



Engaging in spiritual, creative,  
and philosophical revolution.

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [ENGAGE TRAINING INTRODUCTION VIDEO HERE](#).  
\*\*\*\*\*

*This is a book about authenticity.*

*authentic knowledge  
authentic faith  
authentic life  
authentic destiny*

*“Choose entrance through the narrow gate.  
For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to  
destruction, and there are many who choose it.  
But the gate is small and the way is narrow that  
leads to life, and there are few who find it.”*

*- Jesus in Matthew 7:13-14*

## THE STORY HANDED DOWN FROM THE DAWN OF TIME!

At the dawn of human existence Adam and Eve, on our behalf, ensured spiritual, eternal death for themselves and all human offspring.

God immediately killed animals and clothed our “parents” to cover their nakedness and shame. They had become “uncovered” because they chose to not believe God’s Word, and to rebel against our Creator. By shedding this first blood on the earth God indicated that blood would be required to escape spiritual death.

Through Abraham, the Living God gave us the chosen people (the Jews), the Law and Prophets, and finally the One who would save humans from eternal death. Jesus Christ was born according to many specific prophecies on the exact day of God’s choosing. He is the Savior, or Messiah, of the entire world. Please take care to understand, *the Son has always existed*. In submission to His Father’s will and to “buy back” lost humans from eternal death, the Son was born without a human father to a young Jewish woman. His goal was to shed the necessary blood as an offering for the sin (separation) of the world. The Bible is His story and, consequently, our story as well.

*May you respond to this “Good News” of the so-called “old” and “new” testaments - a good news which appears to be the only answer to the “bad news” of Adam and Eve’s (and our) eternal spiritual death.*

One other note. Don’t confuse historical Christianity or Christianity today with Jesus. It’s ALL about Jesus. And you.

*This would be a great time to go to [Fourthstream.com](http://Fourthstream.com) and listen to “The God Story” as an audio reflection!*

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE INDESTRUCTIBLE LIFE VIDEO HERE.

\*\*\*\*\*

What do you conclude about Jesus’ view of life, death, and heaven?

---

---

---

---

# ENGAGE

## TRAINING

Engage Training Introduction.....	page 2
Indestructible Life.....	page 3
Growing Strong in the Story of Time.....	page 5
First Things First.....	page 8
Who is God?.....	page 13
Reasons to Believe.....	page 18
Fine Tuning.....	page 21
What Jesus Wants: Part A.....	page 26
What Jesus Wants: Part B.....	page 28
What is the Kingdom?.....	page 29
Spiritual Transformation.....	page 31
How People are Healed.....	page 36
My New Heart.....	page 41
Forgiveness.....	page 44
Deeper in the God Story.....	page 47
God Story One.....	page 50
God Story Two.....	page 58
Quality Character.....	page 77
Spiritual Warfare & Strongholds.....	page 85
Talking with God.....	page 93
Relational Farming.....	page 101
Kingdom Seed.....	page 105
Kingdom Harvest.....	page 109
Principled Living.....	page 117
The Holy Spirit.....	page 127
Kingdom Leadership.....	page 131

\*\*\*\*\*

Access to the support videos noted in this book can be obtained  
by contacting [theguy@fourthstream.com](mailto:theguy@fourthstream.com).

\*\*\*\*\*



*The Bible is God's love letter to His children. It is alive!  
The Author of the Bible is God, working through the personality and  
experiences of chosen men and women just like you and me.*

The Hebrews were chosen to hold and care for these sacred words of God.  
There is no dispute about the Authenticity of the Old Testament books.

The Jews cared for, transcribed, and honored the  
Scriptures. The so-called "Old Testament" is the history of  
God choosing a people to bless the earth (the Jews) with the  
promise and fulfillment of a "Messiah" or Deliverer.

This promised Messiah was Jesus Christ, a Jew from the royal tribe of  
Judah and a descendent of King David. Jesus is God's Son, and has  
always existed. According to the God-story He made the world.

When the Holy Spirit came upon Mary (a virgin) He became  
the Father of Jesus the human (who was also sinless God).  
They were and are Father and Son - just as they have always been.

Jesus' sole purpose was to come to reveal eternal  
life to the world, die, be raised from the dead,  
and to take upon His sinless self the sins of the world.

The so-called "New Testament" is God's story of giving His Son.  
There are other religious writings but they dim when held up to the Law  
(the books given through Moses) and the prophets and the  
psalms of the ancient Hebrews - God's chosen people.

*You can be quite confident that sufficient truth  
concerning God's Son has been accurately brought to mankind.  
Certainly enough to find or reject eternal life. All that remains is for  
the Holy Spirit to bring His Word of faith alive in our lives!*

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [GROWING STRONG WITHIN THE STORY OF TIME VIDEO HERE](#).  
\*\*\*\*\*



Read each passage and think through the outline below and answer the question:  
“DO I LONG FOR AUTHENTICITY?”

---

---

---

---

*Authenticity: The genuine article. Faithful to the original. Real.*

*To be authentic it must transcend culture and yet contextualize truth in personal ways.*

*To be authentic it must transcend circumstance and yet be totally relevant.*

*To be authentic it must transcend experience and yet stir the passions of the heart.*

*In what ways do I desire authenticity?*

---

---

*Have I learned to ask these questions with frequency?*

*If God has spoken - what is He saying?*

*Am I following what He has spoken?*

*Will He be pleased with my response?*

*Where can I find authentic examples of faith and am I solidly familiar with these examples?*

From the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms. How familiar am I?

From Jesus' life and words. How familiar am I?

From eyewitnesses who carried the Gospel to the world. How familiar am I?

From some early church fathers (2nd - 4th century). How familiar am I?

From a select part of historical Christianity as well as books about personal faith. How familiar am I?

From current expressions of faith by groups around the world. How familiar am I?

From people we know or hear stories about. How familiar am I?

*Are these things true in my spiritual quest for authenticity?*

Hold to the purity of the original message (1 Corinthians 15:3-8) Is this me?

---

---

Be devoted to the calling of my heart (2 Timothy 2:3-13) Is this me?

---

---

Engage in living as a servant (Mark 10:41-45) Is this me?

---

---

Live for the promised outcome (1 Corinthians 15:19, 50-58) Is this me?

---

---

Follow the anointing (1 John 4) Is this me?

---

---

*Are these key questions at the core of what is shaping of my world view?*

How can I break free from my human **nature**? (1 Corinthians 10:11-13)

---

---

How can I break free from my **culture**? (John 8:31-36)

---

---

How can my heart go where I am unable to take it myself? (John 6:63; John 16:12-15)

---

---

**AUTHENTICITY**.....*to find it, you have to want it!*.....*Read Jeremiah 29:10-14*

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [FIRST THINGS FIRST VIDEO HERE](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Read Acts 2:37-47

Serious contemplation of the God-Story readily reveals our need for continual intervention and communication from our Living Creator. A belief in the need for repentance, renewal, and revival has been shared by many Jesus followers in history. Careful observation of church and secular history reveals that followers of Christ in any age must accurately assess their times. We live in times that are weak in prayer (God contact) and shallow in principled and passionate living.

We must learn to be men and women of **prayer**. We must embrace **spiritual heart strategies** that will put the axe to the roots of religious tradition, lazy agnosticism and weak atheism. We must engage in the painstaking, fruitful process of sowing the fresh and precious Seed of Jesus into our own hearts and into the world around us. Too often we emphasize getting to know people rather than knowing Christ, in functioning as an organization rather than as a living organism, and mastering our mission or program at the expense of being men and women with uncompromising hearts.

There is nothing worthwhile in this world apart from Christ. God can do in a moment through His Spirit what we can labor over for a lifetime. Time spent in this world is brief when compared to the eternal privilege of experiencing the inexhaustible depths of God. "Getting it right" is not the ultimate goal, because it is WHO we know and not WHAT we know that makes us spiritual.

The first Christ-followers cut deeply into the pages of past and future history. Through continual devotion to the apostle's teaching (the Word), the breaking of bread (the remembering), fellowship (the consuming desire to spend days and evenings together), and prayer, *It was the presence of God within them, around them, and through them that made the difference.* The world would never be the same. They were, quite simply, men and women of whom the world was not worthy. Though as common as you and me, their relationship with their Master eclipsed the temptation to be ordinary. *They were obsessed not so much with the dream of heaven on earth, as heaven in heart.* In my view there are several areas that reflect our current cultural need for intervention by the Living God so we too may experience [heaven in heart](#).

### 1. WORSHIPPERS OR ACQUAINTANCES? Read John 4:21-24

There are many who are acquainted with Christ and the Gospel but few who worship Him in Spirit and in truth. People in America are often observers in worship, not necessarily dedicated to knowing God. This is an incredible shame, because the divine power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that opens our mortal eyes to see the immortal and inspires our souls to seed-sowing that is bigger than ourselves. God has many acquaintances in the American church, but how many are worshippers?

