**Part 1 of Series “WITHOUT HOLINESS NO ONE WILL SEE GOD”**

Psalms 1 has been one of the most popular chapters in the Bible among Christians.

*“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But* ***his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.*** *He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which* ***yields its fruit in season*** *and whose leaf does not wither.* ***Whatever he does prospers.*** *Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.* ***For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,*** *but the way of the wicked will perish.”* Psalms 1

It’s only right that we want this to be true in our lives that *whatever we do, we prosper.* But, so often it isn’t because we haven’t lined up with God’s condition to this promise. All of God’s promises have conditions. God’s conditions are rooted in His laws.

Can you say that you delight in the law of the Lord? To delight means: “a high degree of pleasure or satisfaction of the mind.”

When we “delight” in the law of the Lord it will cause results in our mental and physical health, in our relationships and partnerships, in our recreation, in our abilities and work; in all aspects of life.

If we delight in the law of the Lord: We do not take any advice or counsel from the wicked; those who do not love the Lord and His laws. Two: We do not do the things that sinners enjoy doing and live to do. Third: We don’t take lightly the truth and judgments of God. We don’t make fun of godliness. We do not compromise with truth and cower down on behalf of the truth when confronted.

Cowardice is why a Christian gives in to intimidation of the ungodly and why we give up doing the right thing, even in little things. When we compromise we show God that we doubt His promises to us for standing firm and strong on what is right. When we give in, even a little, we reveal the idols in our lives; what we truly value.

Your mind was designed to think like God thinks. When it doesn’t think that way your mind is out of order, somewhat like an out of balance washing machine when it starts to bang around and make a lot of noise. What happens to a train when a section of the train track is missing? That’s the same thing that will happen to anyone who does not meditate on the law of the Lord day and night.

When we become Christians we are to renew our mind, our thinking, so that we think like God thinks and so that His kingdom becomes our heart’s desire and standard of living. We are not of this world any longer.

*“Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet* ***your spirit is alive because of righteousness****. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”* Romans 8:5-11

Righteousness begins in the mind. When the body tells the mind it wants what it shouldn’t have the mind is responsible to say, “No, it’s not the best thing for you. It’s wrong. It will hurt someone (etc.).” The body might go into a little fit, but if the mind stands firm on the law of the Lord the body will submit every time and benefit from it. This is why it is so very important to take a moment to think before doing or saying something, before making a choice. The indwelling Holy Spirit is in us to guide us in the way of righteousness.

Paul’s struggle with the battle within is our same struggle. He summed it up by saying:

*“So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being* ***I delight in God's law****; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then,* ***I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law****, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”* Romans 7:21-25

What you go on to make of yourself and of your life is best done in agreement with the Lord because the Lord makes His covenant known to those who fear Him. He keeps His promise to them. What you need to know about your destiny with the Lord is more important than you realize. This is why He says, *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints?”* (Psalms 116:15)

To “delight in the law of the Lord” means that you have ‘gladly’ chosen to live a godly life. You have made yourself a serious student of what is required to live in the kingdom of God. You have come to understand that God’s love for man and His love for life is behind all His laws and judgments.

**Part 2**

God has calculated, designed and established laws and principles for all His creation: His natural laws, spiritual laws and kingdom laws and they are in perfect beautiful harmony. God’s laws do not contradict one another. One law can not cancel out another law. They all work together perfectly for the good of mankind’s eternal existence. God’s laws can not be changed because if they could then all that we see would not exist.

The Bible is where we begin our learning about natural laws, spiritual laws and kingdom laws. All theories can be proven ‘truthful’ or ‘false’ by what God has clearly made known to man since the creation of the world. Creation will also prove God’s invisible qualities, eternal power and divine nature. (Romans 1:19-20) And, by what has been written down by His servants so that every generation has the knowledge they need; the truth and doctrines of faith, hope and love.

God established laws so all of His creation would continue just the way He designed it to function and thrive. The universe obeys God’s rules. If it didn’t, the universe would catastrophically fall apart. The same goes for mankind; if we don’t obey the law of the Lord we will also self-destruct and be forever separated from God and His kingdom.

If our universe came into existence “accidentally,” like atheists teach, then why does the universe need to obey any rules and principles in order to keep going in all its awesome life sustaining power? How does every little part know what to do and how to keep doing it? How does the sun remain in place while the planets rotate around it? How do seeds know when to break open and take root? Every scientist who has gone in search of the truth has become a believer in the all-knowing, all-powerful, calculating, passionate-for-life Creator – just like the Bible teaches.

If there are no laws by which to live and thrive then why do the sexual parts of a woman and man fit together perfectly and reproduce another human being? Why does a woman’s body temporarily change for the child growing in her womb and for the nursing child after delivery? And, if I may venture a little further; then why did God also design the human body for sexual pleasure as well as reproduction? I think our wonderful God is most pleasured Himself with reproduction! I think His desire to feel delight and rapture over endless generations of the godly is the same feeling He has given us; what we call “climax.” (It’s real, it’s good and God put it there for our enjoyment!) The problem man has is taking the good things from God and perverting them with over use, waste and alteration.

If God wasn’t for us “enjoying all things in life and about life” (1 Timothy 6:17) then why do we have taste buds, acute hearing and smell? Why is our eye drawn to beauty and majestic things? Why are we appalled at the sight of deformities, poverty, hatred and suffering; wanting to do something about it? Why is man able to overcome these horrible things; things that are not from God?

Since the beginning of Creation natural laws have never changed and never failed. In fact, because of this *absolute truth* scientists have been able to find out more and more and to build precept upon precept. Man is able to continually (and eternally) increase his understanding as he searches deeper into how it all works and keeps going – by God’s design and laws. Greater discoveries lead to a greater life on earth as long as the ‘right’ people lead with it.

If Colossians 1:16-18 were not true then scientists would have nothing sure and constant to improve on or increase with. He would have nothing certain to start with and to move forward with. No absolutes = disorder. Disorder = break down and destruction.

*“For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*” Colossians 1:16-18

**What are “natural laws?”** Natural laws are: Biogenesis – the laws of life (man, animal and plant), the laws of chemistry, the laws of planetary motion, the laws of physics, the laws of mathematics, and the laws of logic. (For information on any of these laws go to website: [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org).)

God has clearly and precisely designed and set “order” within our universe. You don’t need to be a rocket scientist to see this when, *“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”* Psalms 19:1-4

The atheist will not accept this and so the atheist spends his precious God-given life trying to prove something that just isn’t true. No wonder God says that only fools say there is no God. (Psalms 14:1 and 53:1) He’s a fool because the truth has not been kept from him at all; he simply refuses the truth and works [in vain] to prove that there is no God or purpose behind all that we see.

An unbeliever doesn’t want to believe the truth and reality of God ‘after his ignorance changed.’ Satan (god of this wicked world) is the one who keeps unbelievers blinded from the truth and proud to disbelieve. (2 Corinthians 4:4-6) It was God who made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory - in the face of Christ. The early Church saw that face and one day we will too! Hallelujah!

The atheist (unbeliever) does not want to surrender and admit his rebellion and sin; that he is deserving of hell. Anyone who has ever surrendered to God, confessing and admitting his need for the Savior, KNOWS what the atheist (unbeliever, agnostic – whatever name you give it) struggles with inwardly. They also know how better off they are having God’s peace, favor and life – which the atheist/unbeliever turns down for whatever reason.

If God is not real and God is not love – then why does man yearn for love and do best when loved and favored? If we are not made in God’s image then why are we so different from all other life forms? If we weren’t created to live forever then why do we fear death and fight to stay alive? Why does man have a conscience from God; a brain unlike any other life form? Who or what did God give the responsibility and honor to rule and take dominion over all life forms? The one He made in His image!

When man tries to make for himself another image apart from God’s image he has no inner peace and rest. He can never be satisfied and fulfilled as a human being, and here it is: the “root of all wickedness;” the root of hatred, homosexuality, terrorism, abuses and addictions – the worship of false gods. We can state and claim all we want, but if we do not have God’s approval and favor we do not have inner peace and a life with true meaning. Men lie and deceive one another, but nothing is hidden from God.

Chaos and destruction is in our world where there is no worship of the “one true God?” When man turns against God and His laws – man does things a man should not do and when man does what he shouldn’t do man self-destructs because he’s gone against the “law of the Lord.”

*“Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures. Your laws endure to this day, for all things [were designed] to serve you. If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have preserved my life.”* Psalms 119:89-93

God is the only one who can make part of His own Creation go against one of His laws, and He will do it so that man will humble learn to sincerely fear Him (worship and obey Him) so that he will live the abundant life now and forever.

**Part 3**

In Romans chapters 6, 7 and 8 Paul, God’s faithful servant, speaks with God’s wisdom on the law of sin and death. (You can read its entirety on your own.) Along with Adam and Eve’s rebellion came the *law of sin and death.* It is the first ‘spiritual’ law because of sin’s sickly and deathly effect on human life. We might think we are gaining something in life by a sinful lifestyle, but the truth is we are shortening our life and the life we do have left is not the abundant life Jesus said He came to give us.

Animals, trees and clams do not sin; they simply do what God created them to do. They have no ‘spiritual’ laws by which to exist. They ‘naturally’ do what God designed them to do. You can train a monkey to give you his banana but you can not get him to feel guilty for not wanting to share his banana or give you his banana. This is why many “trained” animals turn on their trainers. Trained animals obey by fear of pain or by a reward they receive for their obedience.

This is evidence that man never evolved from the ape. Just because some breeds of animals mate for life or have one male leader over their society or does anything else similar to man – does not mean that man evolved from it. God did not give the animals a soul like He gave man. The soul is the spiritual nature of man; his will and his emotional and moral nature.

Animals did not prey on each other before sin entered the world (through Adam and Eve). After God killed the first animal to cover His children’s sinful rebellion and shameful nakedness certain animals acquired a taste for blood, even for man’s blood. And, man acquired a taste for meat after that too. Adam and Eve were vegetarians at the start.

Beloved, Satan is out for blood! He’s blood-thirsty and he and his demons will enter animals or people in order to have that evil satisfaction. In Christ’s kingdom the lion and the lamb will be able to live together once again because the Lord’s two last enemies to be thrown into “the lake of fire” is Satan and death. (Revelation 20:13)

What gives death its power over our life? Sin does. (1 Corinthians 15:56-57) What takes the “sting” out of death? The resurrected life does. Who gives us power over the fear of death? The grace of Jesus Christ does. (Hebrews 2:14-15) When you have been forgiven by the Lord and given His gift of the Holy Spirit you no longer fear dying because you have God’s love and promise living in you. You have God’s peace that when you die you will see the Holy One you are longing for. (Philippians 1:21 and 2 Corinthians 5:8)

*“By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, ‘The two will become one flesh.’ But he who unites himself with the Lord is* ***one with him in spirit.*** *Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that* ***your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God****? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”* 1 Corinthians 6:14-20

Here is another ‘spiritual’ law: If you are in Christ then the Holy Spirit is in you and your body is the temple of God. For the child of God there is one main goal in which all other goals revolve around. We make it our number one goal to please our heavenly Father and to glorify His Son in all that we do and with all that we say. (2 Corinthians 5:9)

You can be a law-abiding citizen in your community but if you break God’s law you are a lawbreaker to God. Our courts imprison those who commit murder, but Jesus said that if you have ‘evil’ hatred in your heart you are guilty of murder in God’s court. Now I understand what it means to “fear the Lord.”

