lodge tonight.' ...
:5-7 "Let this be a sign among you, so that when your children ask later, saying, 'What do these stones mean to you?' then you shall say to them, 'Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it crossed

the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off.’ So these stones shall become a **memorial** to the sons of Israel **forever**.”

:8-9 ... the sons of Israel did as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones ... and they carried them over with them **to the lodging place** and put them down there. Then Joshua set up twelve stones **in the middle of the Jordan** at the place where the feet of the priests who carried the ark of the covenant were standing, and they are there to this day.

e. God re-instituted circumcision, and the Passover was celebrated.

Joshua 5:2-9 At that time the Lord said to Joshua, “Make for yourself flint knives and circumcise again the sons of Israel the second time.” So Joshua made himself flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel ... **This is the reason why** Joshua circumcised them: all the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, died in the wilderness along the way after they came out of Egypt. For all the people who came out were circumcised, but all the people who were born in the wilderness along the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised. For the sons of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, until all the nation, that is, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished **because they did not listen** to the voice of the Lord, to whom the Lord had sworn that He would not let them see the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. Their children whom He raised up in their place, Joshua circumcised; for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them along the way. Now when they had finished circumcising all the nation, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. Then the Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have **rolled away the reproach of Egypt** from you.” So the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day.

Joshua 5:10 While the sons of Israel camped at Gilgal they observed the **Passover** on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month on the desert plains of Jericho.

f. The pillar of fire and the pillar of cloud were no longer mentioned once they entered the Promised Land. It was now a “faith” walk, not a “sight” walk.

g. They immediately began receiving God’s prepared blessings.

Joshua 5:11-12 **On the day after** the Passover, **on that very day**, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The **manna ceased on the day after** they had eaten some of the produce of the land, so that the sons of Israel **no longer** had manna, but they ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during that year.

Exodus 16:35 The sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, **until** they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna **until** they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

h. God had already prepared the way for them.

Joshua 2:8-11 (Rahab told the two spies) ... “I know that the Lord has **given you the land**, and that the **terror of you** has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have **melted away** before you. “For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, ... whom you utterly destroyed. “When we heard it, our **hearts melted** and **no courage remained** in any man any longer because of you; for the Lord your God, **He is God** in heaven above and on earth beneath.

Exodus 15:14-16 *“The peoples have heard, they tremble; anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. ... all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. “Terror and dread fall upon them; ...*

i. Why did God want to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan?

Deuteronomy 9:4-6 ... *it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is dispossessing them before you. “It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart ...*

Ezra 9:10-12 ... *You have commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from end to end and with their impurity. ...*

j. They met the Commander of the Lord’s army, who was there to direct and fight their battles

Joshua 5:13-15 *Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, “Are you for us or for our adversaries?” He said, “No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the LORD.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, “What has my lord to say to his servant?” The captain of the LORD’s host said to Joshua, “Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.” And Joshua did so.*

Deut. 20:3-4 (Moses had given God’s promise to Israel) ... *‘Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, for the Lord your God is the one*

who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.’

Acts 7:45 ... *the nations whom God drove out before our fathers, ...*

Acts 13:19... *When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance—all of which took about four hundred and fifty years.*

k. Some years later, after having conquered the land of Canaan, the 2nd group of Israelites testified of God’s faithfulness and blessings - what He had originally intended for the 1st group.

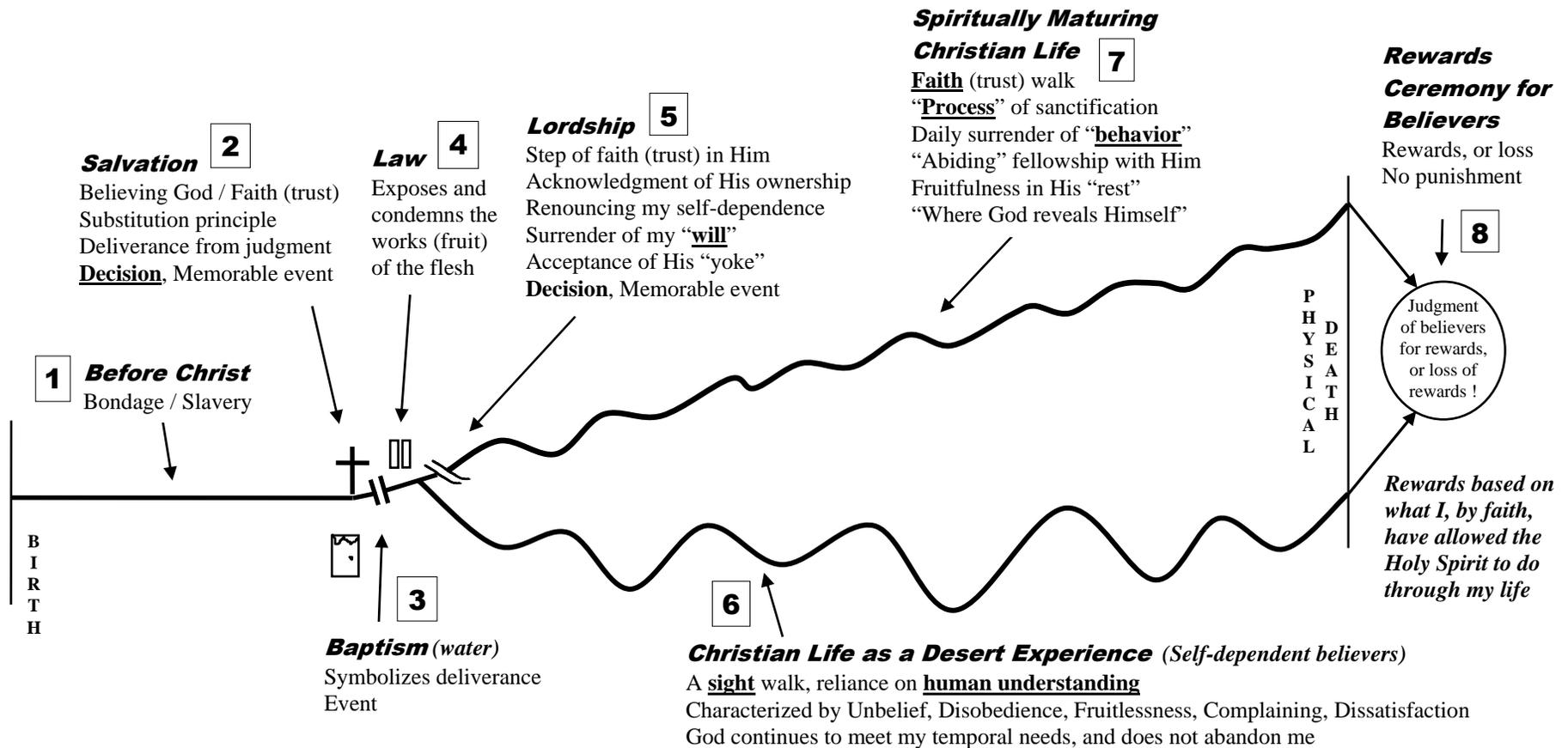
Joshua 21:44-45 *And the Lord gave them rest on every side, according to all that He had sworn to their fathers, and no one of all their enemies stood before them; the Lord gave all their enemies into their hand. Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.*

Joshua 23:14 ... *you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one word of all the good words which the Lord your God spoke concerning you has failed; all have been fulfilled for you, not one of them has failed.*

Joshua 23:3 *“And you have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has been fighting for you.*

OVERVIEW OF THE CHRISTIAN JOURNEY

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Eph. 2:1-3,12 Rom. 3:9-18	1 Cor. 5:7 Jn. 1:29	1 Cor. 12:12-13 Rom. 6:3-14	Rom. 7:7-24 Gal. 5:14, 18	Mt. 11:28-30 Lk. 14:25-33	Lk. 8:14 Acts 7:39	Mt. 13:23 Jn. 15:1-17	Mt. 6:19-21 1 Cor. 3:10-15 2 Cor. 5:9-10
ROMANS 1-3	ROMANS 4-5	ROMANS 6	ROMANS 7			ROMANS 8	



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N. T. VERSES RELATED TO THE CHRISTIAN JOURNEY

1. God's call to enter the place of His blessing (the Spiritual Promised Land) is still valid for believers today.

Heb. 3:16-4:1 *For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief. **Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.***

Heb. 4:9-11 ***So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.***

Note: While some hymn writers have used Canaan (the *Promised Land*) as a type of heaven, that analogy is hardly warranted by Scripture.

2. The following verses from the letter to the Hebrews provide a New Testament perspective of the Old Testament example of the Israelites. These Scripture portions can be read at the disciple's convenience.

Hebrews 3:1-19

:1-6 *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.*

:7-11 *Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, and saw My works for forty years. “Therefore I was angry with this generation, and said,*

‘They always go astray in their heart, and they did not know My ways’; as I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest.’

:12-15 *Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, while it is said, “Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me.”*

:16-19 *For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.*

Hebrews 4:1-11

:1-5 *Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard. For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, “as I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest,” although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; and again in this passage, “They shall not enter My rest.”*

:6-8 *Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, He again fixes a certain day, “Today,” saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, “today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.” For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that.*

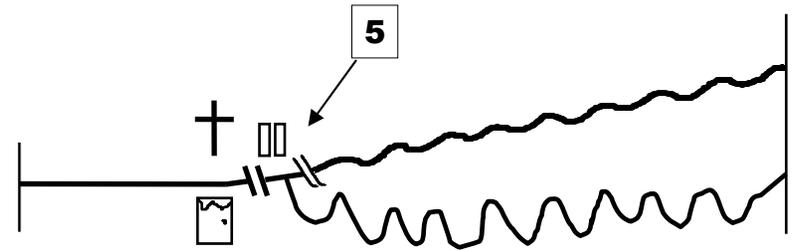
:9-11 *So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.*

Hebrews 4:12-16

:12-13 *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*

:14-16 *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us*

hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.



Hebrews 5:1-14

:1-3 *For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided, since he himself also is beset with weakness; and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself.*

:4-11 *And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, “You are My Son, today I have begotten You”; just as He says also in another passage, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.*

Hebrews 5:12 – 6:12 (referring to spiritual growth from immaturity to maturity and fruitfulness)

5:12-14 For though **by this time** you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the **elementary principles** of the oracles of God, and you have come to need **milk** and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is **not accustomed** to the word of righteousness, for he is an **infant**. But solid food is for the **mature**, who because of **practice** have their senses **trained** to discern good and evil.

6:1-6 **Therefore** leaving the **elementary teaching** about the Christ, let us press on to **maturity**, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permits. For in the case of those who have once been **enlightened** and have **tasted** of the heavenly gift and have been made **partakers of the Holy Spirit**, and have **tasted** the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

6:7-12 For **ground** that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation **useful** to those for whose sake it is also tilled, **receives a blessing** from God; but if it yields **thorns and thistles**, it is **worthless** and close to being cursed, and it **ends up being burned**. But, beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, and things that **accompany** salvation, though we are speaking in this way. For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering

to the saints. And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience **inherit the promises**.

3. Christians of today are warned to not follow the Israelite's example.

1 Cor. 10:1-14

:1-5 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were **drinking from a spiritual rock** which followed them; and the **rock was Christ**. Nevertheless, with **most** of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness.

:6-10 Now these things happened as **examples for us**, so that we would **not crave** evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play." Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

:11 Now these things happened to them as an **example**, and they were written **for our instruction**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

SUMMARY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TWO GROUPS

CHARACTERISTICS OF A "PROMISED LAND" EXPERIENCE

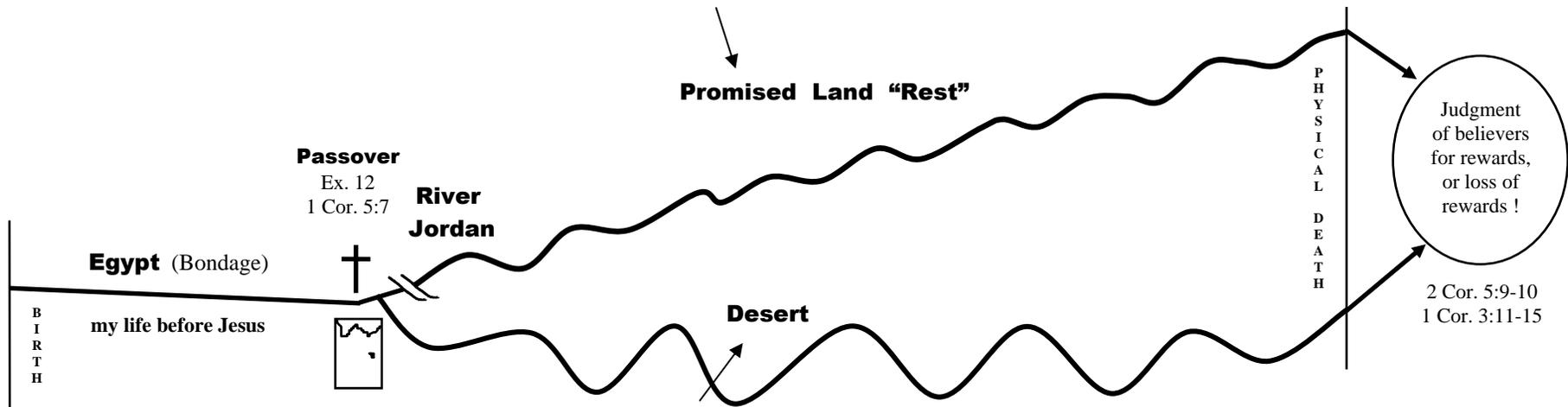
(Heb. 4:9-11) So **there remains** a Sabbath **rest** for the people of God. For the one who has entered His **rest** has himself also **rested from his** works, as God did from His. Therefore let us **be diligent to enter** that **rest**, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.

(Joshua 21:44-45) And the Lord gave them (Israelites) **rest** on every side, ..., and **no one** of all their enemies stood before them; the Lord gave **all** their enemies into their hand. **Not one** of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; **all** came to pass.

(Matt. 11:28-30) "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you **rest**. "**Take My yoke** upon you and **learn from Me**, for I am **gentle** and **humble** in heart, and you will find **rest** for your souls. "For My yoke is **easy** and My burden is **light**."

(Eph. 5:31-32) ... a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become **one flesh**. This **mystery** is great; but I am speaking with reference to **Christ and the church**.

(Matt. 13:23) "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed **bears fruit** and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."



CHARACTERISTICS OF A "DESERT" EXPERIENCE

(1 Cor. 10:11) Now these things happened to them (Israelites) as an **example**, and they were written **for our instruction**, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

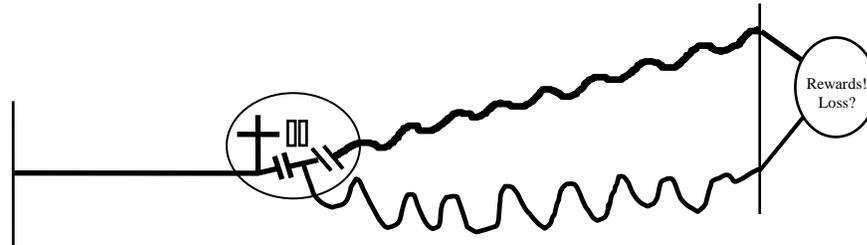
(Heb. 3:19-4:1) ... they were not able to enter because of **unbelief**. Therefore, **let us fear** if, while a promise **remains** of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have **come short** of it.

(Luke 8:14, Matt. 13:22) "... the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with **worries** and **riches** and **pleasures** of this life, and bring **no fruit to maturity**."

(1 Cor. 3:15) If any man's work is burned up, he will **suffer loss**; but **he himself will be saved**, yet so as through fire.

“LORDSHIP”

This lesson focuses on the scriptural concept of "Lordship". By this point in the discipleship process the typical believer has made a decision to acknowledge His lordship over his life, and recognizes Christ as his Master. The purpose of this lesson is to reinforce and provide further understanding of that decision already made.



1. I belong to God because He created me. (Does the Creator not have absolute authority over His creation?)

Deut. 10:14 "... to the Lord your God belong ... the earth and all that is in it.
Psalm 100:3 It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people ...
Jer. 10:23 ... a man's way is not in himself, nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.
Rom. 14:7-8 ... not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

2. He bought me. He redeemed me. He owns me. (A statement of fact)

1 Cor. 6:19-20 *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: ...*
2 Cor. 5:15 *and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.*

3. The title "Lord" implies a Master – servant relationship.

Matthew 22:37-38 *And He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' "This is the great and foremost commandment.*
John 13:13 (Jesus said) *"You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.*
Luke 6:46 (Jesus said) *"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*
Jn 14:21,23 (Jesus said) *"He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; ... Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; ...*

4. He is my Master, and I should view myself as His servant (slave).

Matthew 10:24-25 (Jesus said) “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. “It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. ...

