



*As the Father loved
Me,*

I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU:

Abide
IN
My Love

~John 15:9

KATHLEEN BEARD

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Abiding Life Ministries, Int'l

In describing Abiding Life Ministries International, there is an inherent problem: If ALMI were introducing you to a teaching, doctrine, method, or program, its ministry would be very easy to describe. However, we want to introduce you to a Person very much alive and living in you, and that can only be done by a revelation from Him.

ALMI is a worldwide (150 countries so far) missions organization dedicated to the simple message that there is nothing the nearness of Christ cannot overcome. This message we call the abiding life (John 15) is best explained by the following illustration: Holding both hands out in front of you, imagine Christ on your right hand and your problems on your left hand. As you move the hand with problems toward you, the problems get your attention and become all-consuming. However, if you move the hand with Christ on it toward you, He gets your attention, and though the problems have not disappeared, they are not overwhelming. What gets your attention gets you.

The goal of Abiding Life Ministries is singular: We are missionaries to Christians and desire to see them focused on Christ and understanding all He has already done for them. ALMI does not present a one-time fix; it is our conviction that Christ desires a moment-by-moment relationship with Himself, and in the moment of an abiding relationship, we share in all of Christ's victory, all of His power, and all of His work. The Bible proclaims that power comes through weakness, so as Christians we should pray to be weak, for we only fail where we think we are strong. The man who did everything did nothing, and all that He ever did, He never did. It was the Father doing it through Him.

In John 17 is a promise that we can be one with Him as He was with the Father. We never pray, "Help me be strong. Help me have love. Help me have kindness, etc." We pray this: "Jesus, in this moment You come to be my love, my kindness, and my peace, for without You I can do nothing." We believe in a purpose for suffering, and there are things learned in suffering that cannot be learned in comfort. To that end, we believe God permits what He could prevent. We also believe in being offended until we can no longer be offended, and that in every relationship God is working something spectacular in our lives. Understood by the name "Abiding Life Ministries International" is the fact that we take the message of abiding in Christ internationally.

ABIDING LIFE MINISTRIES OVERVIEW

Kathleen Beard

- Based on John 15, we are instructed to “abide” in Christ as He “abides” in us, and in John 17, Jesus also prays that we would be one with Him as He is one with the Father and that we would be one in them.
- How did Jesus abide in the Father? What does that mean? In John 5: 19, 30, Jesus tells the disciples that He (Jesus) of Himself could do nothing, only what “He sees” Father doing. Again in verse 30, He repeats this and tells us that He can do nothing of Himself, only what He “hears” from the Father and He seeks only the Father’s will in everything.
- So, Jesus truly modeled for us what it means to be His disciple—to do nothing except what He sees and does through us.
- In John 15, after admonishing us to “abide” in Him, He says in verse 15, that “we of ourselves can do nothing apart from Him,” just as He, apart from the Father, could do nothing of Himself.
- In Colossians 1, Paul, after his spectacular discourse on the glory and power of Jesus Christ and all that He is and all that He has done, makes the claim that God was pleased to have all of His fullness dwell in Christ, and referring to us, He states that He has reconciled us to Himself, by His physical death and shed blood.
- In verses 26 and 27, He declares that God wanted to make known to us the mystery which has been hidden throughout the ages and the mystery is this: *“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”*
- As believers, we know the theology that Christ is in us when we have received Him as our personal Lord and Savior. But, to actually live this out is only possible when we have come to a place in our lives when we realize the truth of John 15:15—that of ourselves, we can do nothing. We can’t do the Christian life.
- Only by abiding in Christ, as Christ abides in the Father, can we do anything at all as Christians.
- Abiding in Christ means that we are in the process of learning to die to “self,”—dying to everything that we have held onto—our image, our reputation, our kingdoms, our idols, our glory, our righteousness, and our worldly possessions. It means that He has full reign in our lives and we learn to recognize and hear the voice of the Shepherd and follow Him wherever He leads.
- Living the crucified life happens when we realize that it is not our “sin” that keeps us from that kind of relationship with Him; it is our glory fighting against His glory, our kingdoms fighting against His Kingdom.
- His goal for our lives is not to make us comfortable here on earth; it is to bring us to a place where we live for His kingdom, His glory—filled with all the fullness of God—bringing us into full maturity in Him.
- This cannot be achieved by anything we do, but what we learn and live (abide), in what He has already done. Christ is IN us and He will live exactly His life out from us in every circumstance, but only as we lay aside all of our old “self” life making room for Him to live completely out from us.
- The abiding life happens as we, moment-by-moment, allow Him to bring anything and everything that we are holding onto—even old “baggage” that we have done or that has been done to us, into the open, allowing Him to heal us of the guilt, the shame, the condemnation, the lies we have believed, and opening up His rivers of living water to pour into every part of us and out from us into the lives of others.

This is how Jesus lived the life. He is not asking us to “imitate” Him; He is asking us to allow Him to live exactly His life out from us. It is no longer working “for” Christ, rather it is working “from” Christ.



Thanks to Abiding Life Ministries, Int'l for their kind permission to use parts of the Abiding Life materials, charts, and lessons. As Michael Wells was fond of saying, "I don't care about copyrights, I just care that you copy it right."

Hopefully I have stayed faithful to the valuable teachings of Michael Wells and his wife, Betty Wells, while bringing into the teaching, my own experiences with these lessons.

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Lesson 1

ABIDING IN CHRIST

LESSON 1

NOTES/HOME STUDY

What is your belief system?

- I, not Christ*—unsaved
- I and Christ*—newly saved
- Christ and *I*—miserable Christian
- Christ *not I*—Free indeed

God's Goal

- . . . **Christ in us**, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27)
- When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, **that God may be all in all** (1 Corinthians 15:28).
- . . . which is his body, **the fullness of him who fills all in all** . . . (Ephesians 1:23).
- . . . to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be **filled with all the fullness of God**. (Ephesians 3:19).
- For in Him dwells **all the fullness of the Godhead bodily**. (Colossians 2:9).

FILLED UP WITH ALL HIS FULLNESS!

The Line: Eternal/Temporal

"FOR WE DO NOT LOOK AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE **SEEN**, BUT AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE **NOT SEEN**. FOR THE THINGS WHICH ARE SEEN ARE **TEMPORARY**, BUT THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN ARE **ETERNAL**" (1 Corinthians 4:18)

How did Jesus live the life?

- John 5:19: "Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself**, but what He sees the Father **do**; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."
- John 5:30: "**I can of Myself do nothing**. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I **do** not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."
- John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for **apart from me you can do nothing**"

Body, Soul, Spirit (See Handout)

Three basic Needs:

- The Need for Love
- The Need for Acceptance
- The Need for Security

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AT HOME

1. Based on the four belief systems, where would you say you are at this point in your Christian walk? Explain.
2. We are learning that Abiding in Christ involves a process whereby we are losing our “kingdom, image, strength, and righteousness.” Try to think of some things that make up your kingdom, your image, your strength and your righteousness. (Example: If I am a perfectionist and want to follow a certain order in my life, I might become irritated when others don’t at least try to follow the guidelines I set up—at home, as a wife, mom, church leader, or employee. Order is certainly necessary, but when I put my need for order and organization above relationships, then I have created a kingdom.)
3. How would I define my Kingdom?
4. How would I define my image?
5. How would I define my strength?
6. How would I define my righteousness?
7. God’s goal for us is that we be filled with all of His fullness. He is not merely looking to give us comfort to make our lives easier; He desires our maturity rather than merely our comfort. Read Colossians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 15:28; Ephesians 1:23; Ephesians 3:19 and Colossians 2:9 asking Jesus to read it to you and give you understanding of these passages. Before a glass of water can be filled it first must be emptied. Before we can be filled with all of His fullness, we must be emptied of self. Do you feel that you are ready to begin to live in all the fullness of God?
8. Try to write in your own words what it means to “live above the line”—seeing everything in your life as from Him and for a higher purpose you may not understand completely. Reading the story of Ruth from her perspective—with all of her trials and losses, do you think she had any idea that she was going to be in the bloodline of the Messiah many hundreds of years later? Would knowing that have made a difference in how she dealt with the difficulties she faced? If you could see that what you are currently facing, hard as it is, had a divine purpose for some future time, would you see these things differently?

9. In reading of the times that Jesus said of Himself He could do nothing, only what the Father told Him, how does that knowledge change how you see Him? Have you always thought that since He was God of course He could do anything? Does knowing that He had actually did lay aside His own powers and had to depend on God for every thought, decision and action change your perspective on living as He lived—i.e. Jesus living His life out from within you as you lay down your own agenda, works, kingdom, reputation, image?
10. We are all born with three basic needs—the need for love, the need for acceptance and the need for security. Knowing this, does it help you to know that God is not condemning you for having these needs and that He wants you to believe that He is able to meet all of them?
11. Which need (love, acceptance or security) would you say defines you the most? How have you tried to fill these needs in the past?
- 12. Read Ephesians 1** Before we are able to move into that deeper walk with Christ, it is essential to know and believe who we really are in Him and how He really sees us. I believe Ephesians Chapter 1 (and also 2 and 3), are His personal expressions of how He sees us. As we begin to see and to believe how so much of our behavior is based on wrong perceptions of how Jesus sees us, our old identities of worthlessness and failure will begin to be transformed as we grow into a deeper love for Him. *“We love Him because He first loved us...”* (1 John 4:19). Read Ephesians 1 out loud every day, putting your name in the blanks. Be honest with Him if you are having trouble believing this is true of you, but that you want to believe it and you want to learn to walk in it.

LESSON 1 HANDOUT 1-Ephesians 1:3-23

EPHESIANS 1:3-23

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

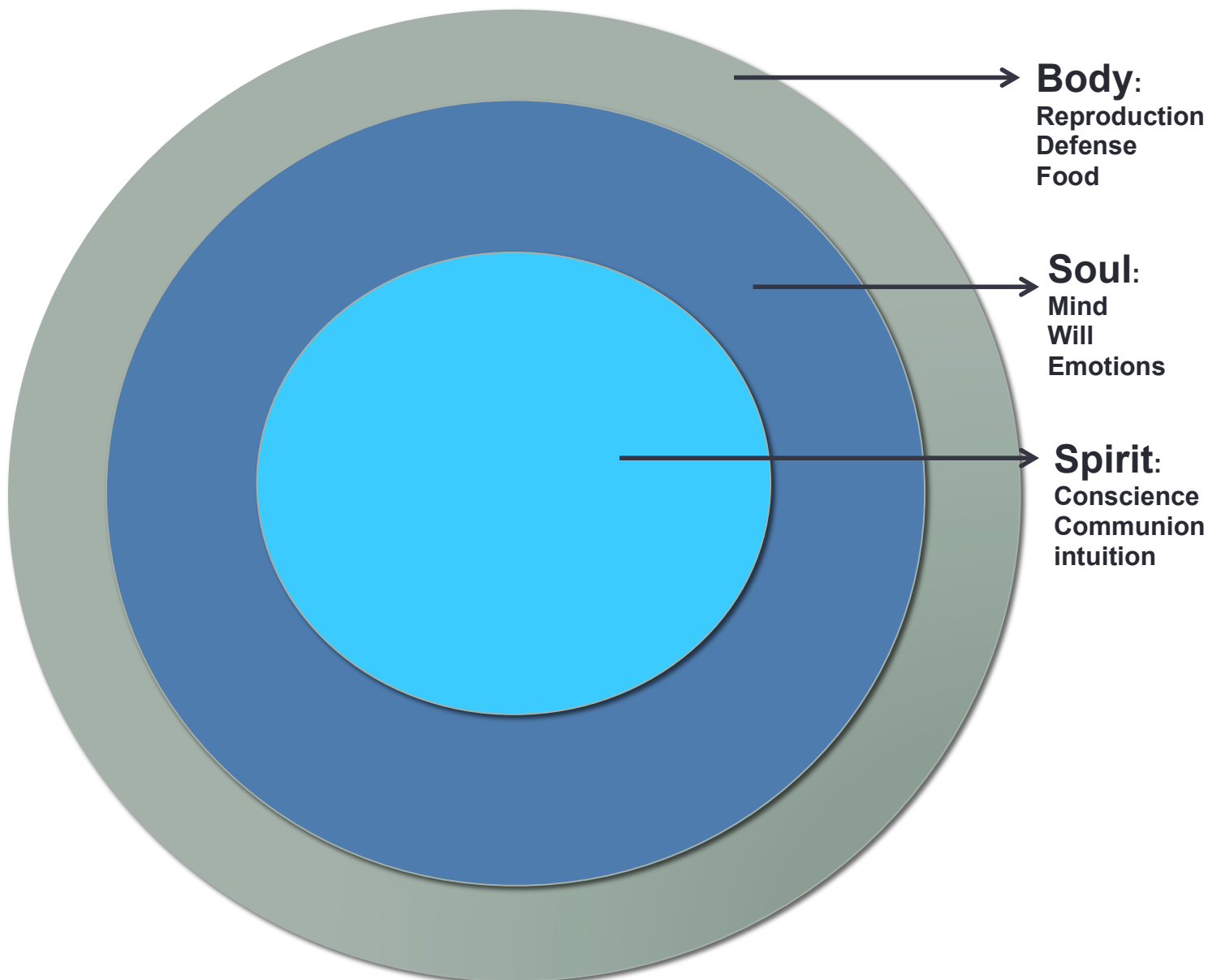
EPHESIANS 1-PERSONALIZED

Blessed are You, God, the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed me, (your name), with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as You chose me, _____, in Him before the foundation of the world, that I, _____, should be holy and without blame before You in love, having predestined me, _____, to adoption as Your daughter by Jesus Christ to Yourself, according to the good pleasure of Your will, to the praise of the glory of Your grace, by which You have made me, _____, accepted in the Beloved. In You I, _____, have redemption through Your blood, the forgiveness of my sins, according to the riches of Your grace which You made to abound toward me, _____, in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to me, _____, the mystery of Your will, according to Your good pleasure which You purposed in Yourself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times You might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in You. In You also I, _____, have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of You who works all things according to the counsel of Your will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of Your glory. In You I, _____, also trusted, after I heard the word of truth, the gospel of my salvation; in whom also, having believed, I, _____, was sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of my inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of Your glory.

Therefore I do not cease to give thanks ... that You, the God of my Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to me, _____, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of You, the eyes of my understanding being enlightened; that I, _____, may know what is the hope of Your calling, what are the riches of the glory of Your inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of Your power toward us who believe, according to the working of Your mighty power which You worked in Christ when You raised Him from the dead and seated Him at Your right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And You put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

BODY/SOUL/SPIRIT

*“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”
(1 Thessalonians 5:23).*



TWO SIDES TO THE CROSS

"... There are two sides to the cross: the blood side and the body side. On the blood side, Jesus Christ died for our sins. Through His death for us we obtain forgiveness. On the body side of the cross, in the unseen and eternal realm, in our spirit, we experienced with Christ what He experienced: we died with Him and we were raised with Him.

If we emphasize only our death with Christ, however, we will never see what God purposed to be resurrected out of our death: new life. We can stand at the tomb all day celebrating our death and never get on to life. In Romans 6, Paul emphasized both our crucifixion with Christ and our resurrection with Him:

God raised our new man from the dead and birthed in us an entirely new spirit, holy and righteous, so that He could unite Himself to our spirit and live His life through us. Whether we knew it or not, at salvation Jesus Christ came into us and we became one with Him. He now lives in and through us.

Drawing of a Cross. Blood on left side/body on right side (Communion), "Christ died for us" on left side" "Christ lives in us" on right side.

As with so many New Testament truths, this one is foreshadowed in the Old Testament. In fact, God painted a billboard-sized picture of it. We call it the Passover. In Exodus 12, before God sent the death angel to kill all the firstborn in Egypt, He told the Hebrews to set apart a lamb from the flock, kill it, and smear the blood on the doorposts of their dwellings. When the death angel saw the blood, he would "pass over" that house and spare the firstborn inside. The people only had to apply the blood to the doorposts. This part of the Passover foretells the blood side of the cross. The lamb died for the household. The household didn't participate in that death; the lamb died for them. When they applied its blood to their doorposts, they escaped the wrath of God that came upon the land. Their firstborn son was spared. The parallel to the blood side of the cross is obvious. Christ died for us. He shed His blood as payment for our sins— a satisfaction of the righteous judgment of God. When, by faith, we apply Christ's blood (His death) to our lives, we are spared the wrath of God upon us. Our sins are forgiven.

One day, though, I saw something in the Passover story. When the children of Israel were in captivity under Pharaoh, what country were they in? Egypt. After they put the blood on the doorposts of their houses, and the death angel passed over, and their firstborn son was spared, what country were they still in? Still Egypt. I saw that as long as our revelation knowledge is limited to the blood side of the cross (Christ dying for us), we may still have our firstborn— that is, our sins are forgiven— but experientially we continue living in captivity. We are still living as if we are subject to the capriciousness of the Pharaohs in our life, in bondage. We are still carnal Christians, striving to overcome by our own effort, trying to become spiritual. It's great to have our sins forgiven. But after a while, living as if we are still captives takes the glamour off being forgiven.

God had a solution to the problem of the Hebrews' captivity. The solution was to provide them with sustenance, or life, to get them out of Egypt. So He instructed each household, after they had smeared the blood of the lamb on the doorposts, to roast the lamb and eat it as nourishment for the upcoming journey. That's the body side of the cross. You take the lamb (Christ) into you as life. God is showing us here that the lamb they used for blood on the doorpost was the same lamb they ate for the journey. In other words, everything necessary for living the life comes from the lamb. It isn't that the lamb dies for you and then you're sent out to do the rest on your own (with God's help, of course). The lamb is the total answer. The lamb that gave its blood for them also gave its life to them. They took its meat into them, and that became their nourishment, strength, and vitality for the journey. They lived their life out of the lamb's life. They walked in its energy. They killed one lamb for two purposes: for the Passover and for the walk.