If God’s Son, an innocent man, forgave man for what they did to Him then God expects the same from all His children “in Christ.” We are to become like Jesus in all things. God judges what is in our heart so that we will not take it further – to action. Once we take the evil in our heart to action we involve other people with our evil. Our sin affects other people. Sin does not affect God or change God. Our rebellion toward His indwelling Spirit (of conviction and holiness in us) makes Him angry to the point of painful discipline in our lives. God wants to help us, not hurt us!

Jesus brought to us (by word and example) the sum of all the law of God when He said:

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”* Matthew 22:37-40

Love never fails, no matter what! “Agape love” that is. All other types will fail because they have personal conditions. (1 Corinthians 13:1-8) You can’t forgive anyone; truly forgive them until you have come to Jesus Christ for His forgiveness; knowing what it is and how it feels to be forgiven by Jesus Christ for all you’ve ever done and will do against Him.

Without the forgiveness and holiness of God we have absolutely no way to live with God because God is HOLY and we are not; not in our ‘natural’ state, the sin nature we all have.

*“Therefore, there is now no condemnation (punishment or blame) for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”* Romans 8:1-2 23

**Part 4**

You can’t do right until you are right. When you “are” right your core desire is to be holy and to make your will come into agreement with what God requires of those who offer themselves to Him. You can have all the zeal for God you can muster up but until you have the true understanding of what God means by “godliness” and “righteousness” you’ll conjure up and attempt to perform your own idea of what pleases God. You can’t say you have faith in God until you know His Word and His will for you.

Two of the apostles attempted to please God on their terms and both, Paul and Peter, were permanently wounded by it. Paul called it his “thorn in the flesh” that remained with him throughout the rest of his life lived for the Lord. His thorn was a continual reminder of what he was missing; the *essence and wisdom* of the law of the Lord: LOVE, God’s love for people. Peter was kept humble by his spirit’s scar as he was also responsible for the first churches of the Lord; that they understood what it truly means to love the Lord by following Him at any cost, even death.

Those who have the deepest (most painful) ‘spiritual’ scars are usually the ones who go on to do the greater works of the Lord; the work that demands the greater sacrifices. They can most relate with the Lord Himself who laid His own life down so that you and I could live the holy life with God. Martyrs live and die for the Lord because their love for Jesus and for people – is deep.

Jesus said, *“On this rock I will build MY church…and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”* Matthew 16:18-20

On true love Christ builds His Church. All religions build their religion on their own conjured up works of pride, fear and greed masked by something that looks like love, but isn’t. You can read the Bible all you want and set out to obey God’s commandments, but you’ll never be right or do right until the Lord gives you His robe of righteousness. *“For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness.”* (Isaiah 61:10)

Jesus also said (using the King James Version), *“Wherefore I say unto thee,* ***Her*** *sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”* (Luke 7:47) This chosen and highly favored woman is a symbol of today’s Church of Jesus Christ. Our sins are many because we have not remained “in love” with the Lord by obeying all His instructions. But, that is changing with the Lord’s various forms of painful discipline in our lives which is working for our whole-hearted devotion to Him in fellowship and for finishing His work on the earth so He can come just like He promised. Jesus has a stronger desire to return than we have in seeing Him return.

Jesus Christ came, not only to show us the Father’s love by dying on the cross in our place, but to show us the way faith should act with those who claim to love God. The Lord’s way of whole-hearted obedience to what the Father had sent Him to do was so convicting and compelling to His disciples that they never wanted to leave His side.

Man has devalued the one thing that gives him discernment of good and evil: it is his own conscience. Our conscience comes from God but we can ruin it by listening to those outside us instead of God who is inside us; our spirit.

People who don’t want to believe or be accountable to God for their choices, actions and lifestyles MUST go to great lengths to get rid of a guilty conscience so they can do the things that God hates and does not accept. They choose to live in opposition to their good conscience and to do this a person goes through much inner turmoil until the conscience has become totally seared; even to the point of no return. Only by the touch of God can a charred ruined conscience be made new and sensitive again. Thank You Lord for the power of Your love!

We come straight from our perfect precious Father when conceived by our father and mother. We are made in the image of God, but we have certain genetic (inherited) things that come through the sperm of our father and blood and nourishment of our mother (through the umbilical cord). We received a sensitive conscience from God but we learn to go against it by those who raise us, teach us and lead us down the wrong path in life. No wonder God has told godly parents to raise, teach and lead their own children.

Why is “godliness” such a rare thing in a church that claims to love and know the Lord? Is it any wonder why people judge and criticize Christians instead of fearing them? When I say “fear” I mean a holy fear not an evil fear. Evil people use fear in order to control people; to promote and satisfy their own evil personal desires and agendas. But, when God’s people are feared it’s because the true and living God is recognized in them, over them and for them. They fear what God may do to them if they come against one of His servants. This kind of fear incites the “disobedient to turn to the wisdom of the righteous.” (Luke 1:17)

Abraham was feared. David was feared. Elijah was feared. John the Baptist was feared. Jesus was feared. The Apostles were feared. Is the “Church” feared today? Jesus did not forgive us so that we could continue living in the ways of the world and for our selfish desires. The forgiven child of God just needs to take hold of the Lord’s right hand and not be afraid of anything He would say or of anywhere He would want to take you. You can trust His love and plan for you.

*“In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me; come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Free me from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hands I commit my spirit; redeem me, O Lord, the God of truth.”* Psalms 31:1-5

There are absolutely no “gray” areas with God. There is no place between right and wrong; truth and lie where you can live or hide. Gray areas are attitudes and lifestyles of compromise; they are traps of the devil. Jesus was very clear when He said, *"You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going. Put your trust in the light while you have it, so that you may become sons of light."* (John 12:35-36)

If you add even a hint of black paint to a little white paint you’ve ruined that pure white paint. The more black you add the darker that gray (area) gets until all you have is black. The same is true in our lives. If you think you can add some black back into your life after the Lord has forgiven and cleansed you – you are worse off than before. At our *black to white* “transformation” we begin a new glorious life with God into all His wonders of love and works of redemption and restoration.

***“If anyone is in Christ, he is a******new creation****;* ***the old has gone, the new has come!*** *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us,* ***so that in him we might become the righteousness of God****.”* 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

**Part 5**

The cross of Jesus is where we start our new life in the Lord’s kingdom. We started with the cross but we are not to remain there because Jesus is on His throne at the right hand of the Father. We need to get on with the rest of “the will of God” because when we were at the cross “*the blood of Christ cleansed our conscience from acts that lead to death.”* (Hebrews 9:13)

Satan would want the believer to stay at the cross all the rest of his life to keep him feeling as if he has NOT been forgiven by God or that God is still holding his sin against him. This is one of his many lies that work so well. But the truth is:

*“For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God’s love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”* Psalms 103:11-12

Jesus longs for us to get with our walk of faith and righteousness with His Holy Spirit. *“I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”* (Psalms 40:8-10) His salvation and laws are for everyone.

I remember a dear woman who would come to church with me from time to time and every time she came she would respond to the pastor’s invitation at the end of his message by going forward to receive the Lord. After she had done this a few times I asked her why she keeps going forward and she said, “I feel like I need to.” I told her she didn’t need to keep receiving the Lord; she simply needed to start walking with the Lord.

He is at the right hand of the Father covering us with His favor and defending us from the accusations of Satan (and most the time they are true about us). If we don’t learn how to distinguish good from evil, the devil will have his opportunity to keep us thinking the wrong thoughts and doing the wrong things so that we never live in the freedom and fulfillment we have in Christ.

In Hebrews 5:11 through 6:6 we are instructed to move on from milk to meat; from infancy to maturity. The milk of God’s Word provides our solid foundation: the need to repent from acts that lead to death, understanding what Christ’s resurrection means for our future, public baptism, getting our feet wet with acts of faith, understanding what the Lord’s purpose is and having the Lord’s anointed leaders laying their hands on us for healing and service, and understanding the eternal judgment that is coming; that you need to be a faithful witness for the Lord. This is our “solid foundation” that all the “milk” provided, but:

*“Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness…solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”* (Verses 13 and 14)

Have you trained yourself to distinguish good from evil? What are you “using” to do so? What are you chewing on? Who are you listening to? There are wicked things we should no longer be doing. There are wonderful things to be done for the Lord and to the glory of the Father. There are people to embrace and pray for; people to help and teach; people to make ready for the Lord, prepared for Him.

Now, here is another “spiritual” law of the Lord:

*“It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.”* (Hebrews 6:4-6)

This had always puzzled me. What exactly is the Christian’s “loss” in “falling away?” What does God mean by “falling away?” And, why is it “impossible” to be brought back to the cross of repentance where Jesus suffered our shame? This is very important to understand as a believer. I believe the Lord has explained it very well in Revelation chapters 2 and 3 as to what we can lose by falling away from Him; His love and laws.

I will continue to share about the woman I know. She is in her late seventies now and has never moved on from infancy. She believes that Jesus is her Savior and she reads the Bible when she is feeling desperate. She is fearful and full of worries. She’s stuck and unfulfilled. This is what happens to a child of God who doesn’t mature. They refuse the “solid food” of the Lord. They do not want to spiritually discipline themselves. They don’t want to follow the instructions about spiritual maturity because it requires more from them than they want to give or give up. They want His salvation but not His righteousness. But, salvation and righteousness go together.

If we don’t grow up we remain stuck and spiritually handicapped. Jesus came to set us free from everything that hinders our livelihood; our destiny with Him and our true purpose in life on earth.

Freedom is what you have once you have settle the matter of sin and rebellion with your Father but most Christians never go on with the Lord to experience their freedom. They ignore the instructions that break loose their chains and the knowledge for their faith to act upon that opens their prison door so they can get on with all those wonderful things of God that accompany our salvation.

The Lord is our refuge; the shelter of protection from even our own selves. If you fall away and go back to what you had and what you used to do that Christ set you free from then you are worse off than before you were forgiven and set free. In the end, it would have been better not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then fall away from it. (2 Peter 2:20-22) Even though the righteous genuinely feel the need to confess from time to time (and do so) they have absolutely no fear of God’s eternal judgment.

Timothy teaches us that you can wander away from a “pure heart,” a “good conscience” and a “sincere faith” for whatever reason. (1 Timothy 1:4-7) What you might think is an innocent thought or a short visit or a quick look or a little distraction is what can start you drifting off. We must pay more careful attention to what God says in His Word and reveals by His Spirit so that we do not drift away. (Hebrews 2:1-2)

**Part 6**

Jesus gave us a “kingdom law” when He spoke to two different [believing] men who wanted to walk with Him but felt they had other things to do first before they could. Jesus said to one, *“Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”* (Luke 9:60) Jesus said to another: *“No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”* (Luke 9:62)

Christ’s kingdom is greater than the kingdom of this world because Jesus is God and Satan is not. (The Bible calls Satan the “god of this world.”) The devil and his followers teach, honor and reward wickedness. Their world ends with eternal suffering and undying regret. Jesus and His followers teach, honor and reward righteousness. His way leads to eternal life with God; all that God had in mind from the start of creation for those who love and obey Him.