Matthew 20:26-28 (Jesus said) “... whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Romans 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, ...

1 Cor. 7:22-23 he who was called while free, is Christ’s slave. You were bought with a price ...

Phil. 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

2 Tim. 2:4 No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

1 Peter 2:16 Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.

NOTE ON ROM. 1:1 Paul identified himself first as a servant of Christ Jesus. “Servant” (*doulos*) means slave, a person owned by another. Paul wore this title gladly (Gal. 1:10; Titus 1:1), reveling in the Old Testament picture of a slave who in love binds himself to his master for life (Ex. 21:2-6). (Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985.)

5. God expects those things I value to be yielded to His Lordship.

Matthew 10:37-39 (Jesus said) “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. “And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. “He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 19:29-30 (Jesus said) “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. “But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.

Luke 5:10-11 ... James and John, ... Simon, ... When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him. (Luke 5:27-28)

6. Jesus appeals to me to put my head in His yoke. (Yielding my independence and perceived rights to Him.)

Matthew 11:28-30 (Jesus said) “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

“Beware of refusing to go to the funeral of your own independence.”

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7. God wants me to offer my body to Him.

Romans 6:13,18-19 ... *For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now **present your members as slaves** to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.*

Romans 11:33-36, 12:1-2 ... *For **from** Him and **through** Him and **to** Him are **all** things. ... **Therefore** I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies** a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** by the renewing of **your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

8. God has to be more important than my very life.

Luke 14:26-33 (Jesus said) *“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and **even his own life**, he **cannot** be My disciple. “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me **cannot** be My disciple. “For which one of you, when he wants to **build** a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? “Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ “Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in **battle**, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? “Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. “So then, **none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions**. (See NOTE below.)*

Luke 9:23-24 *And He was saying to them all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must **deny himself**, and **take up his cross** daily and **follow Me**. “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever **loses his life for My sake**, he is the one who will save it.*

John 12:24-26 (Jesus said) *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and **dies**, it remains alone; but **if it dies**, it bears much fruit. “He who loves his life loses it, and he who **hates his life in this world** will keep it to life eternal. “If anyone serves Me, he **must follow Me**; and where I am, there My servant will be also; ...*

Acts 20:24 *“But **I** (Paul) **do not consider my life of any account** as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, ...*

Acts 21:13 ... *Paul answered, ... **I am ready** not only to be **bound**, but even to **die** at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”*

Rev. 12:11 *“And they overcame him (evil one) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they **did not love their life** even when faced with death.*

NOTE ON LUKE 14:26-33 The stress here is on the priority of love (cf. Matt. 10:37 - “He who loves father or mother **more than** Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter **more than** Me is not worthy of Me.). One’s loyalty to Jesus must come before his loyalty to his family or even to life itself. Indeed, those who did follow Jesus against their families’ desires were probably thought of as hating their families. (Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985.)

***If God loves you,
can only do what is in your best interest,
and never makes mistakes,
what would be a logical reason
for not embracing Him as Master?***

When clearly explained, the typical new believer will view Lordship as “good news”, as evidence of God’s love for them.

Unfortunately, many older believers who have never had Lordship clearly explained to them, upon hearing it tend to perceive it as “bad news”, equating it to “bondage”.

SUMMARY OF “LORDSHIP” PRINCIPLES

God has a great and beautiful plan for my entire life. Am I willing to yield my personal rights to Him and give Him permission to orchestrate my life to His perfect ends?

1. FACTS:

- a.** God says that as a Christian I have been **bought** (redeemed) from slavery to sin by the blood of His Son. That purchase has given Him legal **ownership** of my entire life. That He now owns me is an **absolute fact** that does **not** depend on my acknowledgment or acceptance of it.

1 Cor. 6:19-20 ... *do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are **not your own**? For you have been **bought** with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*

1 Peter 1:18-19 ... *you were not **redeemed** with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the **blood of Christ**.*

- b. Salvation** - speaks of a **Foundation, Jesus Christ**, upon which construction will take place. **Lordship** - The quality and duration of that construction depend on whom **I choose** as the architect and contractor. If I will give the Lord permission, allowing Him to **manage** my life, **He** will build a beautiful eternal house of gold, silver and precious stones on that foundation. That house will survive the judgment seat of Christ. However, if I am unwilling to let Him manage the construction, **I** will be building a **temporary** house of wood, hay and straw which will only last for the duration of my life here on earth, and will become ashes at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Daily Walk in Fellowship - The “**building materials**” that are available to the Holy Spirit fall into three categories, my “**time**”, my “**energy**” and my “**possessions**” (both tangible and intangible possessions). The Lord has given me a “**free will**”, which means that I have the privilege of moment by moment “**allowing**” Him to use those “**resources**” that He has granted me. But I am also free at any moment to “**deny**” Him use of any or all of those resources (building materials), during which time I will be using those same resources to build myself a temporary structure for this life here on earth. The Lord will not force me to let Him use my resources, even though He always has my best interest at heart.

1 Cor. 3:10-15 *According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a **foundation**, and another is **building** on it. But **each** man must be careful **how** he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with **gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw**, each man’s work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the **fire** itself will test the **quality** of each man’s work. If any man’s work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a **reward**. If any man’s work is burned up, he will **suffer loss**; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

Psalms 127:1 *Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; ...*

Eccl. 3:14 *I know that **everything** God does will remain **forever**; ...*

- c. Before I became a Christian, I was enslaved by my human nature (inherited from Adam). I **always** resisted God and was **not able** to please Him. That **same** human nature still resides in me as a Christian. It is **not the least bit improved**. God did not repair my rebellious human nature, but rather He gave me a **new** divine nature in the Person of the Holy Spirit.
- Mat. 7:17-18 *“So every good tree bears good fruit, but the **bad tree** bears bad fruit. “A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, **nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.**”*
- Gal. 3:1-3 *You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, **are you now being perfected by the flesh?**”*
- Gal. 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.*

d. I should accept a role as a “disciple” (apprentice learner), allowing the Holy Spirit “access” to every area of my being.

From infancy I began to accumulate ideas and concepts about life, the world, etc. When I became a Christian those ideas and concepts did not disappear, but rather have remained in my mind much like written material on a blackboard. Some of those ideas and concepts will be in harmony with God, others will not be. Only the Holy Spirit knows what needs to be changed in my thinking. That is why each Christian needs to give the Holy Spirit “**access**” to his/her mental blackboard and be open to whatever changes **He** determines best. **Yielding up that authority** to Him speaks of “Lordship”, after which can follow the **process** of having my mind renewed, i.e. to increasingly view life as He views it.

Caution: A Christian who intentionally (or through ignorance) is unwilling to acknowledge His authority over his/her mind (understanding) will very likely adopt a perceived “Do” and “Don’t Do” list. That list would typically include what seems to be acceptable Christian behavior, based on the average spiritual expectations as modeled by older Christians. The danger is that fellowship with the Holy Spirit will be severely threatened when He speaks to the new believer about areas of thinking or behavior that are outside of the arbitrary parameters set up by the new Christian. The result is often a reoccurring cycle of disobedience, frustration, repentance and brokenness. This will continue until the **will** is surrendered.

Romans 12:2 ... **do not be conformed** to this world, but **be transformed** by the **renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Luke 6:40 *“A pupil (disciple) is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be **like** his teacher.*

2. ILLUSTRATIONS AND TERMINOLOGY THAT DESCRIBE LORDSHIP.

a. Relinquishing my independence - as in a wedding ceremony (Marriage “Covenant”).

Marriage consists of an **event** (a wedding ceremony), followed by a **process**. The **wedding ceremony** represents a relinquishment of my right to make independent decisions, in favor of being joined (yoked) with another. The **marriage process** is designed to be a growing relationship, learning to live and walk in harmony with a spouse. This process represents the manner in which a Christian learns to live and walk in harmony with the Holy Spirit.

Eph. 5:32 *This **mystery** is great; but I am speaking with reference to **Christ and the church.***

b. Acknowledgment of His ownership of my life.

A conscious agreement with what God states to be true.

c. An acceptance of His yoke (an event), followed by learning of Him (a process of learning to walk in harmony with Him). A relinquishment of your right to live and make decisions independently.

Matthew 11:28-30 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

“**Take My yoke** upon you and **learn** from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Note: Older Christians who have not yet acknowledged His Lordship tend to be threatened by the Master-servant relationship, imagining that it borders on “bondage”. A Christian needs to understand that the God-ordained Master-servant relationship is intended to be liberating.

d. Entering His rest (as pictured in the O.T. Israelites).

At the burning bush, God laid out to Moses His original purpose for the Israelites.

Ex. 3:7-8a *The Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, ...*

*“So I have come down to deliver them **from** the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land **to** a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, ...*

The **1st group** was unwilling to accept God’s plan. (Num. 13:1-2, 23-33, 14:1-11, 19-24)

The **2nd group** was willing to entrust themselves into God’s care. (Josh. 21:44-45, 23:14)

Warning for me: Rom. 15:4 *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.* (see also Heb. 4:9-11)

e. A wild mustang.

A wild mustang could be used to depict Lordship - The goal is to end up with an animal that is **available**, **trained** and **useful** to its owner (Master). But **first** the mustang’s **will** (his resistance to another’s authority) must be broken. Upon acceptance of another’s authority over it, the mustang is not yet considered to be the least bit trained, or useful. However, it now has a **mindset** (disposition, attitude) that will allow it to **begin** the **process** of being trained (transformed), which will over time produce an animal that is useful to its owner. Until the **will** (mindset, disposition) is changed the animal can never be trained.

Psa. 32:9 *Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have **no understanding**, whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, otherwise they will not come near to you.*

f. Car illustration

Imagine an auto which could represent the Christian’s life. The Christian is sitting in the driver’s seat, while Jesus sits in the passenger seat. Because God allows them to hold the steering wheel, many believers erroneously conclude that God is simply seated at their side, ready to help whenever they determine they have a need. Hence the bumper sticker, “*God is my co-Pilot*”. Even though the Christian may acknowledge that Jesus is holding the “title” to the auto, there is a fear of relinquishing control of the steering wheel. The Lord doesn’t want to be in the believer’s life as a co-Pilot, he wants to be in charge and direct the course of his life. “Lordship” is really an issue of “control”, and it is sad that so many believers are unwilling to let God have control of the steering wheel, because they’re afraid of where He might take them. If given control, God will always do what is in my best interest. God wants the believer to learn to keep his hands on the steering wheel, while actively and voluntarily relying on the Lord to provide directions.

3. ILLUSTRATION OF TWO DOORS

What does the typical new Christian have to face as he looks at the future?

Shortly after becoming a Christian I come to a fork in the road where I see a door, through which I can visualize the future. I see goals and material belongings that would seem to satisfy my needs and desires in this life, at least based on my previous experience. Those goals and material belongings don't appear to be unacceptably evil. In fact I've seen many Christians seeking after the same things. Using my God-given skills and intellect, those things appear to be obtainable, especially now that I can count on God to assist when needed. It seems reasonable that if God delivered me from unhappiness when He saved me, my happiness would now be one of His priorities.

But wait, I see through another door. It is as though there is a sign beyond the entrance with a message from Jesus saying, "Come follow Me, I have a better plan prepared for you". He seems to want me to trust Him alone to give me fulfillment and satisfaction in this life and beyond. He seems to be telling me that the things I've seen through the other door only give temporary satisfaction for this life, but what He has prepared for me has eternal value. Since I can't visualize anything He seems to be promising, how does He expect me to make a sensible evaluation? Does He really expect me to just trust Him on blind faith? That doesn't seem very reasonable since I'm just a new Christian and don't have much faith yet. Maybe further along I'll understand better, when I have more faith.

4. MY LIFE CAN BE CATEGORIZED INTO THREE AREAS

There are **THREE AREAS** over which His Lordship needs to be considered, over my possessions; over my body; and over my understanding. Why three areas? Because a failure to yield to His authority over these three areas can keep a Christian from going on to maturity in Christ to bear eternal fruit.

Matthew 13:22 "... the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. (Luke 8:14 ... it becomes unfruitful.)

5. IS GOD TOTALLY GOOD?

- Can He be totally counted on?
- What does the Bible say about God's character?
- What does the evil one say about God's character?
- Just as a typical small child recognizes the authority of a parent, we should expect the typical new Christian to easily understand that God ought to be in charge.
- Is there a logical reason to not entrust myself totally to His authority? At the judgment seat of Christ what excuse could I offer for not doing so?
- If God has already given me what was most valuable to Him, how can I ever conclude that He would deny me that which is of so much less value? *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?* (Rom. 8:32)

Many older believers tend to equate Lordship to "bondage", while most new believers will equate Lordship to "freedom" (if it is clearly and correctly explained).

Surrender

In the early 1940s, the president of Dallas Seminary, Lewis Sperry Chafer, gave a very brief banquet speech. Introduced after a long program, he announced his subject:

"The Reasonableness Of Fully Surrendering Our Lives To God."

Then, because of the lateness of the hour, he gave only the three points of his message.

Reason 1: God is all-wise and knows better than anyone else what is best for my life.

Reason 2: He is almighty and has the power to accomplish what is best for me.

Reason 3: God loves me more than anyone else does.

Chafer concluded, "**Therefore the most logical thing I can do is surrender my life to God.** What more can I say? What more need I say?"

The apostle Paul had the same conviction. He knew that prison and hardship awaited him in Jerusalem, but he also knew that God wanted him to go (Acts 20:22-23). Even his sorrowing friends wisely concluded, "The will of the Lord be done" (21:14). They knew that Paul was right.

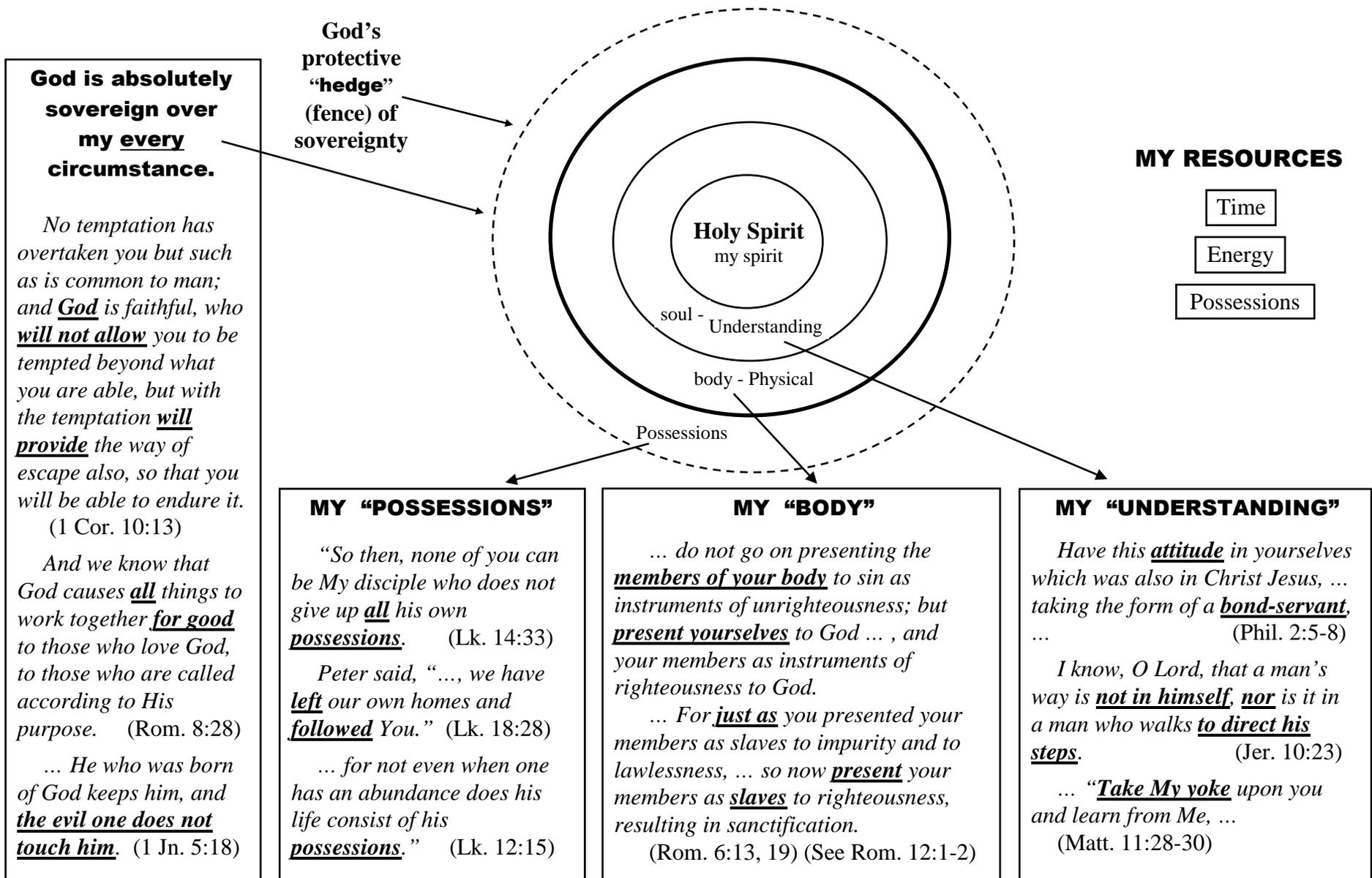
No matter what happens, when we do God's will we're in the safest place in all the world. The Lord is all-wise, almighty, and all-loving. Doesn't it make sense to surrender your life to Him? –HVL

*All to Jesus I surrender,
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live. --Van de Venter*

Surrender means victory when we surrender to God.