Paul calls the New Testament life a walk. What is the sustenance, the life, of that walk? It isn't us trying to walk for God. It may look like that on the outside, but we have taken the Lamb of God into us. He is not only the forgiveness of our sins. He is also the life within us, from whom we make the journey. One cross fulfills both purposes, just as there was one lamb

for two purposes. God says, "Take the blood and put it on your door. Take the meat and put it in your body. Put the life in you. Unless you put the life in you, you'll always be operating in the realm of captivity. When you put the life in you, you'll be ready to live. You'll be ready to start the journey." We can walk around for years with a sense of forgiveness but no sense of life. We have the life in us, but we don't know it. We try to generate the life ourselves, but we are doomed to failure because it's impossible for us to generate the life. God is telling us, "I will share My glory with no man. Only I can live My life. But I will impart the life to you. I will give you the life. I will live it through you."

When Jesus said, "Learn from Me," He meant to learn from Him how He lived. And how did He live? He lived out of the Father. He didn't have any other secret.

It's not your striving that releases Christ's life through you. It's your trusting. Just say, "*Lord, Your Holy Spirit is showing me this truth. I embrace it by faith, just like I embraced Jesus for me by faith and experienced forgiveness of my sins. I now embrace Jesus in me as my life. Teach me, convince me of this truth by the Holy Spirit, so that I won't be captive any longer to trying to produce the life myself.*"

What's good news to us now isn't just that He died for us, though that is good news. It isn't just that He's with us, though that is good news. It isn't just that He's in us, helping us, though that is good news. The really good news is that He is in us, living His life as us. He has joined His Spirit with our spirit. In the unseen and eternal, there's Deity inside us. We are not that Deity, but we are containers of that Deity. A well of eternal life is springing up within us. That life is adequate; that life is sufficient; that life is never exhausted, never tires, never tastes bitter. That life is always light, always has mercy in it, always has a second chance in it, always carries God's forgiveness toward others, always is love. When we recognize this, suddenly the "oughts" and the "musts" of Satan's frenetic life become the "Be still, and be" of God's life—the "Be still, and be" of His eternal presence. A dramatic change of our point of reference results. Satan's invitation to humanity was "you become." When we're playing the game of must and ought, we're in the spotlight. Our performance is center stage. But our point of reference is now the indwelling Jesus Christ. He has no part in the separation implied by "must" and "ought." He lives in our inner sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, where all simply is. We are invited to let that be, and let Him come forth.

The importance of the blood: In Rev. 12:12 we see an interesting verse: *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.* We usually attribute this verse to tribulation saints, but this verse is for us right now. How do we overcome? By the *blood of the Lamb*. How do we apply this? By the *word of our testimony*. The Passover and escape from Egypt was a shadow of what was to come. The children of Israel killed the lamb and collected its blood in a basin. The lamb was slain, but the blood was not effective for their protection from death until it had been applied to the doorposts and lintels. The fulfillment for us is that the Lamb has been slain for us. His blood has been shed, and the "word of our testimony" is when we *apply* the blood, proclaim it, declare it. The blood of the Lamb is the most misunderstood and awe inspiring concept ever given. The Lamb was slain for the sins of the whole world. The blood applied to our doorposts (the new "tabernacle" which is our body, the temple of the Holy Spirit), is our testimony to this fact.

And then of course, as we love this Lamb more deeply through the sanctification process, we find that we no longer love our lives, even unto death. This verse also parallels Phil. 3:10 *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.* Knowing Him brings about a deeper love for Him, it brings about an understanding of the power of His resurrection and ultimately, it introduces us to this mysterious thing called the "fellowship" of His sufferings, and then being conformed to His death. This is why He always begins the discipleship process in us with the importance of *knowing Him*. Most of our discipleship programs begin with the "how to" aspects of "how to live the Christian life".

(Excerpt from *The Rest of the Gospel*, by

EXCERPTS FROM *THE LISTENING LIFE*

By Adam S. McHugh

- You become a disciple by hearing. Listening is the first act of discipleship as fishermen drop their nets and follow when Jesus calls, and listening is the core of their apprenticeship as they listen their way from Galilee to Jerusalem.
- The apostle James famously counsels his hearers to be quick to listen, slow to speak (James 1: 19). Ancient wisdom cautions us that “if one gives answer before hearing, it is folly and shame” (Proverbs 18: 13). This is the pattern that life commands. Listen before you speak. Learn before you teach. Hear the call before you lead. Absorb the word before you preach it. But somewhere along the way we start to violate the natural order of things. Speaking our minds and asserting ourselves take priority over listening. We interrupt someone else because we are convinced we already know what he or she is going to say. We begin to take up more space than we allow for others. We consider ourselves experts on topics without anything more to learn. We tell God what to give rather than asking what God wants to give. We participate by speaking and sharing, and we assert our identities by taking verbal stands.
- We consider our great Christian task to be preaching, rather than assuming the listening posture of a servant. We speak volumes, but we listen in snippets.
- We need to learn how to listen because all the talking in the world will not make our relationships what we want them to be, and it will not make us into the sort of people we want to be. Our longings for intimacy will not be satisfied through one-way conversations and interactions that feel like competitions. Our desire to be transformed will not be met through giving voice to all the noise in our souls. Our identities will not be discovered in finding our own voice independent of others but in helping others find their voices. We learn how to listen because we want to learn how to love. We want to learn how to practice hospitality, how to truly welcome people into our lives. We want to be story-hearers and not just storytellers. We want to find the internal quiet and stillness that will open us to being changed. We want to learn how to listen because we want to become more human. The question that drives this book is, how would our relationships change, and how would we change, if we approached every situation with the intention of listening first? What if we approached our relationship with God as listeners? What if we viewed our relationship with nature as one of listening? What if we approached our relationships using our ears rather than our mouths? What if we sought to listen to our emotions before we preached to them?
- For this is its lesson: the words listen and obey have the same root. In Latin, the word “obey” would not exist without the word “listen.” The word we translate into English as “obedience” literally means a “listening from below.” Obedience is a deep listening, a listening of the whole person, a hearing with your ears and with your heart and with your arms and legs.
- Listening, on the other hand, is something that we choose. Listening is a practice of focused attention. Hearing is an act of the senses, but listening is an act of the will. In listening you center not only your ears but also your mind, heart and posture on someone or something other than yourself. It is a chosen obedience, like soldiers falling into line the moment their commanding officer calls them to attention.
- The beginning of discipleship is listening. At the sound of Jesus’ voice, his first followers dropped their nets and followed him. Of course, discipleship must involve more than one episode of listening; it is an ongoing journey of listening. Disciples are walking listeners.

- Listening is important enough to Jesus that he devotes his first parable to it (Mark 4: 1-20). In Mark's Gospel Jesus frames the parable of the sower with the opening word "Listen!" and the closing exclamation "Let anyone with ears to hear listen!" Overtly about a farmer indiscriminately scattering seed on different types of soil, the story is actually about different types of hearers. There are the path hearers— those who don't really hear at all, deflecting and dismissing Jesus' words. There are the rocky listeners, who let the word penetrate a little but then reject it because of adverse voices of struggle and persecution. Third are the thorny listeners, who listen a while longer but slowly allow the subtle power of seductive voices— the accumulation of wealth and the sparkle of material things— to suffocate the word. Finally are the true and fruitful listeners, those who receive the word deep into themselves, where it does its proper work of flowering and bearing fruit.
- What seems to separate the different types of listeners is the amount of effort that they put into listening. What we lack in understanding we can make up for in asking questions. The true listeners are those who stay, who crowd around Jesus and ask him the interpretation of the parable. This is the kind of listener God desires: those who pursue and seek and relentlessly question. They sit with Jesus' words like an old friend that you know yet really don't know, chewing and digesting, continuing to seek greater clarity and depth of understanding. They don't just ask the first question; they also ask the second and third questions. They exhaust others with their questions.
- Listening makes us into disciples— those who learn, who follow and who submit to the Lord.
- Too often we try to gain control with our words. Listening, done well, gives power away. A commitment to listening is one of the best antidotes for power and privilege. A servant listener does not dominate the conversation. Servants take the attention off themselves and focus their attention on the needs and interests of others. The call to servanthood is at the heart of the gospel; it is the call to humble ourselves, to empty ourselves of our own agendas and egos and submit ourselves to the Lord and to others. Servant listening is a practice of presence, in which we set aside what might distract us and what we think should happen in a moment or conversation. It is an act of humility, in which we acknowledge that no matter who we are listening to, we come to learn. Servant listening is an act of surrender, in which we lay down our verbal weapons, our preconceived notions, our quick advice and our desire to steer the conversation toward ourselves. We release our grasp on the terms and direction of the conversation.
- Wisdom, on the other hand, is a deep, relational knowledge that comes through slow listening, allowing what we hear to steep and simmer in us. And it requires us to listen to voices that challenge us and present us with the unexpected, forcing us to weigh what we hear against what we believe.
- My hope is that we will treat listening as an act of hospitality, one that opens us to the world, to the people in front of us and to the Lord who knocks at the door.
- Our surprise grows when we recall that an act of listening is an act of obedience, and it turns out that "bow down Your ear" perfectly captures what is required for the Lord to listen to humans. It's what theologians of previous generations used to call the "condescension" of the Lord, but they didn't mean it with the negative connotations it carries today. The Lord lowers himself to pay attention to an individual's particular troubles, even doing for her what she asks. What kind of king is this who would kneel down before his subjects? We find ourselves at the heart of the gospel mystery— that the heavenly King not only speaks but listens, that he not only commands obedience but obeys commands. God's serving nature does not make him servile to our desires; he does not serve out of slavish compulsion or hollow duty, but of a freely chosen posture of servanthood, because that is who he is.

- This is no ordinary king. From the very beginning of the Scriptures we find a God who does not hoard power but shares it. Created in God's image, humans are given the kingly responsibility of co-ruling creation, subduing it and representing the Lord to it. Psalm 8 builds on the vice regency bestowed on human beings:
 1. You have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.
 2. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
 3. You have put all things under their feet. (vv. 5-6)
- Much later the risen and exalted Jesus gives his followers a great commission to act and speak on his behalf. The power of his reign, available through the Holy Spirit, would be present to them as they carried out his mission. The apostle Paul promised Timothy that those who endure will reign with Christ, and Revelation echoes that the saints redeemed from every tribe will reign on earth when the kingdom comes. The God who shares power is a listener. Listening is not something that becomes necessary for God only after the world is created. Listening is who God is. In God's very being, communication does not move unilaterally but flows back and forth and around the three persons of the Trinity— Father, Son, Holy Spirit. The triune nature of God puts listening right at the center of the universe. God is love, and love requires listening. The inner workings of the divine life are held together by a self-giving, reciprocating and listening nature, so when Son is revealed in human form he says he does not do what he wants but what his Father commands, and when the Spirit comes it guides people into all truth because it only speaks what it hears. In the work of creation, redemption and mission the persons of the Trinity reveal the listening that has been at the heart of their relationships all along.
- The paradox of the King who listens comes to its climax in the Messiah. The New Testament gives us an astonishing picture of kingship: the true king is not the one who wields his power but the one who surrenders his power and serves. It would seem that the ruler who jealously guards his power is in fact a ruler with insufficient power. Jesus abdicated his heavenly throne, emptying himself of power and privilege, in order to become a servant.
- That is why listening is so central to the gospel: it is the indispensable attribute of a servant. Emptying yourself, assuming the role of a servant and submitting to others is not only the description of Christ's incarnation, it is also the description of a true listener. Jesus came not to be served but to serve. He came not to be heard but to hear. He shrank so that others might have room, and he bent down his ear so that the unheard voices would be honored. In doing so, he utterly redefined what kingship is. Here is a king who serves his subjects, washes their feet and listens for their needs beyond even what they know they need. Here is a king who does not ask his people to die for him but who instead dies for them. The servant heart that led him to listen to others is the same heart that led him to the cross.
- Over the past few years, I have asked many people this question: has there ever been a person in your life who surprised you with listening? They usually have to think for a while, which probably indicates how rarely we are truly heard. But then they remember, and they tell a story about an authority figure— a parent, a teacher, a pastor, a boss— who listened to them unexpectedly and how it changed them. I have had enough of these conversations now that I can say that all the lectures and sermons we hear, all the books we read, all the instruction and advice we receive do not compare to the transformative power of being heard. (McHugh, Adam S. *The Listening Life: Embracing Attentiveness in a World of Distraction* (p. 40). InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.)

As the Father loved Me,

I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU:

Abide
IN
My Love

Lesson 2

ABIDING IN CHRIST

LESSON 2

NOTES/HOME STUDY

- Handout #1—Problem tree, empty for you to fill in/ Problem tree, examples of problems and root rot
- Wilderness experiences are necessary.
- It is my response to the trial that exposes what God is after.
- We are only at peace when we are being fed only from God.
- As we consent to this process, the branches on the problem tree will naturally fall off
- We are all born into sin since the fall. Sin creates the problem of being out of control. Then we go to other out-of-control people to tell us who we are.
- Slowly we come to the knowledge and belief that all of our needs are met in Christ and we will no longer look to others to tell us who we are.
- Handout #2-3-4—Idols are the things we use to fill our needs, fix our problems or the first things we run to when faced with a problem/crisis/issue. From Scripture we can learn what the idols were that caused Israel to fall.
- Handout #5—The “invisible strings,” attaching us to people, things and events, may not completely leave, but we can learn to allow the Holy Spirit to manage them so that they no longer control us.
- Handout #6—The Flesh pot: Filled with old wounds, unresolved anger, bitterness, distorted self-perception, faulty definitions of God, and when conflict arises, we either run to Jesus to resolve these things and sort them out, or we run to our fleshpot and react out of our flesh.
- Sometimes the Holy Spirit has to work through a lot of baggage to get us to the place where we can receive His conviction and healing.
- We react to this conviction by turning it into condemnation or self-defense and denial.
- Handout #7—Prayers. The middle ground of hearing conviction from the Holy Spirit is to confess and to allow Him to heal us.
- Identity Messages: Messages that have been subtly, unintentionally, sometimes overtly fed into our identities over the course of our lives.
- Eventually, when the Holy Spirit is invited into these areas, He will expose the root rot which can be Pride/Unbelief/Self-loathing or other bigger issues.
- Handout #8—He’s Got This! The Holy Spirit is our comforter, counselor, helper, teacher, the One who bears witness to Christ, the Spirit of truth, the One who convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come, He prays for us and He can grieve over our sin and our pain. (Handout)
- The “Process” of allowing Him into every area of our lives produces genuine peace

DISCUSSION:

Using the Homework assignment from last session, review the questions and share what God revealed in this teaching. If you have time, also review some of the material from this session (#2) and go over the homework assignment.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AT HOME

The Problem Tree: List on the branches some of the problems that continue to surface in your own life (example: alcohol/addiction, anger, marriage problems, relationship problems, etc.)

What ways have you tried to get rid of old patterns of problems (those issues that continue to resurface)?

Can you define/identify idols in your life?

Can you identify ways that you have tried to fix yourself or your problems that have failed?

What is your **first** response when you experience some trial? Anger/Disappointment/Blaming Self/Blaming others/Blaming God/Self-condemnation/Self-defense/Depression/Panic

Jesus asked the question of some, "Do you want to be made whole?" We are quick to answer yes, but do we really want to be made whole? What will it cost? If we have relied on our old coping mechanisms and they are no longer working, how difficult is it going to be to let those go?

Who or what invisible strings can trigger a good or bad emotional response to a situation?

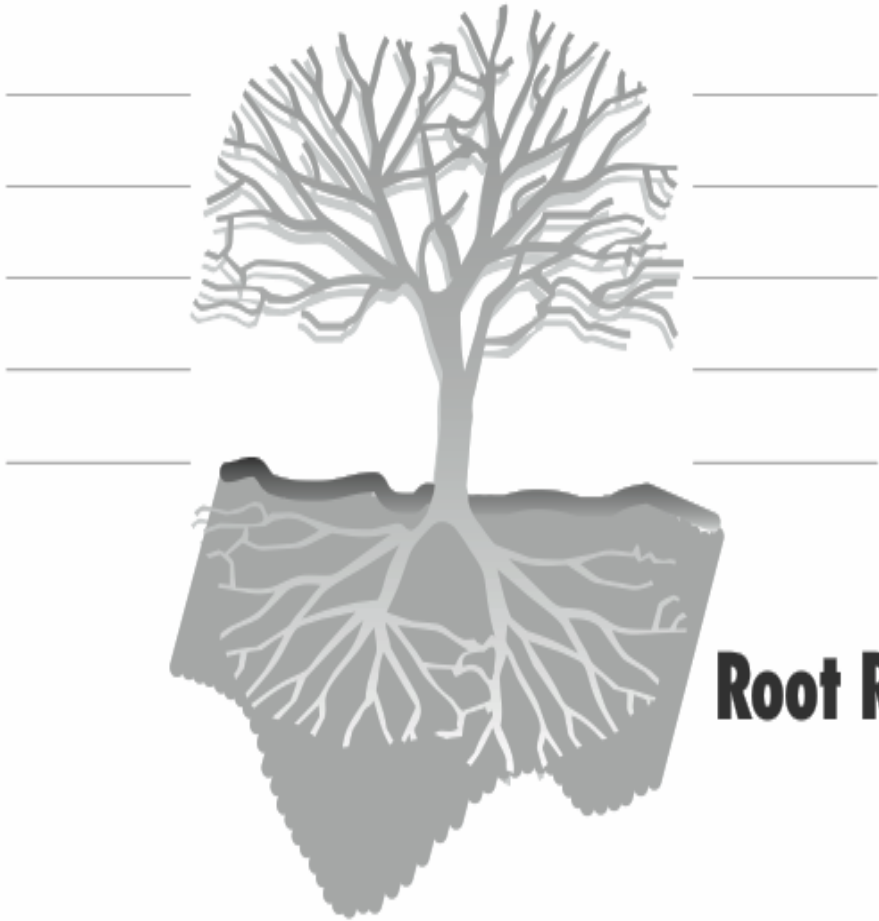
What emotional baggage do you feel is in your flesh pot?

UNIQUE SELF TEST BOOKLET: There are many profile tests out there that try to evaluate your basic personality and many of them are very helpful. The one we will be using ties directly into the three parts of our make-up—Body, Soul, Spirit. It helps to determine whether we are thinkers/feelers/doers. Or any number of combinations of the three.

- First, read through the booklet completely.
- Then take the profile test at the end and calculate where you test out as a Feeler/Thinker/Doer/Blends. There are no right or wrong answers, you will be answering the questions from your first response—don't analyze too much.
- Then, depending on what you test highest in, go back to pages 26 through 49 of the booklet and under whichever category you fall, just check each characteristic that fits you.
- Then for next session, pick out the ten highest characteristics that define your personality.