There are people around us, even family members that are not worth our time and involvement. That sounds cold doesn’t it? Jesus said a lot of things that sounded hateful; He did many things that appeared insensitive, but Jesus was the most truthful, sensitive, giving and loving man that has and will ever walk the earth. So, what did He mean by this command and warning in Luke?

There are things to do that ‘you’ don’t need to do; things that the ‘Lord’ is not holding you responsible for; things that other people can do just as well if not better; things that don’t need to be done in the first place. For the servant of the Lord there are greater things to do because the kingdom of God has been shown to him and her and they no longer live for the kingdom of this world, but for the Kingdom that is coming to stay. Whose disciple and servant are you?

The godly get their discernment and peace about this from the Holy Spirit. It didn’t take much courage to ask Jesus to forgive you and come into your heart. But, it will take great courage to do the whole will of God. To worldly people your godly confidence will look like pride and your faithful courage will look like insanity, foolishness or insensitivity to say the least. But, keep your eyes on the Lord who holds your future; keep your hearing guarded for His Spirit’s voice within. If you do, your rocky crooked dark path will level and straighten out quickly. You will be able to accomplish more walking with the Lord of light and glory.

I’m reminded of Lot’s wife who “looked back” after being warned by God’s messengers not to. No doubt she had close friends there and wanted to go back and see if they were dead. Maybe she thought she would give them a proper burial? But, the whole city was to be covered with ashes. When God judges He doesn’t leave anything undone or half way done. He purifies and then renews. Obviously her worldly friends had influenced her instead of the other way around because the Lord told Abraham that if He found any righteous people there He would spare them.

*“So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham (a righteous man), and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.”* Genesis 19:27-29

Lot and his family were the only ones allowed to leave the city. Homosexuality had defiled the cities on the plain as well as the inhabitants who lived there and tolerated it. It was time for God to set it all on fire before it continued to spread. When the city of Sodom was being destroyed by fire Lot’s wife “looked back” and so she was turned into a pillar of salt because she disobeyed God’s command and law.

*“Do not follow their practices. You must obey* ***my*** *laws and be careful to follow* ***my*** *decrees. I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and laws, for the man who obeys them will* ***live by them****.* ***I am the Lord.”*** Leviticus 18:3-5 (My emphasis with bold print and underlines.)

Jesus said that putting your hand to the plow and looking back is also to your loss. I would say that getting a field ready for seed and harvest is very hard work. I’ve connected prayer with plowing many times, but I haven’t always been willing to finish all my plowing. The kind of prayer that is hard is often the one that isn’t answered quickly. Plowing is the kind of prayer that demands perseverance. A serious plowman knows how to wait patiently on his field to produce; to finally have what he/she worked so hard for. Plowing is what proves the men from the boys; the strong from the weak; the faithful from the fool who starts what he doesn’t want to finish.

What would make you quit praying or quit working? When it requires more from you to keep going? Or, that the field is bigger than you thought and taking too much time? Or, that you have to do it all by yourself? What does the kingdom of God require of His servants so that they are “fit for His kingdom?” What happens if we don’t finish what we start or we don’t keep at the work (whatever it is) till the job is done and the harvest comes in?

Here is a “kingdom law” that Jesus gives us:  *“…any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”* (Luke 14:33)

Here it is again: *“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”* (Luke 14:26-27)

After we “come” to Jesus and He gives us His Spirit, the Holy Spirit will reveal to us the people we should or shouldn’t spend time with; things we don’t need to give our time and attention to; things we don’t need to be responsible for anymore; things we should not be doing any longer. We can do all kinds of things but miss (or forfeit) doing the most important things that are ours to do on behalf of the Lord’s kingdom. I battle this every single day. I let so many unimportant things take me away from the important things. Awe, but God’s mercy is new every morning!

Jesus didn’t waste His ‘precious’ time and words on the wrong people, or on worthless thoughts and activities. He knew why He was on the earth, where He was going and what would happen once His work on earth was done. We should and can know this – just like He did. Jesus taught His disciples that His kingdom begins in their hearts.

*“For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who* ***will be declared*** *righteous. (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)* ***This will take place*** *on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.”* Romans 2:13-16

What will take place? The righteous will be (future tense) “declared righteous” because they “obey (past, present and future tense) the law of the Lord.” As Christ’s disciples we are not under the law that was given to Moses; we are under the grace of the Lord; covered by His righteous precious blood. (Romans 6:12-14) We are not under the law, but we are still responsible to know and live by His law; to live the life of righteousness that is opposed to the ways and laws of the world. We used to offer ourselves and parts of our body to wickedness, but now we offer ourselves to God because we have been delivered, healed and blessed by Him.

Here is a spiritual law: *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23)

**Part 7**

*“He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him my salvation; the salvation of God.”* Psalms 50:23

Thankfulness to the Lord, no matter what is happening in my life, no matter how I feel, but simply, humbly and obediently – being thankful to God – is the key that opens the way for Him to come and help me in whatever I have need of, and it’s His open door to come fellowship with me. Thankfulness and faith are interlocked.

Every single day God saves you in one way or another because you belong to Him by your honest and sincere confession and commitment. Even before you gave your heart and life to Jesus – God was saving you from all kinds of things and people because He knew that one day you would come to Him wholeheartedly. Therefore, He has been ‘saving’ you all your life, from conception to death. He knows every thought you’ve ever had, why you’ve done what you’ve done and said what you’ve said, but to God the only thing that truly counts is faith expressing itself through love. (Galatians 5:6) Being certain of God’s unconditional love for His children should make us thankful no matter what happens. It makes living by faith much easier.

I can look back at my life before I had a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and see how His grace was there in so many ways, keeping (saving) me for ‘the day’ when I opened my wicked heart and confessing mouth to my Savior (at the age of 23). I did so many foolish and selfish things that should have caused so much more trouble in my life than it did, but my God was for me and not against me. What ‘god’ can do this? What man-made idol-god or satanic demon-god ever died for someone else? Our Savior Jesus Christ, He is the One True God.

When we offer God a sacrifice of thankfulness this obedient act of gratitude and reverence makes our fearful, anxious, hateful, selfish, ungrateful feelings surrender to the truth about God. God says that it is a “sacrifice” to be thankful because it’s not easy, and in the days ahead it will only get harder. It goes against the world, our will, our flesh and our sin nature to be thankful to God. In our natural self, we like being angry, mean, selfish, arrogant, hateful and revengeful. (If you deny this, then you are lying to yourself.) We like feeling sorry for ourselves and believing that no one cares; that God doesn’t care. We entertain negative thinking more easily than positive thinking. We are drawn to the very people and things that hurt us and take our lives early. Why? Read Romans 7:24 through 8:11 for that answer. Paul said it perfectly and truthfully.

Here is another “spiritual law:”

*“For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons (and daughters) of God.”* Romans 8:13-15 (Red highlighted words are mine.)

God comes quickly to those who by faith are thankful towards Him. My honest and open thankfulness to God for who He is and for all He’s done for me is God’s evidence of my faith and humility towards Him. God takes into His confidence those who are humble, faithful and thankful.

If we come truthfully and thankfully to the Lord – He draws near to us. (James 4:8) If we forget God – God forgets us. (Psalms 50:22-23) If we deny the Lord – the Lord will deny us, for Jesus made it very clear:

*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock…it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”* Matthew 7:21-29

As the children of God, God is angered by our ignorance and rebellion towards His laws as well as when we insult His Spirit of grace and try to live for Him within our own limitations. Rebellion will make God turn on you so that you face all your problems and fears alone. You might think that His temporary silence means He’s not bothered by the way you cast Him and His Words aside each morning and throughout your day. You might think that because all seems well ‘right now’ that He’s not angry. Beware beloved. His patience is long, but His patience will end. (Psalms 50:16-21)

Here is another “spiritual law:”

*“If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ and again, ‘The Lord will judge his people.’ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* Hebrews 10:26-31

It makes our heavenly Father very angry when we deny or take lightly His Son’s death; when we forget what He did for us on the cross and why He did it. This is why we should and as often as we can, drink of His blood and eat from His body, symbolically of course. (Matthew 26:26-28 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-32) Our Father is intensely angered when we insult His precious Holy Spirit by disregarding His conviction within our heart – over and over again; when we refuse His wise counsel and leadership. (Matthew 12:31-32)

Did you think the Father feels sorry for those who reject His Son and Spirit after all the times that He came to make His appeal to them? Are you under the delusion that our Father is impersonal or cowardly; that He won’t hurt or discipline you to the point of your full surrender and obedience? Think again, because our Father God says this:

*“Consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you to pieces, with none to rescue you: He who sacrifices thank offerings honors me, and he prepares the way so that I may show him the salvation of God.”* Psalms 50:16-23

Paul bears testimony: *“To keep me from becoming conceited….there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”* 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Peter bears testimony: *“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, if it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’ So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.”* 1 Peter 4:12-19

**Part 8**

*“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face shine upon us, that your ways O God may be known on earth, your salvation made known among all nations.”* Psalms 67:1-2

If we are not careful we can begin serving and living for the church and for church leaders, even for ourselves, and not for the Lord. Jesus Christ has given us our instructions and authority and when we are living out His instructions in the power He has invested in us we can expect all the power, provision and protection we need from Him. We can actually “feel” the Lord’s face of favor shining upon us; His perfect peace and joyful presence.

Most Church leaders work for their paychecks instead of the Lord. Therefore, they set up ‘their’ church the way ‘they’ want and hire others to do what ‘they’ want done – as if “*for the Lord*.” The day is soon coming when ‘church’ pastors, teachers and worship leaders will have to finish their course without a paycheck like they’ve known it. I wonder how many will fall out of the ministry then.

The world has seen enough of man’s words and man’s ways as well as the words and ways of organized religion. The words and ways of God are given to us in God’s Holy Scriptures so we will know how He thinks, rules, acts, speaks, listens, helps, provides, protects, favors, honors righteousness and judges evil – so that we will do the same as we are becoming “like Him.”

There is no excuse for not knowing what God wants you to know. On the Day God judges all men He will not accept any excuse anyone can come up with. God has gone to great lengths in each and every generation since the beginning of time to make His ways and salvation known to all men, women and children – so that all mankind are without an excuse. (Romans 1:20)

When I was slowly falling out of love with the Lord He came to me in a vision one early morning October of 2001 to show me that my light was going out and why, and to show me the danger I was in because of it. He said to me ‘audibly,’ *“Carol, I love you. Just walk with me.”* I’m writing a book about it called Just Walk With Me because I know I represent most of the church today who is not walking with the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Since it’s the responsibility of every believer to stay lit and filled after Jesus lights and fills us how do we do this? We need to know how because if we do not hold and tend to the ‘passion’ and ‘disciplines’ of our Christian life we will drift, fall away and lose what we thought we had; what we worked so hard for – thinking we were doing it *for the Lord*. (2 John 8:8)

This is why, as a concerned parent, we should not try to ‘coerce’ our little children to receive the Lord until their age of accountability has come. And, only God knows this time for each of us, which is different. As parents we teach them the laws of God and about the love of God in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We live it before them and PRAY for their salvation – watching for the sign of that divine time – ready to lead them in prayer to the Lord when they are ready by the work and prompting of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said that many Christians have a reputation of being alive, but they are dead; their deeds are incomplete in the eyes of God. (Revelation 3:1-6) He commands them to: *“Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die.”*  I was one who the Lord said this to about 10 years ago, but He said it to me directly with these words: *“Carol, there is a death coming. Prepare yourself.”*

When I heard this ‘in my spirit’ I immediately panicked wondering who of my loved ones was about to die, but as time passed I found out that God was talking about me. Was I going to literally die, or was He talking about something in me that needed to die? The Lord began revealing to me that I needed to die to those things and people that I let take the place of my Lord; people that I allowed to dictate what I should do and not to do; what to say and what not to say. Spiritual flattery and family loyalty will distract you from the Lord’s call.