Jacob had a simple formula. Grasp

Him and don't let go until He blesses you. Peter's understanding was pure as well, "Where else shall we go Master, You have the words of eternal life."

There is no substitute for holding on to God. We were created to know God. All preaching, teaching, singing, discipling, retreating, and Bible studying that misses this is worthless. It is the hot and cold of life that is normal, not the exception. God meant our personal insufficiency to do good to drive us to Him. Here we find what only He can provide. This leads to a second very important issue:

## 2. ARE WE CHRIST-FOLLOWERS OR BELIEVERS? Matthew 10:34-39

It is clear from the Gospels that Jesus was exacting a great price from His disciples. The decision to be a follower far surpassed what we call being someone who “believes.” In America when someone “believes” it means that he or she is giving mere intellectual assent. This was not true in the Biblical time of the people of God nor in eastern cultures today. When Jesus said, “Come, follow me,” He was assuming a journey that would require much of His followers. Paul called this “dying to self.” Jesus called it picking up our cross...and following Him!

The very nature of Christ and His gospel requires everything from us. According to James “demons believe (in Jesus) and tremble.” To say we believe when we are unwilling to follow is to fly in the face of Christ and all of His teachings. This luxury of choice and convenience is Greek, Roman, American, and

---

*"Believers in America are often parasites of convenience."*

---

spiritually decadent. After all, are we not supposed to be “working out our salvation in fear and trembling?” Believers in America are often parasites of convenience. If the people of God wish to experience the power of God, then we will take seriously the command to follow. For it is the Lord Christ we serve. *Once this is settled in our heart, we move to the next thing our needy days demand:*

## 3. HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FACE OF CULTURAL IRRESPONSIBILITY Read Ephesians 5:15-21

I am husband to my wife of 30 years and father to my three children. Neither the state, Sunday school teachers, High School teachers or college professors, peers, counselors...no one...is to fulfill my role as a partner and parent. When God voiced His expectation for a father to lead and teach, He did not qualify this role with how much someone worked, the status of a marriage, or how comfortable a man was with his role. He expected it then just as He does now. We are to let God build our house by His grace, teach our children to fear the Lord, and live with our wife in an understanding way. No excuses. No psycho-babble. No weak-willed compromise.

My children are to be taught to be servants of God, contributors to what is good in society, and to flee and oppose what is undesirable or evil. I am supposed to love my wife and my daughter with a godly, protective love. I am to teach my boys to become men who love God, respect women, and hold to high integrity. I, and I alone, will be held responsible for the father-picture of God in my home. If my wife is my partner in this, I am blessed. If she is not, I am not off the hook. If I am a woman alone or a woman alone with children, I set my face toward the Living God who is my protector and my husband. If I am unmarried, I embrace my freedom from concern with joy, and design a life-style that blesses Christ and furthers His kingdom.

I am to discern what is garbage in my society and call it what it is. I am to reject sensuality, greed, anger, envy, and strife. I am to reject pornography and the degrading of women, expend my heart on my family rather than myself, and constantly teach my children what it means to be a man or a woman who embraces their destiny as the seed of God in the world.

Together with my wife, we form a partnership to advance God's kingdom and bring God glory. If I experience the privilege of co-laboring for the Gospel with my children, I am doubly blessed. I am to see parenting as the highest calling apart from my marriage to Christ and my commitment to my wife. This leads us to point four. *I need friends who hold the same values and convictions as I do.*

*MY THOUGHTS ABOUT THESE THREE “FIRST THINGS”:*

---



## 4. RELATIONAL LOVE BASED UPON TRUTH Read 1 Peter 1:22

Jesus summed up all of Scripture by saying we should love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This is why the Church exists. We are to help each other love our neighbor as ourselves, because "if we cannot love our neighbor whom we can see, how can we love God whom we do not see?"

The Church has evolved in America to focus on the WHERE rather than the WHO. This is a critical error. We must wade through multiple layers to uncover the relational reality that we ARE the church. Often the church is more of a club than a community, an organization rather than a living organism. If there are often so many layers that those who follow Christ never discover community, how will the unbelieving community ever see it or understand it? And yet, we are to be marked before unbelievers by our love for one another.

***This higher relational calling is built upon the foundation of love spoken and lived toward one another.*** It is not as elementary as modern psychology's belief if we can just change behavior or environment, our problems will be solved." This calling is built upon a third Person in our relationships where people love others the way God is loving them RIGHT NOW. The Church becomes a community where merely being right is not the goal, but, rather, our quest is fulfilling our ongoing debt to love one another. Community occurs as a group of people love one another despite our personal shortcomings and sociological, economic, and even theological differences.

This kind of love for one another is something that our culture avoids. It is messy. It is work. And it costs us a huge piece of ourselves. It cost Jesus and His Father dearly.

In a world where relationships are discarded like out of date clothing, love based upon truth has heart, fortitude, and commitment. It has sacrifice at its root. It is the inevitable measuring stick on the pathway that has been blazed by the One who IS love. It takes a brave man or woman to "go first." It takes courage to love others the way God loves us, and to speak the truth in love. *We have been gifted by God to apply this kind of love to others:*

## 5. TALENTED OR GIFTED? Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

According to the Scriptures, when Christ ascended to heaven He gave gifts to men. These gifts, when activated by the Holy Spirit, were to make the Church a supernatural community. Christ-followers were to band together with their gifts and together become far more than they ever could have been alone. This necessitated being submitted to one another in love. This supernatural living also demanded that time, gifts, and treasures be released completely for the sake of the Kingdom of God (one another). Not one day in seven but seven days a week were to belong to God. We are to give more than a "leftover" commitment of hours and even our work and leisure time are to be submitted to the discretion of our Creator. It is not a question of giving 5, 10, or 20 percent of my time, talents, and money, but a commitment to use all of my resources to build the kingdom of God.

The church today functions much more on experience than gifting, on human drive than divine empowerment, and on who is

*Christ-followers  
are to band  
together with  
their gifts, and  
together become  
far more than they  
ever could have  
become alone.*

available rather than who evidences mature character and needed gifts. Our leaders are often untested or visible leaders in commerce and community, and then assumed to be good leaders for the people of God. Our workers often see God as needing to be integrated into life, rather than our whole lives being given over to God. Our confidence is many times based in our ability to plan and execute and our prayer lives are puny in comparison to our gallant efforts. The ministry of the Spirit is either divorced from the Word or the Word is absent of the Spirit.

When Jesus came He unleashed not only the authority of truth but the daily reality of a Living Holy Spirit, supernaturally revolutionizing the souls of men. If we aspire to only what mere men, even great men, can do, then we rule out our need to rely upon Christ to work through us. When God's strength is obvious God's glory will not be confused with our own. To mature in love and effectiveness by supernatural gifting is the heart of the Church. *And if we are to be men and women of renewal and revival in the power of God we must be willing to:*

## 6. CHOOSE RELATIONSHIP OVER RELIGION Read Mark 7:1-23

*The Church is not a gathering point where people meet to find their identity, it is a "place" to celebrate our identity.*

*The work of God is done on our behalf because God is gracious - not because we are able to perform well enough.*

It is human nature to develop traditions. Traditions are not evil in and of themselves, but when elevated to a level of the Word of God (or above it), they suck the spiritual life right out of a living community. This is why Jesus had such fiery words for the Scribes and the Pharisees. Eventually their traditions not only eclipsed commandment, they invalidated them. A healthy community of believers will avoid and put to death religion (the traditions of men) wherever they are found.

The Church is not a place for people to find their identity, it is a place to celebrate it. The work of God is done on our behalf because God is gracious not because we are able to perform well enough. Obsession with personal recognition is a powerful result of being in a fallen world. This stronghold of Satan, along with the accusation that we are worthless, runs deep in our humanity. It drives leaders, workers, homemakers, and children every day. Yet the essence of the message of the Gospel is that God loves us and has rescued us not only from sin and Satan but from self (and self-effort).

Little seeds become large plants. When "church" became a place we GO rather than who we ARE, American Christianity suffered. In our culture we are hard-pressed to find believers (let alone unbelievers) that don't associate God with what goes on in a building. In the face of "calling no man father" we elevate priests and pastors to a higher order. But the main quality of men and women of faith in the Bible was the extraordinary work of God in very ordinary people. Though they were just like anyone else (and sometimes worse) they had learned the secret of "Christ in me." We bicker and fight over worship styles, petty dogmas, the color of carpet, and the articles of our worship. And all the while our relevance gap with our dying world widens right along with our inflated views of our traditions and ourselves.