THE PROBLEM TREE

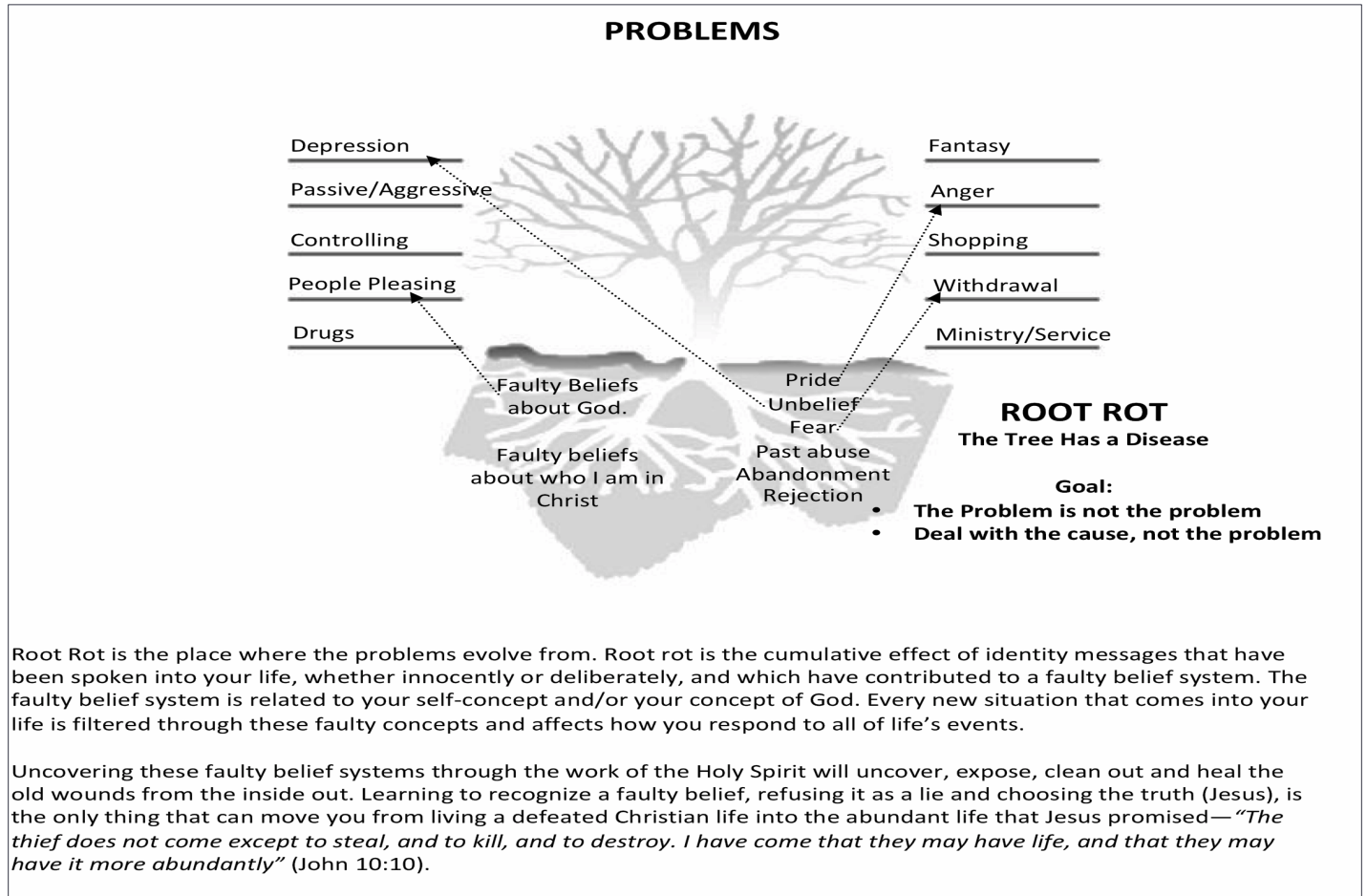
Problems



Root Rot



LESSON 2 HANDOUT 1-The Problem Tree



JESUS

LOVE
JOY
PEACE
PATIENCE
FAITHFULNESS
GENTLENESS
KINDNESS
MEEKNESS
SELF-CONTROL
WISDOM
FORGIVENESS
FULFILLMENT
SATISFACTION
CONTENTMENT

MY IDOLS

RUNNING TO OTHERS BEFORE
RUNNING TO JESUS
SHOPPING
BUSYNESS
MIND-SPEWING
WORRY/ANXIETY
SELF-SUFFICIENCY
PRIDE
CHILDREN
MINISTRY
WITHDRAWAL
MEDICATION
ALCOHOL
SELF-DEFENSE
SELF-CONDEMNATION
CONTROL
SEX
TV/INTERNET
FANTASY
MANIPULATION
REJECTING OTHERS
ANGER EXPLOSION
SELF-LOATHING

IT'S MY CHOICE

IDOLS/HIGH PLACES

What was the thing that Israel did repeatedly that grieved God the most and eventually forced Him to drive them from the Land? It was the fact that they worshipped idols, built "high places" and mixed the truth of the Word of God with the religions of the nations surrounding them. If God went to the trouble to write so much about these idols and high places, it means that this is something of utmost importance to Him.

A most definitive statement about these idols and high places can be found in Ezekiel 8, and 14. Here we see that the images, or idols, were things that they had in their secret rooms (imaginations), images on the walls, and figuratively on the walls of their hearts. Their hearts were divided. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8).

Ezekiel 8:2, 4-18—Definition of idols

"2 Then I looked, and there was a likeness, like the appearance of fire--from the appearance of His waist and downward, fire; and from His waist and upward, like the appearance of brightness, like the color of amber. ... 4 And behold, the glory of the God of Israel [was] there, like the vision that I saw in the plain. 5 Then He said to me, "Son of man, lift your eyes now toward the north." So I lifted my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, was this image of jealousy in the entrance. 6 Furthermore He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary? Now turn again, you will see greater abominations." 7 So He brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, there was a hole in the wall. 8 Then He said to me, "Son of man, dig into the wall"; and when I dug into the wall, there was a door. 9 And He said to me, "Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there." 10 So I went in and saw, and there--every sort of creeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed all around on the walls. 11 And there stood before them seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and in their midst stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan. Each man had a censer in his hand, and a thick cloud of incense went up. 12 Then He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.' " 13 And He said to me, "Turn again, [and] you will see greater abominations that they are doing." 14 So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD's house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz. 15 Then He said to me, "Have you seen [this], O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these." 16 So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, [were] about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east. 17 And He said to me, "Have you seen [this], O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they put the branch to their nose. 18 "Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them." " (Eze 8:2, 4-18 NKJV)

Ezekiel 14: 3-8—Idols of the "heart"

"3 "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them? 4 "Therefore speak to them, and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Everyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, 5 "that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols." ' 6 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations. 7 "For anyone of the house of Israel, or

of the strangers who dwell in Israel, who separates himself from Me and sets up his idols in his heart and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, then comes to a prophet to inquire of him concerning Me, I the LORD will answer him by Myself. 8 "I will set My face against that man and make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people. Then you shall know that I [am] the LORD." (Eze 14:3-8 NKJV)

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE REGARDING HIGH PLACES:

"3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every **high thing** that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ," (2Co 10:3-5 NKJV)

New Testament Scripture regarding idols:

1. "20 "but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, [from] sexual immorality, [from] things strangled, and [from] blood. ... 29 that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell." (Act 15:20, 29 NKJV)
2. "16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols." (Act 17:16 NKJV)
3. "25 "But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written [and] decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from [things] offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality." " (Act 21:25 NKJV)
4. "22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?" (Rom 2:22 NKJV)
5. "1 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. ... 4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol [is] nothing in the world, and that [there is] no other God but one. ... 10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?" (1Co 8:1, 4, 10 NKJV)
6. "19 What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? ... 28 But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "the earth [is] the LORD's, and all its fullness." " (1Co 10:19, 28 NKJV)
7. "2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led." (1Co 12:2 NKJV)
8. "16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among [them]. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." " (2Co 6:16 NKJV)
9. "9 For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God," (1Th 1:9 NKJV)
10. "21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (1Jo 5:21 NKJV)
11. "14 "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. ... 20 "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols." (Rev 2:14, 20 NKJV)
12. "20 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk." (Rev 9:20 NKJV)

The Old Testament Temple (outer court, inner court, holy of holies) is a picture of the temple that now resides within us. The veil which divided the inner court from the holy of holies is now torn and we are able to enter into the very presence of God, which no one in the Old Testament ever dared do, except the high priest once a year (on Kippur). In the New Covenant, the veil is the old man. Most Christians never allow this veil to be torn in two; they remain in the outer courts. The goal is for Christ's life, which resides in the Spirit, to freely move in and out of the spirit to the inner courts (the soul = mind, will and emotions) and the outer courts (the body, defense and reproduction areas), and ultimately have full possession of the whole self. With the veil removed, Christ can attack any problem in our lives which He has already conquered at the Cross.

Before He can do this, it becomes necessary to expose to us what is our own personal veil, based on past hurts, which resulted in our developing our particular coping/idols. The symptoms are evident when we are facing a crisis or difficult situation, what do we typically turn to, or resort to, when we are pressed? Do we sulk, get depressed, get angry and lash out at everyone, focus on our sad lot in life, feel self-pity, etc. When we begin to isolate these things, we are near to discovering what our idols are. Then we begin to simply exchange our idols for His mind. (1 Corinthians 2:16 *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*)

IDOLS

Michael Wells

Idols are developed as we learn to cope with hurts we receive. An idol is simply anything, other than Christ, that we turn to in the attempt to meet our needs. We develop many idols, keeping them in our bag in case we have a need. We are like Rachel stealing the idols she trusted, forsaking Jehovah. There are four types of people, I, not Christ (atheist, Buddhist, etc.); I and Christ (fire-insurance Christians); Christ and I (the most miserable -- they keep their idols); and the Galatians 2:20 people we want to become: Christ, not I.

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN OUR LIVES?

Exactly Christ flowing through me.

Need to be offended until we can't be offended.

Gal. 5:19-21 -- The Deeds of the flesh (also my coping mechanisms)

Kingdom of Heaven vs. Kingdom of Earth:

Kingdom of Heaven is Jesus, Kingdom of earth is the power of self. When Jesus comes to live in me, I am living in His Kingdom.

To live in the Kingdom of heaven and also in the Kingdom of earth makes me a divided person. God uses the Kingdom of earth to squeeze me until I realize that Jesus is all I need for every situation.

Rachel and Leah, the Bride of Grace and the Bride of the Law. Even though they both witnessed the grace of God in Jacob, they still returned to the idols of their past? Why? How do I still return to my old idols (coping mechanisms), even though I am living under grace?

"Travel light -- Travel with an empty bag!"

The Old Testament Temple (outer court, inner court, holy of holies) is a picture of the temple that now resides within us. The veil which divided the inner court from the holy of holies is now torn and we are able to enter into the very presence of God, which no one in the Old Testament ever dared do, except the high priest. In the New Covenant, the veil is the old man. Most Christians never allow this veil to be torn in two; they remain in the outer courts. The goal is for Christ's life which resides in the Spirit to freely move in and out of the spirit to the inner courts (the soul = mind, will and emotions) and the outer courts (the body, defense and reproduction areas), and ultimately have full possession of the whole self. With the veil removed, Christ can attack any problem in our lives which He has already conquered at the Cross.

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INVISIBLE STRINGS

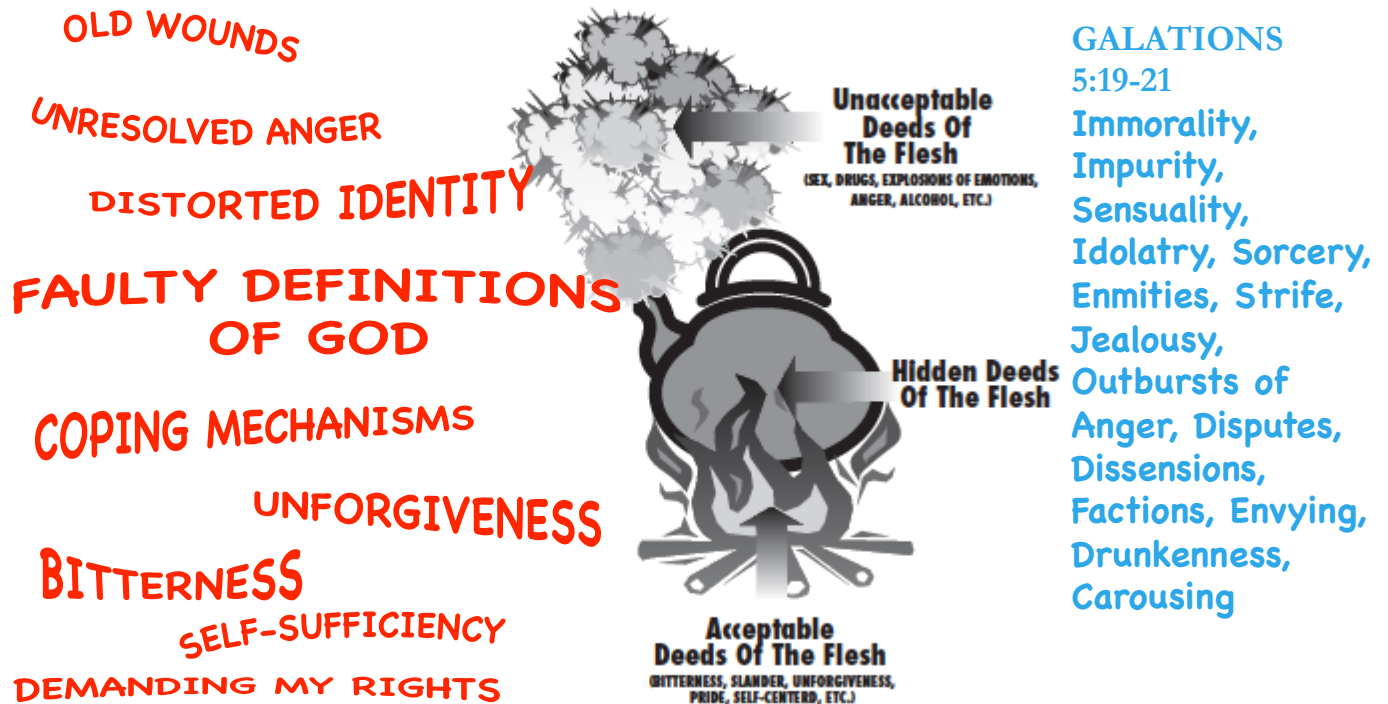
THE INVISIBLE STRINGS

What messages contributed
to your identity?



**PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, SIBLINGS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS, EMPLOYEES,
FELLOW WORKERS, PASTORS, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, AUNTS, UNCLE
OTHER RELATIVES, OTHERS**

THE FLESH POT



TWO RESPONSES TO OFFENSE

If we are being accused or offended, there are two ways that we will receive what we are hearing. The first is to go immediately into condemnation (blame-taking). We assume that the person accusing us must be right, so we go into self-condemnation, guilt, shame and worse. We can't hear the "conviction of the Holy Spirit" because we see conviction as condemnation. The Holy Spirit must have the freedom to do His real work of conviction, so we go to Him and ask Him to reveal the conviction and we tear down the stronghold of self-condemnation.

The second coping mechanism is to automatically deny, defend and blame. When the accusation is given, we deny that we are in the wrong, we defend our position of being right (coping mechanism/idol), and we blame the other person for falsely accusing us.

These two prayers will be helpful in discerning the truth, tearing down the lies, and getting to a healthy sense of self in Christ:

PRAYER TO END SELF-CONDEMNATION

Yes, Lord, that accusation might be true; I certainly may be guilty of that and worse. But, I have confessed this to my Heavenly Father and He has forgiven me, and cleansed me of all unrighteousness and it is now under His blood. NO ONE can access it or retrieve it from His blood. Thank You Jesus, that You have cleansed me.

PRAYER TO END SELF DEFENSE

Lord, if there is any truth in this accusation against me, will You sort through all of it—all of my self-defenses and coping mechanisms—and get to the root? I will defer and submit to whatever You, Lord, reveal to me and however You wish to expose and heal it.

THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES

- "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16 KJV);
- "But the **Comforter**, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26 KJV);
- "But when the **Helper** comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me" (John 15:26-ESV).
- "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the **Helper** will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:7-8).
- "And the **Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness**. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the **Holy Spirit prays for us** with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the **Spirit pleads for us believers** in harmony with God's own will. " (Romans 8:26-27)
- "For the **Holy Spirit will teach you** in that very hour what you ought to say. " (Luke 12:12).
- "In Him you also [trusted], after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were **sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise**, who is the **guarantee of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. " (Eph 1:13-14)
- "And do not **grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were **sealed** for the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:30)
- "Therefore he who rejects [this] does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit." (1 Thess. 4:8)

Our comforter

Our helper who speaks truth to us, bears witness about Jesus, helps us in our weakness

One who convicts us of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come

He Prays for us and pleads for us to be in harmony with God's will

Our Teacher

He seals us and guarantees our inheritance

He is grieved when we sin

HE'S GOT THIS!