Both Satan and God want something from you. But, there is a huge difference in their motives: God’s favor = freedom and fulfillment. Man’s (Satan’s) flattery = control and contempt.

Flattery is not the same as favor. People use flattery to draw and manipulate people for their own selfish purposes. Flattery wants something from you; it ‘takes’ from you. Flattery is deceitful and self-serving. ‘Spiritual’ flattery wants to use your ‘spiritual’ gifts, gifts that come from God for the extension of His Kingdom. They want to promote and extend religion, not the Lord’s Kingdom. Religious leaders falsify God’s favor by the use of flattering words so that people will serve them and their purpose. I have experienced this.

Favor doesn’t take from you. Favor originated with God and those who show you favor have God’s heart and mind. Favor is honoring and supportive; it gives. Favor frees you so you can be all you were created to be. God only shows His favor on those who love Him who want to live the obedient godly life and tell others about His Son. I am experiencing this.

When we fall from our height of love with the Lord (from our true worship of Him) we begin to replace the Lord with people and things. We are born to worship and worship we will do no matter what it is or who it is. We can’ help it; God made us worshippers. We need to honestly ask ourselves: What is my worship towards or on?

People who worship their family are blinded by their sense of [false] loyalty which is rooted in the fear of being unappreciated or alienated (on bad terms, divided). Most people worship their bodies with all kinds of pampering, lustful indulgences, body piercings and tattoos, jewelry and clothes that attract attention or make us feel beautiful and important. Others worship money; what money can buy them and do for their personal image and agendas. Many people worship their pastors, worship leaders or people they want to be like. Sports fans worship sports players. Movie fans worship movie stars. Some people worship knowledge; the more knowledge they have the better they feel about themselves and the more advantage they seem to have over others. Many people worship Satan himself; even to the point of death and hell.

When we worship anything or anyone else but God it won’t produce or grant us the high feeling or high standing or high position or high understanding we want and need. Only God, the Most HIGH can. The “high” we need and want is found ‘only’ in an obedient love relationship with Jesus Christ. If you want a high that doesn’t ruin you and that fully satisfies every part of your being – well there it is!

*“Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits — who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.”* Psalms 103:2-5

**Part 9**

*“Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.”* Psalms 119:97-104

After Jesus has lit you up with His Light and filled you with His Spirit it is your responsibility Christian to stay lit and filled. How do we stay lit and filled? God has given us His complete ‘written’ Word for our daily consumption, His ‘live-in’ Spirit to guide us and impart godly wisdom in us and to keep us excited about the reality of our eternity with the Lord. And, if that were not enough, He has also given us His peace and freedom for the use of all our divine gifts from Him so we can fulfill our wonderful purpose. And there’s MORE! He has given us His sovereign mighty holy Name to use and get things done along with all the mercy and grace we will ever need. Because of all this we are able to live openly and joyfully before Him day and night, glory to glory.

*“….He is a holy God; he is a jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you,* ***after he has been good to you****.”* Joshua 24:19-20

To stay lit and filled you must remain in the love of God and teach yourself to listen to the voice of God’s indwelling Holy Spirit. Learn to distinguish His soft gentle voice from others: your own, people and the devil/demons. There are many voices telling us what to do and say, and what not to do and say. Jesus gave us the Truth, His Word and Spirit to free us from all that chaos.

Trust and obey what you hear in your spirit (inwardly) from God. The Lord helped me with this when He directly said to me: *“Trust yourself Carol because I do.”* We are not led by the written Word of God or by the preacher’s preaching of it; we are led (and taught) by God’s Spirit of His Word, the Spirit of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 19:10, 1 Thessalonians 1:4-6, 1 Peter 1:2,10-12, 2 Peter 1:21, 1 John 3:24, 5:6-9)

If the Holy Spirit is living in me and my sincere desire is to live for the Lord – then I can trust the Holy Spirit to teach me in God’s Word, to compel me to do the right things, to go in the right way and to say what is in agreement with God’s own Word. Holy Spirit will teach me, compel me and keep me moving in the right direction as long as my cause is righteous. If not for the Holy Spirit in me I would not even be able to confidently and courageously share my personal testimony of Jesus Christ and neither could I pray in the Spirit according to God’s will with confidence and expectation.

People will ask me to pray for them, but one thing that is both wrong and harmful is when I pray the way the person wants me to pray for them instead of what God’s Spirit would want me to pray for concerning that person. Our natural tendency to ask people to pray for us to be saved from our discomfort or misery when discomfort and misery might be the way God is using to draw them to the truth and into confession or into His Kingdom work and ministry. Or, they may ask me to pray for their loved one to stay alive even if it means much suffering for that loved one. God just might want to bring His ‘loved one’ home.

The Lord has said and written down as one of His laws that if we agree on how to pray, what to ask Him for, then He will give us what we are all asking for “in agreement.” (Matthew 18:18-19) But, we better be sure where our agreement comes from? We need to test the spirit. Does our agreement come from the Spirit of truth or the spirit of human loyalty, affection and sympathy? Human sympathy is not the same as Godly compassion.

*“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.”* John 16:13-15

When we pray out of fear and self-protection we are actually saying that we don’t trust the love of God; that we are not familiar with the perfect ways of the Lord. For God to do something else than what we want is frightening to us because ‘truthfully’ we don’t trust His love and ways like we should. God does not punish those who put their hope and trust in Him.

*“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”* Hebrews 11:6

*“The one who fears is not made perfect in love.”* 1 John 4:18

About eight years ago the Lord set me free when He said to me: *“Carol, from now on I don’t want you doing anything except for* ***love****.”* This has changed so many things in my life: the way I see myself, how I see my children, husband and other relationships, even how I see strangers. It has changed the way I work and how I understand the work that I am to do (John 17:20, Colossians 3:12-14, Revelation 2:4-6).

While it is my responsible to stay lit and filled – it is the responsibility of God’s Spirit to show us why we need to stay lit and filled and to help us.

Since the beginning of the Church age every generation of the faithful has been given every reason to expect the Lord’s promise that He will return in their own generation. Why would the Holy Spirit do this? It is my firm belief that He does this so that every generation be ready and prepared for the Lord. Otherwise, Christ’s followers will not be ready and prepared and they will not prepare the next generation to do likewise. Each unprepared generation has caused the decline of God’s power and purpose in the Lord’s World-wide Church. We know this by Christ’s letters to His “ministering angels” of the *“seven churches;”* angels assigned and sent to serve *“those who will inherit salvation.”* (Hebrews 1:14 and Revelation 1)

The Lord reveals in His letters (Revelation 2 and 3) that most believers will not be ready and prepared for Him for various reasons and this is why we need to be testing our faith and judging ourselves while we still have the time. It’s the responsibility of every believer to be ready and prepared for the Lord whether or not the Lord returns today or in your generation.

God has made sure that nobody can know the exact time of Christ’s return. We can study God’s Word and we can listen to what God’s servants, His prophets are saying. Jesus prophesied of His own return and what it would be like on earth and in the world before He returned. He has also stated that He would once again tell His prophets before He brings disaster so that the unfaithful can repent and be ready and prepared for what is coming. (2 Kings 21:17-23, 24:2-4, Jeremiah 25:4, 26:3-6, Daniel 9:7-10, Isaiah 44:24-26 and Luke 1:67-80)

*“Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets. The lion has roared — who will not fear? The Sovereign Lord has spoken — who can but prophesy?”* Amos 3:7-8

John was called by God to prepare the way for the Lord in his generation and we are to do the same [by the same Spirit] in preparing our generation for the Lord’s reappearing. One of Satan’s successful schemes is to keep believers in the dark and unprepared.

God is ready and prepared (more than we) to use us in so many different ways. His longing is to glorify His sons and daughters; to reward us and crown us for His glorious eternal Kingdom. But, how many does the Lord want to crown? How many noble princes and princesses does God have? I think the answer is why He hasn’t returned yet.

**Part 10**

Man’s laws should be the same as God’s laws because God will judge each one of us according to His laws and redemptive grace. (2 Timothy 4:1-2, Hebrews 12:22-24 and Revelation 6:10, 20:11-15) There have been more laws made by man than there are laws from God, but God’s laws reign high above any of the laws man has ever made on his own without God.

Jesus Christ brought us the law of freedom and righteousness. He offers every man, woman and child freedom to live the life of righteousness with protection and provision because you will need God’s protection and provision to live that way while you still live in this wicked world.

How can you really know what it is to depend completely on God’s protection if you still depend on the world’s systems? You won’t have any ‘real’ enemies until you go against man’s unrighteous laws and refuse to depend any longer on man’s ungodly systems. How can you genuinely experience God’s provision if you continue to live the way everyone else does who love the things of this world? If we will seek after the righteousness of God and strive to live in His kingdom, even while we live in this world, then God will take care of us completely. (Matthew 6:33-34) Jesus promised that we would have all we need for life and holiness because “without holiness no one will see the LORD.” He commands that we do not worry about our physical needs and not to worry about tomorrow’s problems because our Father is fully capable and ready to take care of it all – if we depend on Him and strive for His righteous life as our own.

Satan comes to man with his lies about their future, their world and the condition of the earth in order to put fear in man so that man will try to solve the problem that really isn’t there. For instance: Man fears overpopulation and so man creates laws that are based on a lie, not on the truth. The truth is that God is in control of this world’s population and it is not a problem at all, and it never will be. The earth will never be overpopulated because God has put within His creation the way for mankind to increase, thrive and prosper throughout eternity. Besides, if the entire world’s population were to stand shoulder to shoulder they would only take up the area of one good size city. This is far from our world being “over-populated” to the ridiculous point of making laws that limit the amount of children being born and determine who has the right to live or not, or making laws that determine where people can live and do business, or making laws that take control of people’s land and resources.

Man only sees what is visible to the eye. Man is limited in what he knows and in what he can do without God, but man continues to try to control everything without revering God; giving the honor and glory due Him. Man’s blindness and darkness becomes all the more evident when he sets out, apart from God and His system and principles, to make and enforce laws that are rooted in fear and that instill fear in people.

The Kingdom of God is not confined to the earth. The Kingdom of God is not limited in space and resources. God has created far more than what man can see or even know about yet. Only God has the power as well as the right to determine when enough people have populated the earth and since God commanded man in the beginning to “increase in number” and to “multiply on the earth” this is still in effect until He says otherwise. (Genesis 9:5-7) He said it to Adam and Eve and he repeated it to Noah and his wife after the flood and I’m sure that man will hear those words from God again after He has ended all evil on the earth - FOREVER. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28, Revelation 11:17-18, 15:1 and 19:11-16 Hallelujah!)