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THE THREE AREAS OF MY "LIFE" OVER WHICH I NEED TO YIELD MY INDEPENDENCE AND ACKNOWLEDGE HIS LORDSHIP AUTHORITY



GOD WAS AT WORK IN THE 3 AREAS OF JOB'S LIFE

(The story of Job is often presented as one of “suffering and patience”. We believe the greater lesson is one of “how God molds His children”.)

1. Job was a man who had a passion for God.

Job 1:1 *There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was blameless, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.*

Job 23:12 (Job said) ... *I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.*

2. God had tremendously blessed Job.

Job 1:2-3 *Seven sons and three daughters were born to him. His possessions also were 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and very many servants; and that man was the greatest of all the men of the east.*

3. God had a hedge (fence) of protection around Job and all that pertained to Job. This hedge represents God's sovereignty, against which the enemy is powerless. The same hedge surrounds every believer.

Job 1:8-10a *The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil.” Then Satan answered the Lord, “Does Job fear God for nothing? “Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? ...*

Illustration: There are tribes in Africa who traditionally built a hedge around their village to protect themselves and their livestock from marauding predators. **1 Peter 5:8** implores us: *Be*

of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

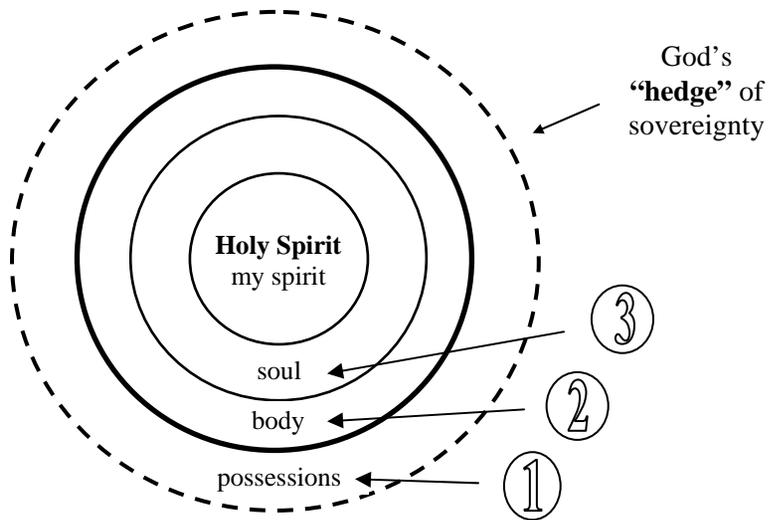
4. In order for Satan to afflict Job (even in the area of “possessions”), he had to be granted permission by God.

Job 1:10b-12 *You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. “But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face.” Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.*

NOTE: The enemy, Satan, had no power, nor right in himself, to afflict Job (or any believer). He only had power over Job to the degree granted to him by God. Satan has been allowed by God to exert power and influence in this present world, but only to the degree that it accomplishes God's purposes. It is comforting to know that God's absolute sovereignty and dominion over all His creation has never been, and will never be, the least bit compromised.

Prov. 21:30 *There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD.*

Dan. 4:35 *“All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, but He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’”*



5. God granted Satan permission to enter through the hedge and afflict Job in the area of **“possessions”**, but He ordered Satan to not go into the next area, that of **“the body”**

Job 1:12-19

:12 Then the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not put forth your hand on him.” So Satan departed from the presence of the Lord.

:13-15 Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, and the Sabaeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

:16 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

:17 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

:18-19 While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

6. Even though Job was crushed, overwhelmed and bewildered by the happenings, Job had long before acknowledged that God is the rightful sovereign Lord over all creation, including all that God had given him. His response was the evidence of that conviction.

Job 1:20-22 Then Job arose and tore his robe and shaved his head, and he fell to the ground and worshiped. He said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.” Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

7. Having lost the battle in the area of **“possessions”**, Satan returned to request permission to afflict Job in the area of the **“body”**. God granted Satan permission to enter into the area of the **“physical body”**, but ordered him to not go further, into the area of the **“understanding”** and the soul.

Job 2:1-7

- :1-5** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. The Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” Then Satan answered the Lord and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.” The Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.” Satan answered the Lord and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. “However, put forth Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh; he will curse You to Your face.”
- :6** So the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life.”
- :7** Then Satan went out from the presence of the Lord and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

- 2** **8. Job was once again dismayed and bewildered by the happenings. But as with his possessions, Job had long before concluded that God is the rightful sovereign Lord over all creation, including his body. And again his response was the evidence of that conviction.**

Job 2:8-10 And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

For the next 29 chapters (chapters 3-31) Job defends himself against the accusations of his three friends.

- 3** **9. God wanted to focus Job’s attention on an error he had in the area of his “understanding”. He uses Elihu, a young man who has been listening to the debate, to expose Job’s spiritual pride (chapters 32-37), after which He spoke directly to Job.**

Job 32:2-3 ... the anger of Elihu ... burned; against Job his anger burned because he justified himself before God. And his anger burned against his three friends because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

Job 33:8-12 (Elihu to Job) ... I have heard the sound of your words: ‘I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent and there is no guilt in me. ‘Behold, He invents pretexts against me; He counts me as His enemy. ‘He puts my feet in the stocks; He watches all my paths.’ “Behold, let me tell you, you are not right in this, for God is greater than man.

Job 34:5 (Elihu continued) “For Job has said, ‘I am righteous, but God has taken away my right; should I lie concerning my right? My wound is incurable, though I am without transgression.’

34:12 (Elihu) ... “Surely, God will not act wickedly, and the Almighty will not pervert justice.

34:17 (Elihu) “Shall one who hates justice rule? And will you condemn the righteous mighty One?

34:35-37 (Elihu) ‘Job speaks without knowledge, and his words are without wisdom. ...’ ”

NOTE: The way in which Elihu gently and humbly pointed out Job's error is a worthy example of Gal. 6:1-2, where the Lord instructs us: Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal. 6:1-2)

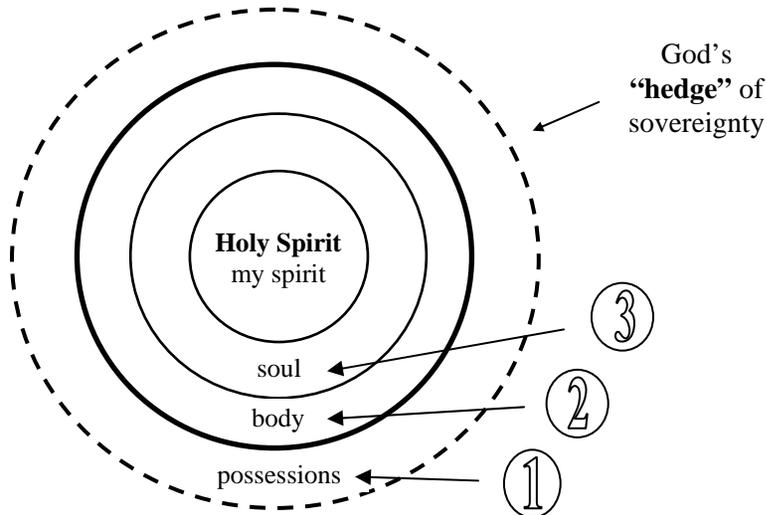
10. God then corrected Job directly (chapters 38-41).

Job 38:1-4 Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? ...

③

Job 40:1-2 ... the Lord said to Job, "Will the faultfinder contend with the Almighty? Let him who reproves God answer it."

Job 40:8 (God said to Job) Will you really annul My judgment? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?



11. Job acknowledged his error to God and repented.

Job 42:1-6 Then Job answered the Lord and said, "I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. 'Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?' "Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know." 'Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.' "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You; therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes."

③

12. God rebuked the three accusers, and restored Job.

Job 42:7-8 ... the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against you and against your two friends, because you have not spoken of Me what is right as My servant Job has. "Now therefore, take for yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer up a burnt offering for yourselves, and My servant Job will pray for you. For I will accept him so that I may not do with you according to your folly, because you have not spoken of Me what is right, as My servant Job has."

③

Job 42:9-12 ... The Lord restored the fortunes of Job when he prayed for his friends, and the Lord increased all that Job had twofold. Then all his brothers and all his sisters and all who had known him before came to him, and they ate bread with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversities that the Lord had brought on him. And each one gave him one piece of money, and each a ring of gold. The Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; ...

Note: For more Scriptures on "Suffering", see Lesson 1-14

3 AREAS OF TEMPTATIONS, TRIALS, TRIBULATIONS AND SURRENDER

	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6	
		Gen. 3:6 Independence	Luke 4:1-12 Dependence	Jeremiah 9:23-24	Luke 8:14 "The Sower"	1 John 2:15-16	
Introducti on →	Our "Resources"	6a <i>When the woman saw that the tree</i>	1-2a <i>Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, ... was led around by the Spirit ..., being tempted by the devil.</i>	23a <i>Thus says the Lord</i>	14a <i>... the ones who have heard, ... they are choked</i>	15-16a <i>Do not love the world nor the things in the world. ...</i>	
R O W 1	(I Am) "soul" Self Mind Understanding Will Personality Emotions Reasoning	Time	6d <i>and that the tree was desirable to make one wise,</i>	9-12 <i>And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down ... Jesus answered and said to him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"</i>	23b <i>"Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom,</i>	14b <i>with worries</i>	16d <i>... the boastful pride of life,</i>
R O W 2	(I Do) "body" Appetites Food Health Strength Physical Beauty Appearance	Energy	6b <i>was good for food,</i>	2b-4 <i>And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'</i>	23c <i>and let not the mighty man boast of his might,</i>	14d <i>and pleasures of this life,</i>	16b <i>the lust of the flesh</i>
R O W 3	(I Have) "possessions" Things Money Security	Possessions	6c <i>and that it was a delight to the eyes,</i>	5-8 <i>And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world ... "Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'</i>	23d <i>let not a rich man boast of his riches;</i>	14c <i>and riches</i>	16c <i>... the lust of the eyes</i>
	Conclusion →	To yield to His oversight and management "Lordship"	6e <i>she took from its fruit and ate; ... and he ate.</i>	Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. (Psalm 73:25)	24 <i>but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me,</i>	14e <i>and bring no fruit to maturity.</i>	16e <i>is not from the Father, but is from the world.</i>

Note: Advertisements typically target areas in Rows 1, 2 or 3, with the purpose of producing dissatisfaction.

Discussion Points

Part II – Salvation, Two Natures and Lordship

1. Contrast the **Substitutionary principle** of salvation with the common inclination toward merit based salvation. New Christians need to clearly understand that salvation is not earned, nor kept, through our human effort, in order for them not to reason like the Galatian Christians. *You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? **Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?*** (Gal. 3:1-3)
2. Discuss the “**event**” of salvation (the “new birth”) as being just the “**first step**” in the spiritual walk with God, just as physical birth is the first step in the human experience of progressing from childhood to adult maturity. Many Christians emphasize the event of salvation (and obviously it isn’t optional), but then fail to emphasize the importance of the Christian’s life between the experience of salvation and the departure from this body. Too many Christians view their daily life as being a difficult and frustrating struggle with sin, to be endured until they are finally delivered through death (an unpleasant, but necessary experience) into heaven. Even though they would like to experience a consistently victorious life, many reason that only “very spiritual” believers are able to achieve that goal.
3. Discuss the importance of understanding **God’s character** as it pertains to **His trustworthiness**. Then discuss the enemy’s strategy of **undermining the character of God** in a Christian’s mind by portraying Him as One who cannot always be counted on to do what is best for those who follow Him. The enemy utilizes the human nature’s propensity toward independence from God to promote distrust in Him, even though the Bible continually reinforces God’s character as loving, perfect, faithful and **absolutely worthy** of my trust.
4. Discuss **how we came to have within us two natures** which are in direct opposition to one another. Also discuss how the human nature is **not** the least bit improved at conversion, in contrast to the common perception that the Holy Spirit’s presence somehow raises the human nature to a new level of goodness. Each Christian needs to know that he has the same potential for committing sins after being saved as before. The human nature is beyond repair. God’s only provision for a victorious life is the **Divine Nature in the Person of the Holy Spirit**.
5. Discuss the need to view the Holy Spirit as a **Person**, God Himself, in contrast to the idea that He is something less, such as an “inspiration” or an “influential force” for good in my life. He should be recognized as a constant Overseer and Companion, and a Person with whom there needs to be continual **communication** and **interaction**, as I would have with a spouse or a close friend. He has a daily plan for my life and wants me to learn to **follow** Him and fit into **His** plans, contrary to the commonly held belief that He is always by my side, but is really only needed for those difficult times when “**I**” determine through my human understanding that I can’t cope alone.

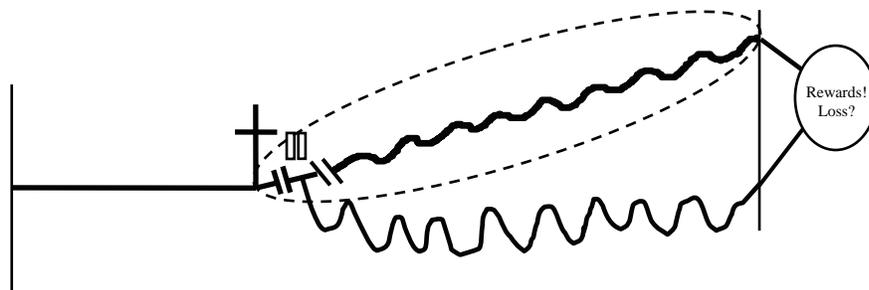
6. Discuss **Christ's "ownership"** of each Christian as a truth that does not in anyway depend upon the Christian's acknowledgment or acceptance of it. Christians need to clearly understand **from the very beginning** that surrender does not imply the giving up of something to God which is not already His. He **has** bought me and therefore to do anything less than unconditionally yield myself to Him is to usurp authority over that which is not mine. He **is** my Lord and I need to acknowledge and accept it. He should not be presented as One who will **"become"** my Lord sometime in the future.
7. Discuss the concept of Lordship as a **"decision" (event)**, a submission of the will to His authority, followed by a process (abiding, sanctification, spiritual growth). This event is represented by the decision of the 2nd group of Israelites to cross the Jordan River into God's chosen place of blessing and fruitfulness (Canaan), where they learned to follow God in the process of conquering the land. The familiar marriage ceremony (Marriage "Covenant") is also an **event** of commitment ("relinquishment of independence"), followed by the marriage **process** ("learning to live together in harmonious fellowship"). This perspective is in contrast to the prevalent understanding that Lordship is a **goal** that is attained to as a **result** of a "process" of surrender and obedience.
8. Discuss the concept of each Christian fitting into one of **two camps**, one camp being represented by the Israelites who entered into Canaan, and the other camp (probably 80% or more) being represented by the first group of Israelites who refused to believe God and entrust themselves into His care. They did not consider God trustworthy. As a result they found themselves in a desert experience where God faithfully took care of all their temporal needs, but they were **not fruitful** from God's eternal perspective. Typically Christians are viewed as all being on the same path (camp), just at different stages of growth. This perspective tends to view Lordship as a goal arrived at through a process, rather than as a prior event.
9. Discuss the **two** aspects of surrender, which present an obvious opportunity for confusion. There is an **initial** surrender of the **will** to His authority which is an event, followed by the process of surrendering those areas of my **understanding** and **behavior** that He wants to change and/or prune to make me more useful and fruitful. (A wild horse's will must first be broken, after which the process of being trained can follow.) The "yoke" referred to in Matthew 11:28-30 speaks of the relinquishment of my independence to Him (event), followed by a process of learning to walk in harmonious fellowship with Him, "getting to know Him" ("sanctification").
10. Discuss how many Christians mistakenly equate Lordship to a surrender of **external behavior**. This misconception typically results in a Christian repeatedly committing to total surrender and obedience, only to be soon disappointed by the lack of anticipated purity and godliness. It is then easy to conclude that such struggles with the human nature must be due to insincerity, lack of understanding, or lack of commitment on their part. Many Christians repeat this process over and over again through the years.