Galatians gives us a simple formula: The GOSPEL + SOMETHING = NOTHING. When time and energy serving our traditions carries the bulk of our time and heart, it is time to beg God to deliver us. If tradition's foothold is so strong that we lose our ability to pray, dream, and believe, then it is time to slit the throat of tradition. *We can then turn our eyes onto the fields, white for harvest:*

## 7. GOSPEL RELEVANCE FOR OUR DYING WORLD

There is a chasm in our culture. Most undecided Christ-followers perceive church people or "Christians" as religious to the point of being self-righteous. Even when this isn't true, most Americans still view becoming a Christian as getting behaviorally better. If we just could kick smoking, quit drinking, reject drugs, escape premarital and extra-marital immorality, go to church enough, wear different clothing, and change our language from crude to "christian-speak," then we would be good enough for God. Despite the fact that this flies in the face of the Gospel of grace, the "church" does little to defuse such fanciful notions. In fact, we even reinforce them, depending upon just how religious we are. Perhaps it is because we are struggling so much with our own identity in Christ, or busy perfecting our newfound Christian altar-egos, that we have so little to talk about with our "brothers in Adam."

The world is a dying place that needs Jesus. It doesn't need "church." KING FIRST. KINGDOM SECOND. and CHURCH is the outworking of the "King in me!" The world doesn't need perfect people to bring the gospel to it. It doesn't need people with all the right answers, ready to "dump the truck" rather than give salt-seasoned responses. The world needs people who care enough to introduce others to Jesus. Because He is all-powerful God He can and will take care of the rest. The world needs people who understand the power of God. Committed people who know that presenting Jesus is more powerful than presenting "me" or my "church." *In this way we "hold out the word of life!"*

### SOME CONCLUSIONS:

It is my belief, and our secularizing numbers substantiate it, that America is the "lost mission field" of the twentieth century. As we launch into the 21st century, Jesus must be experienced and represented by courageous communities of Christ-followers who worship with all our hearts and who take responsibility for our lives, blemishes and all. We must be those who love one another fervently from our hearts, who use all of our gifts to bless the King and His Kingdom, and who uncompromisingly live above religion.

In these last days God needs people who take Him at His Word. He is my KING. His KINGDOM is me! The Church is the "called out" expression of God's richness dwelling within our hearts.

*Dare to be courageous. Dare to engage. "Eye has not seen or has ear heard what God has prepared for those whose heart is perfect toward Him!"*

### MY THOUGHTS ABOUT THESE LAST FOUR "FIRST THINGS":

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [GROWING STRONG WITHIN THE STORY OF TIME VIDEO HERE.](#)  
\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [WHO IS GOD VIDEO HERE](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

## WHO IS GOD AND HOW DO I CONNECT WITH HIM?

There are a number of ways people can contemplate God. Here are a few. Which ones best help you to connect with the concept of a Designer or Living God?

1. In nature...from macro-astronomy to creatures and plants.
2. Through science...from species to atoms, DNA molecules to forces of nature.
3. Archeology...all that we can infer from digging up old stuff.
4. Religious writings...places in history God may have authentically shown up.
5. Philosophical writings...stories of personal experience and observation.
6. Personal experiences...compelling evidence from those who are credible - or those we trust personally.

Who is God based upon your current personal thoughts?

---

---

What sources have provided primary avenues for your conclusions?

---

---

Do you feel like you know God? How and in what ways?

---

---

What would you assess as the level of your desire to please God?

---

---

*The Bible tells us that we can have a personal relationship with God. Through His Son we may talk to Him, hear from Him, and see Him at work in the world around us and in the lives of people. To what depth do you believe this and how do you believe you are experiencing this in your personal journey?*

---

---

---

---

# WHO IS OUR FATHER AND WHO HAS HE REVEALED HIMSELF TO BE?

God's personal name in the New Testament: ABBA, FATHER!

PSALM 84...Abba means "Daddy."

Read Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6

*What do you learn about a personal relationship with God from the following passages?*

---

---

Some things you and I can count on about our Father:

Matthew 7:6-11

He is our Protector and has our best interests at heart so that we can live without speculation!

*How protected do you feel?*

---

---

Hebrews 12:3-11

He disciplines us for our holiness so that we can have an example for our growth!

(He totally understands us...Hebrews 5:7-9) *How have you seen this in your life?*

---

---

Romans 8:31-39

There is nothing that can separate us from His love so we can live without fear!

*How big of an issue is fear in your life?*

---

---

Romans 8:26-30

He will continue to work with us and in us so we can be secure in His love!

*What can separate you from God's love?*

---

---

John 14:1-3

He is preparing a place for us so that we can trust Him, reject anxiety, and invest our hearts in eternal things (Matthew 6:25-34). *Does this excite you?*

---

---

Romans 9

Because He is God of all that exists He has rulership over everything. Our "free will" is subjected under the umbrella of His sovereign will. *Do you allow God to rule in your life?*

---

---

## SOME OF LORD GOD'S REVEALED NAMES

What does each of these names help is to understand about the nature of our Creator?

EL ELYON.....“The Most High” ..... Genesis 14:22, Isaiah 14:14

---

EL OLAM.....“The Everlasting God” ..... Genesis 21:33, Isaiah 40:28

---

EL SHADDAI.....“The Almighty God” ..... Genesis 17:1, Ruth 1:20-21

---

YAHWEH-JIREH.....“The Lord Provides” ..... Genesis 22:14

---

YAHWEH-NISSI.....“The Lord is my Banner” ..... Exodus 17:15

---

YAHWEH-SHALOM.....“The Lord is Peace” ..... Judges 6:24

---

YAHWEH-SABBAOTH.....“The Lord of Hosts” ..... 1 Samuel 1:3

---

YAHWEH-MACCADDESHCEM.....“The Lord thy Sanctifier” ..... Exodus 31:13

---

YAHWEH-ROI.....“The Lord my Shepherd” ..... Psalm 23:1

---

YAHWEH-TSIDKENU.....“The Lord our Righteousness” ..... Jeremiah 23:6

---

YAHWEH SHAMMAH.....“The Lord is there” ..... Ezekiel 48:35

---

## **GOD'S RULE**

*As you read these passages determine the extent  
of rulership God deserves in your life!*

Genesis 1:1,2,26,27

---

---

Job 1-2, 38-42

---

---

Psalms 90

---

---

John 1,8,9

---

---

Colossians 1:15-20

---

---

Matthew 28:16-20

---

---

Revelation 1, 19:11-16

---

---

*“When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching;  
for His teaching was filled with authority, and not like their religious leaders.”*

Matthew 7:28,29









## **The King and His Kingdom!**

*"And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.*

*His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many crowns; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.*

*He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.*

*From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.*

*And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

- Revelation 19:11-16

**There is only one King over the earth.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [REASONS TO BELIEVE VIDEO HERE](#).  
\*\*\*\*\*

With so many voices in the world it is truly difficult to focus. Jesus Christ is unique among the voices. I would like to help you to consider Christ for yourself, independent from any religious atmosphere or pressure. I would like to present to you what the Bible teaches about Christ. Please take this opportunity to consider the claims of Christ firsthand. *If you find them to be untrue or impossible to believe, then you have the peace of mind to know you have considered Christ for yourself. We stake far too much on far too little if we stop short of considering Christ beyond our culture's oversimplified and under-investigated conclusions.*

*Jesus claimed to be the Savior of the World.  
Read John 4:26*

If you take the time to read about this woman at the well, you will find that Jesus is not interested in promoting religion. He is interested in providing a quality relationship. Do you know that God can be known personally? Jesus claims to be the Messiah (Savior). That means that God thinks that you and I need to be delivered from something. Do you find it hard to believe that mankind needs to be saved from ourselves? Jesus was very specific in John 8:21-24. If we don't see our need for a Savior we will die, eternally separated from God.

*Jesus claimed to be God.  
Read John 8:58*

Is it really so hard to believe that there is a God? Jesus believed it. Why? Because He had experienced the Father firsthand. He had 100% authority to speak on the subject. Why do we insist on speaking with such authority about things which we cannot see? This is why it is so important to examine the Scriptures personally. Jesus Christ made some pretty amazing claims...and history backs Him up!

*Jesus came to help the blind and the hungry.*

*Read Luke 4:18-19*

If you can admit that you have insufficient insight to walk through life or find eternal life, you are not far from the kingdom Jesus was preaching. In John 8:12 Jesus states that He is the light of the world. Can you admit that you are blind when it come to pleasing God? In John 6:35 Jesus claims to be the Bread of Life. If you can admit that the food this world has to offer is insufficient to sustain you, you are close to Christ's kingdom.

# Who is Jesus?



*Jesus claimed to hold the keys to eternal life.*

*Read John 12:25,26*

Do you truly believe that "what you see is all you get?" Do you believe deep in your heart that your 50-90 years on this earth (if you live that long) are all that there is? Jesus speaks with transcending perspective. He says that after our physical death, there will be entrance into the eternal presence of God. Apart from trusting Christ this meeting will be as unpleasant as anything any human will have ever encountered.