As the Father loved Me,

I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU;

Abide
IN
My Love

Lesson 3

ABIDING IN CHRIST
LESSON 3
NOTES/DISCUSSION/HOME STUDY

- Our past may explain us but it does not excuse us
- The Unique Identity only functions in God's perfect design when it is under the control of the Holy Spirit
- The characteristics of your Unique Identity are not your spiritual gifts
- Page 26 in workbook, circle all that apply in your highest Unique ID (Thinker/Feeler/Doer)
- Inner/Outer Man/Woman handout Section A—write the top 10 characteristics that apply in this space
- Section B—list your top five hurts in life (example, "I could never please my Dad/Mom")
- Section B—What was the message that sent (example, "I'm never good enough.")
- Section C—Check all that apply—add more if you think of something.
- Section D—What have you tried to do to change yourself so you no longer feel these things? (Add more if you think of anything else).
- Section E—when all that you have tried to do to change to make yourself more acceptable have failed, what do you resort to in order to cope?
- Draw a circle around Section C
- Write in bold letters over the top, the word "LIES!"
- New Identity in Christ chart. This is truth—it is how Jesus really feels about you, but you must choose to believe it, even if it doesn't match how you feel about yourself.
- Laboring to enter into His rest Scriptures
- Let Jesus take the hits for you
- Choosing/Refusing handout
- Hebrews 4:12—see handout
- "Rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29) Soul=mind, will, emotions. You will have rest for your mind, rest for your will and rest for your emotions.
- Hands in front of face—left hand your problems; right hand Jesus. Move Jesus between yourself and your problem—He is your new filter.
- Philippians 4:6-9—this is who Jesus is.
- Pray it out loud—Meditate on who He is.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Discuss questions and answers from session #2
- Discuss the Unique Self Test
- Discuss the New Identity In Christ chart

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AT HOME

- Thinking back over your life, can you identify your five worst hurts? Is this difficult to do? Spend some time and ask the Holy Spirit, who as we learned is our teacher and who speaks truth, to identify these for you.
- Looking more closely at how these worst hurts and the identity message they sent made you feel—add your own if you don't see it on the chart. Spend time talking to God about this—really talking and listening to Him. These are the things He desires to heal.
- Write on an index card 1 Corinthians 6:11 and phrase it in your own words as you see on the handout, and carry this index card with you, or tape it to your dash board so that you can speak it out loud when you are hearing condemnation for your past or for your sins.
- On the New Identity in Christ chart, read carefully through who you really are in the eyes of Jesus and pray through it, even if your prayer is simply telling Him that this is so hard for you to believe, but you want Him to make this a reality in your whole being. He loves you. Do you really believe this?
- In reading through Hebrews 4:11 it says that we are to "labor" to enter His "rest." That seems contradictory, but then when you read on to Hebrews 4:12, you see that the "labor" is explained as using the Living, Active, Sharp Word of God (the "word" of God is Jesus), who is able to divide between your soul and spirit and judge the thoughts and intents (motives) of your heart. As you are "laboring" in prayer, using this verse, you are truly allowing Him to get in deep to those areas and to

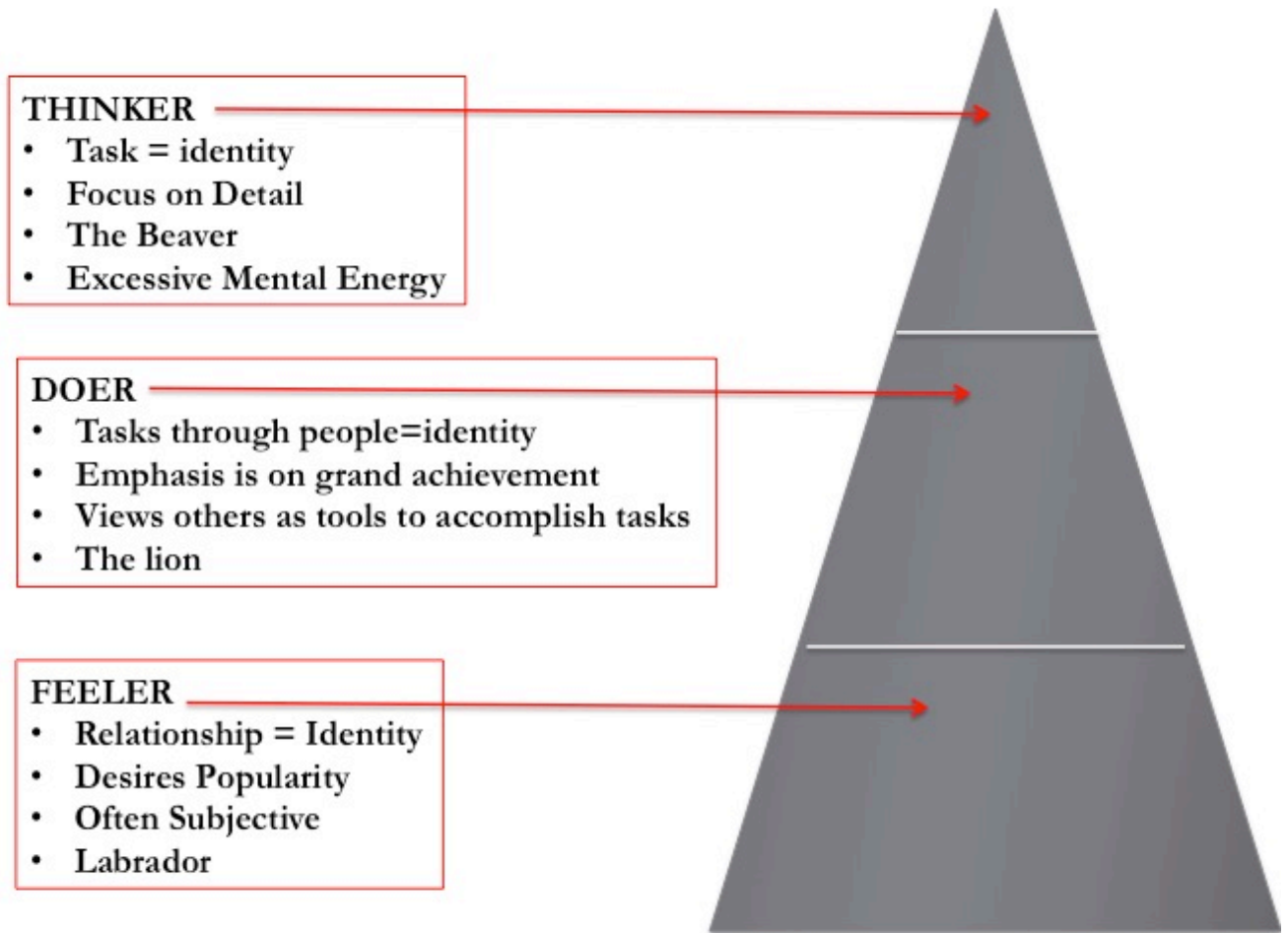
dig out and judge the things that are causing you to walk in old baggage and bondage. He won't do this all at once, but over your life, He will return again and again to reveal something that is holding you captive and begin to divide between your "soul" (mind, will, emotions) so that He can set you free. In this time of prayer, ask Him to begin that process. Don't try to begin it yourself, just ask Him to begin. As you do this, and as He heals these areas, you will begin to enter into His "rest" for your soul.

- Every time you find yourself struggling to believe, or are under a spiritual attack, take out the Choosing/Refusing prayers and pray out loud.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 gives us very detailed instructions about our thought-life. When you are having difficulty with wild thoughts—unbelief, anger, self-loathing, etc. your weapon is the Scripture and in this verse you can quote it out loud to the enemy who is attacking you with these thoughts: *"For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"* (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

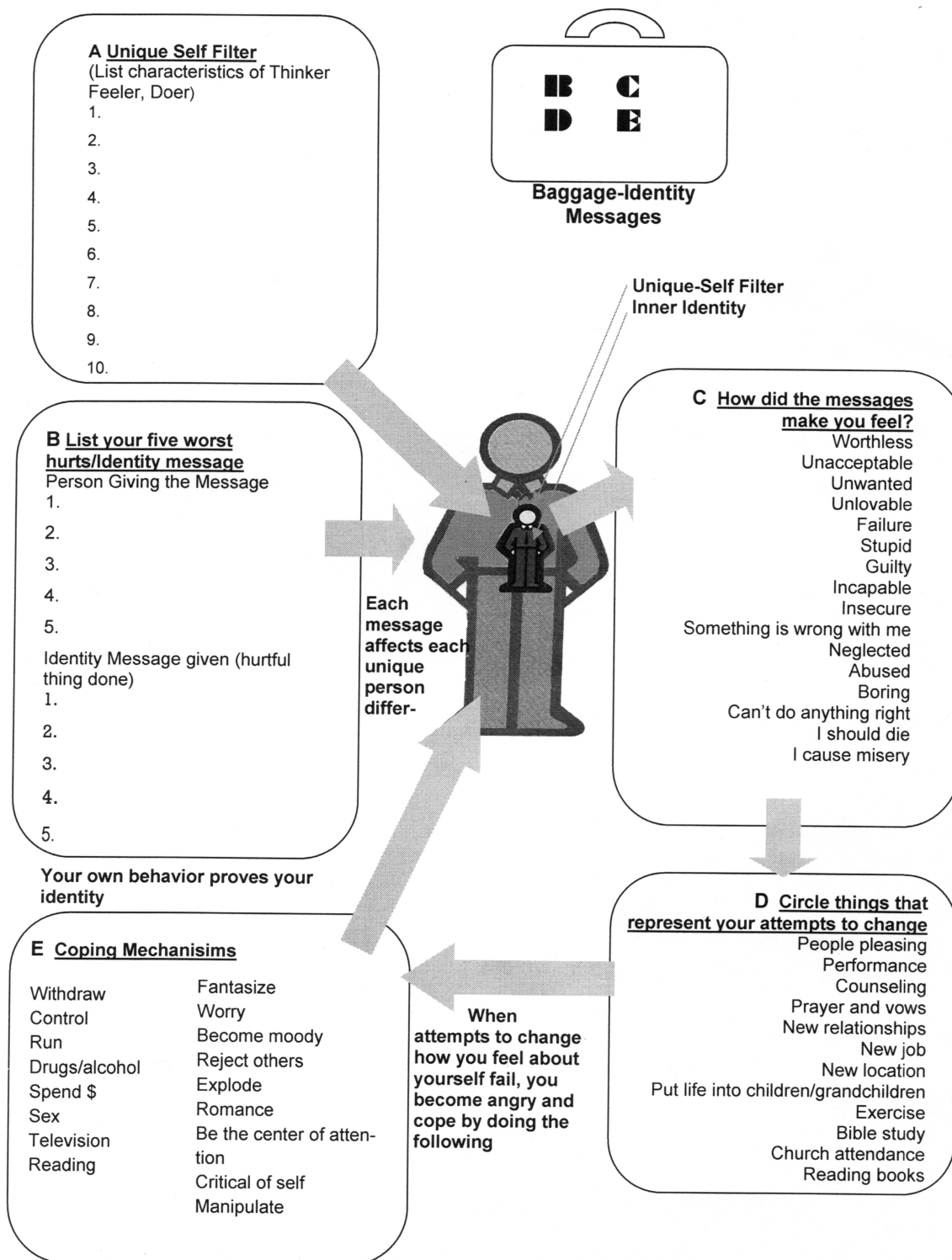
"Jesus, I am taking this thought captive in obedience to You and I am tearing down the stronghold of (name the specific stronghold associated with the thoughts).

- For our next lesson, we will be talking about our definitions of God. In your handouts you will see a document called "Faulty Definitions of God" and another one called "Who Is God?" Go through the Faulty Definitions and check off any that apply or have applied in the past of how you have perceived God through your identity messages. On the "Who Is God" document, just fill in the first thought you have about God **in your worst moments, not when life is going well and you are feeling His presence**. We will talk more about this in the next lesson.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THINKER/FEELER/DOER



INNER/OUTER MAN



FAULTY DEFINITIONS

We walk out our lives based on the identity messages we received from different people who have had an influence on us throughout our lives. We develop our definition of God based on these identity messages as well. Some of these definitions are:

The emotionally absent God: I'm locked out of His presence; I never feel Him; I wonder if God really exists; I'm frustrated—in the world without hope; Where is God? When will I feel Him?

The God of Judgment: He is a vengeful God; He will condemn me in the great Day of Judgment; I'm not certain I'm saved; He is keeping a list, and someday He will get me.

The distant God: I can't reach Him; I know He is there, but I call to Him and He does not respond; He frustrates me.

The explosive God: I never know when He will get tired of my failings and get me; I'm uncertain as to His response to my sin but I'm sure He is finally sick of me; I fear what He will say to me; He keeps a record of good and bad, and the bad is outweighing the good; I'm just waiting for the other shoe to drop; He will get even by causing harm in someone that I love; He may take away my health or job to get my attention.

The dead God: He is not there; When I pray it is like praying to a brick wall; He never helps.

The manipulating God: I must do everything just right in order to get Him to do everything just right; He loves to control me.

The confusing God: What does He want? What will make Him happy? Did I do the right thing; am I doing His will? Did I make the right decision?

The materialistic God: Things are more important than people; What I do for Him is more important than my relationship with Him; I must continually ask myself, what have I done for God today; Has my giving been exactly 10% this year?

The preoccupied God: He is too busy for me; God wouldn't have time for me; God has other priorities than me; He couldn't be concerned about the details of my life.

The God of partiality: He helps others, but not me; Other people are special, I'm not; Others are chosen but not me, they can expect His intervention; He loves others more than me.

The performance God: If I get close, He will hurt me; He doesn't care about my feelings; I don't matter to Him; I get what I deserve.

The physically abusive God: No matter how much I do, it will not be enough; Nothing will ever be good enough for God; He will accept me in the future when I can do more; I must strive to be more holy, so He will hear me.

The untrustworthy God: I can't trust Him; If things start going well, the trap door will open; Just when I was drawing near, the world fell apart; I had better take every precaution to make sure nothing bad happens.

The verbally abusive God: When I read Scripture I see all I have done wrong; Every sermon I hear speaks to my miserable behavior; Draw near to God and He will pick you apart.

The overpowering God: If I get too close He will make me do what I do not want to do; He forces Himself upon me and will make my life miserable.

The passive God: The responsibility for abundant life rests wholly on me; I don't expect God to do anything for me; I must figure it all out on my own.

The lying God: He promises one thing and gives another; He has returned good with evil; Christian life was to be abundant, so far it is miserable; I try to serve Him, and yet bad continues to happen to me.

WHO IS GOD?

WHO IS GOD?

1. When I think about being with God I feel _____
2. When I have to trust God I feel _____
3. When I think about God I wish _____
4. Sometimes I get angry with God when _____
5. It frustrates me when God wants me to _____
6. I really enjoy God when _____
7. The one thing I would change about myself to please God is _____
8. When I think about God's commands I feel _____
9. Sometimes I wish God would _____
10. I can really depend on God when _____
11. In my relationship with God I am always sure that He will _____
12. The one thing that frightens me about God is _____
13. God surprises me when _____
14. The one thing I am afraid God will do is _____

CHOOSING/REFUSING

(Taken from *Taking Every Thought Captive*, by Alaine Pakkala)

I loose the enemy's hold on my will. I throw off any bindings, fogs, confusion or paralysis that he may have brought to my will. I choose to exercise my will in agreement with the truth of the Word of God. I can decide. I choose to decide. I am not helpless. I am not a victim. I am one who overwhelmingly conquers through Christ. I reactivate my will in agreement with God's choices for me.

- I refuse all the enemy's lies and choose only the truth of God for today.
- I refuse all discouragement and choose to hope in the God of all hope.
- I refuse to allow my mind to wander when I am trying to read the Word.
- I choose to concentrate.
- I forbid the enemy to interfere. I refuse all fear and choose the peace that passes understanding. I refuse to be intimidated by the enemy.
- I choose to trust in God's protection. I refuse all despair, suicidal thoughts and depression.
- I choose to be filled with the hope and joy of the Lord today.

CHOOSING/REFUSING LIES

Kathy Beard

- I choose to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to 2 Peter 3:18.
- I refuse to be tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming, according to Ephesians 4:14.
- I choose to not let any unwholesome word proceed out of my mouth: bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and slander, according to Ephesians 4:29-31.
- I refuse to be confused, for God is not the author of confusion, according to 1 Corinthians 14:33.
- I choose to walk by the Spirit, not being boastful, challenging others, envying others, according to Galatians 5:25.
- I choose to believe that the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable and He gives strength to the weary and to those who lack might, He increases power, according to Isaiah 40: 28-29.
- I choose the Word of God that promises me that sin shall not be master over me, for I am not under the law, but under grace, according to Romans 6:14.
- I refuse the condemnation of Satan or others because there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and of death, according to Romans 8:1-2.

- I refuse to give in to my weakness and fatigue because the Spirit also helps my weakness, for I do not know how to pray as I should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for me with groanings too deep for words. And the Spirit knows what the mind and will of God are, and I know that all things work together for good to those who love God and to those who are called according to His purposes, according to Romans 8:26-28.
- I choose to believe that God is for me and will freely give me all things and that nothing shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus my Lord, according to Romans 8:31-39.
- I choose to believe that no temptation has taken me but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, Who will not allow me to be tempted beyond what I am able, but will, with the temptation, provide the way of escape also, that I may be able to endure it, according to 1 Corinthians 10:13.
- I choose to believe that God's grace is sufficient for me, for power is perfected in weakness, according to 2 Corinthians 12:9.
- I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me, according to Galatians 2:20.
- I choose to not lose heart in doing good, for in due time I will reap if I do not grow weary, according to Galatians 6:8-9.
- I choose to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might and to put on the full armor of God, according to Ephesians 6:10.
- I count all things as loss for the sake of Christ and for the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, according to Philippians 3:8.
- I choose to rejoice in the Lord and to let my forbearing spirit be known to all men because the Lord is near, according to Philippians 4:4-5.
- I choose to be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving I let my requests be made known to God. Therefore, I choose to pray and be thankful to God, according to Philippians 4:6.
- I choose the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, according to Philippians 4:7.
- I choose to be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that I may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and bear fruit, according to Colossians 1:9.
- I choose to believe that God has delivered me from the domain of darkness, and has transferred me to the Kingdom of His beloved Son, according to Colossians 1:13.
- I refuse the empty philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ, according to Colossians 2:8.
- I choose to stand and believe that Christ Jesus spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them, according to Colossians 2:15.
- I choose to set my mind on the things above and not on the things that are on earth for I have died and my life is hidden with Christ in God, according to Colossians 3:2-3.