A Tool For Personal Discipleship

Phase 3
Amplified Discipleship Concepts

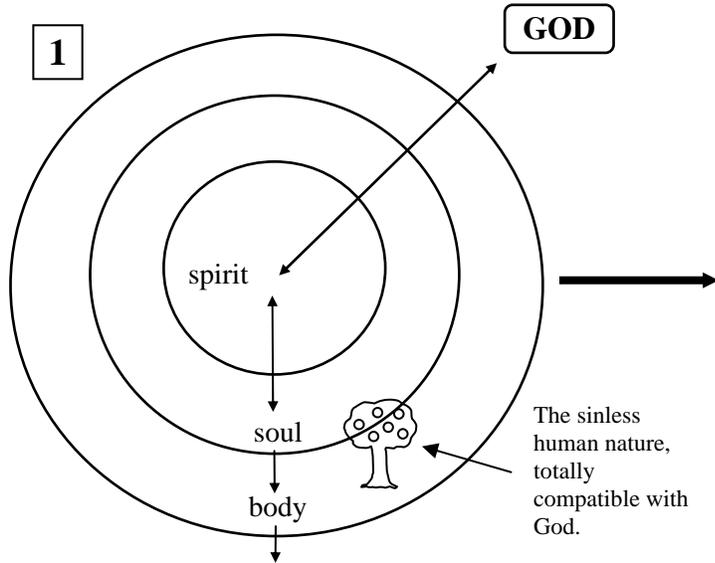
Part III

ABIDING



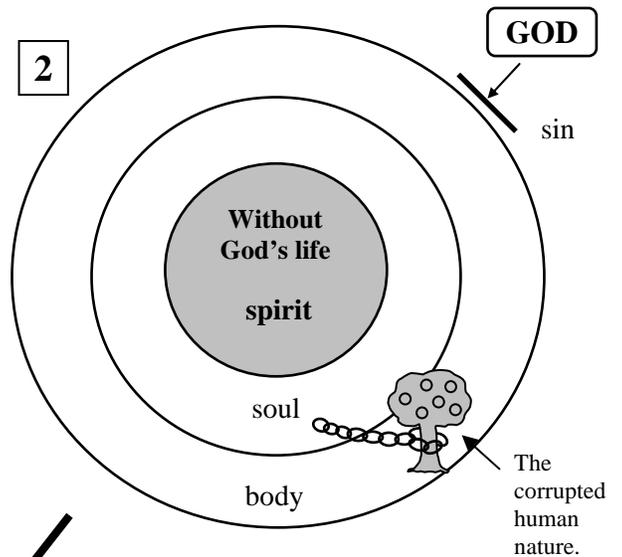
ABBREVIATED OVERVIEW OF THE TWO NATURES

Adam - before he sinned
(Jesus - while on earth)



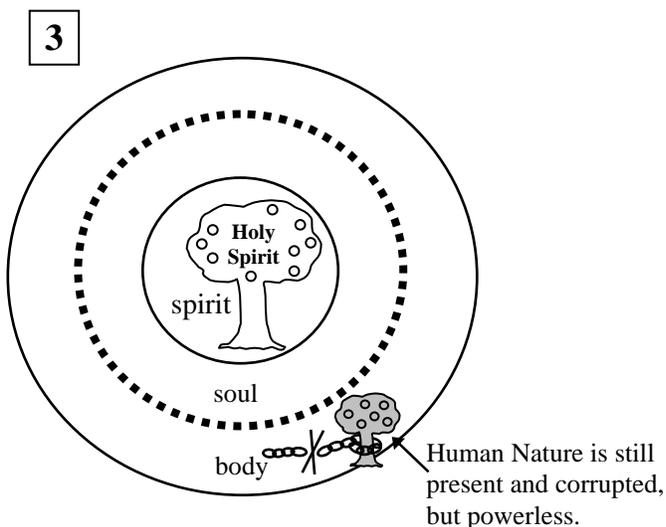
All behavior was in total harmony with God's character, totally pleasing to God.

All unbelievers



Their works (fruit) have no life (eternal), are imperfect (flawed), and unacceptable to God.

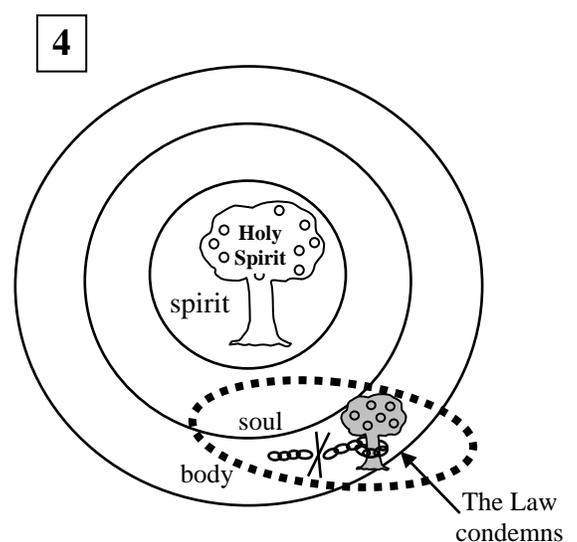
The condition of "abiding" in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.
("Walking in the Spirit")



All that I allow the Holy Spirit to do through me is eternal and rewardable at the judgment seat of Christ (gold, silver, precious stones).

Note: The circular "dotted line" represents the "conditional" aspect.

The condition of "not abiding", having an unresolved issue with the Holy Spirit.
("Walking in the flesh")



All that is not motivated by the Holy Spirit is temporal, without His life and not rewardable (wood, hay, stubble).

ABIDING, CONFESSION OF SIN and RESTORATION TO FELLOWSHIP as illustrated in JOSHUA 7

SETTING: The 2nd group of Israelites, under the leadership of Joshua and Caleb, had just entered Canaan (the Promised Land), after having spent 40 years in the desert because of the unbelief of the 1st group of Israelites. They were faced with the challenge of learning to walk in daily dependence on the Lord as He gave them victory over their enemies, the inhabitants of Canaan.

“When He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance—all of which took about four hundred and fifty years. (Acts 13:19)

PROBLEM: There is a prevalent misconception that I can somehow be under the control of the Holy Spirit and the Human Nature *simultaneously* (as long as I’m “trying my best”). I need to understand that God interacts with me as a “whole” person, in the same way I would interact with a spouse, or with a close friend. That is, He will not allow me to abide in fellowship with Him and have victory in one area of my life while I am consciously allowing disobedience and defeat in another area. **CAUTION:** A troublesome area of defeat in my life will often be the result of an unrelated and less obvious unresolved conflict in another area.

IMPORTANT: In this illustration, corporate Israel represents me as a Christian.

1. God assured Israel of victory in the Promised Land. However, Israel needed to learn that His guarantee of victory was conditional on their “abiding” in fellowship (communion) with Him. In the same way, He assures me of victory in my Christian walk - conditional on my remaining (“abiding”) in fellowship with Him.

1:3,5 *“Every place on which the sole of your foot treads, I have given it to you, just as I spoke to Moses. ... “No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you.
6:2 The Lord said to Joshua, “See, I have given Jericho into your hand, ...*

2. At Jericho, the Lord gave clear instructions. They were accountable to obey what they understood.

6:17-19 (The Lord said) *“The city ... and all that is in it belongs to the Lord; ... all the silver and gold and articles of bronze and iron are holy to the Lord; they shall go into the treasury of the Lord.”
6:21,24 They utterly destroyed everything in the city, ... Only the silver and gold, and articles of bronze and iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.*

They “assumed” that they had obeyed the Lord.

3. But there was disobedience that disrupted their fellowship with God, removing them from God’s provision for victory and rendering them defenseless. (One small piece of dirt or a drop of poison, in a glass of water pollutes the whole. 1 Cor. 5:6 says: “a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.” What I deem “insignificant” may be very significant to the Lord.)

7:1 But the **sons of Israel** acted unfaithfully ... for **Achan**, ... took some of the things under the ban, therefore the anger of the Lord burned against the **sons of Israel**.

Although only **one** man was involved, God held the **entire nation** (corporately) accountable. At first glance this may appear “unfair” to some. But this is how we relate to a spouse, and to others. If someone were to steal something, would just their “hand” be sent to jail? **One** of God’s purposes for this illustration was to teach Israel (and us) this principle. (read also Joshua 22:20)

4. They seemed to feel quite **confident** at this time, and there is **no indication** that they “consulted” the Lord before proceeding. Evidently they felt they were “on a roll”. (read also Joshua 9:14)

7:2-3 Now Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, ... and said to them, “Go up and spy out the land.” So the men went up and spied out Ai. They returned to Joshua and said to him, “Do not let all the people go up; only about two or three thousand men need go up to Ai; do not make all the people toil up there, for **they are few**.”

They appeared **unaware** that they were now **defenseless**, and functioning in their own strength.

5. When they confronted the enemy **in their own strength** they found themselves defeated.

7:4-5 So about three thousand men from the people went up there, but **they fled** from the men of Ai. The men of Ai struck down about thirty-six of their men, and pursued them ... so **the hearts of the people melted** and became as water.

It would be easy to conclude that God’s promises (see point 1) had failed.

6. They were very discouraged and at a loss to understand why this had happened. They “**assumed**” they had obeyed the Lord. They were ready to give up.

7:6-9 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until the evening, both he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads. Joshua said, “Alas, O Lord God, **why** did You ever bring this people over the Jordan, **only to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us**? If only we had been willing to dwell beyond the Jordan! “O Lord, what can I say since Israel has turned their back before their enemies? “For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land will hear of it, and they will surround us and cut off our name from the earth. And what will You do for Your great name?”

7. God now had their attention. He wanted to reveal an “unresolved issue” to them. The tendency is for a believer to **not associate** the “symptom” with the **root** problem. **Israel viewed Ai as the problem, but God viewed Ai as a symptom. Achan was the problem. They were defeated at Ai only because the source of their strength had been disrupted, leaving them defenseless.**

7:10-11 So the Lord said to Joshua, “Rise up! Why is it that you have fallen on your face? “**Israel** has sinned, and **they** have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. And **they** have even taken some of the things under the ban and have both stolen and deceived. ...

Notice again, God uses “**they**” because He held the **entire** nation accountable for **one** man’s sin.

8. God wanted Israel to understand that victory over their enemies originated from Him alone and was **conditional** upon their **continual** abiding fellowship with Him. While out of fellowship with Him they were defenseless. (As am I when I “allow” disobedience to disrupt my fellowship with the Holy Spirit. John 15:4-5 states: ... *apart from Me you can do **nothing**.*)

7:12a “***Therefore the sons of Israel cannot stand before their enemies;*** ...

1% unresolved sin in my life can leave me 100% out of fellowship with the Lord. That doesn’t mean I’m 100% sinful, just that I am now functioning **in union with** my sinful nature (“walking in the flesh”), until I am willing to be restored.

9. In order to be **restored** to “abiding fellowship” with God they would need to **repent** and **acknowledge** the sin for which God was holding them accountable. Otherwise they could not count on God’s strength, but rather would be standing against their enemies **in their own strength**.

7:12b-13 “... *I will not be with you **anymore unless** you destroy the things under the ban from your midst. “Rise up! Consecrate the people and say, ‘**Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, for thus the Lord, the God of Israel, has said, “There are things under the ban in your midst, O Israel. You **cannot** stand before your enemies **until** you have removed the things under the ban from your midst.**”*”

Note: While refusal to enter His Spiritual Promised Land does result in a defeated and unfruitful life, simply being in His Spiritual Promised Land does not guarantee a victorious and fruitful life, because His victories and fruitfulness are “**conditional on abiding**”.

10. They needed to honestly examine themselves to be sure that nothing was left unresolved. The sin that disrupted their fellowship with the Lord was identified and laid out before the Lord. Biblical “confession” carries the idea of “repentance” (putting to death). (See also 1 John 1:5-10)

7:14-19 *‘In the morning then you shall come near by your tribes. ... ‘It shall be that the one who is taken with the things under the ban shall be **burned with fire**, he and all that belongs to him, ... So Joshua arose early in the morning and brought Israel near by tribes, ... Achan, ... from the tribe of Judah, was taken. Then Joshua said to Achan, “My son, I implore you, give glory to the Lord, the God of Israel, and give praise to Him; and **tell** me now what you have done. **Do not hide it** from me.”*

7:20,21,23 *So Achan answered Joshua and said, “Truly, **I have sinned against the Lord**, the God of Israel, and **this is what I did**: when I saw among the spoil a beautiful mantle from Shinar and two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold fifty shekels in weight, then I coveted them and took them; and behold, they are concealed in the earth inside my tent with the silver underneath it.” They took them from inside the tent and brought them to Joshua and to all the sons of Israel, and they **poured them out before the Lord**.*

7:24-26a *Then Joshua and all Israel with him, took Achan ... the silver, the mantle, the bar of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, his sheep, his tent and all that belonged to him; and they brought them up to the valley of Achor. ... And **all Israel stoned them** with stones; and they **burned them** with fire ...*

11. Their fellowship with the Lord was **immediately** and **completely** restored and they were once again “abiding” in fellowship with Him. Because they were abiding, they could once again experience and enjoy His blessing and victory.

7:26b-8:1 ... ***the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger.*** ... Now the Lord said to Joshua, “***Do not fear or be dismayed.*** Take all the people of war with you and arise, go up to Ai; see, ***I have given into your hand*** the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land.

Notice that God reinstates the original promises and encouragement (from Joshua 1:3,5).

12. God gave them different instructions in regard to the next confrontation. What God deemed to be sin in Jericho was **not** sin at Ai. If Achan had waited for **God’s timing**, what he did would not have displeased God. (Even doing a “**good**” thing at the **wrong time** may be sin.)

8:2 “You shall do to Ai and its king just as you did to Jericho and its king; you shall ***take only its spoil and its cattle as plunder*** for yourselves. ...”

13. The Israelites were reminded to not forget the lesson they had learned in Joshua 7.

Joshua 22:20 When Achan ... acted unfaithfully regarding the devoted things, did not wrath come upon the ***whole*** community of Israel? He was ***not the only one*** who died for his sin.”

PRINCIPLES TO BE LEARNED:

- 1) If you find yourself defeated and cannot seem to get victory in an area of your life, perhaps you are struggling with a “symptom”, rather than the “problem”. Ask God for discernment to distinguish the difference.
- 2) God will not allow you to experience His joy, peace, victory and blessings, while you are unwilling to resolve an issue for which the Holy Spirit is presently holding you accountable. Remember, it is the Holy Spirit alone who determines when you are responsible for disrupting your fellowship (and you’re not “abiding”). What He deems to be significant may be “insignificant” to you (for example, pride, unforgiveness, neglect, complaining, etc.).
- 3) He may hold you accountable for something “today” for which He would not have held you accountable “yesterday”. **Or** He may choose to not hold you accountable today for something which He chose to hold you accountable yesterday.
- 4) You will never get to the place in your spiritual life where you don’t have to pay attention to His leading.