*Jesus claimed to be the way, the truth, and the life.*

*Read John 14:6*

This is where many people stumble. We all want to think that what we are grasping for is the essence of life. We all want to believe that we understand the truth about reality. We all want to believe that everything will work out in the end. Jesus' claims are clear... there is only one way: His way. There is only one truth: His truth. There is only one option for eternal life spent with God: His life... the eternal life that only the Son of God can give!

*Jesus wants to rescue you.*

He claims to have the authority

- 1) to define your plight
- 2) to provide your escape
- 3) to allow you to live forever

*He offers this gift to anyone who will call upon His name!*

*John 1:12,13*

If, as you have considered these claims,  
you find you have the strength to believe, read on.  
If you think the decision will wait, read James 4:14.

If you think this is foolishness,  
may God be merciful to your soul.

*What are your objections to Jesus? Are you prepared to acknowledge His kingship over your soul?*





## Becoming a Christ-follower

How does a person become a Christian? What is a Christian? The word literally means "little Christ." The first followers of Jesus were called Christians because they embraced all that their Master taught. Jesus claimed not only to be the Savior of the world, but the Judge of the world as well. According to Jesus' teaching He is standing before the door of our hearts.

---

*"I am the door; if anyone enters through me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." John 10:9*

---

**You and I are outside the door.** That means we need to gain access. Do you believe you have a need for God? Read Matthew 4:17; Romans 3:10-12; and Ephesians 2:1-10. In order to receive the good news, we must first examine the credibility of the bad news.

To enter through the door you must step through Christ. You can't go over Him (there is no one above Him). You cannot get around Him (there is only one door, one entrance). You must go through Him.

According to Christ, you have come to the crossroad of life and death. If you choose to go forward, life and peace are waiting. If you choose to shrink away, eternal separation from your Creator is assured you. The decision becomes yours alone.

Do you believe you have entered through the Door?

Jesus died to save us.

[Read Colossians 2:13,14](#)

The first step to enter through the door is to receive the fact that God's Son was given in our place to satisfy God's wrath for sin. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son..." (John 3:16). If Jesus had not died, there would be no way to come to God. His purpose in dying was to build a bridge across the chasm of death between God and men.

Jesus was raised from the dead to prepare the way for us.

[Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-5, 12-28.](#)

If Jesus had the authority to raise Himself from the power of sin and death, won't He be able to do the same with those who believe in His name? Entering through the door we believe that upon leaving this life we will stand before God, and, through Christ; eternal life will be ours.

Finally, we must humbly embrace Jesus as our only hope. Only Jesus offers and provides forgiveness for our sins. Through belief in His mission of death and resurrection, we receive entrance through the Door.

**How does a person become a Christ Follower?**

1. Face up to the plight you are in; confess your need for God to God,
2. Believe that Christ's death on the cross is sufficient to clear your debt.
3. Pray to God to request forgiveness in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ... God will listen!

Remember, Jesus claimed to come to save sinners. We will never be good enough. This is exactly the point. Grace is "undeserved favor." This grace is available to anyone who will humble his or her soul before our God and Father.

May you even now find yourself walking through the door!

[The choice is yours.](#)

[The work is God's.](#)

[Ask Him to give you life!](#)

# Is Jesus God's Son? Is Jesus God?

God reveals Himself in nature, in His written Word, and in His Son Jesus. Jesus is "the Word made flesh!"

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE FINE TUNING VIDEO HERE.  
\*\*\*\*\*

*"...as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." - John 1:12*

Christ invites everyone to examine His works and words. He welcomes scrutiny and dialogue. One commonly verbalized barrier to considering Christ is the criticism of shortcomings of those who call themselves "Christians." It is important to remember that we will be held to Christ's own words, and not by comparisons we make with those around us.

If you have never truly taken the time to Consider Christ for yourself, the following study should be helpful. We offer Biblical references and several questions to stimulate your thinking.

## Some hints to get the most from your reading...

As you consider the following passages ask these three reflective questions:

1. What specific information are these verses communicating?
2. What did the words probably mean to those who were originally participating or reading? (each context will tell you who this is)
3. What implications do these verses contain for me and the way I believe and live my life?

Use a translation of the Bible that you can understand and are comfortable with. The New American Standard and the New International versions of the Bible are a couple of good translations from the original languages.

Meditating on the Scriptures is an engaging process. The above questions will help you to see more deeply and engage the following pages more fully!



# THE WRITTEN WORD: GIVEN TO HIS PEOPLE

Reading One: What are the potential benefits as we search the Word of Christ?

2 Timothy 3:14-17 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Timothy 2:14-16 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 3:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 4:12 \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the value of **meditating** on the Scriptures?

---

---

2. Why is **accuracy** important in Bible study?

---

---

3. How does the Word of God live **inside** a person?

---

---

4. What can **encountering** the Word of Christ do for us?

---

---

What are your personal commitments to searching the words of Christ? **What emphasis do you place on God's Word in your daily life?**

---

---

Reading Two: How may we respond to Christ as a living person?

Revelation 5:9-10 \_\_\_\_\_

John 9:1-42 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 28:17 \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you think about when the word **worship** comes to mind?

---

---

2. Why is worship of Christ **necessary**?

---

---

3. Why does the Bible claim that Christ by His very existence is **deserving** of worship?

---

---

4. What are the practical **benefits** for the follower of Christ as he or she follows and worships?

---

---

In what ways can you honor Christ through your life, and what do you consider personal barriers as you attempt to submit to Christ?

---

---

### Reading Three: Facing the Example of Christ

Hebrews 12:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

John 13:12-20 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 2:18-25 \_\_\_\_\_

1. Why should we view Christ as our **example**?

---

---

2. What aspects of His example stand out in your mind as you read these and other passages?

---

---

3. In what ways does Christ's example **transcend mere words**?

---

---

List three specific ways that a man or woman can better **follow** the example of Christ.

---

---

# THE LIVING WORD: JESUS

## Reading One: Considering my Need for Christ

Romans 3:10-12 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:1-9 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 2:2 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 15:3 \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the **extent** of sin? Why can this concept be so distasteful?

---

---

2. What are the **consequences** of sin?

---

---

3. What is the only **remedy** for sin?

---

---

4. What does the Bible indicate as the **hope** for those trapped by sin?

What is the hope for the world?

---

---

Would you honestly call yourself a sinner? Have you ever experienced personal need for Christ? How do your personal beliefs compare to those listed within the passages above?

---

---

## Reading Two: How to Receive Christ by Faith

John 1:12-13 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 10:8-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 11:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 16:19-31 \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is there any difference between intellectual recognition of Christ and **personal faith** in Christ?

---

---

2. What is faith? Why is it important?

---

---

3. What does the Bible mean when it refers to the word **believe**?

---

---

4. What does **confession** have to do with salvation?

---

---

Would you consider **faith** an easy or difficult issue for you? Do you believe that at some point in your life you have received Christ by faith?

---

---

Reading Three: Experiencing the Assurance of Christ

- 1 John 5:13 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Peter 1:3-9 \_\_\_\_\_
- Philippians 1:3-6 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ephesians 1:3-14 \_\_\_\_\_
- John 10:22-30 \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does salvation through Jesus Christ provide **benefits** only for the future?

---

---

2. Who is responsible for maintaining our salvation?

---

---

3. To what extent can we count on God to complete work that He begins in us?

---

---

4. Who or what can take away our relationship with God in Christ Jesus?

---

---

In what ways do you find **security** in God? Just how far does that security influence your life?

---

---

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE **WHAT JESUS WANTS: PART A** VIDEO HERE.  
\*\*\*\*\*



# THE SPIRIT WORD: THE BREATH OF GOD

## Reading One: The Spirit-Influenced Life

John 14:26 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 5:15-21 \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians 5:16-26 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:1-17 \_\_\_\_\_

1. In what ways does the **Spirit** of God help us interact with the Word of God?

---

---

2. How can a person be **filled** with the Spirit?

---

---

3. What does it mean to **walk** by the Spirit?

---

---

4. If a person claims to be a Christ-follower, what should be his or her **relationship** to the Holy Spirit?

---

---

Do you believe that people have a spirit? How can any person know if they are living a **Spirit-directed** life? In what ways have you seen the activity of the Holy Spirit in your daily life?

---

---

## Reading Two: The Gifts of the Spirit

Ephesians 4:16 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 13 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 4:7-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Colossians 1:3-8 \_\_\_\_\_

1. What do you believe are some of the things that “every joint” can **supply**?

---

---

2. What is the foremost **motivation** for the use of spiritual gifts?

---

---

3. How many gifts are there?

---

---

Do you feel you are becoming a spiritually **mature** believer? Can a Christ-follower evidence spiritual gifts and yet be immature? **In what ways do you believe God has gifted you?**

---

---

---

### Reading Three: The Presence of the Spirit

1 Peter 3:15 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 24:44-49 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

John 15:26-27 \_\_\_\_\_

1. In what ways do Christ-followers **evidence** the grace of Christ to those around us?

---

---

2. How would you describe the **hope** within you?

---

---

3. Of what are Christ-followers **witnesses**?

---

---

4. **Where** are we to be a witness?