- I choose to put away from me, anger, wrath, malice, slander and abusive speech and to put on the new self which is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created me, according to Colossians 3:8.
- I choose to put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another and forgiving each other and to put on love, the perfect bond of unity, according to Colossians 3:12-14
- I choose to let the peace of Christ rule in my heart, according to Colossians 3:15
- I choose to let the Word of Christ dwell in me richly with all wisdom, according to Colossians 3:16.
- I choose to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks through Him to God my Father, according to Colossians 3:17.
- I choose to rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give thanks in everything, according to 1 Thess. 5:16-18.
- I choose to believe that God is faithful because Faithful is He who calls me, and He also will bring it to pass, according to 1 Thess. 5:24.
- I choose to believe that nothing is too difficult for the Lord, according to Genesis 18:14.
- I choose to believe that God goes before me and will not leave me nor forsake me. I fear not, neither am I afraid, according to Deut. 31:8.
- I choose to believe that the Lord is faithful and He will strengthen and protect me from the evil one, according to 2 Thess. 3:3.
- I refuse to be in any kind of fear or anxiety because God has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind, according to 2 Tim. 1:7.
- I know in whom I have believed and I am persuaded that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day, according to 2 Tim. 1:12.
- I will not give in to confusion because the Lord will give me understanding in everything, according to 2 Tim. 2:7.
- I choose to walk in confidence because the Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly Kingdom, according to 2 Tim. 4:18.
- I am not afraid of death because Christ Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and He will deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives, according to Hebrews 2:14-18.
- I choose to hold fast to and rest in the fact that God's Word is powerful and active and sharper than a two-edged sword, able to pierce my soul and spirit and to judge the thoughts and intentions of my heart, according to Hebrews 4:12.
- I do not fear nor am I dismayed because of this great multitude because the battle is not mine but God's, according to 2 Chronicles 20:15.
- I do not fear the enemy in any way because God has given me authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means harm me, according to Luke 10:19.

- I refuse the lie that God cannot accept me because of my past sin, because I am accepted in the beloved, according to Ephesians 1:6.
- I choose to stand in the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed me with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, according to Ephesians 1: 1.
- I have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of my trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished upon me, according to Ephesians 1: 7.
- I am sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, according to Ephesians 1:13.
- I am God's own possession, according to Ephesians 2:6.
- I am seated with Christ in the heavenly places, according to Ephesians 1:1-13.
- I have a High Priest Who sympathizes with my weaknesses because He has been tempted in all things just as I am, yet without sin. I choose to draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that I may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need, according to Hebrews 4:15-16.
- I choose to believe that all things are possible to him who believes, according to Mark 9:23.
- I refuse to become anxious about how or what I will speak if I am delivered up, because the Holy Spirit will give me what I need in that hour, according to Matthew 10:19-20.
- Jesus has given to me the keys of the Kingdom and whatever I shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever I loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, according to Matthew 16:19.
- The Son of God, Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior was manifested that He might destroy the works of the Devil, according to 1 John 3:8.
- I refuse to be oppressed because My Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble, and I know His Name and put my trust in Him, for He has not forsaken those who seek Him, according to Psalms 9:9-10.
- My eyes are continually toward the Lord, for He will pluck my feet out of the net, according to Psalms 25:15.
- I refuse to despair because I believe that I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. I choose to wait on the Lord; I choose to be strong and to let my heart take courage in the Lord, according to Psalms 27:13-14.
- I refuse discouragement because weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning, according to Psalms 30:5.
- I choose to seek the Lord because He answers me and delivers me from all my fears, according to Psalms 34:4.
- I choose God, my refuge and my strength and my very present help in time of trouble. I will not fear, though the earth should change, and though the mountains slip into the sea, according to Psalms 46:1-2.
- I choose to cease striving and to Know That God is God and that He will be exalted among the nations and in the earth, according to Psalms 46:10.
- I choose to believe that God gives me help against the adversary, and that deliverance by man is in vain because through God I shall do valiantly, and it is He who will tread down my adversary, according to Psalms 60:11-12.

- At night, on my bed, when I am awake, I choose to meditate on God because He has been my help and in the shadow of His wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to Him, and His right hand upholds me, according to Psalms 63:6-8.
- I choose to allow God to search me and know my heart; to try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there is any hurtful way in me, according to Psalms 139:23-24.
- I choose to allow God to put a guard over my mouth and keep watch over the door of my lips to prevent my heart from entering into any evil thing, according to Psalms 141:3.
- I choose to not set any worthless thing before my eyes, according to Psalms 101:3.
- I choose Jesus even though the fig tree should not blossom, and there is no fruit on the vines, and though the yield of the olive should fail, and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold, and there be no cattle in the stalls. I choose to exult in the Lord, I choose to rejoice in the God of my salvation. I choose to believe that He will make my feet like the feet of a deer, and He will make me to walk on my high places, according to Habakkuk 3:17-19.
- I refuse to trust in my own strength because "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord", according to Zechariah 4:6
- I choose to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ Jesus, according to 2 Corinthians 10:5.
- I choose to be at rest once more, O my soul; for the Lord has been good to me, according to Psalm 116:7.
- I choose to believe that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, according to Matthew 4:4.
- I choose to believe that when my foot was slipping, Your love O Lord, supported me. When anxiety was great within me, Your consolation brought joy to my soul, according to Psalm 94:18-19.

As the Father loved Me,
I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU:

Abide
IN
My Love

Lesson 4

ABIDING IN CHRIST

LESSON 4 NOTES/HOME STUDY

- What is your definition of abundant life?
- Some of God's definitions: Rivers of living water flowing out of heart; peace with God; access by faith into grace; rejoice in hope; glory in tribulations; tribulation produces patience, perseverance, character, hope; free indeed; rest; rest for your souls; weakness; His strength perfected in my weakness; Jesus working in me to will and to do His good pleasure; spirit of wisdom; revelation in the knowledge of Him; eyes of understanding enlightened; hope of His calling; strengthened with might in my inner self; Christ dwelling in my heart; rooted and grounded in His love; know the love of Christ which passes knowledge.
- We sometimes perceive God through a lens/filter of past experiences with parents/siblings/teachers/church leaders/friends, etc.
- Our Wrong definitions of God come from the root rot in our lives
- "Who Is God" helps us to see how we might feel about God, not in our best moments when things are going well, but in our worst moments when life is tanking.
- "My Needs/God/1 Corinthians 13 chart. We all have a basic need for love, acceptance and security. We can add our own to this as things come to mind. List what we feel about God in our worst moments, and/or our faulty definitions of God from that list, this is a basic idea of where we can begin to get off track and where the enemy will traffic his lies and deceptions.
- 1 Corinthians 13 is a definition of real love. We tend to look at this list and say "I can never achieve that!" But the list is really a list of who Jesus Christ is. And Jesus Christ in you, is all of these things through you.
- The "Holy But."
- The glass half empty/the glass half full/the cup overflowing—it is a choice.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the Inner/Outer man, Five Worst Hurts. Share what your personal experiences were as you worked through this chart.
2. In session 3 homework, **Faulty Definitions of God** lists ways we perceive God through the lens of our Unique Identity. Without over-analyzing it, were you able to see how your identity messages throughout your life and the filters through which you have been viewing God have influenced and impacted how you relate to God today? (*Remember Kathy's example that she had a basic system of unbelief based on a theology of reward/punishment. If she was good and behaving well, He would reward her; if she was failing He would have to punish her to get her to clean up her act before she could approach Him again. There was root rot down there, and it had to go.*)
3. Discuss the New Identity in Christ chart—Did you find it difficult to really trust that this is who you are in Christ now? Why is it difficult to trust this? How can those old identity filters be exchanged for the true filters of Christ?
4. Did you use the **Choosing/refusing prayers** from the homework when you were struggling to believe or felt under spiritual attack over the last 2 weeks? Share your experience, and which ones were most helpful or beneficial?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AT HOME

As we grow and our old self begins to die more, God's life becomes more real in us and we begin to have "new filters" through which we see and understand life. Look at the handout ***What is the abundant life?*** Begin now to take time prayerfully and examine what your definitions have been and what the definitions from Scripture say. Read the verses carefully from the handout and ask yourself the following questions:

1. What does it mean to worship God in Spirit and in Truth? In Scripture worship is often tied in with trials and suffering. Abraham, when he was asked to take his only son Isaac and sacrifice him, spoke of it as the two of them going up to the altar to "worship." Worship in Hebrew is from the word "Shakah" which can translate literally, to "fall face down." Job, when he lost everything, worshipped God (Job 1:20). We tend to think of worship only in terms of standing and singing to worship music. God seems to view it as a supreme act of trust in Him even when it seems there is no reason left to trust.) Can we really worship the Creator of everything any other way than in *His* Spirit and in *His* truth?
2. How do I really feel about Romans 5:1-3—does the thought of tribulation scare me? What is the thing about this process that stops me and makes me not want to think about it or continue into the deeper life with Christ? When I am faced with a "mountain" of suffering, which of these describes me—1) I go over the mountain; 2) I go around the mountain; 3) I go through the mountain.
3. Throughout the "dying to self" process, Jesus will often come to us with the question: "Will you trust Me?" It is the bottom line of all of the things we experience—growing into deeper trust in Him. Have you ever felt He was asking you to trust Him with something that was really difficult? Write this experience out.
4. From John 8:36—what do you think it means to be free indeed? What is it that you want to be free from? What are you now experiencing that you are desperate to be free from? Do you really believe that Jesus desires to set you free from this thing?
5. Read Matthew 11:28-29 and spend some time really listening to Jesus about this—tell Him that you are desperate for this "rest for your soul" (your mind, will and emotions) and you are ready to trust Him for this.

6. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 that Jesus isn't trying to make us stronger and stronger, but that there is something supernatural that He can do in you and through your circumstances when you have no strength left, when there is only Him, and His strength is being made perfect *in* your weakness—does this seem strange to you? Can you tell Him that although you don't understand this, you want it and ask Him to go ahead and do this in your life?

7. Read prayerfully Ephesians 1:17-23 and Ephesians 3:16-19. Write it out by hand and read it as a prayer, first for yourself, and then begin to pray it for others who have been on your heart. This is a powerful way to pray. When you don't know how to pray for someone or for yourself, it is powerful to pray a prayer from the living Word of God. Make this one of your daily prayers.

8. Philippians 3:10 gives a formula of the life we can truly have—We can **know** Him. We can know **the power of His resurrection**—the same power that He used to raise Himself from the dead! But, it also means that we share the **“fellowship” of His sufferings**. Think about an area in your life where you are suffering, can you begin to see whatever you are suffering through at this time as a means of fellowship with Him? Could this change your perception of suffering? Write out some ways you are experiencing this in your life now.

- Look at the handout **Who Is God/MyNeeds/God/1Cor 13**. Finish filling in (1) your perceived needs (ex: love, security, acceptance, _____), (2) then fill in some of your faulty definitions of God, and how you sometimes feel about His activity in your life in the God column, and (3) then in the 1 Corinthian column fill in what is true about God (God is patient, etc). Too many times we feel guilty and inadequate because we aren't the things described in 1 Corinthians. This exercise is to help us remember that we CAN'T be these things, but God IS these things and if He abides in us, then He can be Himself through us.

- Read through the handout **Some Good Prayers for the Exchanged Life**, and select one that stands out to you to put into practice during the next two weeks. This is a helpful tool to change the direction of your thoughts when you are feeling old baggage. Example: *God I believe You are patient. I have no patience right now with this situation and I am once again feeling so inadequate – I choose now to exchange my lack of patience for Your infinite, never ending patience. Thank You that this is Truth and I can walk in it right now. Amen.*

WHAT IS THE ABUNDANT LIFE?

John 10:10 *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have [it] more abundantly."*

Some common definitions:

- Happiness
- Godly husband who is the spiritual leader of our home
- Kids turn out well
- Being in productive ministry
- Having everything turn out well
- Security
- Finally being able to have our emotions all under control
- Wisdom to make the right decisions
- All our relationships free of conflict
- No sickness
- God answering our prayers

Your definitions:

God's definition:

- Worship in Spirit and truth
- Rivers of living water
- Peace with God
- Access by faith into grace
- Rejoice in hope of the glory of God
- Never hunger, never thirst
- Free indeed
- Rest for your soul
- Sufficient grace
- His strength for our weakness
- To will and to do of His good pleasure
- Wisdom
- Revelation in the Knowledge of Him
- Enlightened Understanding
- Hope of His calling
- His Glorious inheritance
- Exceeding greatness of His power
- Strengthened with might in our inner man/woman
- He will dwell in our hearts
- To Know His width, length, depth, height
- Filled with all the fullness of God
- Know Him, power that raised Him from the dead, fellowship of His sufferings
- Conformed to His death
- Conformed into His image

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LESSON 4 HANDOUT 1-What is the Abundant Life?

Scripture

- John 4:23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. (Jhn 4:23 NKJV)
- Joh 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.
- Ro 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.
- Jn 6:35, 48 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ... I am that bread of life.
- Jn. 8:36 "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed
- Mt. 11: 28-29 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
- 2 Cor. 12: 9-10 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." [Young's Literal Translation: *for My power in infirmity is perfected*] Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- Php 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.
- Eph 1:17-23 ...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.
- Eph 3: 16-19 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height--to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
- Php 2:13 ... for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.
- Php 3:10 ... that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death

FAULTY DEFINITIONS

We walk out our lives based on the identity messages we received from different people who have had an influence on us throughout our lives. We develop our definition of God based on these identity messages as well. Some of these definitions are:

The emotionally absent God: I'm locked out of His presence; I never feel Him; I wonder if God really exists; I'm frustrated—in the world without hope; Where is God? When will I feel Him?

The God of Judgment: He is a vengeful God; He will condemn me in the great Day of Judgment; I'm not certain I'm saved; He is keeping a list, and someday He will get me.

The distant God: I can't reach Him; I know He is there, but I call to Him and He does not respond; He frustrates me.

The explosive God: I never know when He will get tired of my failings and get me; I'm uncertain as to His response to my sin but I'm sure He is finally sick of me; I fear what He will say to me; He keeps a record of good and bad, and the bad is outweighing the good; I'm just waiting for the other shoe to drop; He will get even by causing harm in someone that I love; He may take away my health or job to get my attention.

The dead God: He is not there; When I pray it is like praying to a brick wall; He never helps.

The manipulating God: I must do everything just right in order to get Him to do everything just right; He loves to control me.

The confusing God: What does He want? What will make Him happy? Did I do the right thing; am I doing His will? Did I make the right decision?

The materialistic God: Things are more important than people; What I do for Him is more important than my relationship with Him; I must continually ask myself, what have I done for God today; Has my giving been exactly 10% this year?

The preoccupied God: He is too busy for me; God wouldn't have time for me; God has other priorities than me; He couldn't be concerned about the details of my life.

The God of partiality: He helps others, but not me; Other people are special, I'm not; Others are chosen but not me, they can expect His intervention; He loves others more than me.

The performance God: If I get close, He will hurt me; He doesn't care about my feelings; I don't matter to Him; I get what I deserve.

The physically abusive God: No matter how much I do, it will not be enough; Nothing will ever be good enough for God; He will accept me in the future when I can do more; I must strive to be more holy, so He will hear me.

The untrustworthy God: I can't trust Him; If things start going well, the trap door will open; Just when I was drawing near, the world fell apart; I had better take every precaution to make sure nothing bad happens.

The verbally abusive God: When I read Scripture I see all I have done wrong; Every sermon I hear speaks to my miserable behavior; Draw near to God and He will pick you apart.

The overpowering God: If I get too close He will make me do what I do not want to do; He forces Himself upon me and will make my life miserable.

The passive God: The responsibility for abundant life rests wholly on me; I don't expect God to do anything for me; I must figure it all out on my own.

The lying God: He promises one thing and gives another; He has returned good with evil; Christian life was to be abundant, so far it is miserable; I try to serve Him, and yet bad continues to happen to me.

WHO IS GOD?

WHO IS GOD?

1. When I think about being with God I feel _____
2. When I have to trust God I feel _____
3. When I think about God I wish _____
4. Sometimes I get angry with God when _____
5. It frustrates me when God wants me to _____
6. I really enjoy God when _____
7. The one thing I would change about myself to please God is _____
8. When I think about God's commands I feel _____
9. Sometimes I wish God would _____
10. I can really depend on God when _____
11. In my relationship with God I am always sure that He will _____
12. The one thing that frightens me about God is _____
13. God surprises me when _____
14. The one thing I am afraid God will do is _____

MY NEEDS

GOD

I COR. 13

PRAYERS FOR THE EXCHANGED LIFE

From 1 Corinthians 13 and Galations 5:22-23:

When an offense comes your way and you want to react, ask God to give you ten seconds to pause and remember 1 Cor. 13, that He doesn't take offense, and He doesn't react in anger, etc. Speak out loud:

"Jesus in me was not offended by that remark and I choose not to be offended."

"Jesus in me is not angry at that and I don't have to be angry."

When you are tempted to return to something you have been struggling with, such as an addiction to something, you can speak out loud from Galations 5:23:

"Jesus in me is not addicted to anything."

As you read through 1 Corinthians 13, you can allow the living, active, Word of God to change you from the inside out and conform you into the image of God. Make statements/declarations out loud such as:

"God, I believe You are (patient, kind, continue through the list in 1 Cor. 13). I have no (patience, etc) right now with this situation and I am once again feeling so inadequate—I choose now to exchange my lack of (patience, etc) for Your infinite, never-ending (patience, etc). Thank You that this is truth and I can walk in it right now. Amen."

When someone insults you or offends you:

"Thank You that You will take that hit for me."

The "Holy But" (See Psalm 77:1-11 and watch how David turns his attitude around with the "Holy But")

The "Un-Holy But" sounds like this:

*"I know that He is working all things together for my good... **BUT** ... you don't know how bad my situation is, nothing good can possibly come out of all of this..."*

The "Holy But" sounds like this:

*"My life is as bad as it has ever been, I am confused and fearful of the outcome ... **BUT** ... I know and I believe that God is going to take something out of this mess and work it for my good and for His glory even if I can't see that yet. Be glorified Lord in Your plan for my life."*

The cup half-empty/half-full/overflowing

"Thank You Lord that in You I am neither a cup half-empty or a cup half-full. I am a cup overflowing!"

THOSE WHO ABIDE

“God is not looking for brilliant men,
Is not depending upon eloquent men
Is not shut up to the use of talented men
in sending His gospel out into the world.
God is looking for broken men who have judged themselves
In the light of the cross of Christ.
When He wants anything done, He takes up men who have
Come to the end of themselves, and whose confidence
Is not in themselves, but in God.”