“Sanctification”

***“I will drive them out before you little by little,
until you become fruitful and take possession of the land.
(Ex. 23:30)***

JOHN 15 - THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

(Verse by Verse)

These are notes taken from a teaching by E.G. von Trutzschler (“pastor Von”) at a New Tribes Mission annual conference in Bolivia (and I’ve added some notes - Art Barkley)

:1. ***I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser.***

The implication here is that there are "untrue" vines. Those who entrust their lives to Christ are of the "true" Vine. God the Father is the Gardener, Jesus is the Vine, we are the branches. The Vinedresser (or Gardener) speaks of God's sovereignty, ownership, care and protection. God has a hedge around us.

Job 1:10 *"Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, ... ?*

:2. ***Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away (or lifts up); and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.***

“***in Me***” speaks of salvation (he is referring to those who are Christians). We're not “in Christ” because of bearing fruit. We don't earn salvation by our fruit; we produce fruit because we are abiding in Christ. Who of us would be saved by our own righteousness or faithfulness?

Ec. 7:20 ... *there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.*

A Christian may or may not bear fruit. “Cuts off / breaks off” refers to divine discipline. God reacts, perhaps removing me to another place (perhaps to heaven).

1 Cor. 5:5 *I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (See also 2 Cor. 2:5-8)*
1 Cor. 11:30 *For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep (died).*
1 Cor. 3:15 *If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

“***Bears fruit***” Fruit is the character of Christ being produced in us by the work of God. What does a natural fruit do? It satisfies, brings pleasure.

Gal. 5:22-23 *the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

Pruning speaks of removing parts that, from God's perspective, are a hindrance to what He wants to accomplish in and through my life. Their harmful character may or may not be obvious to me; for example, parasitic plants. Who but God can decide what has value? All pruning hurts for awhile. The bottom line is: Can I trust Him? Trials reveal Christian character.

Heb. 12:4-11 ... *He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.*
Rom. 5:3-4 ... *we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;*

:3. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

You are clean because of what He has accomplished; “**clean**” is an appropriate reminder of salvation. The disciples were clean; Judas was unclean. Clean relates to "union", whereas washing relates to "communion". Our feet get dirty as we walk daily in this world.

John 13:10-11 *Jesus said to him, "He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is **completely clean**; and **you are clean**, but not all of you. For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, "Not all of you are clean."*

:4. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

“**Abide**” does not speak of salvation, but "**fellowship**"; it is not union, but "**communion**". Union depends on God, communion depends on me. (for example, as in a marriage relationship) Abide/remain (used 64 times by apostle John) means "to dwell, continue, tarry, endure", "to continue in communion/fellowship without unresolved conflicts".

Scofield on “abiding” – “*Having no sin unjudged and unconfessed, no interest into which He is not brought, no life He cannot share. The abiding one takes his burdens to Him, draws wisdom, life, and strength from Him. It is not unceasing consciousness of these things, and of Him, but that **nothing is allowed in the life which separates from Him.***” (pp. 1136-37).

Can continual communion be maintained? Is God unreasonable? On page 164 of “*Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret*” we read, “**We should never be conscious of not abiding** in Christ.” (If I have a thorn in my foot, or a particle in my eye, do I ignore it, or pretend it doesn’t exist?) Only unacknowledged sin can break fellowship. Confession immediately restores fellowship. Jesus calls us to a "rest" (see Matt. 11:28-30). Not a "striving" to rest, but rather a vigilance, sensitivity to anything that would disturb that relationship. If I am "honestly" doing what I believe to be pleasing to Him, I can trust Him to show me otherwise.

Illustration: An object held in an open hand does not strive, yet is not overcome by gravity. If the object represents you as a soul, then gravity would be like the sinful nature in our body, and the hand would be like the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 30:20-21 *Although the Lord has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher. Your ears will hear a word behind you, “This is the way, walk in it,” **whenever** you turn to the right or to the left.*

Walking in the light speaks of **communion**. Am I aware of darkness? Darkness speaks of sin. This is dangerous! Our eyes adjust if we are not careful.

1 John 1:7 *but if we walk **in the Light** as He Himself is in the Light, we have **fellowship** with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

God uses His Word to train us.

Heb. 5:13-14 *For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who **because of practice** have their senses trained to discern good and evil. (See also Hebrews 4:12)*

We're all at different levels in our Christian growth - child, adolescent, adult. He alone knows where I am, and deals with me accordingly. He doesn't expect me to act beyond my age.

Communion is **conditional**. His promise is conditional on **my** choices, like so many other promises He makes. The choice to abide/remain indicates that my natural tendency is one of "not abiding/remaining"

:5. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

The **natural**, absolute result of being connected is that I **will** bear fruit! Fruit comes from "**just being healthy**". There is no reason to compare ourselves to others.

2 Cor. 10:12 ... when they ... compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.

We have different gifts, just as there are different types of natural fruit. People are looking for fruit that satisfies, they want "**good**" fruit. "**Activity**" is not necessarily "good fruit". "**Nothing**" has no eternal value, and no eternal reward. We can do plenty in the flesh

1 Cor. 13:1-3 *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a **noisy gong** or a **clanging cymbal**. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am **nothing**. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me **nothing**.*
John 6:63 *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits **nothing**;*

:6. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Jesus wasn't attempting to "keep" Himself in union with the Father (see v. 10). This verse speaks of my testimony before the world, not salvation (see v. 2). God sees my faith (invisible to men), but men see my works (visible to men) – see v. 8.

John 13:35 *"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have **love for one another**."*
James 2:14-26 ... just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

God was held in contempt by the world due to king David's sin (see 2 Sam. 12:14). A healthy branch is fixed, but flexible (manageable, pliable, teachable, moldable). A dead branch is brittle, hard, self-willed, unbendable, unmoldable, unteachable.

:7. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.

We'll be in line with Him. We'll learn to think like Him. God is not a "name it and claim it" wishing well. He wants to change my desires, the things I would wish for.

Amos 3:3 *Do two walk together unless they have **agreed** to do so? (NIV)*
Psalm 37:4 *Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

:8. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

Frustration and failure are unpleasant, but are used by God to draw us closer to Himself. We are lights in the darkness. There is no competition like in the secular world; God gets the glory. There are no politics in an organism. There is no room for selfish ambitions in our work.

Matt. 5:14-16 *“You are the light of the world. ... “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

John 7:18 *“He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.*

Gal. 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

:9. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.

“**as**” is important. He loves us in the same way the Father loves Him. We see the Father's love and care for His Son. Jesus entrusted Himself completely into that care.

1 Peter 2:21-23 *For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; 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;*

:10. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

We are called to entrust ourselves completely into His hands.

Rom. 12:1-2 *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

How do we abide/remain? Obey! Obedience is "voluntary". Obey what? Obey the Holy Spirit.

Gal. 5:16-17 *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 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.*

We are given but one command relating to others = **Love one another** (v.12)

Gal. 5:14 *For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

There is danger in omission, that is not obeying/not doing what we believe to be right. Just as “darkness” is “the absence of light”.

James 4:17 *... to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.*

:11. *These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.*

An appropriate time to speak of "joy"?

Heb. 12:2 *fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*

We must abide/remain, then we will bear fruit, and then we will experience God's joy. Not just joy, but rather "Jesus' joy" in full measure.

John 17:13 *"But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.*

:12. *This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.*

Fruit is for others (fruit of the Spirit). Love is a choice; it is choosing to give another's welfare and interests the same importance as my own. "**as**" puts it within the realm of our possibility.

Matt. 22:39 *"... 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'*
Mat. 23:11 *"... the greatest among you shall be your servant.*
Phil. 2:3-4 *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*

:13. *Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

It is an "attitude" of willingness.

Matt. 20:26 *... whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,*
John 10:15-18 *even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ... "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. "No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father."*
Phil. 2:3-8 *... Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ...*

:14. *You are My friends, if you do what I command you.*

A friend is one who yields his allegiance to another. Partners together with Christ.

1 Cor. 3:6-9 *... then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; ...*

:15. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

A friend knows the Master's business.

Eph. 5:17 *So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

:16. You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.

Chose/Election - Who knows why? No one is better than another. We can only be grateful.

John 6:44 *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; ...*
John 6:65 (Jesus said) *no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”*
Rom. 3:11 *There is none who seeks for God;*

The fruit that the Holy Spirit produces through me as I abide has eternal value.

2 Cor. 4:17 *For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,*

:17. This I command you, that you love one another.

One command encompasses all. As I abide in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, He will draw others to Himself through the love for others that He will manifest through my life.

John 13:35 *“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

REVIEW: RESULTS OF ABIDING/REMAINING IN CONTINUAL FELLOWSHIP:

- v. 2. I will be pruned/disciplined/corrected to make me more fruitful.
- v. 5. 12, 17 The Holy Spirit will draw others to Himself as I allow His love to touch them.
- v. 7. I will be communicating/praying and seeing answers.
- v. 8. God will be glorified through my life.
- v. 11. I will be experiencing His joy.
- v. 16. I will be bearing fruit that has eternal benefits.

THE SON IS OUR MODEL FOR “CONTINUAL ABIDING”

1. The Son was the perfect “Branch” of God. (Old Testament prophecies.)

Isa. 4:2 *In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, ...*
Isa. 11:1-5 *Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse (king David’s father), and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. ... (See also Rom. 15:12)*
Jer. 23:5-6 *“... the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land. ...*
Jer. 33:15 *‘In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.*
Zech. 3:8 *‘Now listen, Joshua ..., I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.*
Zech. 6:12-13 *... ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the Lord. ...*

2. As a branch the Son was not the source of what He said or did, He was a usable vessel, constantly available to the Father.

Deuteronomy 18:18 *‘I (God) will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you (Moses), and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.*
John 3:32 (John the Baptist said) *“What He has seen and heard, of that He testifies; ...*
5:19 *... “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; ...*
5:30 *“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.*
7:16 *... Jesus answered them and said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.*
8:16 *“But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.*
8:26 *“... the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.”*
8:28 *... Jesus said, ... I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.*
8:38 *“I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; ...*
12:49-50 *“... I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. “I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”*
14:24 *“... the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.*
14:31 *... that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me....*
15:15 *“... all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.*
17:8 (Jesus said to His Father) *... the words which You gave Me I have given to them; ...*
Phil. 2:5-7 *... Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, ... emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, ...*

3. The Son is the visible manifestation of the invisible God:

John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

10:37-38 *“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.”*

12:44-45 *And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me. “He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.*

14:9 (Jesus said to Philip) *He who has seen Me has seen the Father; ...*

14:10-11 *“... The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.*

Isa. 9:6 *For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; ...; And His name will be called ..., Mighty God, Eternal Father, ...*

2 Cor. 4:4 *... Christ, who is the image of God.*

Col. 1:15 *He is the image of the invisible God, ...*

Heb. 1:3 *And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, ...*

4. The Son did not seek to please people to win their praise, but sought only to please His Father:

Matt. 26:36-44 *Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, ... And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.” ... He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.” ... And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more.*

John 4:34 *Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.*

5:30 *“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.*

5:41 *“I do not receive glory from men;*

6:38 *“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

7:18 *“He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.*

8:29 *“And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”*

8:50 *“But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.*

8:54 *Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, ...*

12:27-28 *“Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. “Father, glorify Your name.” ...*

5. The Son totally entrusted Himself into His Father's care. He knew His Father was sovereign and totally trustworthy.

Matt. 26:39 *And He ... fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."*

John 7:28 *... I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, ...*

John 19:10-11 *So Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?" Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; ...*

Phil. 2:8 *Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

Heb. 5:8-9 *Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,*

1 Pet. 2:21-23 *... while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;*

6. God wants me to have that same "abiding" relationship with Him:

John 14:12 *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father.*

15:5 *"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.*

17:3 (Jesus prayed to His Father) *"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

17:14 *"... they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*

17:18 *"As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*

17:23 *I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.*

17:26 *and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."*

20:21 *So Jesus said to them again, "... as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."*

Matt. 10:40 *"He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.*

Rom. 8:29 *For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;*

2 Cor. 3:18 *... we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, ...*

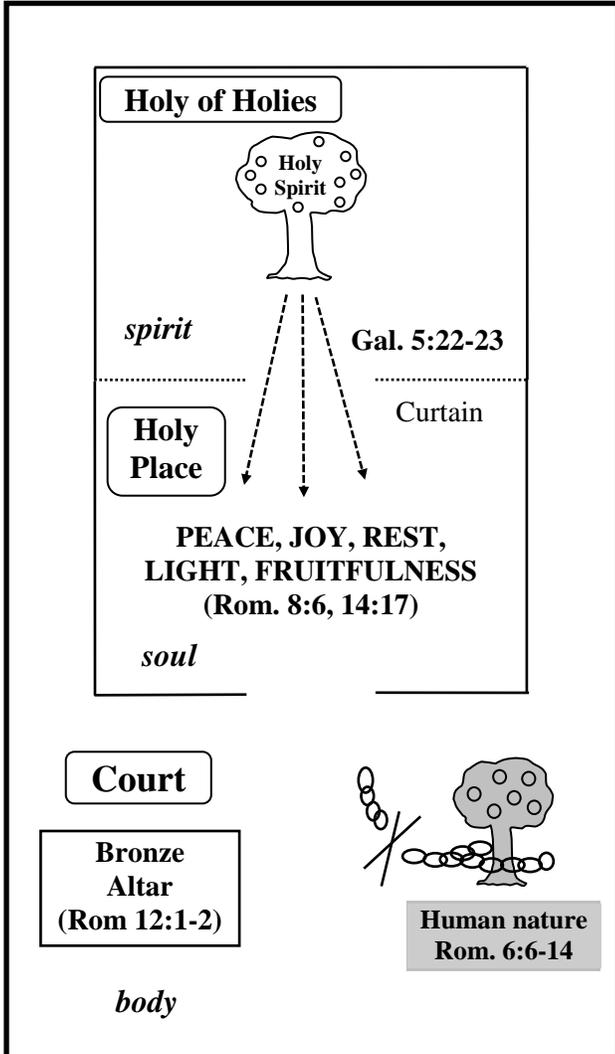
Phil. 2:5-7 *Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant,*

1 Pet. 2:21-23 *For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, ...;*

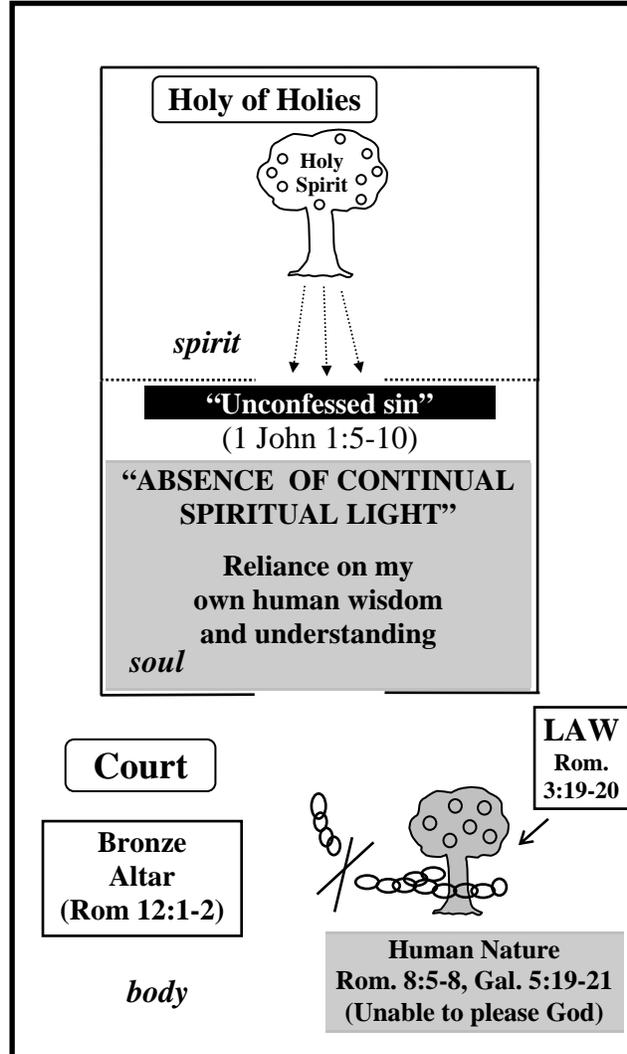
1 John 2:6 *the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.*

ABIDING IN HIS TEMPLE

“Walking in Fellowship with the Holy Spirit”
 “Abiding in Christ”
 “Walking in His Light”



“Out of Fellowship with the Holy Spirit”
 “Allowing the Human Nature to Reign”
 “Walking in Spiritual Darkness”



THE HOLY SPIRIT IS PRODUCING HIS FRUIT

Illustration – Imagine a reflection in a calm lake. Sin acts like a pebble that is dropped into the water and distorts the reflection.