---

---

In what ways do you know the Holy Spirit is a part of your life? Do you find it comfortable to tell others about your faith in Christ? Do you feel any more ready to tell others how to consider Christ for themselves? **Can you distinguish the Spirit's voice?**

---

---

---

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE **WHAT JESUS WANTS: PART B** VIDEO HERE.

\*\*\*\*\*

# What is the Kingdom?

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [WHAT IS THE KINGDOM VIDEO](#) HERE.

\*\*\*\*\*

To understand God's Kingdom we must understand His Son, and to understand His Son we must understand how He has revealed Himself. God has chosen to communicate with mankind through His natural creation (all we may see and observe), through our historic need to worship (mankind's searching heart), through His chosen people (the Jews), and finally through Jesus Christ His Son.

The world exists for one purpose: to display the glory of God. Mankind exists for one purpose: to bear the image of God and to glorify our Creator.

God begins to be considered in earnest when we begin to ask the question: "How am I to find meaning for my existence?" The search for significance often results in men and women being reconciled to God. This is the story of the Kingdom.

Man has a huge problem. We are destined to eternal separation from our Creator. The story of the Kingdom is God's ancient choice to buy back men's souls by paying a huge price. This effort would cost Him His dearest possession - His own Son's life.

Men and women who answer their question of existence outside of the realm of mere personal experience are called noble-minded people. They have determined that there must be more to life than living and dying. Those who consider Jesus Christ as the solution to existence and to eternal life are given a choice: we can either reject Him or accept Him as the Savior of our souls.

## *Matthew: the King & His Kingdom*



## *A Kingdom Heart/A Kingdom Shift*

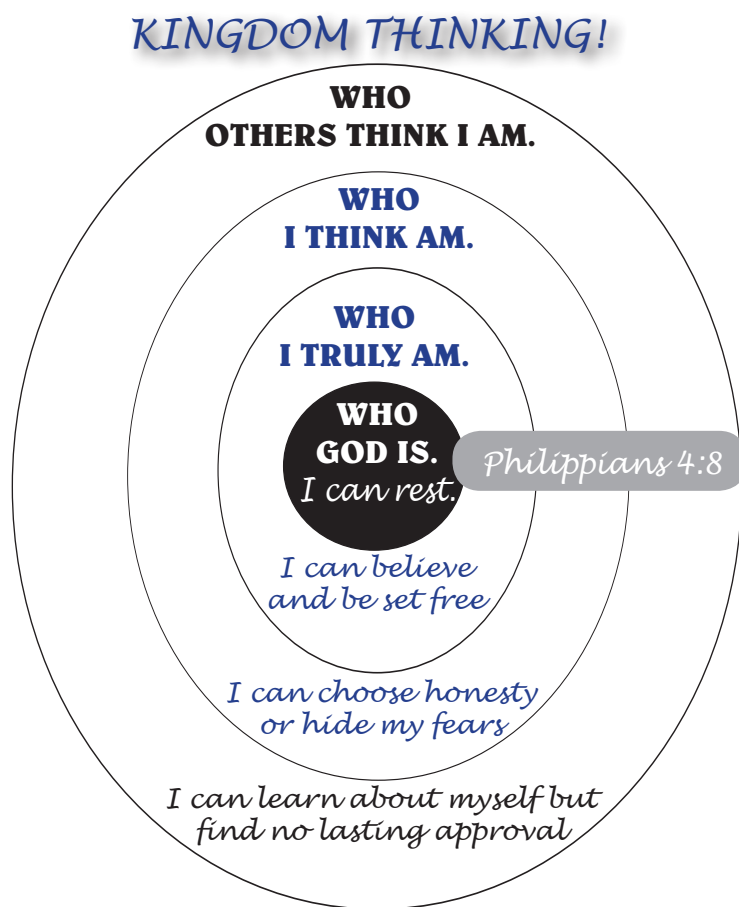
As the diagram above illustrates, once we consider the meaning of our existence (Who Am I?) we then consider the question "Who is the King?" This is where the testimony of the Gospels comes in. In the prophecies and miracles we see unparalleled authority in human history. Once we have engaged a consideration of "who is the King?" we then began to ask the question "what is His Kingdom?" The Gospels clearly answer this question with Christ's own words about Himself. Only then can we begin to grasp the friendship God has extended us by offering us life in His Son. Only then are we free to return to the question "Who am I?" with a whole new set of presuppositions, not the least of which is where we will spend eternity.

[Who has the King chosen for His friends?](#)

# How do we engage the Kingdom?

It is key to recognize that the Kingdom is not a “thing” but is none-the-less very real. Jesus went to great lengths to articulate this unseen Kingdom or a transcendent “spiritual reality,” that though linked closely with our natural lives, was yet very distinct from what is seen. It is in this “unseen realm” that we encounter God.

Jesus’ disciples went through a lifetime transition of beginning to see this difference. Once they understood that Jesus’ Kingdom was “not of this world” they began to prepare themselves to let go of the seen and exchange it for what is unseen. **This is the realm of the heart. Jesus saves the soul by saving the heart.** The work of the Kingdom is literally to believe the One whom God has sent.



What this means is that the more attention we give to our “exterior lives” the more we neglect our “interior lives.” This is a huge mistake. For within our interior lives this transformation occurs. As we are transformed we become more than we can as a mere religious person. Jesus came to “seek and save the lost,” release us from captivity, set us free - literally to turn our interior lives upside down and give of peace, joy, righteousness, and a love that is beyond ourselves. This is how we become the “salt” and “light” that the world so desperately needs!

What are your thoughts about your interior and exterior life?

---

---



## **Transformation**

*"Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.*

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

- Romans 12:1,2

**He changes us from the inside-out.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION VIDEO](#) HERE.  
\*\*\*\*\*

# What is spiritual transformation?

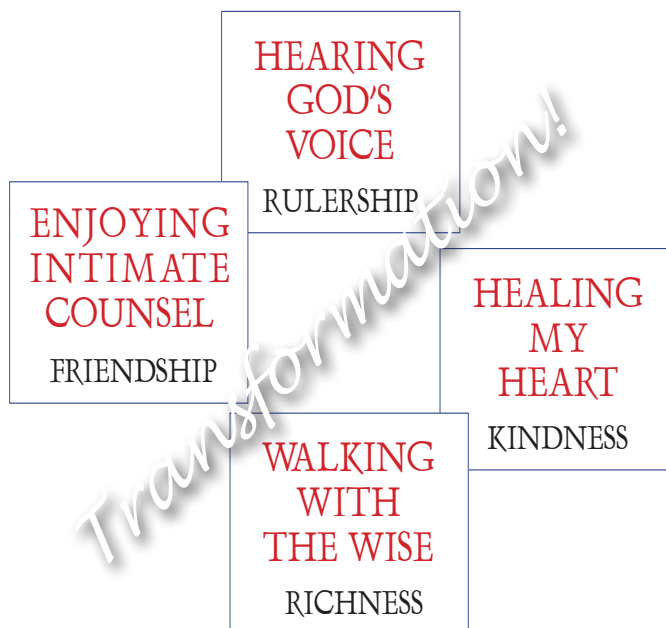
*"Therefore I urge you brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And no longer be conformed to the image of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

- Romans 12:1,2

When Jesus began His public ministry in the synagogue in His hometown (Luke 4) He quoted Isaiah the prophet from chapter 61. "The Spirit of Lord is upon Me, because He has appointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." It is His full intention to introduce the Good News into the world, and to transform our hearts by transforming our perspectives, values, hopes, and dreams. To release us from the captivity of our sin, to make our blind souls able to see spiritual truth, to set us free and heal our brokenness, and to bring this Kingdom into our hearts are all a part of this incredible transforming ministry.

This transformation occurs in several remarkable ways. First we are given the opportunity to submit to His Kingship and are made "sheep who know His voice." This tremendous benefit of **hearing God's voice** as the Holy Spirit discloses it is something that makes our lives very extraordinary. We are set apart as a chosen people who bow before His rulership, and welcome His hand upon our lives.

As this "rulership" grows we began to be changed inside as we experience God's kindness and discipline. Our hearts begin to be released as we understand how perfect God's care is of us, and **just how free we are to allow our past brokenness to be overcome by perfect love.**



We also begin to walk with others who have similarly encountered God, and we open our lives to the Scriptures and prayer, both helping to define this new, transforming relationship. The impact of exposure to Kingdom wisdom begins to **transform our thought paradigms**, and brings a richness to our lives like we have never seen before. It is literally like having our eyes opened from blindness.