We know of countries with ungodly laws that limit families to how many children they can have; where women are ‘forced’ to take birth control drugs and to have abortions against their will. We know of countries with heinous laws that protect abortion (murder in the womb) for any reason. And shockingly, there is a country that has no law against discarding newborn baby girls on to trash heaps simply because they are not boys. We have hideous laws that honor homosexuality and give freedom for other sexual perversities to be viewed publicly and to be taught to children in schools. There are wicked laws made by men that prevent godly parents from raising their own children and from teaching their own children about the Lord and His laws.

God destroyed mankind on earth because rebellion, ungodliness, corruption and violence had covered and defiled the face of God’s beautiful earth. What comes to your mind when you see a violated woman’s bruises, cuts, scars and deformities? How do you feel about a raped and tortured girl not being able to have any children because of what was done to her? Now imagine how our ‘holy’ God thinks and feels about what is being done on and to the face of His perfect beautiful earth. The earth and everything created belongs to God, not man. Man is only the manager of it accountable to God, and he will have to give an account whether he believes it or not.

God is prepared to renew the face of the earth once again and at the proper time, but in a different way. God never does the same thing twice when it comes to creating and destroying. (Genesis 9:12-17, Psalms 104:5-9) The first time God destroyed He used a world-wide flood:

*“Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, ‘I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark…’”* Genesis 6:11-14

All their thoughts and all their ways were evil all the time. There was no place on earth where evil did not thrive and control people ‘by fear and law’ except where Noah lived with his family. So God told the only righteous man still standing on God’s green earth how to prepare for what was coming because God does nothing out of righteous anger before telling His servants so they can be prepared. (Amos 3:7and Revelation 10:7) Our world is just about at that same place again when God will show the righteous their way of escaping His coming judgment and it won’t be determined by “one righteous man” this time, rather by “one righteous church.” God will remove the righteous for a time while He unleashes His full-on wrath on the earth, and then…..He will return to renew the earth and establish His world government so that man can never again bring God to this place of anger and destruction.

Man and everything created was created with eternity in mind. When the Lord said that He was coming to make all things new He didn’t mean that He was going to wipe out the earth, man and all He created in order to start over again. If God calls something good – God has no desire to end it. If God calls something evil – God will do away with it fully and forever, but at the proper time.

Whose laws should God’s people live by? What is the cost of truly living by the love and laws of the Lord? Many have died doing so and in their death the Gospel has spread all the more. Most Christians will not die from the hands of the wicked because they lived for the love and laws of God. God has work for them to do living as long as they can and passing that lifestyle on to their children so they can continue to finish all the redemptive work of God.

The ‘way’ man has chosen to ‘punish’ man for when man breaks man’s laws only exposes what those lawmakers and executioners are enslaved to and the god they serve themselves. God’s ‘way’ redeems man and frees him from the prison-life and pit of hell. When God’s love and laws are put in our hearts by way of God’s Holy Spirit – we are free and enabled to live for the Kingdom of God with all the protection and provision we need. We will judge and rule the world with Jesus Christ because we have not left Him for any reason at all. We took hold of His forgiveness, freedom and power to live a righteous life in a wicked world no matter what because we are the most thankful of all peoples for what God has done.

**Part 11**

The apostle Paul spoke to the “religious” people of his day; ignorant people who made idols and worshipped many gods along with a god that they called the “Unknown God.” (Acts 17:23-31) This is still being done today and sadly with people the Lord has revealed Himself to as their Savior and Lord, and told to get rid of their gods and idols and then go make disciples of the nations; teaching them to obey everything He commands. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Satan is not concerned over the fact that you have been forgiven by the Lord, but he is threatened by your firm belief that you have become a “new creation” in Jesus Christ and that you wholeheartedly desire to truthfully represent Jesus Christ and do all that He commands. (2 Corinthians 5:17 – 6:2) Satan is very afraid of the believer who takes his salvation seriously as being far more than forgiveness.

I would have to assume that all churches are designed and structured to represent God. The fact that there are so many religions (and church denominations) prove that each have their own idea of who God is. God is “unknown” to those religious people who consider their religion better than another or their interpretation of the Scripture the only right one. The Holy Spirit is the teacher and interpreter of God’s written Word. If the Holy Spirit lives in you and in me and you and I yield to the Holy Spirit, then you and I will agree and be able to work together with all our individuality (which also comes from the Holy Spirit). There is power in agreement.

There are ‘gods of divisions.’ Jesus brought it out in His letters to the angels of the seven types of churches how we get divided and out of line with holiness. Although He commends five types of churches for certain things they were doing right, He sternly rebukes them for what He sees in their hearts and church structures that is hypocritical and dishonorable as well as deceiving to people. The little good they are doing is outlawed by their erroneous lifestyle and invalid belief systems. He warns us of what a believer will lose that God so eagerly wants to give to those who have been faithful “to Him” to the end of their life. He will even take “our name out of the Book of Life” for a reason only known to you and Him. (Psalms 69:28, Revelation 3:4-5, 13:8, 20:12-15, 21:22-27)

Our Father has not forgiven us by the blood of His own Son so that we can then represent Him in the wrong way. You are not born-again so that you can live as you please; so you can keep living in sin like you have. If you have been forgiven by Christ then in Christ you must remain – or face the consequence. This is the law of love and obedience.

*“What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:21-23

God devises ways of bringing us back to Him after we’ve been separated for whatever reason. (2 Samuel 14:14) This is our Father’s constant abounding all-sufficient grace ‘on behalf of His Son’s blood, Word and Spirit.’

We see God’s higher laws in what Jesus said to the woman caught in the act of adultery. Jesus’ law of grace and truth superseded the Law He gave to Moses for His people to live by; the very law these religious leaders were using against her to condemn her to death. God didn’t intend His law to be used in the way these men used it.

In John 8:3-11 Jesus revealed the Law of His Kingdom to those leaders who were supposed to be representing God’s Kingdom and were not. They were eager to stone this woman according to God’s law for His 7th commandment, that *“both adulterer and adulteress must be put to death,”* (Leviticus 20:10) but these leaders and judges were adulterers themselves in one way or another. They were hypocrites and the Lord knew it because nothing is hidden from God. After Jesus began to write in the dust each of their secret sins, one by one they each left till there was no one left to condemn the adulteress.

Jesus revealed what holiness is when He said, *“Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”* (Matthew 5:27-29) God’s ‘interpretation’ of His laws are higher than man’s because His Kingdom begins in our hearts. What does a convicted ‘ex’ offender fight against the rest of his or her life? We each fight against that sin nature till the day we die and ‘thankfully’ with our new nature of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

We can’t hide anything from the Lord and God really wants us to get that because godliness begins in the “secret place” inside us. If God’s truths do not get down into the inmost part of us then we live a life of hypocrisy that ends with an eternal consequence. (Matthew 24:51)

To God, hypocrisy is much worse than adultery or any other sin. God is the only one who has the right to call anyone a hypocrite because He is perfect and we are not. I’ve heard many a person say they do not go to church because of the hypocrisy they see there, but the truth is they themselves are hypocrites. Hypocrites are quick to point the finger, accuse and separate. The reason they are so quick to point out (criticize or judge) someone else’s faults is because they do the very same things. That old saying, “It takes one to know one,” is so true.

A hypocrite deceives people. Deception is the work of Satan. Jesus revealed the hypocrisy of these rulers and teachers of “the Law” over and over again. (Matthew 6:2,5 and16, Matthew 7:5, Matthew 22:18, 23:13, 15, 23, 25, 27 and 29, Luke 12:56-59 and 15:15-16) That He did this ‘perfectly’ so that they could not argue with Him or defend themselves only proves that Jesus IS GOD and not the “evil one” that many accused Him of being.

Jesus said of hypocrites: *“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”*  (Matthew 15:7-9)

King David was quick to confess his sin and guarded his mind and heart from hypocrisy because he had a deep understanding of God’s higher law of love and honor:

*“Test me, O Lord, and try me, examine my heart and my mind; for your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth. I do not sit with deceitful men, nor do I consort with hypocrites; I abhor the assembly of evildoers and refuse to sit with the wicked.”* Psalms 26:2-5

How’s your heart doing? What is your mind feeding on?

People don’t confess their faults (sins) out of fear of being found out and feeling ashamed before the people who trust them and love them, or out of fear of being caught and brought to trial and then punished by the verdict of a jury. People don’t admit their guilt out of pride of losing their admirers and followers; whether citizens and voters, peers, church congregations, wife or children.

A wife who has been “unfaithful” in any way is a wife who has been simply ignorant of her God-given humble position as her husband’s “helpmate” or she is just down-right against it and is under the false impression that her marriage is all about her wants and needs. The same is true when it comes to stealing, cheating, abuse, murder and any inhumane thought or act. A person gets to a hateful destructive place like this when they actually believe their need, desire and want ‘justifies’ the offense. This is what makes Hell a real place.

Holiness reveals hypocrisy. The Holy Spirit in me will gently reveal my hypocrisy and then help me overcome it so that I can forever live in God’s Kingdom. This is what Jesus brought out so clearly. What did He say to the sinful woman who was caught in adultery?

*“At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ ‘No one, sir,’ she said. ‘Then neither do I condemn you,’ Jesus declared. Go now and leave your life of sin.’”*

God is personal and He is holy. Jesus came to the earth to make God “known” to all men, women and children of all races and religions so that no one would worship the One True God without knowing Him personally and thankfully. God became man in the flesh to show us that it is very possible to live a life of holiness with His indwelling Spirit.

**Part 12**

How can anyone base their whole life and future on what the Bible says as if it’s the only book we need for our whole lifetime? God has made it ever so clear, even for the simplest mind, what life is all about; how it began, how it works together for the good of all mankind and how every form of life is able to continue on perfectly and beautifully throughout endless generations. If God were not the God of the Bible then man would not have made it this long on his own. Nothing on earth, or the earth itself, would have continued to exist unless God is who He says He is.

Consider this: The Author of the Bible has a book of His own, of another kind; that if you and I have believed and obeyed His Word our names would be found in it. The only two BOOKS that matter in life are the HOLY BIBLE and the LAMB’S BOOK OF LIFE, and you need God’s Holy Spirit to be in both.

Does the Bible call out to you each morning? Do you feel the need to handle it before you handle anything else? Are you hungry for what is inside? Are you thirsty for what those ‘living’ words will fill you with? If not, then ask your Savior to give you His Spirit so you can feel, hear, hunger, thirst and understand what every human being needs to understand for life and holiness.

No other book but the Bible can relate to all human beings of any gender, any race and culture, and in any time of the history of man. Is it any wonder that the Holy Bible has always been hated, attacked, hidden, cast aside and misinterpreted?

Books are meant to stimulate the flight of the imagination, and to teach the reader the perspective and belief of the author, and to draw in the reader to the personal experience of the book’s author. Good books are inspired by believers in the GOOD BOOK with the purpose of bringing light, hope, counsel and direction to the reader. But, most books lead people away from the truth either by the author’s ignorance or direct intention.

Most Christians read other books instead of the Bible. Why do the very people who claim to love the Lord hardly, if ever, make time to know Him; to know what the Creator of life has to say on all matters of life and especially life after death? (Psalms 19:7-11) Fools repeat their follies because they refuse to learn.