Illustration – Sin is like dirt in an otherwise glass of pure clean water.

Sin is “*anything that displeases God*”.

EXPECT ONLY WOOD, HAY AND STUBBLE

**STAY ALERT FOR ON-GOING
SYMPTOMS OF BEING OUT OF
FELLOWSHIP, SUCH AS:**

**Stumbling, Impatience, Anxiety
Lack of peace, Sense of defeat,
Dissatisfaction, Striving, Complaining
Worry, Frustration, Anger, Irritability**

VERSES RELATED TO THE TEMPLE PRESENTATION

1. JESUS WAS A TEMPLE OF GOD ON EARTH, AND SO IS EACH TRUE BELIEVER.

John 2:19-21 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

The Jews then said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?” But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

1 Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Cor. 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

2 Cor. 6:16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, “I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

2. GOD DWELLS IN EVERY CHRISTIAN AS HIS TEMPLE. NOW EVERY BELIEVER, AS A PRIEST, CAN ENTER HIS PRESENCE AND COMMUNE WITH HIM. (See also Ex. 30:6-8)

Matt. 27:50-51 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; ...

Eph. 2:18-22 ... you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Heb. 9:1-7 ... For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron’s rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; ... the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

Heb. 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Heb 13:10,15,16 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat. ... Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

1 Peter 2:5,9 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ... But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

3. HIS “FRUIT” SHOULD BE PRODUCED IN / THROUGH ME

Rom. 8:6 *For the mind set on the flesh is death (“absence of life”), but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,*

Rom. 14:17 *for the kingdom of God is ... righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

Gal. 5:22-23 *... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

4. HIS “LIGHT” SHOULD SHINE THROUGH ME

Matt. 5:14-16 *“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

2 Cor. 4:6-11 *For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ... always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. 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.*

Eph. 5:8-13 *for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ...*

1 John 2:8-11 *... The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.*

5. HIS “LIVING WATER” SHOULD FLOW THROUGH ME (see also Eze. 47:1-12)

Jer. 2:13 (God, referring to Himself) ... Me, the fountain of living waters, ...

John 7:37-38 *Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’ ”*

James 3:8-12 *But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.*

6. A GLIMPSE OF THE HEAVENLY CITY

Rev. 21:10, 22 *And he (angel) carried me (John) away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ... I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.*

REWARDS (or LOSS OF) CEREMONY FOR BELIEVERS

(Commonly known as *The Judgment Seat of Christ* or *The Bema Seat*)

The judgment of believers has **nothing to do with salvation, nor with punishment** - that was all taken care of **at the cross**. Nor does it have to do with what **I** as a Christian can do **for** God. God does not need anything I can do. Rewards will be based on the **fruit that I have allowed the Holy Spirit to produce** through my life here on earth, as I by **faith** in His promises, have abided in fellowship with Him. I **cannot compare** heavenly rewards with earthly rewards, but I need to understand that they will somehow affect the **quality** of my life in eternity. A Christian should not conclude that rewards are unimportant because there is no associated punishment. If God says they're important, they are!

1. **Every Christian is going to appear at the judgment seat of Christ.**

Rom. 14:10-12 *But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will **all** stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then **each one** of us will give an account of himself to God.*

2 Cor. 5:9-10 (Paul wrote) *Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must **all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that **each one** may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

2 Tim. 4:7-8 (Paul wrote) *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to **all who have loved His appearing**.*

Rev. 22:12 (Jesus said) *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My **reward** is with Me, to render to **every man** according to what he has done.*

2. **What will be the nature of the judgment seat of Christ?**

1 Cor. 3:8-15 (Paul wrote) *Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but **each will receive his own reward according to his own labor**. ... I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with **gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw**, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a **reward**. If any man's work is burned up, he will **suffer loss**; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

1 Cor. 4:5 ... *wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then **each man's praise will come to him from God**.*

3. **When will the judgment seat of Christ take place?**

Matt. 16:27 (Jesus said) “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

Luke 14:13-14 (Jesus said) “But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

1 Peter 5:1-4 (Peter wrote) ... I exhort the elders ... shepherd the flock of God ... And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Rev. 11:18 “And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, ...

4. **There will be no punishment for a believer.**

John 5:24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

Rom. 4:8 “Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.”

Rom. 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Heb. 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

Heb. 10:17-18 “And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” ...

Rev. 21:4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.”

5. **But each one needs to be aware of the potential for “loss” of rewards. (Loss is not punishment. See also 3-14, pages 214-216)**

John 15:16 (Jesus said) “... I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, ...

1 Cor. 3:14-15 ... If any man’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, ...

1 Cor. 9:24-27 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.

Gal. 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

2 Tim. 2:5 Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.

2 John 1:8 Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.

Rev. 3:11-12 (Jesus said) ‘I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. ...

6. For what will believers be rewarded? These are but a sampling of fruit that we should expect to see, as the Holy Spirit is allowed to work.

- 1 Sam. 26:23 *“The Lord will repay each man for his righteousness and his faithfulness; ...*
Prov. 19:17 *One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his good deed.*
- Matt. 5:11-12 *“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; ...*
- Matt. 5:44-46 (Jesus said) *“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ... “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”*
- Luke 6:35 *“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men.*
- Matt. 10:42 *“And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.”*
- Matt. 19:27-30 *Then Peter said to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?” And Jesus said to them, ... “And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. “But many who are first will be last; and the last, first.*
- Rom. 8:17-18 *... heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*
- Eph. 6:5-8 *Slaves (employees?), be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.*
- Col. 3:22-24 *Slaves (employees?), in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*
- Phil. 4:1 (Paul wrote) *Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.*
- 1 Thess. 2:19-20 *For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.*
- James 1:12 *Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*
- Rev. 2:10 *‘Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:20)
- is not a “suggestion”.

7. We should seek “eternal” rewards, not rewards of an “earthly” nature.

- Matt. 6:1-6 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. ... “But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. “When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. “But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.
- Matt. 6:16-21 ... “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- Luke 14:12-14 ... “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment. “But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”
- John 5:44 “How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?
- John 12:42-43 Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.
- 2 Cor. 4:17-18 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
- Phil. 3:7-16 ... I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish ... forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect (mature), have this attitude; ...
- Col. 3:1-3 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ...
- 1 Tim. 4:8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.
- 1 Tim. 6:17-19 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.
- 1 Peter 1:17 Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. (NIV) (See also 1 Peter 1:1 and 2:11)

“for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matthew 6:21)

8. His rewards are eternal (forever). (Note: Daniel references may refer just to Old Testament saints.)

Dan. 7:18 ... *the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, ...*

Dan. 7:27 *'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'*

1 Cor. 9:24-27 ... *Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.*

2 Cor. 4:17-18 *For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

1 Pet. 1:3-7 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*

9. Although much religious activity appears spiritual, only that which is motivated by the Holy Spirit will be rewarded. (the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Gal. 5:22-23)

Ecclesiastes 3:14 *I know that everything God does will remain forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, ...*

John 15:5 *"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.*

1 Cor. 13:1-3 *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

Gal. 6:7-10 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. ...*

1 John 4:16-17 ... *God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.*

10. Old Testament believers will also be rewarded.

Hebrews 11

:1-2 Now **faith** is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For **by it** the men of old gained approval.

:8-11 By **faith** Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. By **faith** he lived as an **alien** in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for **he was looking for the city which has foundations**, whose architect and builder is God. By **faith** even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she **considered Him faithful** who had promised.

:13-16 All these died in **faith, without receiving** the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were **strangers** and **exiles** on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are **seeking a country of their own**. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a **heavenly one**. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for **He has prepared a city** for them.

:24-27 By **faith** Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ **greater riches** than the treasures of Egypt; for he was **looking to the reward**. By **faith** he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as **seeing Him** who is unseen.

:32-40 ... Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a **better** resurrection; and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ... And all these, having gained approval through their **faith, did not receive** what was promised, because God had provided something better for us, **so that apart from us they would not be made perfect**.

***And without faith it is impossible to please Him,
for he who comes to God must believe that He is and
that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.***

Hebrews 11:6

We each have three resources: Time, Energy, and Possessions.

**As I allow the Holy Spirit freedom to manage and use my resources,
He is building me eternal rewards, using gold, silver and precious stones.**

**As I deny the Holy Spirit use of my resources, I am using those resources
to build myself a temporary investment of wood, hay and straw.**

The Judgment Seat (*The Bema*) of Christ or The Doctrine of Rewards (from www.bible.org)

(**bold and underline** added for emphasis by Art Barkley)

One of the prominent doctrines of the New Testament is the Doctrine of Rewards and the Judgment Seat of Christ. It is a doctrine often ignored or, when taught, it is misrepresented because of the term "judgment" that is used in translating the Greek text.

Commenting on this Samuel Hoyt writes: Within the church today there exists **considerable confusion and debate** regarding the exact nature of the examination at the judgment seat of Christ. The expression "the judgment seat of Christ" in the English Bible has tended to cause some to draw the wrong conclusion about the nature and purpose of this evaluation. A **common misconception** which arises from this English translation is that **God will mete out a just retribution for sins** in the believer's life, and **some measure of retributive punishment for sins will result** (Bibliotheca Sacra, *Article by Samuel Hoyt*).

As it will be shown below, though it is **tremendously serious with eternal ramifications**, the judgment seat of Christ is **not a place and time when the Lord will mete out punishment for sins** committed by the child of God. Rather, it is a place where rewards will be given or lost depending on how one has used his or her life for the Lord.

(Added Note: Maybe better stated, "Rewards will be based on the fruit that I have allowed the Holy Spirit to produce through my life, as I by faith in His promises, have abided in fellowship with Him" – Art B.)

In 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, the Apostle Paul drew courage and was motivated by the fact of rewards at the return of the Lord for the church which he mentions in every chapter in this epistle and becomes the primary subject of 2 Thessalonians. The Lord's return and what this means not only to the world but to us individually is a very prominent subject of the New Testament.

It is significant that among the final words of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, we find these words of the Lord: "*Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done*" (Rev. 22:12).

While salvation is a gift, there are **rewards given for faithfulness** in the Christian life and **loss of rewards for unfaithfulness**. Rewards become **one of the great motives** of the Christian's life **or should**. But we need to understand the nature of these rewards to understand the nature of the motivation. Some people are troubled by the doctrine of rewards because **this seems to suggest "merit" instead of "grace"**, and because, it is pointed out, we should **only serve the Lord out of love and for God's glory**.

Of course we should serve the Lord out of love and for God's glory, and understanding the nature of rewards will help us do that. But **the fact still remains** that the Bible promises us rewards. God gives us salvation. It is a gift through faith, but He rewards us for good works. **God graciously supplies the means** by which we may serve Him. Indeed, **He works in us** both to will and to do as we volitionally appropriate His grace (Phil. 2:12-13), but **the decision** to serve, and **the diligence** employed in doing so, are **our responsibility** and our contribution and God sees this as rewardable. Compare the following passages:

1 Cor. 15:10 *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but **I labored even more** than all of them, **yet not I, but the grace of God with me.***

Col. 1:29 *And for this purpose also **I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.***

Key Verses: Rom. 14:10-11; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:9-10; 1 John 2:28; Rev. 3:11-12.

The Meaning of The Judgment (*Bema*) Seat

Both Romans 14:10 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 speak of the "judgment seat." This is a translation of one Greek word, the word *bema*. While *bema* is used in the gospels and Acts of the raised platform where a Roman magistrate or ruler sat to make decisions and pass sentence (Matt. 27:19; John 19:13), its use in the epistles by Paul, because of his many allusions to the Greek athletic contests, is more in keeping with its original use among the Greeks.

This word was taken from Isthmian games where the contestants would compete for the prize under the careful scrutiny of judges who would make sure that every rule of the contest was obeyed (cf. 2 Tim. 2:5).

The victor of a given event who participated according the rules was led by the judge to the platform called the *bema*. There the laurel wreath was placed on his head as a symbol of victory (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-25).

In all of these passages, "Paul was picturing the believer as a competitor in a spiritual contest. As the victorious Grecian athlete appeared before the *bema* to receive his perishable award, so the Christian will appear before Christ's *bema* to receive his imperishable award. The judge at the *bema* bestowed rewards to the victors. **He did not whip the losers**" (Samuel Hoyt, "*The Judgment Seat of Christ in Theological Perspective, Part 1*, Bibliotheca Sacra, p. 37, January-March, 1980, *Electronic Media*). We might add, neither did he sentence them to hard labor.

In other words, it is a reward seat and portrays a time of rewards or loss of rewards following examination, but it is **not a time of punishment** where believers are judged for their sins. Such would be inconsistent with the finished work of Christ on the Cross because He **totally** paid the penalty for our sins. Chafer and Walvoord have an excellent word on this view:

With reference to sin, Scripture teaches that the child of God under grace shall not come into judgment (John 3:18; 5:24; 6:37; Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 1 Cor. 11:32); in his standing before God, and on the ground that the penalty for all sin -- past, present, and future (Col. 2:13) -- has been borne by Christ as the perfect Substitute, the believer is not only placed **beyond condemnation**, but being in Christ is accepted **in the perfection of Christ** (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:6; Col. 2:10; Heb. 10:14) and loved of God as Christ is loved (John 17:23). (Lewis Sperry Chafer, Major Bible Themes: 52 Vital Doctrines of the Scripture Simplified and Explained, John F. Walvoord: Zondervan, 1974, p. 282.)

John 5:24 *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and **does not come into judgment**, but has passed out of death into life.*

Rom. 8:1 *Therefore there is now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Again, Chafer writes concerning the *bema*, "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the judgment is **unrelated to the problem of sin**, that **it is more for the bestowing of rewards than the rejection of failure**." (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 4 [Dallas Seminary Press, 1948], p. 406.)

The Time of *The Bema*

This event will occur immediately following the rapture or resurrection of the church after it is caught up to be with the Lord in the air as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Arguments or Reasons in Support of This View:

In Luke 14:12-14, reward is associated with the resurrection and the rapture is when the church is resurrected.

In Revelation 19:8, when the Lord returns with His bride at the end of the tribulation, she is seen already rewarded. Her reward is described as fine linen, the righteous acts of the saints--undoubtedly the result of rewards.

In 2 Timothy 4:8 and 1 Corinthians 4:5, rewards are associated with "that day" and with the Lord's coming. Again, for the church this means the event of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

So the order of events will be:

1. the rapture which includes our glorification or resurrection bodies
2. exaltation into the heavens with the Lord
3. examination before the *bema*
4. compensation or rewards.

The Place of *The Bema*

It will occur somewhere in the heavenlies in the presence of the Lord. This is evident from 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 4:2 and 19:8.

The Participants at *The Bema*

All the passages dealing with the *bema* or rewards are addressed to believers or pertain to believers of the church (Rom. 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 3:12f; 2 Cor. 5:9f; 1 John 2:28; 1 Thess. 2:19-20; 1 Tim. 6:18-19; Tit. 2:12-14 [note the emphasis on good works]).

The resurrection program and thus the reward of Old Testament saints occurs after the tribulation, after church age saints are already seen in heaven and rewarded and returning with the Lord to judge the earth (cf. Rev. 19:8 with Dan. 12:1-2; Matt. 24).

All believers, regardless of their spiritual state, will be raptured and will stand before the *bema* to give an account of their lives and will either receive rewards or lose rewards. Some believe in a partial rapture theory which says that only those in fellowship with the Lord will be raptured as a form of punishment for their sin. As mentioned above, this is not only contrary to the finished work of Christ who **once and for all** paid the penalty for our sins, but it is contrary to the teaching of 1 Thessalonians 5:8-11 *For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him.*

The context suggests that Paul has in mind the return of Christ for the church--the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The rapture is the means of our deliverance from the wrath he discusses in chapter 5:1-3.

Further, the words "awake or asleep" of verse 10 refer to a spiritual or moral condition, not whether one is alive or dead when Christ returns as in 4:13-14. This is clear from both the context of 5:4-8 and by the fact he changed the words he used for sleep. He used the Greek *katheudo* in 5:10 rather than *koimao*, the word he used metaphorically in 4:13-14 of physical death. Though *katheudo* was used of physical sleep and even death, it was also commonly used of spiritual apathy or carnal indifference to spiritual matters, and this is clearly the context of chapter 5. The point, then, is this: Because of the perfect and finished nature of Christ's death (note the words "who died for us" of verse 10), whether we are spiritually alert or not, we will live together with Him through the rapture to face the examination of the *bema*.