As this transforming relationship unfolds, we begin to understand the depth of friendship God now feels for us, and we begin to enjoy the intimate counsel of God as He directs our lives in our decisions, our relationships, and the **true substance of our lives.**

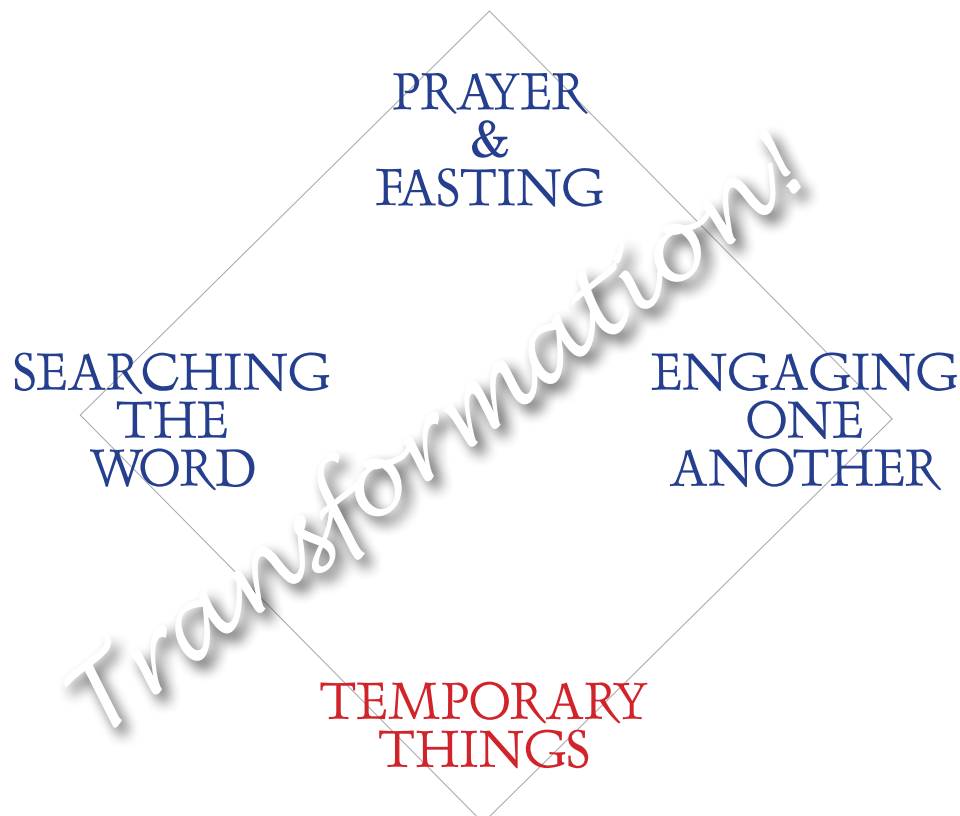
# How does transformation occur?

You have certainly heard of the saying “he or she has it all.” Jesus was very clear on this. He made it plain that we cannot serve God and “stuff.” He also asked the question “what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul.” In these sweeping statements He makes it painfully clear that we will have to choose. We can either “have it all” in this world or in the world to come - it is up to us to decide.

This choice for living involves an exchange of priorities, because “where our treasure is, our heart is there also.” Someone has said that there are only two eternal things on the earth, God and people. Jesus lived completely for both. He overcame His humanity and every temptation you or I will ever experience - and chose life. This is what so uniquely qualifies Him to be our leader - and our Savior.

His example (which we are to follow) is very clear. If we want to be transformed, we too, will make such an exchange. We will exchange temporary things for those that result in eternal treasure. *Praying and fasting, searching the Scriptures, and choosing to engage people at their true point of need is how Jesus prioritized His life.*

He invites us to engage in such a life of transformation as well, knowing very well that it will cost us dearly. It will cost us in this world to store up treasure where “moth and rust do not corrupt.” This is the fertile soil of transformation!



*Family - Income production  
Personal recognition - Accumulation  
Attainment - Leisure and pleasure*

# What does a transformed life look like?

There is a limiting benefit in setting standards for richness or poorness, religious attainment, recognition by our peers, or our resume' of clubs and accomplishments without embracing the idea that God is at work in our lives to transform us.

We should look to how God feels about us in Christ, and avail our character our heart to see His hand upon our life of transformation. We need look to where our time is being allocated and where our preoccupation with living is directed.

Those who love being transformed by God usually have several characteristics in common. We love the idea of having a **pure heart** of devotion. God is so big in our lives that He has come to have first place, pure and simple. This doesn't mean that we won't become distracted - even on a daily basis - but it does mean that we constantly come back to home base. We love God so much because He first loved us, and we offer our hearts for devotion to His purposes.



*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength - and you shall love your neighbor as you love yourself."*

- Jesus

We are also taken with the idea of **knowing God**. We long to be with Him, we want to hear from Him, and we delight to see His hand move. We desire to be "His man or woman" and we hope for His approval. And we have learned deeply that what He approves is wrapped up in showing **true kindness** to our "neighbors" as we reject isolationism and self-centered living and use all of our resources for the welfare of others. We are deeply excited about **growing life**, and hopeful that God will use us to be a part of His plan for reconciling the souls of our neighbors.

*We have found a home in the two great commandments of the Law, and like Jesus, are seeking to "love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength - and to love our neighbors the way we love ourselves!" This is what transformed living looks like!*



# Transformation Observations

Take a few minutes to summarize your thoughts on the subject of transformation which we have discussed over the last several pages.

What would be your definition of transformation?

---

---

---

In what ways do you feel you are becoming attuned to God's voice?

---

---

---

Who would be the wise people with whom you walk?

---

---

---

In what ways do you see your friendship with God developing?

---

---

---

In what ways do you sense that your heart is being healed?

---

---

---

HEARING  
GOD'S  
VOICE  
RULERSHIP

HEALING  
MY  
HEART  
KINDNESS

ENJOYING  
INTIMATE  
COUNSEL  
FRIENDSHIP

WALKING  
WITH  
THE WISE  
RICHNESS



Do you feel like you  
are experiencing a  
peaceful life?

---

---

---

---

Do you believe that the  
world is a broken place?

---

---

---

---

Do you feel that people  
are broken and need  
to be "set free?"

---

---

---

---

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [HOW PEOPLE ARE HEALED VIDEO HERE.](#)  
\*\*\*\*\*

**"I, the Lord your God am your healer."**

- Exodus 15:26

## FINDING PEACE

There are many reasons people seek comfort. Relief of physical suffering. The strain of emotions stretched beyond our capacity. Our inability to move beyond bad habits. Ill-treatment at the hands of people who should have loved us or predators who have exploited us. **Emptiness** from unfulfilled hopes and dreams. This pain is very real, and humans have a propensity to insulate or hide from it.

According to God the world is a broken place with broken people who need to be fixed or "bound up." Healing the heart can only happen to people who recognize and embrace the spiritual dimension of our lives. We may then go to our Creator and invite Him to reveal Himself to us. This is the first and most important step to being healed and set free. In our Creator and His Plan we find power to meet our deepest needs.

If you do not have this kind a relationship with the Living God this is where your journey for peace must begin. **Ask Him to reveal Himself to you.** From your heart (even if you are skeptical) ask Him to show His life to you. The four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are good places to start your journey.

The person who wants to be healed must be motivated to ask and wait for healing. Jesus Christ is no mere ideology or dogma, He is Living, eternal, and waiting to respond to your request. it takes courage before healing can be found. Without this spiritual dimension you and I are unreachable to be healed. Do you have the courage to stand before your Creator and say "Please, reveal yourself to me" and "Please help me?"

To be at peace with God and ourselves we must place our faith in Christ. I am not referring to religion, because religion can keep us from God every bit as much as bring us to God. This is not self-reformation because self reformation does not last. It is **encounter and invitation.** I submit my will, my life, and the destiny of my soul into the hands of the One who created me. This is how I become and grow as a Christ-Follower. Be careful! Awareness of Jesus Christ's existence, family traditions, and the fact that you go to church are not certain indicators that you have this kind of relationship with God.

*Courage friend! God wants you to be filled with peace.*

Do you believe that the world is a dark place?

---

---

---

---

Which of these four areas is most pertinent to you?

---

---

---

---

Do you believe there is such a person as Satan?

---

---

---

---



**"Wash me and I will be whiter than snow!"**

**- Psalm 51:7**

## THIS DARK WORLD

The brokenness of heart that we have been talking about plagues every woman and man. On some significant level one or more of the following four areas impact our ability to respond to a loving Father. Brokenness occurs when we are:



Jesus came to bind up the broken-hearted. He also came to set captives free and proclaim His Father's Kingdom. He is not only capable to do this but He is committed to the process of fixing our human and personal brokenness.

Jesus has complete authority over the works of the Devil. Even though Lucifer is immensely powerful and has woven his web into every human soul, God is in the process of "buying back" our broken hearts. To invite God into this tangled mess in our souls is to release a power greater than anything we can assemble by mere courage or good works.