H.A. Ironside

ABIDING DURING CANCER

God spoke to me concerning my union with Him during my most difficult physical trial to date. In 1994 I was diagnosed with stage-four colon cancer. I said, “What’s going on, Lord? What’s this all about?” He began to minister to me. I sensed His voice saying, “Nothing’s changed. I already knew you had cancer. The only thing that has changed is you found out what I knew.” According to my son-in-law, a doctor, I had probably had cancer quite awhile because it had metastasized from my colon to my liver. But God had more things to say to me. He said, “Nothing has changed, because I’ve always loved you. I’m loving you now. And I will continue to love you.”

And He said this: “You’re going to get everything done that I want you to get done.” That’s what I heard in my spirit. I spent a couple of days in the hospital convalescing, thinking about these things, and seeking the Lord about them. After a while it’s as if the question arose within me from Him: “Now, where are you going to live? Are you going to live in ‘my body has cancer’? Or are you going to live in the Spirit?” “I’m going to live in the Spirit,” I replied. And God showed me again what it meant to be in union with Him. He said to me, impressing upon my spirit, “Who are you in union with?” “I’m in union with You,” I answered. “Well, who am I?” “You are the uncreated One. You are before time, and You are after time is over.” That’s the internal conversation I was having with the Lord. When you and He talk like that, you know to whom you’re talking and from whom you’re hearing. “That’s right. That’s who I am. And you are joined to Me, aren’t you?” “Yes.” “So that means you don’t have an end, either. You’re a part of My family.” I said to myself, That’s who I am in union with. And cancer can’t touch that. Cancer can’t touch the real me, or Him in me. Outside, I may have cancer. But inside I have the Living God, with whom I am one. (Stone, Dan; Smith, Gregory. *The Rest of the Gospel*. 2000, One Press, Corvallis, Oregon. P. 82.)

That Incredible Christian

A.W. Tozer

The current effort of so many religious leaders to harmonize Christianity with science, philosophy and every natural and reasonable thing is, I believe, the result of failure to understand Christianity and, judging from what I have heard and read, failure to understand science and philosophy as well.

At the heart of the Christian system lies the cross of Christ with its divine paradox. The power of Christianity appears in its antipathy toward, never in its agreement with, the ways of fallen men. The truth of the cross is revealed in its contradictions. The witness of the church is most effective when she declares rather than explains, for the gospel is addressed not to reason but to faith. What can be proved requires no faith to accept. Faith rests upon the character of God, not upon the demonstrations of laboratory or logic.

The cross stands in bold opposition to the natural man. Its philosophy runs contrary to the processes of the unregenerate mind, so that Paul could say bluntly that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. To try to find a common ground between the message of the cross and man's fallen reason is to try the impossible, and if persisted in must result in an impaired reason, a meaningless cross and a powerless Christianity.

But let us bring the whole matter down from the uplands of theory and simply observe the true Christian as he puts into practice the teachings of Christ and His apostles. Note the contradictions:

The Christian believes that in Christ he has died, yet he is more alive than before and he fully expects to live forever. He walks on earth while seated in heaven and though born on earth He finds that after his conversion he is not at home here. Like the nighthawk, which in the air is the essence of grace and beauty but on the ground is awkward and ugly, so the Christian appears at his best in the heavenly places but does not fit well into the ways of the very society into which he was born.

The Christian soon learns that if he would be victorious as a son of heaven among men on earth he must not follow the common pattern of mankind, but rather the contrary. That he may be safe he puts himself in jeopardy; he loses his life to save it and is in danger of losing it if he attempts to preserve it. He goes down to get up. If he refuses to go down he is already down, but when he starts down he is on his way up.

He is strongest when he is weakest and weakest when he is strong. Though poor he has the power to make others rich, but when he becomes rich his ability to enrich others vanishes. He has most after he has given most away and has least when he possesses most. He may be and often is highest when he feels lowest and most sinless when he is most conscious of sin. He is wisest when he knows that he knows not and knows least when he has acquired the greatest amount of knowledge. He sometimes does most by doing nothing and goes furthest when standing still. In heaviness he manages to rejoice and keeps his heart glad even in sorrow.

The paradoxical character of the Christian is revealed constantly. For instance, he believes that he is saved now, nevertheless he expects to be saved later and looks forward joyfully to future salvation. He fears God but is not afraid of Him. In God's presence he feels overwhelmed and undone, yet there is nowhere he would rather be than in that presence. He knows that he has been cleansed from his sin, yet he is painfully conscious that in his flesh dwells no good thing. He loves supremely One whom he has never seen, and though himself poor and lowly he talks familiarly with One who is King of all kings and Lord of all lords, and is aware of no incongruity in so doing. He feels that he is in his own right altogether less than nothing, yet he believes without question that he is the apple of God's eye and that for him the Eternal Son became flesh and died on the cross of shame.

The Christian is a citizen of heaven and to that sacred citizenship he acknowledges first allegiance; yet he may love his earthly country with that intensity of devotion that caused John Knox to pray "O God, give me Scotland or I die."

He cheerfully expects before long to enter that bright world above, but he is in no hurry to leave this world and is quite willing to await the summons of his Heavenly Father. And he is unable to understand why the critical unbeliever should condemn him for this; it all seems so natural and right in the circumstances that he sees nothing inconsistent about it.

As the Father loved Me,
I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU:

Abide
IN
My Love

Lesson 5

ABIDING IN CHRIST

LESSON 5

NOTES/HOME STUDY

- Abiding in Warfare. The Bible is filled with stories of warfare—real war and spiritual war
- The Old Testament is mostly real-life war; The New Testament is mostly Spiritual war.
- The Old Testament stories of Israel's wars can be seen as instructions for us in our Spiritual war (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11).
- We make two mistakes about our enemy: 1) Giving him too much attention; 2) Not giving him any attention
- Satan's military is organized much like a nation's military system.
- Paul tells us that we are not ignorant of his schemes (devices/strategies) in 2 Cor. 2:11
- Unforgiveness leaves a door open for the enemy to get a foothold in our life
- The military organization of the enemy military are called Principalities, Powers, Rulers of the Darkness, Spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places (Ephesians 6, Colossians 2:15; Romans 8:38; Ephesians 3:10)
- There has been a "cosmic conflict" since the beginning of creation or before. (Handout—"The Cosmic Conflict")
- Genesis 3, Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-18 give insight into the nature and tactics of Satan. We see the same tactics that he used against Jesus in the wilderness. Jesus calls Satan a liar and the father of all lies in John 8:44.
- Our warfare is basically boiled down to Satan's lies vs. God's truth. This is not between equals—God is "**far above** all principalities, powers," (Ephesians 1:21).
- Daniel 10 gives a peek behind the curtain to see the war that is going on between God's Angels and Satan's fallen Angels.
- Handout—Warfare Scriptures and Definitions—Describes some definitions and meanings of words that we should remember in the warfare.
- The enemy's only real weapon is the weapon of the lie and our only weapon is the weapon of the Truth as found in the Word of God.
- When we speak Truth, we do it out loud—the enemy apparently can't read minds according to scholars.
- The enemy often gains a foothold in our lives by paralyzing us with his lies, fears, accusations.
- In this kind of warfare, we must learn to take time to judge our emotions—"Is this feeling from God? Or is it from the enemy?"
- Handout—Warfare Strategy From the Word of God
- Strongholds=A house or fortress made of thoughts, lies, identity messages, etc. Must be pulled down.
- High Thoughts=any thought that elevates itself above what is true about God. The Old Testament refers many times to Kings who were good and did what was right, but who did not tear down the "High Places."
- After tearing down strongholds and high thoughts, we take every thought captive in obedience to Christ.
- Some examples of Warfare strategy in the Old Testament (see handout—Warfare Strategy from the Word of God)
- Warfare strategies from the New Testament (same handout)
- Two Voices the Sheep hear—Voice of the Shepherd; Voice of the Butcher of the Sheep

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

From Lesson #4 homework, discuss what questions impacted us the most and share these things with the group.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AT HOME

Read Genesis 3:1-4, Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:1-19. Compare the nature and tactics that describe Satan from these passages.

Does having this information help to understand what we call the "above-the-line" unseen dimension where these things are happening, and to understand that because we are in Christ, we will experience the fallout and outright attacks of the tactics and attacks of the enemy?

Read 2 Corinthians 2: 5-11. Paul is speaking of an incidence where there was an offense in the church and he had given them counsel as to how to handle it. The one who had sinned had repented and now he is telling them to forgive the man and receive him back in love. He warns of the seriousness of unforgiveness and says that the enemy can use our refusal to forgive as a door of attack against us. Read the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9-15. This is a serious warning to those who refuse to forgive others. Begin asking Jesus if there is anyone you need to forgive and then begin allowing Him to work you through the process of forgiveness. List some of those you might be having difficulty forgiving and simply begin by telling Jesus *"I choose to forgive _____ for _____. My heart does not want to forgive but I am choosing to exchange my lack of forgiveness for Your perfect forgiveness. Thank You that You have forgiven _____. I can forgive because You forgive. Amen."*

Read John 8:44, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 and Ephesians 6:11-19. What does it say about the nature of our enemy and what our role is in defeating him?

Does knowing these things help you to understand some of the events or things you have experienced in your life? Does it help to have this perspective on some of your experiences instead of just thinking there is something wrong with you and wondering why you are experiencing this?

Read Hebrews 4:12. Write it out by hand. What is the "Word of God?"

Read John 1:1, 4 and Revelation 19:13. Compare these passages with Hebrews 4:12. Does this bring new meaning to the “Word of God” as it relates to the written Word of God and to Jesus as the Word of God? Does it also help to bring new awe of the Bible and a new desire to know it better? Write down your thoughts about these verses.

If Jesus is the Word of God, and Hebrews 4:12 tells us that this word of God is alive, living, etc. how does that change how you read the Bible and how you pray the Scriptures with authority?

Since we have been looking at some of our behaviors, attitudes, old identities and baggage, does it help to now realize that the lies we have been believing about ourselves are from the enemy and that we don’t have to believe those lies? If the Word of God is our weapon against these lies, how has this knowledge (you defeat the lies with verses from the Bible that speak the truth instead of trying hard to not believe the lies), helped you as you are struggling to no longer believe the lies? Give examples of how you have used the truth of scripture verses to defeat the lies you have believed.

Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11(NASB) tell us:

“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

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

If this is true, then we can truly read in the Old Testament and see many examples of warfare that have military type strategies that we can use today in the spiritual warfare that we encounter today. From the Handout “Warfare Strategies” read the 2 Chronicles 20 passage again, carefully and track how you can use these strategies when you are experiencing defeat, lies from the enemy, oppression, depression, attacks from someone.

Using the New Testament strategies (from the same handout), we see scriptures that help to speak out loud when encountering spiritual warfare against you. It is always helpful when trying to remember these things, to write the verses out by hand on index cards to carry with you. Or to have them written into your phone so you can use them at any time. Add to these as you are reading through the Bible yourself and discover your own hidden gems. This is your victory—believe it! Walk in it!

THE COSMIC CONFLICT
(Isaiah 14:12-14)

"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [How] you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart:

- *I will ascend into heaven,*
- *I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;*
- *I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;*
- *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,*
- *I will be like the Most High.*

THE COSMIC CONFLICT IN HISTORY

- Satan's hatred of God,
- Satan's hatred of God's crown of creation—the man and the woman,
- Satan's hatred of God's chosen people and nation—the Jews and Israel, through whom would come the Seed of the Woman, the Messiah, who would ultimately crush the head of the serpent.

THE LIES OF THE ENEMY
(Genesis 3:1-4)

- Did God really say? (instilling doubt and unbelief);
- You shall not surely die (the lie that we can go ahead and sin and there will be no consequences and this has resulted in mankind creating second chances after death to convince themselves that God will not allow anyone to really go to hell);
- You can be like God (instilling Pride—exalting self above God).

LIES VS. TRUTH
(John 8:44)

*"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, **for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies**" (John 8:44).*

VERSES AND DEFINITIONS

WARFARE SCRIPTURES AND DEFINITIONS

Turn to Ephesians 6:10-14.

*10 Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might**. 11 **Put on** the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not **wrestle** against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual [hosts] of wickedness in the heavenly [places]. 13 Therefore **take up** the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. 14 **Stand therefore**, having **girded your waist** with truth, having **put on** the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, **taking** the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 **praying always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints-- (Eph 6:10-18 NKJV)*

We are admonished in these passages to do several things. We are admonished to:

BE STRONG, IN THE LORD AND IN THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT, PUT ON, STAND, WRESTLE, TAKE UP, WITHSTAND, GIRD YOUR WAIST, PRAY ALWAYS

1. **BE STRONG:** To receive strength
2. **POWER OF HIS MIGHT:** God's Dominion; ability, force, strength, might
3. **PUT ON: Verb:** To sink into

This concept of "putting on the armor" in Ephesians 6 is something we get confused about and we tend to misuse it. In the Greek it is also a verb, but it means to "**sink into**" in the sense of "**sinking into a garment**." So, "putting on" the full armor really means to "sink down into" the truth, who is Jesus Christ. When He tells us that we are hidden with Christ in God, I see myself sinking down into this truth and being hidden in Him as He is on the front lines doing the battle. Yes, I am standing, yes I am speaking truth of Scripture, but I am hidden and He is visible to the enemy. However, the same scripture also tells us to "take up" the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and to wield the shield of faith, which is our faith. This means that we pick these things up ourselves. There are defensive and offensive rules of engagement here.

4. **STAND: Verb:** Stand; Place; Make firm; To cause a person or thing to keep his or its place; To escape in safety; To establish a thing; Stand still; Immovable; To continue safe and sound; To stand unharmed, ready or prepared; To be of a steadfast mind of quality; One who does not hesitate or waiver.
5. **WRESTLE:** A wrestling" ("to sway, vibrate"), is used figuratively in Ephesians 6:12 of the spiritual conflict engaged in by believers.
6. **TAKE UP: Verb:** To take up, raise to take up (a thing in order to carry or use it)
7. **WITHSTAND: Verb:** To set one's self against, to withstand, to resist, to oppose, to set against.
8. **GIRD YOUR WAIST:** To equip one's self with knowledge of the truth
9. **PRAYING ALWAYS**
10. **AUTHORITY IN CHRIST:** We are told by Jesus that He has given us His **authority**—to trample on scorpions and serpents and over all the power of the enemy (Luke 10:19 KJV "*Behold, I give unto you **power** to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the **power** of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*")

Power: exousía, in the sense of ability; privilege, force, competency, freedom; superhuman power; delegated influence:—authority, right, permission.

Trample/Tread: to trample, crush with the feet; to tread under foot, trample on, i.e. to treat with insult and contempt.

Power of the enemy: dynamis. Force supernatural power, ability, abundance, violence. Where we get our word for dynamite. The enemy has this power, but in 2 Timothy 2:1 we are given this same dynamite power: "*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of **power**, and of love, and of a sound mind.*" (2Ti 1:7).

Someone once said that at the cross, Satan's authority was defeated, but his power was not. However, we are given both power and authority.

We are also admonished in James 4:7 to "**resist** the devil"

11. RESIST: Verb: To set oneself against, to withstand, resist, oppose, to set against (James 4:7)

This warfare is active, not passive—but the way we understand it is that we know our authority in Christ, and we are acting under that authority just as a policeman is acting under the authority of the Sheriff and with his badge, he has authority to do certain things. He doesn't go around starting confrontations, but when faced with confrontation, he has certain rights under the law to act. We are the same, under the authority of Christ. Resisting is not ignoring—it is still actively opposing the devil.

It isn't about confronting the devil, shouting and shaking fists. It is orderly, organized, and completely accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit using the written Word of God.

In Revelation 2:7 through 3:12, We are called to **Overcome**

12. OVERCOME: Verb: To conquer, to carry off the victory, come off victorious. Also used of Christ, victorious over all His foes; of Christians, that hold fast their faith even unto death against the power of their foes, and temptations and persecution when one is arraigned or goes to law, to win the case, maintain one's cause.

In these passages Jesus is talking about seven churches that were literal churches when John was writing, also they are churches that have been active during different times in history, and they are active today. To each of these churches He gives the command to repent, and the promise of a reward to those who "**overcome.**"

HOW DO WE OVERCOME?

John wrote of what it means to overcome:

*For whatever is born of God **overcomes** the world. And this is the victory that has **overcome** the world--**our faith** (1 John 5:4)*

*"And they **overcame** him **by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death** (Revelation 12: 11)*

WARFARE STRATEGY FROM THE WORD OF GOD

IN WARFARE, BEGIN BY JUDGING OUR EMOTIONS

When you first begin to hear the old messages and you know you are heading down the cliff, first Judge the emotion. Ask, “Is thing I am feeling from God or is it from the enemy?” Take the time to judge it before you go over the cliff, and then ask Jesus for His strategy of truth against lying emotions.

OUR INSTRUCTIONS:

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal (human); they are mighty through God to the pulling down of these strongholds, to the casting down of imaginations and every high thought that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and to the taking of every thought captive in obedience to Christ.” (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

A “Stronghold is a fortress made of our thoughts, lies from the enemy, identity messages over our lifetimes (i.e. “you are worthless, you will never get it right, etc.) We are instructed to pull these strongholds down. Imaginations can be fantasies, images, movies, music, video games, TV shows, etc. that we resort to in our thoughts when we want to escape—coping mechanisms. A High Thought is any thought that elevates itself above what is true about God (unforgiveness, hurt feelings, thoughts of revenge, thoughts that are bigger than God.) These can become idols. We “cast these out” do not tolerate them.

OLD TESTAMENT WARFARE STRATEGIES:

JEHOSHAPHAT

(Read 2 Chronicles 20)

“Some time after these events, the Moabites and the Ammonites attacked Jehoshaphat and started a war.”