The Examiner or Judge at *The Bema*

This is none other than the Lord Jesus who is even now examining our lives and will bring to light the true nature of our walk and works when we stand before Him at the *Bema* (Rev. 1-2; 1 Cor. 4:5f; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 2:28). In Romans 14:10 the apostle called this examining time the *Bema of God* while in 2 Corinthians 5:10 he called it the *Bema of Christ*. The Point: Jesus, who is God, is our Examiner and Rewarder.

The Purpose and Basis of *The Bema*

The purpose and the basis is the most critical issue of all and brings us face to face with the practical aspects of the *Bema*. Some crucial questions are: Why are we brought before the *Bema*? Is it only for rewards or their loss? Will any punishment be meted out? Will there be great sorrow? What's the basis on which the *Bema* is conducted? Is it sin, good works, or just what?

The Problem: Within the church, there exists a good deal of confusion and disagreement concerning the exact nature of the *Bema*. The use of the term "judgment seat" in most translations, ignorance of the historical and cultural background concerning the *Bema*, and foggy theology regarding the finished work of Christ have all contributed to several common misconceptions which, in one way or another, see God as giving out just retribution to believers for sin, or at least for our unconfessed sin.

Three Views of the *Bema*:

- 1) For a summary of three major views, let me quote Samuel L. Hoyt from *Bibliotheca Sacra*. Some Bible teachers view the judgment seat as a place of intense sorrow, a place of terror, and a place where Christ displays all the believer's sins (or at least those unconfessed) before the entire resurrected and raptured church. Some go even further by stating that Christians must experience some sort of suffering for their sins at the time of this examination.
- 2) At the other end of the spectrum another group, which holds to the same eschatological chronology, views this event as an awards ceremony. Awards are handed out to every Christian. The result of this judgment will be that each Christian will be grateful for the reward which he receives, and he will have little or no shame.
- 3) Other Bible teachers espouse a mediating position. They maintain the seriousness of the examination and yet emphasize the commendation aspect of the judgment seat. They emphasize the importance and necessity of faithful living today but reject any thought of

forensic punishment at the *bema*. Emphasis is placed on the fact that each Christian must give an account of his life before the omniscient and holy Christ. All that was done through the **energy of the flesh** will be regarded as **worthless** for reward, while all that was done in the **power of the Holy Spirit** will be graciously **rewarded**. Those who hold this view believe that the Christian will stand glorified before Christ without his old sin nature. He will, likewise, be without guilt because he has been declared righteous. There will be no need for forensic punishment, for Christ has forever borne all of God's wrath toward the believer's sins (*Hoyt, pp. 32-33*)

This last view (#3) I believe to be the one that is in accord with Scripture. Reasons for this will be set forth and developed as we study the nature, purpose, and basis for the Bema. But for now, lest we draw some wrong conclusions, we need to be ever mindful that God's Word clearly teaches there are specific and very serious consequences, both temporal and eternal, for sin or disobedience. Though we will not be judged in the sense of punished for sin at the Bema since the Lord has borne that for us, we must never take sin lightly because there are many consequences.

The Present Consequences of Sin or Disobedience

While the following is not exhaustive, it demonstrates that sin in the life of a believer is not a small issue.

- (1) **Loss of fellowship with the Lord.** Known sin in one's life causes a loss of intimate fellowship with the Lord with the consequent loss of His joy and peace (Ps. 32:3-4).
- (2) **Divine Discipline From the Lord Here in Time. We should not think of discipline as punishment.** Discipline from God is the gracious work of a Father to train and develop His children. Sometimes this comes in the form of various kinds of testing, trials, failure, and predicaments which He uses to correct us, to train us, and if we have been going our own stubborn way, to increase our misery. The goal, however, is always to bring us back to Him (Heb. 12:5-11). If the believer remains unrepentant, this can lead to the sin unto death as with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), and some of the believers at Corinth who were failing to confess their sin and get right with the Lord (1 Cor. 11:28f; cf. also 1 John 5:16-17).
- (3) **Loss of Power and Production.** When we fail to deal with our sinful ways through honest confession, we grieve the Spirit's person and quench His power in our lives. This means that rather than operating by faith in God's provision, we end up operating in the energy of the flesh. We turn to our personal bag of tricks by which we seek to handle life (Gal. 3:1-5; 5:5-1-5; Jer. 2:12-13). This results in the works of the flesh and their fruitless consequences (Gal. 5:19-21, 26). Without the abiding life, the life of faith and obedience to the Savior, we can do nothing (John 15:1-7).
- (4) **Loss of Opportunities.** When we are in charge of our lives rather than the Lord, we become insensitive to people and opportunities of ministry--we lack vision. **Carnal believers have no vision other than their own personal agendas and selfish goals** (cf. Jn. 4:34f).
- (5) **Loss of Desire and Motivation for Service. Carnal believers are occupied and controlled by their own self-centered desires** (Gal. 5:16f). Perhaps this is a good place to discuss the concept of selfishness and rewards, for some see an appeal to rewards as selfish and therefore carnal.

Zane Hodges has some good thoughts on this concept: Scripture does not teach us to be uninterested in our own happiness or well-being. The very desire to escape eternal damnation is

a legitimate and urgent self-interest. The instinct to preserve our lives is the same. Nor are pleasure and enjoyment illegitimate experiences. When God put Adam and Eve in the garden, He furnished them with "*every tree . . . that is pleasant to the sight and good for food*" (Gen. 2:9). They could enjoy themselves freely provided they abstained from eating from the one forbidden tree. Similarly, Paul tells rich people that "God . . . gives us richly all things *to enjoy*." (1 Tim. 6:17: italics added).

Selfishness ought not to be defined simply as the pursuit of our own self-interest. Instead, it should be defined as the pursuit of our self-interest in our own way, rather than in God's way. Since "love" is a preeminent virtue in Christianity, true selfishness often involves a pursuit of self-interest that violates the law of love (*Hodges, Journal of the Grace Evang. Society, Autumn, 1991, p. 7*).

Self-interest in God's way is legitimate. Self-centeredness or selfishness is preoccupation with self at the expense of others and God's will in one's life. When Adam and Eve chose to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they acted in **self-centered independence which was idolatry and sin.** When they enjoyed each other and the fruit trees and blessings of the garden, they acted in their self-interest but they did so in dependence on and in obedience to the Lord.

- (6) Broken relationships and disharmony.** Carnality causes broken relationships and pain to those around us - our families, friends, associates, and co-workers in the body of Christ (Gal. 5:15; Heb. 12:15b).
- (7) Loss of Physical Health and Vitality.** Of course all sickness, weakness, or suffering is not a product of sin, but it can be and often is (1 Cor. 11:29-30; 1 John 5:16-17; Prov. 17:22; 14:30).
- (8) Loss of Rewards at the Bema.** 1 Cor. 3:13-15: "*each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.*"

The Purpose of *The Bema*

It is **not punitive**. It is not to judge believers for sin of any kind, confessed or unconfessed. "Scripture teaches that for the believer God's justice has already been **fully and forever satisfied at the Cross** in relation to the believer's sins. *If God were to punish the believer judicially for his sins for which Christ has already rendered payment, He would be requiring two payments for sin and would therefore be unjust.* Such a concept (punishment for sin) erroneously disparages the all-sufficiency of Christ's death on the cross" (Hoyt, pp. 33-34). Christ paid the penalty for the believer's pre- and post-conversion sins. The believer will **forfeit rewards which he could have received, but he will not be punished in the judicial sense of "paying" for his sins.**"

Scripture teaches that all sins, both confessed and unconfessed, have been forgiven and taken care of by the work of Christ on the Cross so the Christian will never face those sins again at the judgment.

Key Scriptures: The following verses demonstrate the basic principle of the **complete** and **finished** nature of Christ's Work:

Hebrews 10:14 *For by one offering He has **perfected for all time** those who are sanctified.*

Romans 5:19 *For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*

Colossians 2:10 *and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;*

These verses state the **complete** results or conclusion:

Hebrews 8:12 *"For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."*

Hebrews 10:17-18 *"And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin.*

Isaiah 44:22 *"I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud, and your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."*

Psalms 103:12 *As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.*

Micah 7:19 *He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*

Isaiah 38:17 *"Lo, for my own welfare I had great bitterness; It is You who has kept my soul from the pit of nothingness, for You have cast all my sins behind Your back.*

These verses show **we cannot come into judgment**. Why? **Because Christ has borne our judgment** by being made a curse in our place:

Romans 5:1 *Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Romans 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

John 3:18 *"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*

John 5:24 *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*

Question: Then why do we have to confess sin in this life? And why does God judge believers for unconfessed sin as with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 and some of the believers in Corinth in 1 Cor. 11:28f?

Answer: Because this is a completely different matter.

- (1) **Unconfessed sin relates to fellowship in this life, not one's relationship or standing with God.** Unconfessed sin stands as a barrier to fellowship with the Lord and His control over one's life. As Amos 3:3 says, "can two walk together unless they be agreed?" Obviously the answer is no. Confession means we agree with God concerning our sin and want to get back under God's control. "Daily forgiveness of those who are within the family of God is distinguished from judicial and positional forgiveness which was applied forensically to all of a person's sins the moment he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Hoyt, p. 38). We need to distinguish between fellowship forgiveness and legal or forensic forgiveness that justifies us and gives us a standing before God through Christ.

Key Scriptures: Heb. 12:5f and 1 Cor. 11:28-32.

These passages explain the nature of God's judgment of believers in this life. It is discipline designed to train and bring believers back to a walk with God. They teach us the basic cause of discipline is failure to examine and confess known sins because they hinder our fellowship with God. "*Condemned along with the world*" in 1 Cor. 11:32 most likely refers to the judgment of Rom. 1:24f, moral degeneration and the gradual breakdown in the moral fiber of men when they

turn away from God. The same thing happens in the life of believers, but God brings discipline to stop the process.

- (2) God does not judge us for our sin in the sense of making us pay the penalty for that sin.** Scripture teaches that Christ's death was all-sufficient, completely satisfying God's wrath toward sin in the believer. The question of sin in regard to God's justice has been forever satisfied in the mind of God by the all-sufficient sacrifice of His Son. The penalty for the believer's sins has been fully paid for by Christ, the believer's substitute. The Christian has been in court, condemned, sentenced, and executed in his substitute, Jesus Christ. God cannot exact payment for sins twice since payment has been **fully and forever paid**. The believer is seen by the Father as clothed in the righteousness of Christ. God can therefore find no cause for accusing the Christian judicially any more than He can find cause for accusing Jesus Christ. Therefore, at the judgment seat of Christ forensic punishment will not be meted out for the believer's sins (*Hoyt, p. 38*) Rather, God disciplines us as a father disciplines his sons to bring us back into fellowship that we might be conformed to His Son. It is a family matter.

The Positive Aspects of *The Bema*

- 1) To evaluate the quality of every believer's work whether it is good or bad, i.e., acceptable and thus worthy of rewards, or unacceptable, to be rejected and unworthy of rewards. Actually an evaluation is going on every day by the Lord (cf. Rev. 2-3).
- 2) To destroy and remove unacceptable production portrayed in the symbols of wood, hay, and stubble. All sinful deeds, thoughts, and motives, as well as all good deeds done in the energy of the flesh will be consumed like wood, hay, and stubble before a fire because they are unworthy of reward. Why? This will be answered as we consider the basis on which rewards are given or lost.
- 3) To reward the believer for all the good he or she has done as portrayed by the symbols of gold, silver, and precious stones, that which is valuable and can stand the test of fire without being consumed.

Scriptures:

- 1 Cor. 3:13-15 *each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.*
- "Evident"** is *phaneros* which means "known, plain, visible, revealed as to its nature." **"The day"** refers to a day well known and refers to the day of the *bema* after the rapture of the church. **"Declare it"** is *deloo* which means "to make evident, clear." **"Be revealed"** is *apokalupto* and means "to unveil." **"Test"** is *dokimazo* and means "to test for the sake of approval." **"The quality"** is *hopoion*, a correlative and qualitative pronoun meaning "of what sort or kind."
- 1 Cor. 4:5 *Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.*
- "Bring to light"** is *photizo*, "to bring to light, make visible." **"Disclose"** is *phaneroo*, "to manifest, reveal." The issue should be extremely clear from these two verses: The Lord will evaluate the quality and nature of every person's work. Compare also:

2 Cor. 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

Rev. 22:12 *"Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.*

The Negative Aspects of *The Bema*

There are a number of passages that refer to the negative aspects of the Bema which need to be mentioned and explained. In these passages we read such things as "give account of himself," "suffer loss," "shrink away from Him in shame," and "recompense for his deeds . . . whether good or bad." Will believers experience shame, grief, remorse at the Bema? If so, how do we reconcile this with passages like Revelation 7:17, "*God shall wipe away every tear from their eye*", and Revelation 21:4, "*and He shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away*", or with Isaiah 65:17, "*For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind*"?

The negative effects involve the following:

The loss suffered in 1 Corinthians 3:15 refers to the loss of rewards, not salvation as the verse goes on to make clear. Please note that the clause "*he shall suffer loss*" would be better rendered "*it (the reward) shall be forfeited.*"

The disqualification mentioned in 1 Corinthians 9:27 means **disqualified from rewards, not loss of salvation**. This is clear from the context and the analogy to the Greek athletic games.

The "recompense" (NASB) or the "receive back" (KJV) of 2 Corinthians 5:10 refers to the dispensing of rewards or their loss. The verb used is *komizo* and means "to carry off safe," "to carry off as booty." In the middle voice as here, it meant "to bear for oneself" (Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 252), or "to receive back what is one's own" (Rienecker, p. 468). Compare Matthew 25:27 and Ephesians 6:8.

That dispensing of rewards is in view is also evident from the Greek words in 2 Corinthians 5:10 translated "good" (*agathos*--valuable like good fruit) and "bad" (*phaulos*--**unacceptable like rotten or spoiled fruit**) (**flawed, imperfect** – Art). **The idea is not good in the sense of righteousness versus bad in the sense of evil or sinfulness.** For those ideas Paul would have most likely used *kalos*, "good," and *kakos*, "evil." For good works, those valuable like good fruit, we will receive back rewards, but for bad works, those rotten and **worthless**, we will receive no rewards or the loss of rewards.

Illustration: This is no more a punishment than when a student turns in a worthless assignment and receives an F or a D. His poor work results in a just grade or recompense. This is what his work deserves. There used to be a sign in the registrar's office at Dallas Seminary which read, "Salvation is by grace. . . Graduation is by works."

1 John 2:28 This verse undoubtedly refers to the Bema and shows there will be both boldness as a result of abiding, and shame before the Lord as a result of failing to abide.

"And now little children." John is writing to believers. This is his term of endearment for his readers as born again people.

"Abide in Him." "Abide" is a synonym for fellowship which is the subject of the book (1:3-7). It means to remain in Him from the standpoint of drawing on His life as **the source** of ours and then to obey Him out of that relationship of dependence. This is the basis of rewards or the cause of their loss, **the abiding, Christ dependent life.**

"So that" points us to the purpose, the return of the Savior and what it will mean.

"When He appears." Two things. (1) The "when" points to the imminency of the return of the Lord. It is literally "if He appears." The conditional clause does not question the reality of Christ's coming, only the time of it and thereby points to its imminency. (2) "Appears" refers to the rapture which leads quickly into the Bema.

"We may have confidence." "Confidence" is *parresia* and means "courage, boldness to speak." Point: Though none of us are perfect or ever will be, still, faithfulness to abide and obey the Lord will give confidence of rewards.

"And not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming (presence)." Please note several things here.

- (1) The verb is what we call in Greek an aorist subjunctive, and with the basic meaning of this verb, the grammar points to a future act, but not a continuous state. This in no way suggests a permanent condition.
- (2) The voice of the verb is passive. The subject receives the action, that is, he is made to feel shame. But how?
- (3) There are two views:
 - a. The non-abiding believer is made to feel shame by the Lord, i.e., the Lord puts him to shame. This would be somewhat punitive and does not fit the concept of the Bema nor the promises of the Lord that we will not come into judgment.
 - b. The non-abiding believer is made to feel shame by the revelatory nature of the event caused by his own awareness and realization of what his own failure and sin has caused him in terms of the loss of rewards and loss of glory to the Lord. But this will only be momentary or short lived at best in view of passages like Revelation 7:17; 21:4 and Isaiah 65:17.