Inviting Jesus into the dark parts of our past hurts and current brokenness is absolutely personal and completely supernatural. We must face the fact that we have never been outside of God's presence. This can be hard if we have experienced abandonment or abuse. *But remember, there is nothing that has been done apart from God seeing and allowing it, and there is nothing that He does not want to take upon His shoulders and bear.*

Read the three passages  
listed to the right.

Who is winning the  
struggle for control of  
your mind?

---

---

---

---

Do you believe that  
what happens to your  
body is secondary to what  
happens in your soul?

---

---

---

---

Do you believe that  
there is part of you that  
will live forever?

---

---

---

---

Is eternity an  
important issue to you?

---

---

---

---



*It would be wonderful if we were all loved and cared for fully, but the world is filled with incomplete parenting and cruel, self-serving predators. We can invest a huge amount of energy uncovering and confronting such sad neglect and cruelty, or we can identify with the lostness and ignorance of this dark world and learn to forgive even the unforgiveable. To invite God into the process of forgiveness and to give Him the right to vengeance is incredibly powerful and liberating.*

The choices I have made in my own life are very powerful as well. Relationships gone wrong, sins and vices unrepented, and unfulfilled longings are all a part of this brokenness we have been speaking about. Some of these things I have done because I didn't know any better and some because I have just been selfish.

The shame of personal failure and anger over disappointment are very powerful forces to keep us captive. To invite Jesus into this very personal place and to give Him permission to work here is incredibly hard, but provides great opportunity for us to be healed.

## CHRIST-FOLLOWERS & HEALING

Once I have encountered the Living God, I am ready to begin to be set free. Grace, peace, love, and hope are not abstract to God and He doesn't want them to be abstract to us.

When all you know is a broken world it is hard to imagine a loving Supreme Father who can be trusted with the most dear parts of your heart. The Scriptures explain healing on three different but intensely related areas.

In **MY MIND**, which is where struggle for control takes place...1 Corinthians 2:14-16

**MY BODY**, which is where death and life are being worked out before God...2 Corinthians 5:1-10

**MY SOUL**,  
which is eternally the Father's and what He will deliver into eternity...Luke 22:31

My Heart-emotions exist in all three areas: my Mind, my Body and my Soul.

Do you acknowledge  
a supernatural dimension  
and intervention  
in your life?

---

---

---

---

Are you on a path of  
personal healing  
or continued  
brokenness?

---

---

---

---



### **HEALING OF MY MIND** involves:

- understanding my personal need for repentance
- rejecting sin's hold over me
- renewing of my mind by the Holy Spirit

### **HEALING OF MY BODY** involves:

- boldly asking God to heal or not heal me (His choice)
- being grateful when God answers (though doctors or supernatural intervention)
- embracing affliction as it gets my attention and an acceptance that suffering causes my soul to be molded by God

### **HEALING OF MY SOUL** involves:

- understanding practical acceptance of my worth to God
- my personal joy over being delivered from eternal death
- my confidence that there have been no God-mistakes in my life,
- and peace that I can rest easy in the arms of my Shepherd.

## **THE CHRIST-FOLLOWER'S LIFE**

Christ-Followers must understand the **connection** between knowing God, suffering, learning, and healing.

### **SUFFERING**

Read 1 Peter 2:18-25; 4:12-19

Suffering is the path that Christ walked and the path He prepared for us to follow. Our suffering is focused in submitting our will to the Father's will. If we reject suffering as a means to know God then we choose a path that is less likely to please God and to bless us.

Do I believe that embracing suffering is my chosen path for Christ-Following? Do I avoid or do I walk toward suffering?

---

---

### **EXPERIENCING**

Read Hebrews 5:7-10; 12:3-29

Christ-followers are taught and disciplined by our Father. Culturally we associate discipline with negative things, but God equates discipline with sharing in His holiness (purity) and undiscipline with "illegitimacy."

Do I submit myself to the hand of God for the bitter and the sweet fruits of being pressed by His Spirit to submit? Do I avoid or not acknowledge the discipline of God?

---

---

To what extent do  
I believe God is in  
charge in my life?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## HEALING

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

As we said before, healing is something God wants to do in all of our hearts. He wants for us to be free. If we are to be set free by our Father we must embrace His path of suffering and accept discipline as a way of life. Our life in the Spirit involves an active communication with the Father through His purifying path of suffering and His kind, firm hand of discipline.

Do I believe that God has all authority and interest in healing my soul? Do I believe He uses physical limitations and conditions to produce good things in the lives of people? Do I believe that God wants me to be free in soul, mind, and body?

GOD'S PRIORITY IS THE HEALING OF MY SOUL EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF MY MIND AND MY BODY. HE USES INSTRUCTION FROM THE WORD, DISCLOSURE BY THE SPIRIT, SUFFERING, AND DISCIPLINE TO HEAL ME.

*Remember, when you repented and came to Christ you were given a new heart. This new heart is guided by the voice of the Holy Spirit, and stands in stark contrast to your human, lost heart.*

*"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and to be careful to keep my laws."*

*- Ezekiel 36:26-27*

Read Jeremiah 31:31-33 and 2 Corinthians 5:17

*How do you feel about the idea of personal healing and the approach God appears to take with this?*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# My New Heart is a Connected Heart!

“The Spirit is moving in my New Heart”

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [MY NEW HEART VIDEO HERE](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***The Spirit is disclosing God's voice to me:***

### **JOHN 14 & 16**

14:1-15    Oneness of the closest kind (how close does God view us?)

---

---

14:16-31    Disclosure of My greatness (how much of a privilege is this?)

---

---

15:26-16:15    Disclosure of Mine (how sweeping is this?)

---

---

### **ROMANS 8**

#### **This is what God's voice sounds like.**

8:1-2    **The Spirit is always offering deliverance from condemnation**

(free from guilt, accusation, and the power of my old heart - freedom!)

*What is this worth to me?*

---

---

8:5    **The Spirit is inviting me into a new way for my mind: life and peace**

(a place of hope where I can learn to live)

*What is the advantage of learning to live this way?*

---

---

8:11    **The Spirit offers power so my mortal self can be used for immortality**

(the everyday power to live an indestructible life)

*How could this revolutionize how I live my life?*

---

---

8:14    **The Spirit compassionately suffers with me and leads me in conquering my fears** (a relationship of understanding)  
*What is fear-free living worth to me?*

---

---

8:26    **The Spirit is praying according to my deepest needs**  
(a caring advocate to cover my back)  
*What is the personal benefit of this intercession?*

---

---

8:37    **The Spirit leads me in a meaningful, unshakable, victorious life**  
(the peace of mind and heart to make my life count for the right things)  
*What does this look like?*

---

---

***These are free Spirit-gifts for your new heart! Because God is interested in transformation (Romans 12:1,2) spiritual life by it's nature must be supernatural.***

*How would you describe the role of the Spirit within your new heart?*

---

---

---

---

---

---

*Listening to my New Heart!*

**What do you learn about your new heart from each of these passages?**  
**2 Corinthians 3:2,3**

---

---



THE FIGHT: Romans 7:14-25

---

---

The Flesh: Galatians 5:19-21

---

---

The Spirit Fruits: Galatians 5:22-23

---

---

The personal death of my will: Galatians 5:24

---

---



I must learn to answer  
my *old heart* with messages  
that crucify my old nature.

**SELF-ABSORBED**  
**INSECURE**  
**IMPURE**  
**FEARFUL**  
**LONELY**  
**GUILTY**  
**LAZY**  
**SEDUCTIVE BONDAGE**  
**FAMILIARITY**

*These are voices of  
great familiarity.*

I must learn to call on  
my *new heart* with messages  
that set me free.

**HONORING**  
**CONFIDENT**  
**FIGHTING FOR PURITY**  
**PEACEFUL**  
**HOPEFUL**  
**FORGIVEN**  
**PRINCIPLED**  
**FREE TO CHANGE**  
**ADVENTUROUS**

*This is a Voice that must  
become familiar to me.*

# Forgiveness & Roots of Bitterness from Luke

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [FORGIVENESS VIDEO HERE.](#)

\*\*\*\*\*

Forgiveness is huge in the life of any human being.

What benefits does forgiveness bring? (Luke 1:77-79)

---

---

What did John the Baptist teach in relationship to forgiveness? (3:3)

---

---

What message was given to the disciples and what did it have to do with forgiveness? (24:47)

---

---

Why was forgiving sins so significant? (5:17-26)

---

---

What do we learn about forgiveness from the Pharisee & the woman? (7:36-50)

---

---

Why was forgiveness a part of this Kingdom prayer? (11:4)

---

---

What is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? (12:1-12)

---

---

What is to be the extent of our forgiveness? (17:3,4)

---

---

What did Jesus know firsthand about forgiveness? (23:34)

---

---

Read Hebrews 12:14-17 about “roots of bitterness.”

---

---

What are potential roots of bitterness in a persons life?

---

---

---

---

How have bitter roots impacted your life?