Jehoshaphat’s Response:

1. *“In mounting fear, Jehoshaphat devoted himself to seek the LORD” (v3) (He is afraid—but he devoted himself to seek the LORD)*
2. *“He proclaimed a period of fasting throughout all of the territory of Judah, and the tribe of Judah assembled together to seek the LORD. People came from all of the cities of Judah to seek the LORD” (v 3-4) (He proclaims a fast, and got the people to seek the LORD with him.)*
3. *“LORD God of our ancestors, you are the God who lives in heaven, are you not? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations, don’t you? In your own hands you grasp both strength and power, don’t you? As a result, no one can oppose you, can they? You are our God, who expelled the former inhabitants of this land right in front of our people Israel, aren’t you? Then you gave it to your friend Abraham’s descendant forever, didn’t you? They lived in it and have built there a sanctuary for your name, where they said, ‘If evil comes upon us, such as war as punishment, disease, or famine and we stand in your presence in this Temple (because your Name is in this Temple) and cry out to you in our distress, then you will hear and deliver.’ Now therefore look! The Ammonites, the Moabites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir, whom you would not permit Israel to attack when they arrived from the land of Egypt—since they turned away from them and did not eliminate them—Look how they’re rewarding us! They’re coming to drive us from your property that you gave us to be our inheritance. Our God, you are going to punish them, aren’t you? We have no strength to face this vast multitude that has come against us, nor do we know what to do, except that our eyes are on you.” (V 6-12) (He is humble, yet bold with God: Proclaims to God Who He is! Reminds God of His promises to protect them. Makes it clear that the land and property belongs to Him. Acknowledges his own lack of any strength and asks God to punish them.*
4. *“All of Judah was standing in the LORD’s presence, along with their little babies, their wives, and their children.” (He prays this in front of all the people including the children—he involves them in his prayer—they see his humility before God and his dependence on Him.)*
5. *“Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Zechariah’s son Jahaziel.” (There was a prophet who spoke up and Jehosophat listened to him and obeyed)*
6. *“Pay attention, everyone in Judah, in Jerusalem, and you, too, King Jehoshaphat! This is what the LORD says to you: ‘Stop being afraid, and stop being discouraged because of this vast invasion force, because the battle doesn’t belong to you,*

but to God” (God instructs them to stop being afraid and discouraged, reminds them the battle is His.)

7. “Tomorrow you are to go down to attack them. Pay attention, now—they’ll be coming up near the ascent of Ziz.” (God’s instructions through the prophet—Go down to attack, but you won’t be fighting)
8. “You won’t be fighting in this battle. Take your stand, but **stand still**, and watch the LORD’s salvation on your behalf, Judah and Jerusalem! **Never fear and never be discouraged**. Go out to face them tomorrow, since **the LORD is with you**.” (Be ready for war—armed and dangerous—but then stand still and watch the Lord’s salvation. Again, never fear, never be discouraged because the Lord is with you!)
9. “Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face to the ground, and all the assembled inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem fell face down in the LORD’s presence and worshipped the LORD.” (Jehoshaphat’s response? He bowed down with the whole congregation and fell on his face and worshipped)
10. “Korah stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel in a very loud voice that ascended to heaven.” (Sing to the Lord in a very loud voice that goes up to Heaven!)
11. “The army got up early the next morning and headed out into the wilderness of Tekoa” (After praise and worship then start to move ahead)
12. “Jehoshaphat stood up and addressed them. “Have faith in the LORD your God and you’ll be established! Have faith in his prophets and you’ll succeed” (His words of faith and encouragement to his people)
13. “After he had consulted with the people, Jehoshaphat appointed some choir members to sing to the LORD and to praise him in sacred splendor as they marched out in front of the armed forces. They kept saying “Give thanks to the LORD, because his gracious love is eternal!” (Again, he gets the people singing—put on praise music, and keep the praise going throughout—never go to war without a chorus of praise going before you)
14. “**Right on time, as they began to sing and praise, the LORD ambushed** the Ammonites, Moabites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir who had attacked Judah, and they were defeated. The Ammonites and Moabites attacked the inhabitants of Mount Seir, destroying them, and after they had finished with the inhabitants of Mount Seir, they worked on destroying one another!” (When the Lord does the fighting, the enemies go into confusion and destroy each other—Note: God always works “right on time”)
15. “Then they all returned with joy to Jerusalem, every soldier from Judah and Jerusalem, with Jehoshaphat at the head of the procession, because the LORD had made them rejoice over their enemies. They proceeded directly to the LORD’s Temple, carrying lyres, harps, and trumpets. Fear of God seized all of the kingdoms in the surrounding territories when they heard that the LORD had battled Israel’s enemies. As a result, Jehoshaphat’s kingdom enjoyed peace, because his God had provided rest for him all around.” (Just as they began with prayer and praise, they end with praise. Others watching gained respect for them)

- ✓ Hears a bad report-Lie
- ✓ He is afraid—Truth
- ✓ He devotes himself to pray and fast
- ✓ He is humble yet bold with God
- ✓ Proclaims to God Who God is!—Truth
- ✓ Reminds God of His promises—Truth
- ✓ Proclaims that everything belongs to God—Truth
- ✓ Acknowledges his own weakness—Truth
- ✓ Asks God to punish the enemy—Truth
- ✓ Involves others in his prayer—Truth
- ✓ God instructs him to not fear or be discouraged—Truth
- ✓ God tells him the battle belongs to God—Truth
- ✓ God instructs him to go to the battle but to stand still—Truth
- ✓ God tells him to be ready for the war but then to STAND—Truth
- ✓ Jehoshaphat bows and worships
- ✓ Jehoshaphat and all the people sing in a very loud voice while going to the battle
- ✓ When they get there, God has caused the enemy to turn on each other and are destroyed
- ✓ When the LORD does the fighting it is right on time
- ✓ They continue the praise and worship after the battle is over

HEZEKIAH—2 KINGS 19:1, 5-7, 14-17, 19)

1 And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard [it], that he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. ... 5 So the servants of King Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said to them, “Thus you shall say to your master, ‘Thus says

the LORD: "Do not be afraid of the words which you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. 7 "Surely I will send a spirit upon him, and he shall hear a rumor and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." ' ' ... 14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. 15 Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said: "O LORD God of Israel, [the One] who dwells [between] the cherubim, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16 "Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 "Truly, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, ... 19 "Now therefore, O LORD our God, I pray, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You [are] the LORD God, You alone." (2Ki 19:1, 5-7, 14-17, 19)

In 2 Kings 18 and 19 there is a definite warfare strategy when Hezekiah is faced with an army coming against him. Shalmaneser king of Assyria sent envoys to camp outside the walls of Jerusalem and they continuously **shouted** out lies about their power and about God's inability to save them. They defamed Israel's King, Hezekiah. They were shouting out lies. What did Hezekiah do?

- ✓ He hears a bad report
- ✓ He runs immediately to God
- ✓ He repents before God
- ✓ God sends the prophet Isaiah with the answer and strategy
- ✓ The key is "do not fear!" God is in control
- ✓ God will cause the enemy to turn on itself and destroy itself
- ✓ Hezekiah takes the inflammatory letter and spreads it out before God
- ✓ He prays, proclaims who God is and petitions God for deliverance

NEHEMIAH, JOSHUA, GIDEON, DEBORAH, DAVID, ETC.

In Nehemiah there is a definite warfare strategy when the enemy is coming against those Israelis who are trying to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem, and Nehemiah lays out very clearly how he as the leader, led the people to submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Men and women fought the enemy by holding their building tools in one hand and a weapon in the other.

Joshua was given very specific strategies for war as were Gideon, Deborah, David and many others in the Old Testament. You can search this out on your own. Every time you come across a war when reading in the Old Testament, instead of skipping over the passages, look for the strategies. Psalms is filled with warfare verses; you can just take some of them word for word and use them in prayer.

DANIEL 10

Daniel heard from the arch-Angel Gabriel that his prayer from three weeks before was heard as soon as he prayed it, but because of the battle that was taking place in the heavenlies between the prince (principality—fallen angel) of Persia who engaged the Angel in warfare and kept the answer from coming until Michael the arch-Angel (principality over Israel), intervened. Then this angel tells Daniel that he has to leave and fight the next principality, the Prince of Greece who was leading warfare against Israel—these are happening around us, all the time.

NEW TESTAMENT STRATEGIES

Judge the Emotion: When you first begin to hear the old messages and you know your emotions are about to go over the cliff, first Judge the emotion—is this feeling from God? Or is it from the enemy? Take the time to judge it before your emotions go over the cliff, and then ask Jesus to give you His strategy for using His truth against the lies of the enemy:

Strategy: Tear down strongholds. We already looked at this one, but keep it with your list of strategies. *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:3-5).*

Strategy: Hide: Our lives are hidden with Christ in God

“For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3).

Strategy: Pray, Thank God, Focus on the Truth about Jesus: Take all anxious thoughts captive; declare thanksgiving to God, declare who God is: true, pure, etc.

*“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things [are] **noble**, whatever things [are] **just**, whatever things [are] **pure**, whatever things [are] **lovely**, whatever things [are] of **good report**, if [there is] any **virtue** and if [there is] anything **praiseworthy**--**meditate on these things**. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the **God of peace** will be with you”*
(Phil 4:6-9).

Strategy: Submit to God, **resist** the devil, **draw near** to God, God draws near to you.

“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse [your] hands, [you] sinners; and purify [your] hearts, [you] double-minded” (Jas 4:7-8).

Strategy: Proclaim the Blood: They overcame by the blood of the Lamb—Proclaim that you are forgiven and cleansed by the Blood of the Lamb.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death” (Rev 12:11).

Strategy: Declaring the truth about who we are in Christ: Ephesians 1; 3; Col. 1.

Strategy: Renounce Fear, declare what God has given—power, love, a sound mind.

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

Strategy: Speak the truth that the Word of God is living and powerful:

“For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things [are] naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we [must give] account” (Heb. 4: 11-12).

Strategy: Fix our eyes on Jesus:

“Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb. 12: 1)

Strategy: Declare that God is still working in your life and will complete that work:

“... being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete [it] until the day of Jesus Christ ...” (Phil. 1:6)

Strategy: Choose to believe, no matter what your emotions are telling you:

“For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” (Romans 4: 3).

“Who against hope believed...And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform” (Romans 4: 18. 21).

Strategy: Thank God for His Victory that we are already walking in the victory and we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus:

“Now thanks [be] to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing” (2 Cor 2:14, 15).

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (Romans 8: 37).

THE VOICE OF THE SHEPHERD VS. THE VOICE OF THE BUTCHER OF THE SHEEP

Jesus said that His sheep hear His voice and the voice of a stranger we will not follow (John 10: 5, 27). Sheep either hear the voice of the Shepherd or the voice of the butcher of the sheep. Throughout our Christian lives we will either be hearing the voice of the Shepherd or the voice of the butcher of the sheep. What does the voice of the Shepherd sound like? What does the voice of the butcher sound like?

Satan's voice – His goal is John 10:10 (*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*). Satan speaks in 1st person singular with your voice:

Dark, confusing
Sets us at Dis-ease
Distorts the Word
Harsh
Drives me away from God
Critical
Non-specific
Hurtful
Accusing ("you" messages)
Drives instead of leads
Works on fear
Points to negative past
Says failure equals no hope
Condemning
General, not specific

God's voice – John 10:14 (*I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own*). We are the objects of His love. He wants to display Himself through us. He longs to be in fellowship with us and for us to walk in the fullness of Him.

Light, clear
Peace-At ease
Freeing
Forgiving
Loving
Always goes with written Word
Gentle Shepherd, doesn't drive
Gently leads
Gives confidence
Points you to depend on Him
In the moment
God is in all failure
Conviction is specific (He'll never convict us of something He is not going
To free us from)
Lifts my spirit



"It may sound like your
voice to you,
but it sounds like God's
voice to the devil"

~Beth Moore

As the Father loved Me,
I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU:

Abide
IN
My Love

Lesson 6

ABIDING IN CHRIST
LESSON 6
NOTES/HOME STUDY

- Jesus tells us that He came to set us free, that whom the Son sets free is free indeed:
- *"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." ... "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." (Jhn 8:32, 36)*
- **What sets you free?** The Truth
- **Who is the Truth?** Jesus: *"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the **truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'*" (Jhn 14:6)
- The Word of God is the seed that goes into the soil of our hearts and breaks open to produce fruit.
- The Word of God is meant to change us radically from the inside out. Jesus called Himself the "Word:" *"In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word was with God and the Word was God...**And the **Word** became flesh and dwelt among us"* (John 1:1, 14). *"He [was] clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called The Word of God.**"* (Rev 19:13)
- Paul tells us that the Word of God is "God-Breathed" *"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,"* (2Ti 3:16 NIV)
- Paul tells us that the Word of God is: *"... living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* (Heb 4:12 NKJV)
- Who is the Word of God? Jesus. He is living, powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. He is able to pierce and divide between the soul and the spirit (the mind, will, emotions) and He is able to discern the thoughts and intents (motives) of your heart. And He does this through abiding in Him, reading His Word, submitting all of your "self" into His hands.
- Sometimes Jesus doesn't act according to our preconceived ideas of Him.
- Habakkuk 3:1. *"A PRAYER of Habakkuk the prophet, set to wild, enthusiastic, and triumphal music."*
- Victory begins when we have come to the end of ourselves.
- Jesus has given us everything we will ever need to live the life: 2 Peter 1:3-4
- Dying to self is not Taoism, Buddhism or any other religion. It is not emptying the mind. It is emptying of self, so that the mind, will, and emotions are completely under the control of the Fullness of God through the power of the indwelling Christ.
- We are His "Workmanship" which means His "Poem." We were selected to be alive in this day, in this place, at this time, in this country. We are not an accident. *("For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them"* (Eph 2:10).
- Habakkuk 3:18: "Exult" means to jump for joy, to dance and spin before God!
- In the Old Testament it was the women who marched in the victory parade ahead of the armies, playing tambourines, singing and dancing. *"The Lord gives the word [of power]; the women who bear and publish [the news] are a great host."* (Ps. 68:11 AMP)
- Whatever we are suffering right now, He is making us triumphant and not only that, but in our triumph, He makes us a fragrance to all who know us—to those who are saved and those who are not. This is cause for a shout—to dance and spin and sing to wild, enthusiastic and triumphal music!
- Time to end the fairytale of the happy ending here on earth and to enter in to what He is doing above-the-line.

Take the prayers from the handouts and create your own "War Room." Put them where you can see them, carry them with you, or tape them on your wall somewhere. Continue to review all of the material, and ask the Lord to teach you what you need to learn from this material at the exact time you need to learn it.

A PRAYER OF HABAKKUK THE PROPHET

HABAKKUK 1—A Heavenly Conversation

Habakkuk's Cry:

THE BURDEN or oracle (the thing to be lifted up) which Habakkuk the prophet saw. 2 O Lord, how long shall I cry for help and You will not hear? Or cry out to You of violence and You will not save? 3 Why do You show me iniquity and wrong, and Yourself look upon or cause me to see perverseness and trouble? For destruction and violence are before me; and there is strife, and contention arises. 4 Therefore the law is slackened and justice and a righteous sentence never go forth, for the [hostility of the] wicked surrounds the [uncompromisingly] righteous; therefore justice goes forth perverted.

God's Reply:

5 Look around [you, Habakkuk, replied the Lord] among the nations and see! And be astonished! Astounded! For I am putting into effect a work in your days [such] that you would not believe it if it were told you.

Habakkuk's Prayer:

12 Are not You from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, You have appointed [the Chaldean] to execute [Your] judgment, and You, O Rock, have established him for chastisement and correction.

HABAKKUK 2

Habakkuk's Confession:

2:1 1 [OH, I know, I have been rash to talk out plainly this way to God!] I will [in my thinking] stand upon my post of observation and station myself on the tower or fortress, and will watch to see what He will say within me and what answer I will make [as His mouthpiece] to the perplexities of my complaint against Him.

God's Response—Above the Line:

2 And the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision and engrave it so plainly upon tablets that everyone who passes may [be able to] read [it easily and quickly] as he hastens by. 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time and it hastens to the end [fulfillment]; it will not deceive or disappoint. Though it tarry, wait [earnestly] for it, because it will surely come; it will not be behindhand on its appointed day. 4 Look at the proud; his soul is not straight or right within him, but the [rigidly] just and the [uncompromisingly] righteous man shall live by his faith and in his faithfulness.

(Verses 5-19 God tells what is coming in the future)

The "Holy But"

20 But the Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth hush and keep silence before Him.

HABAKKUK 3

Habakkuk's Prayer

3:1 A PRAYER of Habakkuk the prophet, set to wild, enthusiastic, and triumphal music. 2 O Lord, I have heard the report of You and was afraid. O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make [Yourself] known! In wrath [earnestly] remember love, pity, and mercy.

(Verses 3-15 What the future is going to look like)

Habakkuk's Honest Response

16 I heard and my [whole inner self] trembled; my lips quivered at the sound. Rottenness enters into my bones and under me [down to my feet]; I tremble. I will wait quietly for the day of trouble and distress when there shall come up against [my] people him who is about to invade and oppress them.

Habakkuk embracing God's will:

17 Though the fig tree does not blossom and there is no fruit on the vines, [though] the product of the olive fails and the fields yield no food, though the flock is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls, 18 Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will exult in the [victorious] God of my salvation! 19 **The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]!**

OUR VICTORY IN CHRIST!

Colossians 2:15: *Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

2 Cor. 2:14-15: *Now thanks [be] to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

Romans 8:37: *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*

Psalms 112:7-8: *He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.*

Hebrews 2:14-15: *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

Micah 7:7-8: *Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me. Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; When I fall, I will arise; When I sit in darkness, The LORD [will be] a light to me.*

COMING TO THE END OF SELF

Michael Wells

But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ (Philippians 3:8).

Coming to the end of self

Insanity=Out of Control. Sometimes insanity is idolatry.

We go insane as we are consumed with our selves.

The only way we can be satisfied in this life is when we have given ourselves over to something that is bigger than ourselves.

If God takes away our coping mechanisms, what is left? What would we do? We can't leave where we are until we admit where we are. Do we really want Him to take this away from us? Think about this, it is very important to understand what our coping mechanisms are first, and then to think about what we would do if they were removed.

This is why we hang onto our idols.

Journey to the end of self:

- We accept Christ as Savior. Then in our own strength, with our insanity, our idolatry, our trying to change our image, we head out to live the Christian life.
- God gives us a situation where we need divinity; we can't handle it by our self, with our humanity.
- The situation drives us down to our idols, our coping mechanisms, and we begin to try to turn the thing around; get it fixed.
- Then things get worse, until we know we are utterly weak.
- It is then we begin to surrender the whole thing to Jesus and move into His rest, peace, life, power and gifts.