*“I will listen to what God the Lord will say; he promises peace to his people, his saints — but let them not return to folly.”* Psalms 85:8

Those who rightly handle the Word of God are able to handle anything life throws at them; all that their known and unknown enemies have planned against them. They know what do with doubt, fear, worry, threat, loss, disappointment, mistake, pain, suffering and death.

Today we have the Bible on computer and IPod. It’s very convenient but it hinders our hands from touching the actual book. Does it matter? I think it does. On the computer or IPod the Bible is just another book among millions contained. But, a tangible leather bound Bible with pages you can run your fingers through, and where your ‘touch’ and ‘thoughts’ and ‘tears’ are found throughout can better serve as a reminder that God speaks to those who hunger and thirst for Him and what He has to say - daily.

God’s beloved disciple, John, testifies of his time lived with Jesus and wrote it down for each generation of faith after him. We know that his testimony is true because it is in God’s Book. John ended his written account with these words: *“Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”* (John 21:24-25)

Beloved, the day is still to come when all these ‘other’ books of personal testimonies of what the Lord has done will have their public place of glory and eternal praise to God, so keep writing and journaling. Your writings and journals are more important than you realize, especially during the Great Tribulation. People who are left behind to endure the worse time on the earth will go after the writings and journals of those who were taken at the start of what the Bible calls “the great wrath of God.” They will want to know what the “taken” knew that they didn’t, even though they had the Holy Bible and deposit of the Holy Spirit too.

In a day when history is being altered and re-written by the wicked so that certain events in history can be taught as having never happened – we need to listen closely to the Spirit of truth. We need to know how we should live and live with bold confidence rejoicing that our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Eternal Life.

The Lamb said that just because your name was entered in The Book of Life doesn’t mean that the Lion can’t remove it. The Enthroned One knows your deepest secrets and desires. Just because the Lamb forgave you isn’t a guarantee that the Lion will recognize and honor you and that the King will crown you. They are all the same God, just different in purpose for their appointed times.

I think it is right to have our minds refreshed as Peter suggested in asking certain questions. (2 Peter 1:12-3:2) Did you follow cleverly invented stories when you first heard about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ? No, you heard it from the Holy Spirit of those “eyewitnesses” of His Majesty; those who heard it said from the Voice out of Heaven, *“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”*

Beloved, we have the word of God’s holy prophets made more certain by their own testimony and way of life, and we will do well to pay attention to what God has said through them. No prophecy of Scripture came out of the prophet's own interpretation as if man could change or manipulate the will of God. Men of God spoke from God as they were inspired and led along by the Holy Spirit.

Do not be fooled; there are false prophets and teachers among you who secretly work from all angles, and they preach Jesus Christ crucified like any good Christian. But, they deny His power; the power of the Holy Spirit which Jesus said they will not be forgiven for. (Mark 3:29 and Luke 12:10) Do not follow their shameful and deceitful ways; bringing the way of truth into public disgrace. It causes people to turn away from Jesus Christ, which is Satan’s plan. In their greed these teachers will make up stories, with the help of God’s ancient foe, to develop you, then control and use you. They speak empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature. They lure God’s people back into the life of error. They get you to look back at what you had and how it felt. They are prisoners of these things that master them that they tempt you to go back to. They promise freedom as they live bound and enslaved themselves. I know many Christians who try to convince other Christians that what they do is not wrong when the Bible has made it perfectly clear that it is.

Their guilt and condemnation has long been hanging over their heads because demons lead fools and idiots in the way of wickedness, shame and dishonor; for from the beginning their destruction has been certain as they await their judgment and dungeons; the place God prepared for them – out of His sight forever.

Beloved, if you have been delivered by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in what you have been delivered from and then overcome by it – then you are worse off at the end than at the beginning. This comes from the Law-giver Himself. It would have been better for you not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and gone back to your old ways. Don’t let these proverbs be true of you: *“A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.”*

If you study any book, let it be the Holy Bible and study it to live by it. Many study it to find a way to justify their sinful lifestyles. If you recall and repeat anyone’s words, let it be the words of God. Why repeat words of rebellious and wicked people; that only ruins your own heart. Retain what the Lord has said; the words He spoke in the past to the holy prophets and the commands He gave to and through His apostles which have obediently been written down for us. There’s only One Book for this life and how you handle it determines whether your name will *remain in* or be *removed from* – The Lamb’s Book of Life.

**Part 13**

Righteousness can only be obtained by “faith” in the One who is Righteous: Jesus Christ – Lamb of God. (Romans 9:30-32) Righteousness has its work, but without its heart it won’t be credited to the one who did it. This was Israel’s big mistake. Although they dutifully did the work of God’s sanctuary – they denied God His work in the sanctuary of their hearts.

Sanctuary: for private worship; a holy place; protected by God; immunity from punishment of law; unmolested. Is this the condition of your heart?

We are warned not to make the same mistake Israel did. If we have been told about Israel’s spiritual downfall (which we have) and we do not seek to know and heed why it happened so that it does not happen to us – then more than likely we will follow in the same way. (Jeremiah 3:9-10)

Holiness begins with the heart and works out from there. It doesn’t work the other way around because no matter how good we want our work and character to be – if we don’t allow the Holy Spirit to do in us what He is so good at doing – then our own work, laws and successes have no way of fitting in to God’s Kingdom.

Our flip, slick, indifferent, phony, teasing kind of way with the Lord’s Helpmate won’t be defended by Jesus Christ in the least. Jesus, who stands at the right hand of the Father, only defends the holy heart and not the hypocrite’s heart.

Beloved, God’s Word informs us that there are two kinds of sin; sin that does not lead to death and sin that does lead to death. There is a different way we are to recognize and treat both. (1 John 5:16 and Matthew 12:31) We are to pray for believers whose sin does not lead to death because every born-again believer does not want to sin any longer. They want to please their heavenly Father. Our lifestyle and treatment of people will change as we mature in Christ. We no longer want to break God’s laws. (1 John 3:9 and Romans 2:14-15)

The sin that does lead to [eternal] death is the rejection (blasphemy) of the Holy Spirit. We are not to pray for this to be forgiven or pardoned. If it were not for the Spirit’s holy conviction and gracious kindness that leads us to repent before Jesus our Savior then we would not have eternal life nor would we experience the abundant life that Jesus said He came to give us [in the Holy Spirit]. Our heavenly Father can not and will not pardon and forgive anyone who rejects His Son and His Spirit. If you have the Son, you have life – the life of His Spirit. (1 John 5:12)

*“For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.”* 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8

Jesus said that if we would just live by two commandments we would not be guilty of all the others, even of man’s laws.

*“Love the Lord God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.”* Mark 12:30-31

I believe the greatest harm we do as intercessors (watchmen) is to ask God to physically heal someone before they understand what caused the trouble or sickness in the first place. We ‘naturally’ want to see a person feeling better and doing better, but we need to have the mind of the Spirit before we pray or lay hands on someone expecting God to do what we ask or declare in Jesus’ Name. Our aim is to do the will of God no matter how hard it is to see someone suffering. God uses suffering to reach the heart.

It is our responsibility as intercessors (watchmen) to warn sinners where they are headed with their sinful lawless ways and then hold out to them the Words of Life. We are not responsible for what they do with our message. (Ezekiel 33:1-9) What good is it for a person, family, church or nation to have health and prosperity so they can keep doing wrong? (Numbers 14:19-24) When God heals it’s for only one reason; it’s so we can worship Him and live uprightly.

No intercessor’s prayer can guarantee another person’s eternal security. Jesus is the only One with this right and by what He hears direct from the sinner and knows about their heart. No one can pray for the dead. Once you’re dead – whatever choices you made in life will be yours forever. There is a world-wide religion [that prays to the mother of Jesus] and that believes you can pray for the dead and warrant another person’s eternal security in heaven and that adulteress religion is one of God’s shameful condemned enemies.

Don’t think you can talk to your deceased loved ones either. Satan can disguise himself as any person or animal and so can his demons. So when you think you are talking or hearing from a dead loved one you are actually talking and hearing from a deceiving demon wanting to lead you away from the truth. Spirit-mediums are simply demon-possessed people who believe they are summoning the dead on your behalf. They are deceptively convinced they are doing a good thing but they do it for fame or fortune. You don’t need to talk to your dead loved one. You need to talk to the Lord who is the God of both the dead and the living. You can not reach a person who has died and if you think you have – you have been deceived.

Entertaining Satan is a sure way of finding out what eternal damnation and unending regret and suffering is like. The Bible and Holy Spirit are the only means in knowing what your future holds. Any other form or vessel of forth/future telling is from Satan. You are his entertainment when you live for what he has said about you (through one of his servants), and when you look forward to what he has said about your future.

There are some things God hasn’t told us yet because we need to stay focused on what is before us that He has for us to. We can easily get carried away trying to know what is to remain a mystery until God is ready to reveal it. We have the record of Eve that proves this, who has passed it down to all women. Some men get off into idle notions too; men who are not thinking and acting like ‘real’ men but are accustomed to following the teaching of wayward woman.

Jeremiah, the prophet of the Lord, was right in saying:

*“O Lord, do not your eyes look for truth? You struck them, but they felt no pain; you crushed them, but they refused correction. They made their faces harder than stone and refused to repent. I thought, ‘These are only the poor; they are foolish, for they do not know the way of the Lord, the requirements of their God. So I will go to the leaders and speak to them; surely they know the way of the Lord, the requirements of their God.’ But with one accord they too had broken off the yoke and torn off the bonds.”* (Jeremiah 5:3-5)

I’ve heard it said that “the truth hurts,” but it’s not the truth that hurts us; it’s our rejection of the truth that causes so much trouble, sickness and destruction in our lives. Our Father would not have to use painful discipline if we would watch our own tongue and step and guard our own heart. If we claim to have fellowship with the Lord yet live in the dark, we lie and do not live in the light; God’s truth is light. (1 John 1:6-10)

Jesus has severed the devil’s connection and control over us by His death and resurrection, but we must follow through from the moment we are forgiven and delivered by the Lord. What good were the prayer you prayed and the confession you made if you do not go on from there with your upward climb in holiness? You either go up, or you’ll go down.

*“Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”* Matthew 5:19

Jesus didn’t come to cancel His Law but to complete what was missing in His House and in His people. He made it perfectly clear (Matthew 15:19-20) that those who did not want to really know Him and His Standard – will be servants to those who did; those who delighted in law of the Lord and meditated on it day and night; those who walked with the Lord – all the way.

What good is anything we do or have if we do not understand what our life is about and what is coming next? Jesus came to teach us how to think, live and look ahead; to look to His coming.

**Part 14**

Holiness compels us to look forward and move on with the Lord because to go back or to keep looking back threatens our walk of righteousness with Him. God first puts His Kingdom in our heart so we can be passionate for it; purpose with passion is essential for perseverance and persecution. We talk about the Lord walking with us, but the truth is – the Lord needs us to walk with Him so we can keep our attention on things above instead of on earthly things that won’t be recognized or remembered.