Hoyt has a good summary of what this passage is talking about and involves: The Bible suggests that there will be shame at the judgment seat of Christ to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the measure of unfaithfulness of each individual believer. Therefore it should be each believer's impelling desire to be well-pleasing to the Lord in all things. Although Christians apparently will reflect on this earthly life with some regret, they will also realize what is ahead for them in the heavenly life. This latter realization will be the source of boundless joy.

English strikes a proper balance on this subject: Joy will indeed be the predominant emotion of life with the Lord; but I suspect that, when our works are made manifest at the tribunal, some grief will be mixed with the joy, and we shall know shame as we suffer loss. But we shall rejoice also as we realize that the rewards given will be another example of the grace of our Lord; for at best we are unprofitable servants" (E. Schuyler English, "The Church at the Tribunal," in *Prophetic Truth Unfolding Today* [Fleming H. Revell, 1968], p. 29)

The elements of remorse, regret, and shame cannot be avoided in an examination of the judgment seat of Christ. But this sorrow must be somewhat relative because even for the finest of Christians there will be some things worthy of unceasing remorse in the light of God's unapproachable holiness. This

would mean that the finest of Christians could be sorrowful throughout eternity. However, this is not the picture that the New Testament gives of heaven. The overwhelming emotion is joyfulness and gratefulness. Although there is undeniably some measure of remorse or regret, this is not the overriding emotion to be experienced throughout the eternal state.

The emotional condition of the redeemed is that of complete and unending happiness. Emotion proceeds from the realization of facts in personal experience. Hope will at last become reality for all those who are delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:18-25). Elimination of the curse, pain and death will also remove sorrow, tears and crying. (Rev. 21:4)

The judgment seat of Christ might be compared to a commencement ceremony. At graduation there is some measure of disappointment and remorse that one did not do better and work harder. However, at such an event the overwhelming emotion is joy, not remorse. The graduates do not leave the auditorium weeping because they did not earn better grades. Rather, they are thankful that they have been graduated, and they are grateful for what they did achieve. **To overdo the sorrow aspect of the judgment seat of Christ is to make heaven hell. To underdo the sorrow aspect is to make faithfulness inconsequential.** (Samuel Hoyt, "The Judgment Seat of Christ in Theological Perspective," Part 2, p. 131, Bibliotheca Sacra, Electronic Media).

The Nature of the Rewards

What are they and how are they described in Scripture? They are described in terms of generalities. What we know about rewards is given in terms that are more general than specific. These are:

- **The Promise of Crowns** This seems to be used as a symbol of victory, authority and responsibility.
- **The Promise of Heavenly Treasure** (Matt. 6:20; 1 Pet. 1:4). Stresses their eternal value and security.
- **The Promise of Accolades or Commendations** This is seen in those passages where a reward is administered in the form of something like "well done thou good and faithful servant . . ." (cf. Matt. 25:21; Lk. 19:17; 1 Cor. 4:5b).
- **The Promises to Overcomers** These could refer to special blessing of rewards to those believers who overcome special trials and tests rather than a general promise to all believers. See Rev. 2:7; 2:11, 17, 26; etc.
- **The Promise of Special Responsibilities and Authority of the Lord's Possessions** (cf. Matt. 19:28; 24:45-47; 25:21, 23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; Rev. 2:26).

Some Analogies to Consider

A Thanksgiving Dinner At a Thanksgiving dinner, each person eats a different amount, but each is satisfied. After our glorification, there will be no sinful nature to produce envy, or jealousy, or resentment, or feelings of dissatisfaction. We will each be enthralled with God and our glorified state.

A Bat Boy at the World Series Any young man who loves baseball would probably be thrilled to be a bat boy in the world series, but he would not be jealous or resentful because he was not one of the stars of the game. He would just be delighted to be there and do what he was doing.

A Graduate at Commencement All the graduates are there and excited about graduating, yet at the time of rewards, some sorrow might be experienced, but it is quickly overcome by the joy of the event.

Our Spiritual Gifts Our rewards may be likened to our spiritual gifts. Our rewards seem to be primarily a matter of responsibility and maybe opportunities, but they will not be like badges or medals we wear as in the military. Remember that all of our crowns will be cast at the feet of Christ, for only He is worthy (Rev. 4:10-11). Also, Matthew 25:21, 23 and Luke 19:17-19 show us our rewards consist of authority over either many things or many cities. They may include galaxies of the universe. All believers will live in the millennium and in eternity with the Lord. Some will reign with Him, but, because of loss of rewards, evidently some will not.

In Scripture, the church is viewed as the heavenly kingdom and a universal priesthood. This may indicate something of our authority. We may rule over galaxies, celestial bodies, the heavens, and definitely over angels, and the world (cf. 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 4:8)

Israel is the earthly kingdom and will undoubtedly have authority over portions and sections of the millennial kingdom and the eternal kingdom as emphasized in Matt. 25:21; Lk. 19:17-19; and Dan. 7:18, 22, 27.

The Crowns of The New Testament

The Words Used For Crowns

Stephanos. This was the victors crown, the wreath given to the victorious athlete before the judge at the Bema. It is the word used of the crowns promised to believers for faithfulness in the Christian life.

Diadem. This was the royal crown, the crown of a king. It is used of the seven diadems of the Beast in Revelation 12:3 and 13:1. But, to stress that Christ is King of kings, this word is also used of the many diadems the Lord will wear at His return (Rev. 19:12).

The Principle The Lord Jesus is the Victor, and our victory is really His victory which is appropriated by faith. Crowns are given as rewards for **faithfulness** to appropriate God's grace and Christ's victory in the Christian life. They remind us of our responsibility **to abide** in the vine.

The Crowns and Their Significance

The Crown of Thorns (Matt. 27:29; Mk. 15:17; Jn. 19:2, 5) speaks of Christ's work on the cross and stands for His victory over sin, Satan, and death.

The Incorruptible Crown (1 Cor. 9:25). Two things: (a) This describes all the crowns. It contrasts our crowns with the temporal and temporary treasure of this life. (b) It is also a special crown given for faithfulness in running the race and exercising self-control in order to serve the Lord and finish the race.

The Crown of Exultation or Rejoicing (1 Thess. 2:19; Phil. 4:1). This crown is a reward given for witnessing, follow-up, and ministry to others. In one sense, the Thessalonians will be Paul's crown, and the effect at the Bema and throughout eternity will be rejoicing or exultation over their presence in heaven. But what did Paul mean by this? In view of his use of "crown" (*stephanos*, the

victor's wreath) in other places, and the fact believers will cast their crowns before the Lord (Rev. 4:10), Paul may also have in mind a personal crown or reward that he will receive because of their presence at the return of the Lord. Though, in this passage the apostle does not say he would receive a crown, this is suggested, if not here certainly in other passages. Though some of them were not living as they should, looking ahead and seeing them in glory brought joy and would bring great rejoicing.

The Crown of Life (Jam. 1:12; Rev. 2:10). This crown is given for enduring testings (trials) and temptation. The crown is not eternal life which is a gift through faith in Christ alone, (Jn. 4:10; Rom. 3:24; 5:15-17; 6:23; Eph. 2:8), but a reward for enduring trials and overcoming temptation.

The Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8). This crown is a reward given for faithfulness to use our gifts and opportunities in the service of the Lord and for loving His appearing. Note that these two things go together. To love His appearing is to live in the light of it.

The Crown of Glory (1 Pet. 5:4). This crown is a reward promised to Elders for faithfulness in the discharge of their responsibilities in shepherding the people.

The Casting of Crowns (Rev. 4:10-11). Because Christ alone is worthy and because we can only be fruitful when we abide in Him allowing His life to fill ours, we will all cast our crowns before Him in recognition that all we have done is by His grace.

The Many Crowns or Diadems (Rev. 19:12). The crowns of royalty which stand for Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords who alone has the right to rule and judge the world.

By J. Hampton Keathley III <http://bible.org/article/doctrine-rewards-judgment-seat-bema-christ>

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Discussion Points

Part III – Abiding and *The Bema Seat*

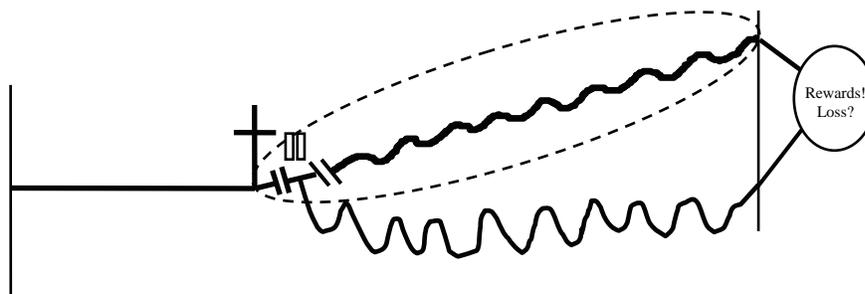
1. Discuss the moment by moment experience of "**abiding**" in fellowship with the Holy Spirit as a Christian's **birthright**, in contrast to a fellowship that is presumably attained to through obedience. Each Christian who wants to experience the continual flow of the Holy Spirit's life must come to understand that God is concerned about sin because **sin disrupts fellowship**. Disrupted fellowship obstructs His blessings and my usefulness. Our tendency is to focus on obedience to a perceived **list of "dos and don'ts"**, as if the obedience were the end-goal. Oswald Chambers rightly states, "Freshness does not come from obedience, but from the Holy Spirit; obedience keeps us in the light as God is in the light." In other words, my "doing" should be the natural **by-product** of my "being." The principle of abiding focuses on the **relationship** of the believer with the Holy Spirit, out of which His fruit is **naturally** produced.
2. Many Christians find themselves habitually living in a Romans 7 experience, and some would point at the apostle Paul to prove that he too had the same "struggles." I believe every Christian must come to recognize the human nature as hopeless (the law in Romans 7 serves this purpose). Paul did pass through Romans 7, as will every Christian, but he **resided** in Romans 8. Has God not made the same provision for every Christian?
3. Discuss how God wants His children to **seek** "His" eternal rewards, in contrast to the often-held belief that to seek rewards is somehow unspiritual, and at the very least a wrong motive. If I have as my goal to be satisfied with worldly desires, i.e. material things, praise, pleasures, etc., then it is wrong. But we are commanded to seek His eternal rewards, which are **not of a worldly nature**, i.e. they cannot be measured by my physical senses and understanding. We cannot comprehend them beforehand, anymore than a person blind from birth could comprehend "color". His nature is to be the **Blesser** and **Rewarder** who always desires to give the very best to those who will trust in His character. He has chosen to bless us into eternity with rewards because of **His** goodness and grace, not because of our goodness or merit. (Heb. 11:6)
4. Discuss the need to focus our attention on **eternal** values (regarding myself as a stranger and alien here on earth), in contrast to the common understanding that it is perfectly fine with God if His children pursue the comforts, pleasures and material benefits during this short physical existence. The pursuit of these things is a hindrance that causes many Christians to **not mature**. (See - Luke 8:14, Col. 3:1-3)
5. Discuss how **the quality of my life** in eternity will somehow be affected by my willingness (by faith) to let the Holy Spirit make me into a useful instrument through which He can produce His fruit and accomplish **His** purposes here on earth. I believe the idea that we as Christians can "do things for God" reinforces the misconception that God is in heaven with a checklist, keeping track of things "**I**" do **for** him. We quickly acknowledge that God has need of nothing I have to offer. Then what does God expect of me? "*the Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing.*" Does that mean I can do **nothing**? Unfortunately I can do lots of things (see 1 Cor. 13:1-3). The question is, does what I do have **eternal** value (His life)? If what I do is **motivated by the Holy Spirit** it does have His life, but if it originates from me it only has **temporal** value for this time on earth.

6. Discuss how we can allow the Holy Spirit to use the resources He has given each believer. Each of us has varying degrees of three resources; **time**, **energy** and **possessions**. The new believer should understand from the beginning that God has given him **control over the choices to allow** the Holy Spirit to use those resources for His purposes, **or to deny** Him use of those resources. As I allow the Holy Spirit use of those resources (building materials) He will build for me an **eternal** structure of gold, silver and precious stones. As I deny Him use of those resources, I am building for myself a **temporary** structure of wood, hay and stubble. Is it not in a believer's best interest to understand this early in his Christian walk, rather than years later?

A Tool For Personal Discipleship

Phase 3
Amplified Discipleship Concepts

Part IV *CHRISTIAN LIVING*



***The Christian Life is Not Just “Avoiding” Bad Behavior,
but Rather Walking in the Spirit. (Eph. 4 & 5)***

**OLD SELF
(Walking in the flesh)**

**NEW SELF
(Walking in the Spirit)**

4: 14-15	... no longer to be children ...	<u>BUT</u>	speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, ...
4: 17-24	... walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk ... in reference to your former manner of life, you <u>lay aside the old self</u> , ...	<u>AND</u>	... <u>be renewed</u> in the spirit of your mind, and <u>put on the new self</u> , which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.
4:25	... laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor,
4:28	He who steals must steal no longer;	<u>BUT</u> <u>RATHER</u>	he must labor, ..., so that he will have something to share ...
4:29	Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth,	<u>BUT</u> (silent?)	only such a word as is good for edification ...
4: 31-32	Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.	...	Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
5:3-4	But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you ... no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting	<u>BUT</u> <u>RATHER</u>	giving of thanks. (as a habit)
5: 7-10	... do not be partakers with them; ... (in the darkness)	<u>BUT</u>	... walk as children of Light ... trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
5: 11-13	Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness,	<u>BUT</u> <u>INSTEAD</u>	even expose them; ... all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, ...
5: 15-16	... (walk) not as unwise men	<u>BUT</u>	as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.
5:17	... do not be foolish,	<u>BUT</u>	understand what the will of the Lord is.
5: 18-21	And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation (abnormal, wickedness, excess),	<u>BUT</u>	be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

..., walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16)

**WE HOPE TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING LIST OF TOPICS IN
THIS SECTION IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE**

(Suggestions and/or comments are invited)

- 1. Finances and Giving / Employment**
- 2. Baptism**
- 3. Truth**
- 4. Spiritual Engiftedness**
- 5. Spiritual Warfare and Temptations**
- 6. Missions and Missionary Service**
- 7. Being a Witness / Witnessing**
- 8. Christian Freedom / Judging / Personal Rights**
- 9. Marriage / Roles**
- 10. Fellowship & Gathering Together**

A Brief History of - *“A Tool for Personal Discipleship”*

Art Barkley and his wife Toni served as tribal missionaries in Bolivia for about 20 years with New Tribes Mission. That's where much of the groundwork for this discipleship material was set.

“Over the years one of the things that bothered me was watching many believers who had obviously accepted the Lord, were excited about their new Christian life, but who within a few months would be found involved with the things that they were involved with as unbelievers.”

During times in the U.S., we would observe a similar pattern. Believers who had enthusiasm and excitement at the beginning of their new life with the Lord, way too often, after a few months, when outside of a Christian setting, could hardly be recognized as followers of Christ.”

“I often felt there was something missing in the equation, but for years I couldn't figure out what it was.”

“Another thing that bothered me was the common perception on the part of many believers that the Christian life is too difficult to understand and live out. I have thought many times, if God designed salvation to be so simple that anybody could easily receive it, would He then design the Christian life to be so difficult to understand and live out?”

Then in 1990, God orchestrated circumstances in such a way that Art and Toni could not permanently return to Bolivia. He provided for Art to serve as an Associate Pastor at Reno Christian Fellowship for 7½ years. It was during this period that God led Art to start developing 'A Tool for Personal Discipleship', a work still in progress.

The purpose of this discipleship material is to provide believers who have a passion for the Lord, with a *Tool* to use under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to help other believers to grow and experience the joy of *the Normal Christian Life*. We have heard many believers lament, “I would like to be used by the Lord to help other believers to grow spiritually, but I don't know what to teach”. This *Tool* is designed to help address that need.

In subsequent years, Art has been involved to varying degrees in the personal discipleship of hundreds of men. He and Toni have seen God change lives and count it a privilege to have a small part in God's plan to grow and use believers through Personal Discipleship.

Art Barkley is President of *Discipler Training International*, and his wife Toni is involved in spiritual counseling and discipling women.