When someone we know is going through this process, don't try to rescue them from the process, allow them to go down to this place where they meet Jesus. (Remember Jesus prayed for Peter that as he was being sifted by Satan, his faith would not fail. Jesus did not rescue Peter from the process, He prayed for his faith.)

Good counseling and good discipleship is knowing when not to counsel and when not to disciple. Walking alongside them through the process, giving scriptural support, reminding them of Jesus' love for them, reminding them that Jesus has not forsaken them, and is not mad at them as they move through the process, is sometimes the most important thing we can do.

How do we give up these idols? Everything in the Christian life is fairly simple; we give them up with the words of our mouth. "I give it to You." and then the key: believe that He has taken it, the first time you gave it to Him, not after you've cleaned yourself up.

"Father, this is where You put me and I'm not rebelling against it, but I can't do it. I can't carry this Father, I just can't. Come and be my _____(strength, forgiveness, love, peace, etc.)"

I Surrender to God:

All that I carry

My children
My future
My relationships
My disappointments
My insanity
My false concepts of God
My fear of the unknown
My old identity messages
My control of others

All about which I worry

My vocation
My marriage
My family
My losses
My lies
My false pride
My depression
My finances
My excuse-making

My past Hurts

My past failures
My bitterness
My sickness
My idols
My lying emotions
My addictions
My lying thoughts
My obsessions

All of my Addictions

- Self love
- Self pity
- Self hatred
- Self exaltation
- Self promotion
- Self protection
- Self remorse
- Self rejection
- Self destruction
- Addiction to rejection from others
- Addiction to other people's problems
- Addiction to counselors and comforters
- Addiction to depression
- Addiction to a need for approval
- Addiction to a need to control others
- Addiction to a need to be loved
- Addiction to crises
- Addiction to drama

All Other things not mentioned here

[illegible]

Father, you are my God! I was not created for the load that I carry! I cannot make one hair white or black. I am not the Holy Spirit in others' lives. I have failed to enter Your rest. I am not god; You are my God. I have a God and therefore I surrender all that I carry to You this day. I give it to You believing that You have taken it, not because I feel it, but because I believe it. Thank You! I now enter into Your rest.

I gave it and You took it!

Signature _____

PRAYERS FOR ABIDING IN CHRIST

PRAYER TO EXCHANGE MY HUMAN EMOTIONS AND ATTITUDE FOR HIS: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control..."*

"Lord, today I am coming to You with my cold love. My love is only as strong as my emotional feeling at the moment and can turn to anger and resentment in a moment. I would like to exchange my love for Yours. I give you my small, cold heart and I receive from You, Your supernatural love."

PRAYER TO END SELF-CONDEMNATION

If you are plagued with condemning thoughts of your past or an accusation or offense from someone:

"Yes LORD, that accusation might be true; I certainly may be guilty of that and worse. But I have confessed that to my Heavenly Father and He has forgiven me, and cleansed me of all unrighteousness and it is now under His blood. NO ONE can access it or retrieve it from His blood. Thank You Jesus, that You have cleansed me."

PRAYER TO END SELF-DEFENSE

If you are one who has difficulty ever seeing yourself as having done something wrong, it goes straight to Jesus and say:

"LORD, if there is any truth in this accusation against me, will You sort through all of it—all of my self-defenses and coping mechanisms—and get to the root? I will defer and submit to whatever You, LORD, reveal to me and however You choose to expose and heal it."

TEARING DOWN STRONGHOLDS

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 gives us very detailed instructions about our thought-life. When you are having difficulty with wild thoughts—unbelief, anger, self-loathing, etc. your weapon is the Scripture and in this verse you can quote it out loud to the enemy who is attacking you with these thoughts:

"For the weapons of our warfare [are] not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

"Jesus, I am taking this thought captive in obedience to You and I am tearing down the stronghold of ____."

From 1 Corinthians 13 and Galations 5:22-23:

When an offense comes your way and you want to react, ask God to give you ten seconds to pause and remember 1 Cor. 13, that Christ in me doesn't take offense and He wasn't offended by that. He doesn't react in anger, etc. Speak out loud:

"Jesus in me was not offended by that remark and I choose not to be offended."

"Jesus in me is not angry at that and I don't have to be angry."

When you are tempted to return to something you have been struggling with, such as an addiction to something, you can speak out loud from Galatians 5:23:

"Jesus in me is self-control; He is not addicted to anything."

As you read through 1 Corinthians 13, you can allow the living, active, Word of God to change you from the inside out and conform you into the image of God. Make statements/declarations out loud such as:

"God, I believe You are (patient, kind, continue through the list in 1 Cor. 13). I have no (patience, etc) right now with this situation and I am once again feeling so inadequate—I choose now to exchange my lack of (patience, etc) for Your infinite, never-ending (patience, etc). Thank You that this is truth and I can walk in it right now. Amen."

WHEN SOMEONE HURTS YOUR FEELINGS:

"Thank You Jesus that You will take that hit for me."

The "Holy But" (See Psalm 77:1-11 and watch how David turns his attitude around with the "Holy But")

The "Un-Holy But" sounds like this:

*"I know that He is working all things together for my good... **BUT** ... you don't know how bad my situation is, nothing good can possibly come out of all of this..."*

The "Holy But" sounds like this:

*"My life is as bad as it has ever been, I am confused and fearful of the outcome ... **BUT** ... I know and I believe that God is going to take something out of this mess and work it for my good and for His glory even if I can't see that yet. Be glorified Lord in Your plan for my life."*

The cup half-empty/half-full/overflowing

"Thank You Lord that in You I am neither a cup half-empty or a cup half-full. I am a cup overflowing!"

WARFARE STRATEGY FROM THE WORD OF GOD:

Strategy: Hide: Our lives are hidden with Christ in God. *"For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God"* (Col. 3:3).

"Thank You Jesus that I am hidden in you and You are hidden in God. This thing that is coming against me has to go through You before it can get to me."

Strategy: Pray, Thank God, Focus on the Truth about Jesus: Take all anxious thoughts captive; declare thanksgiving to God, declare who God is: true, pure, etc. *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things [are] **noble**, whatever things [are] **just**, whatever things [are] **pure**, whatever things [are] **lovely**, whatever things [are] of **good report**, if [there is] any **virtue** and if [there is] anything **praiseworthy**--**meditate on these things**. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the **God of peace** will be with you"* (Phil 4:6-9).

"Lord, I believe that You are Peace. Thank You for being my peace. I rest in Your peace right now."

Strategy: Submit to God, **resist** the devil, **draw near** to God, God draws near to you. *"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse [your] hands, [you] sinners; and purify [your] hearts, [you] double-minded" (Jas 4:7-8).*

"Lord Jesus, I submit to You [name everything of "self" that you are submitting—self love, self protection, self loathing, pride, attitudes, opinions, worldly involvement, etc.]. I believe that You have taken this and now, in Your Name I resist the devil and he must flee from me. I believe that he must flee! Lord, I humbly draw near to You now (James 4:7-8) [Be quiet and still before Him, thinking on Him, thanking Him, praising Him that He desires to draw near to you. Wait in meekness as he draws near to you.]

Strategy: Renounce Fear, declare what God has given—power, love, a sound mind. *"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim 1:7).*

"Thank You Lord Jesus that You have not given me a Spirit of fear—that comes from another spirit. Thank You that what You have given me is Your power, Your love and Your Sound Mind!"

Strategy: Speak the truth that the Word of God is living and powerful: *"For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things [are] naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we [must give] account" (Heb. 4: 11-12).*

"Thank You Jesus that You are the Word and You are powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword and only You know what is in my soul and in my heart. I consent for you to judge the thoughts and intents (motives) of my heart."

Strategy: Fix our eyes on Jesus: *"Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12: 1).*

"Right now, with all of the crazy things going on around me and my uncontrollable thoughts, I choose to fix my eyes on only You Jesus. You are the author and the finisher of my faith."

Strategy: Declare that God is still working in your life and will complete that work: *"... being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete [it] until the day of Jesus Christ ..." (Phil. 1:6).*

"Thank You Lord Jesus that You promised to finish the work that You began in me."

Strategy: Choose to believe, no matter what your emotions are telling you: *"For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." (Romans 4: 3). "Who against hope believed...And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Romans 4: 18. 21).*

"Lord, I see no visible hope to an end of the thing I am facing, but as Abraham did, I choose to believe You."

Strategy: Thank God for His Victory that we are already walking in the victory and we are more than conquerors in Christ Jesus: *"Now thanks [be] to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing" (2 Cor 2:14, 15). "Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8: 37).*

"Thank You Lord that You are always in the process of leading me in triumph in Christ Jesus and that You are diffusing the fragrance of Your knowledge through my life. Thank You that I am more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus!"

FROM HABAKKUK:

"I will stand on my post of observation and station myself on the tower or fortress, and will watch to see what He will say within me and what answer I will make [as His mouthpiece] to the perplexities of my complaint against Him" (Hab. 2:1).

"The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]!" (Hab. 3:19).

THE WALK OF VICTORY:

Colossians 2:15: Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

2 Cor. 2:14-15: Now thanks [be] to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

Romans 8:37: Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Psalms 112:7-8: He will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

Hebrews 2:14-15: Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Micah 7:7-8: Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me. Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; When I fall, I will arise; When I sit in darkness, The LORD [will be] a light to me.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A LIFE SURRENDERED TO GOD

A study in contrasts

“You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God” (David, Ps. 51:16-17 NLT).

Unbroken and un-surrendered

Focuses on the failure of others
 Self-righteous, critical, fault-finding

Looks down on others
 Self-condemning, although often hidden
 Independent, self-sufficient spirit
 Maintains control—must be “my way”
 Has to prove he/she is right
 Demanding spirit
 Self-protective of time, rights, reputation
 Desires to be served
 Desires self-advancement
 Driven to be recognized
 Thinks of what he/she can do for God
 Trumps others through his/her knowledge
 Self-conscious, self-absorbed
 Guarded with others
 Quick to blame
 Unapproachable
 Defensive when criticized
 Concerned with being respectable
 Clings to his/her self-proclaimed “word from God”
 Overly concerned with what others will think
 Works to maintain and protect his/her reputation
 Hides his/her sin
 Confesses his/her sin in generalities
 Clings to gifts from God
 Remorseful over his/her sin
 Demands those he/she disagrees with see it his/her way
 Displays false humility
 Uses the words of God
 Uses “god talk” to control others or get his/her way
 God
 Blind to his/her true heart condition
 Promotes an “experience with God”
 Durable, thick-skinned for the moment

Broken and surrendered

Aware of his/her own spiritual need
 Compassionate, forgiving, looks for the best in others
 Esteems others higher than him/herself
 Accepts him/herself for who God says he/she is
 Dependent spirit, recognize need for others
 Surrenders control
 A willingness to yield the right to be right
 Giving spirit
 Self-denying without self-deprecation
 Motivated to serve others
 Promotes others
 A willingness for others to get recognition
 A willing sacrifice for God “to do” through him/her
 Humbled by how much he/she is still learning
 Lost in the wonder of God’s presence
 Takes risks in relationships and closeness to others
 Owns personal failures, if accurate
 Easily entreated
 Listens to criticism humbly, even when inaccurate
 Concerned with being real
 Seeks confirmation from the “Word of God”
 What matters most is what God knows
 Lays down his/her right to his/her own reputation
 Exposes his/her sin. Can’t live without honesty
 Deals in specifics
 Clings to God Himself
 Repentant over his/her sin and forsakes it
 Lets irreconcilable people go
 Humble before God
 Lives the “word of God”
 Respects the uniqueness in others to hear from

Walks in the Light
 Quietly manifests the “experience of God”
 Invincible always through God’s strength.

Related scriptures for the surrender of oneself to God: Matt. 10:38-39; Luke 9:23-24; John 12:24-25; Romans 12:1-2; Phil. 2:5-8; Phil. 3:8-10

SCRIPTURE PRAYER FOR FREEDOM

Kathy Beard

Praise and Thanksgiving

Lord Jesus, I come boldly in Your Name as You have instructed and I bow humbly before Your throne of grace to receive grace and mercy in this time of need. It is an urgent time Father, but You warned us that it would be. You tell me to lift up my prayers, supplications and petitions to you, with thanksgiving and without being anxious about anything and Your peace will guard my heart and mind in Christ Jesus, so I now lift up this prayer with thanksgiving to You. You tell me that when I don't know how to pray as I ought, Your Holy Spirit will pray through me with groanings too deep for words. I confess I don't know how to pray as I ought and I am completely dependent on You to pray through me now. I lay aside all of my own opinions, agendas and emotional feelings about this situation and submit to You everything including the outcome and the process You choose in bringing this answer to pass and I resist Satan, because You tell me that if I submit to You and resist Satan, he will flee from me. As You Yourself prayed for Peter when the enemy had asked permission to sift him like wheat, You asked that his faith would not fail. I ask the same now for _____, that their faith would not fail. (Hebrews 4:16, Philippians 4:6, Romans 8:26, James 4:7 and Luke 22:31-32)

Thank You Jesus that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes and that seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to You by the Father, thank You for choosing to reveal Yourself to us; I am in awe of this truth.

Thank You Lord Jesus that no one can come to You unless You, Father draw them and I know that You, Abba Father are drawing _____ to Yourself, to a complete surrender of their mind, will and emotions to Your loving control. Draw them now, even as I pray, to Jesus, the One true God and Father, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Thank You that it is the Spirit who gives life, no one can give them this life and no one can prevent them from receiving Your life. Thank You that You promise living water to anyone who is thirsty. I am asking for Your living water to be poured into _____ and through them, cleansing them of all of their past, present and future sin and of everything that is not of faith. Make them thirsty for this Water Lord Jesus. Lord You tell me that whoever abides in Your Word will be Your disciple indeed and I am asking that You will give _____ a hunger and thirst for Your word. (Matt. 11:25; John 6:44, 6:63; 7:37 and 8:31)

The Prayer of Jesus for Us

Oh God, how I love Your own prayer, which You prayed not only for those who followed You two thousand years ago, but also for us, today. I rejoice that You have authority over everyone; that You give eternal life to _____, who was given to You, that You made it possible for _____ to know You, the only true God and Jesus Christ. Thank you that You finished the work and are glorified now and are even now, praying to keep _____ through Your name. Thank You that You are praying that _____ will be one with You. Thank You that none of those whom You were given have been lost and _____ has not been lost. Thank You that _____ can have Your joy fulfilled in themselves because You have given them Your Word and even though the world hates us, You are not praying that we be taken out of the world, but that You would keep us from the evil one. You pray for _____'s sanctification by Your truth, Your Word. Thank You that it is Your desire that we all be one, even as You and the Father are one, that _____ may be made perfect in one and that the world would know that You have loved us, just as the Father loved You. Thank You that You desire that _____ would be with You where You are and that they may behold Your glory. Thank You that You have declared to _____ Your Name that the love with which the Father loved You, will be in _____ and You will be in _____. These truths are so astounding that I bow before You in awe and worship in the Spirit. (John 17; John 4:23)

Proclaiming and Declaring of Truth Against the Lie

I believe Your Word, I stand on Your truth which tells me that with You, God, all things are possible; that if I have faith and do not doubt I will be able to say to this mountain "Be removed and be cast into the sea" and it will be done. There is a mountain of a stronghold in _____'s life, a mountain that they themselves do not see or

understand. I speak out Your word boldly against this mountain “Be removed! Be cast into the sea!” and I know that it will be done because with You, all things are possible, and the things I am asking right now in prayer, believing, I will receive.

I believe and lay hold of Your written Word which tells me that You have given me authority to trample on serpents and on scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and that none shall be able to harm me. Therefore, on this truth, I trample on the serpents and scorpions which are holding _____ in bondage and I proclaim that none shall be able to harm _____ as I pray this prayer for their freedom.

I declare and announce to principalities, powers, powers of darkness and wicked spirits that Jesus Christ has granted to me power to pull down strongholds and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and to take every thought captive in obedience to Christ. I declare and stand on Your truth that the strongholds of pride, rebellion, apathy, fear, self pity, sexual immorality, confusion, impure thoughts, lust, indecency, idol-worship, sorcery; enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, hostility, quarreling, selfish ambition, self-loathing, critical spirit, hatred, rejection and other kinds of strongholds, in _____ are even now being pulled down and every high thought that _____ lifts up above what is true about You, God, is being taken captive in obedience to Christ. I declare and announce that Jesus Christ disarmed principalities and powers, making a public spectacle of them and triumphing over them, therefore all of the evil works operating in _____ life are disarmed and destroyed. (Matt.19:26; Matt. 21:21-22; Luke 10:19; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 2:15)

Proclaiming and Declaring the Walk of Triumph and Victory

I declare that Jesus is able to establish _____ according to His gospel and preaching according to the mystery kept secret since the world began, but has now been revealed by the prophetic Scriptures according to the commandment of the everlasting God, who alone is wise and glorified through Jesus Christ forever. I declare that _____ is being established according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and they are being led in triumph in Christ Jesus and are to God, the fragrance of Christ. I declare and announce that God always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For _____ is to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. (Rom. 16:25-27; 2 Cor. 2:14)

Proclaiming and Declaring the Prayers of Paul the Apostle

And now I do not cease to give thanks for _____, making mention of them in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened; that they may know what is the hope of Your calling, what are the riches of the glory of Your inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of Your power toward us who believe, according to the working of Your mighty power which He worked in Christ when You raised Him from the dead and seated Him at Your right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And You put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

I also, do not cease to pray for _____, and to ask that they may be filled with the knowledge of Your will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that they may walk worthy of You Lord, fully pleasing You, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to Your glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to You Father who has qualified them to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in the light. You have delivered them from the power of darkness and conveyed them into the kingdom of the Son of Your love, in whom they have redemption through Your blood, the forgiveness of sins. You are the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by You all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through You and for You. And You are before all things, and in You all things consist.

I also pray always for _____ that You God would count them worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of Your goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be

glorified in _____, and You in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank You that it is You who works in _____ to will and to do of Your good pleasure. (Eph. 1:16-23; Col. 1:9-14; 2 Thess. 1:11-12)

Benediction

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that You would grant _____ according to the riches of Your glory, to be strengthened with might through Your Spirit in his inner man, that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith; that they, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height--to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that they may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. To the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. And to Him who is able to keep _____ from stumbling, And to present him faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen. (Eph. 3:14-21; 1 Tim. 1:17; Jude 24)