Jesus never looks back. Why would He want to keep looking back to what He suffered? He’s not on the Cross! He’s not in that Tomb! He went from death to life to prepare for our glorious future. After He died He returned to show His followers the truth in what He taught about the resurrection of the faithful. The Lord is looking forward to when we will all be united to Him to finish what is to be done in His millennial reign on earth. The finish line is not the rapture; it’s the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ. The “finish” begins the “rest;” the “eternal rest” of God on earth. Jesus taught us what to look and work for when He prayed:

*“….your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* Matthew 6:10

Righteousness is moving on from what we’ve been taught about the cross of Jesus, forgiveness of sin, eternal security, resurrection of the dead, baptism, God’s coming judgment and spiritual gifts. Teach the next generation these things for they must be taught as first and foremost, but lead them on from there in the whole will of God. (Hebrews 5:11- 6:3) Why stop short of the finish line when the Lord has something to give you that tops it off and makes it worth it all?

Some of us look back and long for the kind of life we had when we were growing up. Fond memories are pleasant, but when we try to duplicate what we had in the past we ruin what is before us today and avert how we should prepare for tomorrow and make our children ready. The times, they are changing. We are getting closer to the return of the Lord and we need to look forward with hope and readiness. Your generation could be that generation that lives to see the return of the KING!

Those past dreams, routines and people are what aided in who we are. We should build up from there, not make it a shrine to which we return. Now some people have pasts that they should NOT build upon; pasts that need to be put under the blood of Christ and never again to let affect them, shape them or condemn them.

If you keep trying to live in the past you will not appreciate the new people God has put in your life to help you in living the life Christ said He came to give you. And, you will not recognize the time of God’s coming to you with His open door or provision for what He has for you to do with Him. We like to talk about God being there for us, but are we making ourselves available to Him by constantly returning to our past hoping to get it back in some way?

Some of us “look back” to those days of ‘prosperity’ when everything was going our way. We look back and dream of having what we had then, but this only keeps us trapped in discontentment, failure and envying what other people have. It ruins all of ‘today’s’ opportunities for true wealth and enduring prosperity. It distorts our perspective of what ‘today’s’ trials and challenges are for; what they can produce and prevent in us.

Some of us “look back” and remain stuck in what happened to us that hurt us deeply or that took something personal or hopeful from us so that we never heal and get on with the wonderful life and work of God. To remain stuck will make you into the same kind of person you resent or even hate (secretly hate). You become that person to someone else without really wanting to.

As wives we can be like a ball and chain on our husband’s leg. As fathers and mothers we can deeply offend our own children when we do not lead them in the truth and promises of God. The person with a hard cold heart not only ruins his/her own life, but the lives of others who are looking to them (instead of to the Lord).

Fantasy, discontentment and bitterness are KILLERS! People who live in the past; who keep going back so they can feel what they used to feel or to have what they used to have – are the most miserable of all people. Their words are deadly because out of the overflow of their heart – their mouth speaks. (Matthew 12:34)

Miserable people make other people miserable. Misery loves the company of other miserable people. The gossiper’s friends are other gossipers. Liars hang out with liars. Thieves make close friends of dishonest greedy people. Seducers go where the seductive gather. Fearful people surround themselves with fearful people. We have all kinds of groups today who are thinking they need to “save” something because of fear and false-belief. The have no sense of what their cause – will cause.

No matter how many times God comes to heal and comfort with His touch and His Word – the fool will refuse it. They have been so long in their dark cold place – that when hope and truth comes along they are afraid and suspicious. They don’t want to get out of that place that they have become so familiar with, having learned to accept it; even thinking it is a safe place.

You remember Lot, Abraham’s nephew, whose wife “looked back” and then lost her life and inheritance from God. The life she had, that she longed for, was not the life she needed and that her children needed. It was not the life that would bring her and her daughters into their glorious future and later we see what the two daughters did with their drunken father because of the environment they grew up in. (Genesis 19)

On the other hand, Sarah (Abraham’s wife) “looked ahead” as to the promises Abraham had from the Lord. Sarah didn’t fear the “what ifs,” she just trusted God and entrusted her husband and children to Him…..and GOD DID NOT DISAPPOINT HER in the least. Although Sarah made the big “Hagar-mistake,” which generated more enemies for Israel, Sarah repented and kept her focus on God’s promise.

Lot’s wife turned into a *pillar of salt* when she disobeyed the Lord and looked back. She became a memorial of what happens when we long for what we shouldn’t; when we try to go back to what we had. Abraham’s wife became a *pillar of holiness* reminding us of what happens when we keep our eyes on the Lord – looking forward to our eternal home of glory.

What we had before is not for us to hold on to or try to get back or repeat. It can never be the same because we are not the person we were then. The process of our transformation ends when we see the Lord, and not any time before that. Satan works his wicked schemes against you so you will continue to look back, go back and be controlled by the past.

Today, when a real preacher preaches on the whole will of God which includes God’s hatred of sin and rebellion, God’s judgments and wrath – he doesn’t get the good response he gets as when he simply preaches on God’s grace and mercy. Jesus prayed that after every believer comes to Him that we’d not be taken out of this world, but that we would finish the work of the Father; that we’d live like He lived, speak like He spoke, pray like He prayed and go like He went until our Father’s House is finished.

True worshippers look ahead with God’s Spirit and His Word – living strength to strength, glory to glory – because they have ahead of them the reward of their faith; the inheritance of the saints. (Hebrews 11:26-27) So, let us do what the old hymn says to do: “Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in His wonderful Face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.” Turn…. and never look back.

*“Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”* Hebrews 11:16

**Part 15**

Does God deliver us from the evil one before we are sincere about turning away from evil? I tend to believe He won’t because true repentance is just that. (Psalms 31:1-8 and Matthew 6:13) The perverted version of repentance is where you, in admitting to God that you’re a sinner, receive the Lord’s forgiveness but then go back to living and thinking like you were, never really wanting to know God’s ways and laws. This is not salvation! What does the Lord have to say about this?

*“When You hear My Voice (and He has made sure that we all have), do not harden your hearts against Me….do not test My patience after you have heard of all I’m capable of….but know My ways so your hearts do not go astray, or I will speak this word against you, on oath in my anger; that you will NEVER EVER enter My Rest.”* (Psalm 95:8-11 in part and caps are mine)

If we cry out to the Lord in truth and spirit to deliver us from evil, from the ways of our world, from the evil desires of our flesh and from the deception and control of the devil, He will, but He will require some diligence from us in learning how to think like He thinks and live accordingly as His sons and daughters. There are more to His ways than just being kind and generous. There is also hatred and meanness toward evil. Do you have it in you to truly hate that which is evil and not tolerate it in the least as instructed by our heavenly Father? Could you be cruel enough to do what the Lord suggested?

*“If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell.”* Matthew18:8-9

The Lord is speaking metaphorically here, but God’s thoughts are much higher than ours and by what the Lord said here – His ways are too.

If we do not make it our number one goal to live by faith (in obedience) to what God says in His Word and by His Spirit, doing all to ‘get it’ and ‘do it;’ even doing the hardest radical unheard things that are in line with God’s holiness, then we can not worship and serve the Lord God. We worship and serve a lesser god; a god void of holiness.

Your enemy is threatened by your faithful confessions to the Lord and your prayers of faith that are prompted by what God says in His Word, by His Spirit. Satan fights hard and with all he’s got to convince God that He should turn His back on you just like God did with Israel (temporarily). Satan has and is doing all he can to keep believers from reading and studying God’s Word. We can say that he’s been quite successful because of all the disorder, confusion and disunity there is among God’s people. Often, when a nation is in trouble it’s because the Lord’s church is out of order and divided.

Do you have someone interceding for you; one that walks with the Lord and is praying for you? The prayers of God’s servants are *undermined by our neglect to pick up our own cross and follow after Christ*. By our own neglect of doing what God requires of His children we are actually working along with the enemies of the Cross – evil workers of inequity – against our own soul and good future.

As one who still prays for her (adult married) children and friends, I can say that the hardest thing for me to do is to be ‘prayerfully’ silent when I’m burning inside with something to say to the one I love and pray for continually. There are things that need to be said and things that need to wait to be said. When I present my concerns to the Lord first, He takes them and holds them for His appointed time to be released; when those I pray for are ready to receive “the light of truth.” It might be through me or someone else, or through a book or movie, or even by some roadway sign or natural disaster; one way or another God knows how to get through to each of us.

“God does nothing until His people pray.” This statement [from the Holy Spirit of God’s Word] changed my prayer life.

When we trust in Jesus and He deposits His Holy Spirit in us – the veil of uncertainties lifts so we can understand what we never could understand before, BUT so often we want to hold on to that veil. We want the Lord’s forgiveness but we don’t want His wisdom and deliverance. Wisdom and deliverance are given to the righteous, not to the pretenders.

There’s an old saying: “Ignorance is bliss!” Well, is it? I believe it’s the “fool” who thinks this is true. God has gone to great lengths to give us all we need to know now in His written Word. The deeper we go in His Word with His Spirit – the greater our LIGHT becomes. God has given [to the forgiven] His Holy Spirit who teaches the truths our faith needs because faith has a scheduled journey. Faith has a finish line:

*“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.”* 2 Peter 1:5-9

For instance: You can not go from “knowledge” skipping over “self-control” to reach “godliness.” And, “goodness” can not reject “knowledge” and claim to have “love.”

God is not letting His people, the Lord’s Church, pussy-foot around anymore with our sneaky way of living in sin as we claim to be the children of the Living God. Our God is not allowing His *blood-cleansed forgiven church* to say, “I didn’t know!” or, “I don’t understand!” or, “I have my own interpretation.” There is no excuse for ignorance, confusion or defeat when we’ve been graciously given all things necessary for living the victorious life in Christ Jesus. You might think that because you’ve been getting away with something wicked, or in your opinion - not so wicked, that the Lord doesn’t mind, but…..

*“How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?”* Hebrews 10:29-30

Just imagine how much simpler life would be, and less costly too, if everyone simply trusted God’s love and obeyed God’s Word. Think of how simple and full human life would be if we just followed those two commandments that Jesus gave us to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. (Matthew 22:37-40) It’s how life on earth was intended to be; simple, full, glorious and eternal.

We have given people way too much credit for what they ‘make up’ in their heads that opposes the way God tells us to think and live. We have acknowledged and honored the thoughts and works of man far more than the thoughts and works of God. We have meditated and acted on the wrong words. We have been medicated right out of our sound minds and bodies. We have trusted in the wrong leaders, both nationally and spiritually. We need to return to the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

*“Take heed, you senseless ones among the people; you fools, when will you become wise? Does he who implanted the ear – not hear? Does he who formed the eye – not see? Does he who disciplines nations – not punish? Does he who teaches man – lack knowledge?”* Psalms 94:8-10

*“Blessed is the man you discipline, O Lord, the man you teach from your law; you grant him relief from days of trouble, till a pit is dug for the wicked. For the Lord will not reject his people; he will never forsake his inheritance.”* Psalms 94:12-14

Jesus didn’t “save” you for later; He “saved” you for now; for now and for evermore!

**Part 16**

*“For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, it is he who will save us.”* Isaiah 33:22

Why do we get so excited in a movie when the bad guys get what’s coming to them? What is it that stirs up courage in little boys when they watch evil overthrown by good? What causes the zeal of righteousness in grown men to become quickly activated when wickedness is in their face or in their way? Why does ‘bravery’ bring tears our eyes? Well it’s all because of whose children we are and who Jesus Christ is – in totality.

If Jesus was not coming back to the earth as “King” over all, just as He promised, then mankind would’ve self-destructed a long time ago. God’s grace doesn’t end when the Church is removed from the earth; it ends when Jesus has destroyed all dominion, authority and power on the earth; when every enemy of God’s has been put under; the last being “death.” (1 Corinthians 15:24-28) God’s grace took over when God’s people gave up their God-given authority and power; something that should never have been done.

God created all things for man to exist and live forever in the most peaceful, joyful and prosperous way and it will be just that way after Christ has finished His thousand year reign on the earth.

God proved His extravagant love to mankind with a creation of the most incredible things both essential in keeping life of all kinds thriving forever as well as the most amazing things that are not necessary for life to keep going. Some things He created are just for our wonder and amazement; to keep man humble and worshipful of so wonderful a God.

God showed His absolute love again by the cross where our Savior Jesus Christ willingly took on Himself all the sin this world has ever, and will ever, produce; with His own blood your guilt and my guilt was covered. Have you received that amazing grace from Jesus yet?

God will show His holy love again in another spectacular way, but only to those who have been covered by the blood of Christ; to those who love Him for all He’s done for them. *“The Lord will extend His mighty scepter from Zion and He will rule in the midst of His enemies….He will crush kings on the day of His wrath. He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.”* (Psalms 110) Our King is returning with His willing troops to make right what’s been wrong for so very long; with righteous zeal the earth will be rid of all evil, even death.

Satan’s control on the earth is why the earth itself continues to let us know how upset it is. (Romans 8:14) God uses nature against man’s rebellion and nature certainly is rising up, opening up, churning up, shouting down, touching down, pushing down, drying up, acting up and certainly not shutting up. Nature is pointing its finger at who’s to blame. In fact, nature is giving man a real good tongue lashing for all that has happened on the earth. *“God does all these things to man – more than once – to turn his soul from the pit, that the light of life may shine on him.”* (Job 33:29-30)

Love for God and each other can not be enforced, but God’s laws certainly will be enforced. True love in God’s people will be the reason they will fully execute the perfect will of God all over the earth.

For instance: God’s law for man to rest from his work every seventh day comes from our Father who set the example for us. (Genesis 2:2-3 and Exodus 34:21) God’s good laws like: releasing debts every seventh year, resting the land every seventh year and celebrating firstfruits, the year of Jubilee; laws for humanity to thrive will be applied by all without any exceptions. The book of Leviticus is filled with God’s laws that will continue, all except those that Jesus Christ fulfilled with His own blood when He died on the cross. (Hebrew 10:1-14)

Any religion or race of people that requires “blood” sacrifices by whomever and for whatever is from Satan. Any religion or race of people that requires you to follow certain rules and regulations that are not in line with God’s grace is from Satan. God’s laws do not terrorize people, oppress people, encumber people or limit the number of people on the earth. God’s laws protect life and promote peace on the earth. God’s laws are intended to show us that we are sinners by nature and that we all need the Savior Jesus Christ.

God has a law for how we should pray for answered prayer: Matthew 18: 19-20, Mark 10:27, John 14:12-14 and 1 Corinthians 3:21-22.

God has laws for individuality: Deuteronomy 19:11-13, Luke 6:37-38 and James 2:12-13.

God has a law of guilt and punishment: Deuteronomy 19:15-19

God has a law of eternal inheritance: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 5:5-6, 1 Corinthians 15:50, Galatians 5:19-21.

God has a law of denying the Lord Jesus Christ: 1 Chronicles 28:9-10, Romans 2:5-11, 1 John 2:23 and 5:11-12.

God has a law of Kingdom Entrance: John 3:5-8 and Revelation 21:27.

I’ve heard people state that there is no “black or white” “right or wrong” way to think and live. Where would this belief come from? Surely not from God who has made it very clear in His Book that there is right and wrong, truth and lie, purity and impurity, holiness and wickedness, Hell and Heaven. There are only two voices of authority and one is an impersonator, liar and deceiver.

People question how one book can dictate how all people; people of all nations, heritages, languages and cultures – are to live on the earth. How can I know who or what determines right and wrong and what truth really is? Well, one way is to just live out your belief and then see what happens. One of two things will happen and one is not what you hoped for.

There are absolutely no “gray” areas with God because gray is the mix of black and white. All it takes is a little wickedness to cast a shadow on godly character. When we mix righteousness with a little wickedness the result is a “compromised lifestyle” and here is what the Lord says about it:

*“These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”* Revelations 3:14-16

I look at the lives of people who really don’t want to know God or hear that there is a right and wrong way to think and live and I can honestly say that I pity them because of what will come of them. I don’t envy anything they have or have done. I don’t want them teaching my children and grandchildren a thing. I know what is desperately missing within them because it was missing in me at one time. I know how they hide it because I used to hide it. I know how insecure they really are because I was before I came to Jesus Christ. I know without a doubt that there is Heaven and Hell and how you end up in one place or the other. I know what peace with God feels like. I know what God’s favor feels and looks like. I know how repentance and restoration work together because I have been blessed with every real blessing from my heavenly Father.

I don’t know everything and I still have lots of questions about the past and the future, but Father has my past sealed and my future secured in Christ and He’ll reveal more and more because I get to spend ETERNITY with Him.

I have to ask: Do you know the God of all wonders; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Do you know the Holy One who designed an ‘eternal’ universe for ‘eternal’ life; the One who cannot be contained or restrained or changed; the One who saves and delivers those who listen for His voice to obey and follow His voice? It’s not too late to call on the Lord and start living in obedience to His ways and commands.

*“Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God.”* 1 John 3:7-9

Jesus told us (and showed us) how to remain in the love of the Father. *“…just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.”* (John 15:11) It’s easy to obey God when love for God compels us.

God is gracious and merciful because of our humanness, but God rewards and crowns us because of our holiness. *“Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.”* (Revelation 3:11)

*“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”* Hebrews 11:6

*“Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer….Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.”* Revelation 2:10

**Part 17**

Do you know the Lord’s Voice? There are three inner voices: Satan’s voice, your voice and the Holy Spirit’s voice, and all three have a will, a very strong will. It’s critical that we know who’s who, especially in the days to come. God’s will for you is in your best interest, not like the other two. The will of the Lord stretches further than your will or Satan’s will. The Lord’s will for you is flawless, blameless, industrious, rewarding and eternally fruitful.

There are other voices we can listen to and follow but your pastor’s voice, your father’s (or mother’s) voice, your husband’s (or wife’s) voice, your boss’s voice, your teacher’s voice, your friend’s voice, the voice of your nation’s president and the voice of the media – can NOT do for you what only the Lord’s voice can. The Lord’s Voice will lead you to your heavenly Father. No other words but God’s words can give you the perfect peace of mind you need, the hope you need in tribulation, the clear understanding you need, the specific vision you need, the bold confidence you need, the patient endurance you need and the timely go ahead you need.

Jesus said, *“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”* (John 10:27-30) *“They will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice.”* (John 10:5-6)

How can you tell the difference between the Lord’s voice and a stranger’s voice? If you are not the Holy Spirit’s serious student of God’s Word then you won’t be able to tell the difference. It’s as simple as that. Jesus warns us that if we refuse the Holy Spirit He won’t forgive that; He’ll forgive any sin we commit but we will not see the Lord if the Voice of His Spirit is not the one we know and obey. *“See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?”* (Hebrews 12:25)

God’s warnings are all for our good; we don’t need to be afraid of them no matter how strong they get, and they will get stronger. (Hebrews 12:26-29 and Revelation 8:13) Don’t turn away from His warnings; turn to the Lord with all your heart, mind and strength. We don’t need pills; we need to take in His love and promises. We don’t need to watch more television or play more video games; we need to look into the Word of God and hear the Holy Spirit tell us what’s coming and how to prepare. We don’t need a vacation when life is hard; we need the peace, perspective and patience of the Lord. We don’t need any more distractions.

We are living in the time of what many call “the day of distractions.” I don’t think there was ever a time in history when there were so many kinds of distractions; things to do and with which to keep ourselves occupied; worthless things that take up our time and meditation. We need to recognize “distraction” and stand against that evil spirit because, *“If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.”* Isaiah 7:9

Satan controls people through their fears and desires. Most of us don’t test our thoughts and desires for truth to prevail in our lives. Most of us don’t know what we are truly afraid of; we let “fear” dictate to us. We don’t really go to the Lord to hear from the Lord about our fears and how to overcome them because if we did – the enemy would be afraid of God’s people instead of getting his wicked will done through us.

*“Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”* Ephesians 6:10-18

My precious husband is always wrestling in prayer for our children. He had an experience the other night in his sleep where he was attacked three times by evil. His spirit was alert while his body slept. He knew this evil was after our grandchildren downstairs sleeping, but he also knew that it had to get through him first. Each time it came at him it got closer and as he stood against it with faith in the Lord it left. But, on the third attempt the enemy came at him with a loud roar as if to make my husband afraid enough to move aside and let evil have its way in. Again he stood firm and it left. When he woke up and got with the Lord about it this statement came to his mind: *Not many Christian men are spiritually awake and alert.*

I have to ask: If Christian men are *spiritually asleep* what does that say about the faith they profess to have in the Lord or the work they are doing for the Lord, in the Name of the Lord?

As long as I’ve known my husband (40 years) my husband has never let evil or fear knock him off his feet. He’s been tripped up a few times, but like God says in Proverbs 24:16, even a righteous will stumble and even if he takes a fall he’ll get right back up because of his faith in the Lord. We have seen the deliverance of the Lord in our lives many times and so we know that the Word of the Lord can be fully trusted.

*“Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.”* James 5:7-9

Evil comes at us every day with greater force. We can’t hide from it so we’d better learn to stand our ground against it, because without holiness no one will see the Lord. The Day of the Lord is closer than we realize. Satan knows it and is why we see the rapid increase of evil on the earth. Jesus told us that *hearts will melt* and *hearts will grow cold* because of our fear of evil and our lack of faith. But didn’t Jesus also say that because He overcame the world, the flesh and the devil – that we could also; that we should take heart and finish what He started? (John 16:33)

The writer of Hebrews warns us not to do what Esau did. (Genesis 27 and Hebrews 12:16-17) Esau considered his God-given firstborn birthright of less value than the desires of his flesh. When it was time for him to receive his father’s blessing Esau begged with bitter tears for a blessing but his father had none to give him; he had given it to Jacob, the one who would carry it out faithfully. Esau and Jacob’s mother, Rebecca, knew God’s choice even though she didn’t go about it in the right way with Isaac their father. So, may we highly value our heavenly Father’s blessing and consider all our ways that we not forfeit what our Father has set aside for the faithful.

May we remember the Lord who is our only salvation. May the Lord remember you and bless you. May He grant you success and make you increase; you and your children. May you enter His gates of righteousness with thanksgiving and praise!

Though the Lord must chasten us, even severely – let the righteous rejoice! For this is the day the Lord has made! His love endures forevermore. The laws and judgments of the Lord are holy. Blessed are they who walk in the ways of the Lord and prepare for His coming. They will not have shame put on them; instead the Lord will put on them – their gold crown of righteousness, life and glory.

*“Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him - all the earth….He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth….The Lord reigns, let the earth be glad; let the distant shores rejoice….Say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns!’… Light is shed upon the righteous and joy on the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, you who are righteous, and praise his holy name.”*