---

---

---

---

## How key does forgiveness in my spiritual health?

---

---

---

Do you consider yourself a forgiving person?

---

---

---

*What guidelines could you establish for yourself in light of the above passages that can help you to cultivate forgiveness as a life-style?*


---

---

---

Other teachings about forgiveness - what do you learn from each?

*Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 130:4; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:22; Ephesians 4:32; 1 John 2:12*







## **The God Story!**

*“All scripture is god-breathed  
and is profitable for teaching, reproof,  
correction, and training in righteousness;  
so that the man of God may be adequate,  
equipped for every good work!”*

- 2 Timothy 3:16,17

**The Bible is God's love letter to humanity.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [DEEPER IN THE GOD STORY VIDEO HERE](#).  
\*\*\*\*\*



## God's Story and My Life!

How has God revealed Himself to you through His story?

In what ways has God's Word shielded you?

In what ways do you feel that the Spirit has empowered you to understand His Word?

How does discipline impact the strength of the Word in your life?

Record the answer that is either least true (1 & 2), or most true (3 & 4) about you...

- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | I frequently consult God and His Word when I have a decision to make.   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | I am confident in my working knowledge of the Story of God (the Bible).   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | The years are finding me faithful to continue to search God's Word with distinct regularity.                              |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | God's Word is honored in my home.   |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | I share Jesus' life with others.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | I am often excited about God's Word.  |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | When I have a choice between leisure time and God's Word, I often choose to pursue a deeper understanding of God's Story. |

*If God's Word is not my priority can I truly say that I am focused on becoming a man or woman of God?!*

## *Reading the God Story!*

Reading by itself can be tedious and even boring. Encountering God is never boring, it is life-changing! Meditating on the Scriptures involves placing yourself right into the Story. Once you have taken the time (Encounter) and considered what it meant to the people involved as well as the original hearers (Expose) it is time to apply the truth of the Story to our lives (Enlighten)!

### ENCOUNTER the Reference

*What does the text reveal?  
Take the time and have a plan.*

### EXPOSE the Meaning

*What did it mean to the  
principle characters?  
Formulate conclusions about  
God and man!*

### ENLIGHTEN your Heart!

*What does it mean to me?  
Pray and expect the Word to  
change your heart!*

Meditating in the Scriptures is a mind, heart, and soul interaction with the Living God through His Son Jesus Christ! It is more than mere intellectual study and so much more than exposure to “right thinking.” Christ wants to be engaged in every part of our hearts and minds!

As we encounter the reference, expose the meaning, and enlighten our hearts we grow in our listening relationship with the eternal Living God!





\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE GOD STORY ONE VIDEO HERE.  
\*\*\*\*\*

It is an exciting thing to understand how God thinks! The person who searches the story of God will understand the mind of God, and the person who understands the mind of God will understand the will of God! The following paragraphs help tell the story and illustrate the spiritual principles of the Big Picture of the Old Testament! Refer to the graph on the following Old Testament chart to help you to understand and keep a grip on the Big Picture of God's Word to men.

## THE BEGINNINGS

Note the location of these first books on the chart. Genesis explains to us the **Origins** of God's dealings with mankind. It also describes the reasons and the events concerning why God chose the Hebrew people as caretakers of the testimony of His Word! There are four important persons listed who are called the four patriarchs (name them), and there are four critical events (name them) that explain foundational understandings about where we come from and why the world exists as it does. As you read notice how imperfect these spiritual patriarchs were. The book of Job is very old and teaches us about the plan of God being worked through one individual, and how through the difficulties and trials of life, that man Job could recognize the purpose for **Sovereign Suffering**.

## THE CHOSEN RACE

The chosen race (the Hebrew or Jewish Nation) was delivered out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh (you've probably seen the movie). This is the account of the book of Exodus. It was through God's power and Moses' leadership that the Jews would find their **Exit** from a 420 year bondage in the land of Egypt. Someone has said that it took a short period of time to get the Jews out of Egypt, but a lot longer to get Egypt out of the Jewish people. This was the purpose of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy: to help get Egypt out of the people! In Leviticus this newly delivered people were to learn what it meant to **Worship** the Lord God. In the book of Numbers we see the **Wanderings** of an entire nation. They chose to grumble and complain rather than to walk. In fact, a journey that should have taken about forty days ended up taking forty years! And all of the people that chose to grumble and complain died before Israel ever entered the promised land...except Joshua and Caleb, two of twelve spies that forty years earlier were not afraid to enter the land. Deuteronomy, as with the rest of the first five books, was recorded by Moses. If these people were to experience spiritual deliverance, they would need spiritual **Standards**! The ten commandments were given in Exodus (the tablets were broken by Moses) and given again in Deuteronomy.



## THE CONQUEST

We then enter the events that took place during the conquest and first years in the land. The book of Joshua tells us about a great general who led the Jews into a **Conquest** of the Land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey that God had promised to Abraham long before Jacob went down into the 420 years of bondage in Egypt. The book of Judges records the disobedience of the people in their newfound land as they chose eight **Cycles** of sin rather than to obey the voice of God. Each time God would give them new opportunities to be delivered and each time they chose bondage. Samuel is the last Judge and leads us into the period of Israel's kings. Ruth is the account of a bright spot during the dark time of the Judges where "every man did what was right in his own sight". God's message through this Gentile (non-Jewish) woman is one of **Love's Redemption**. This means that God loved Ruth enough (even though she wasn't a part of the chosen nation) to give her a place of Salvation in Israel.

## THE KINGS OF ISRAEL

The people of Israel had grumbled against Moses, sinned under Joshua, and failed miserably under the Judges. They felt if they only had a king like the other nations obedience to God could be ensured. Samuel reluctantly anoints Israel's first King, Saul. 1 Samuel is the account of the **People's King**. 2 Samuel is the unfolding story of **God's King**, David. 1 Kings reviews the **Solomon/Split**. The first half of the book considers Solomon, son of David and Bathsheba; the second half of the book reviews the split of the united kingdom into a divided kingdom.

For a deep and significant spiritual message remember this simple formula: SAUL HAD NO HEART...DAVID HAD A WHOLE HEART...AND SOLOMON HAD HALF OF A HEART. This reflects one of three choices that will summarize every person's choices in life! The book of 2 Kings accounts for the **Exile/Scatter** of God's chosen people. This came about because the people sinned and would not change their lives as a nation. Notice that the division in the kingdom occurred in 931 BC into Israel (the Northern 10 tribes) and Judah (the Southern two tribes). 1 Chronicles (**Throne Secured**) and 2 Chronicles (**Temple Revered**) were assembled later and are a similar accounting of the kings of the united and divided period but with a specific purpose of bringing the people back from captivity (see the Return below).

The writings of these prominent Kings reflect the spiritual lessons of their lives. Psalms speaks primarily of David's experiences of **Prayer & Praise**. Proverbs pours out Solomon's knowledge of **Wisdom from Above**. Ecclesiastes is his reflection on the impact and futility of life apart from God or **Vanity Below**. Song of Solomon reviews his remembrances of the wife of his youth, and lifts up the virtues of godly marriage and **Intimate Love** (unfortunately he didn't follow his own advice!).

## THE CAPTIVITY

God uses two nations to punish the chosen people and to place them into captivity. Judah watches as Israel (the sinning sister) is taken into captivity to Assyria in 722 BC. In 586 BC Judah (and Jerusalem) follows her sister by being taken into captivity to Babylon. Through obedience or disobedience God will continue to accomplish His Word through the Jews!

## THE PROPHETS

The prophets were God's instruments to attempt to bring Israel and the rest of the nations to repentance.



Isaiah spoke to them concerning **Jehovah's Salvation**. Jeremiah communicated **Sin's Condemnation**, and wept over Jerusalem's fall in Lamentations, **Weeping Prophet**. Ezekiel and Daniel spoke specifically to the captives in Babylon. Ezekiel explained how the Exiles were **Ruined and Restored**. Daniel spoke of **Future Things** and the deliverance that God would bring. He also spoke incredibly of the events of the end times. Hosea married a harlot to place in Israel's face the fact that God's Love was present even in the midst of **Israel's Apostasy**. Joel encouraged the people to **Blow the Trumpet** and to warn of the coming day of the Lord! Amos was a farmer who revealed the **Roaring Punishment** of God against Israel's sin. Obadiah explained that Edom would be Cut Off because of the way she had treated her brother, Israel. Edom was comprised of the descendants of Esau (remember Jacob and Esau!?).

Jonah's message was reserved for the capital of Babylon: Nineveh. He was **Compassion's Voice** to this nation (even though he didn't like it one bit!) Micah spoke of God's **Unchanging Love** toward Israel, and Nahum returns to the subject of **Nineveh's Doom** 100 years after the preaching of Jonah. Habakkuk is concerned with the **Just** before God **Rejoicing** even in these difficult times of judgment, and Zephaniah warns of Israel's **Last Chance** to repent before captivity.

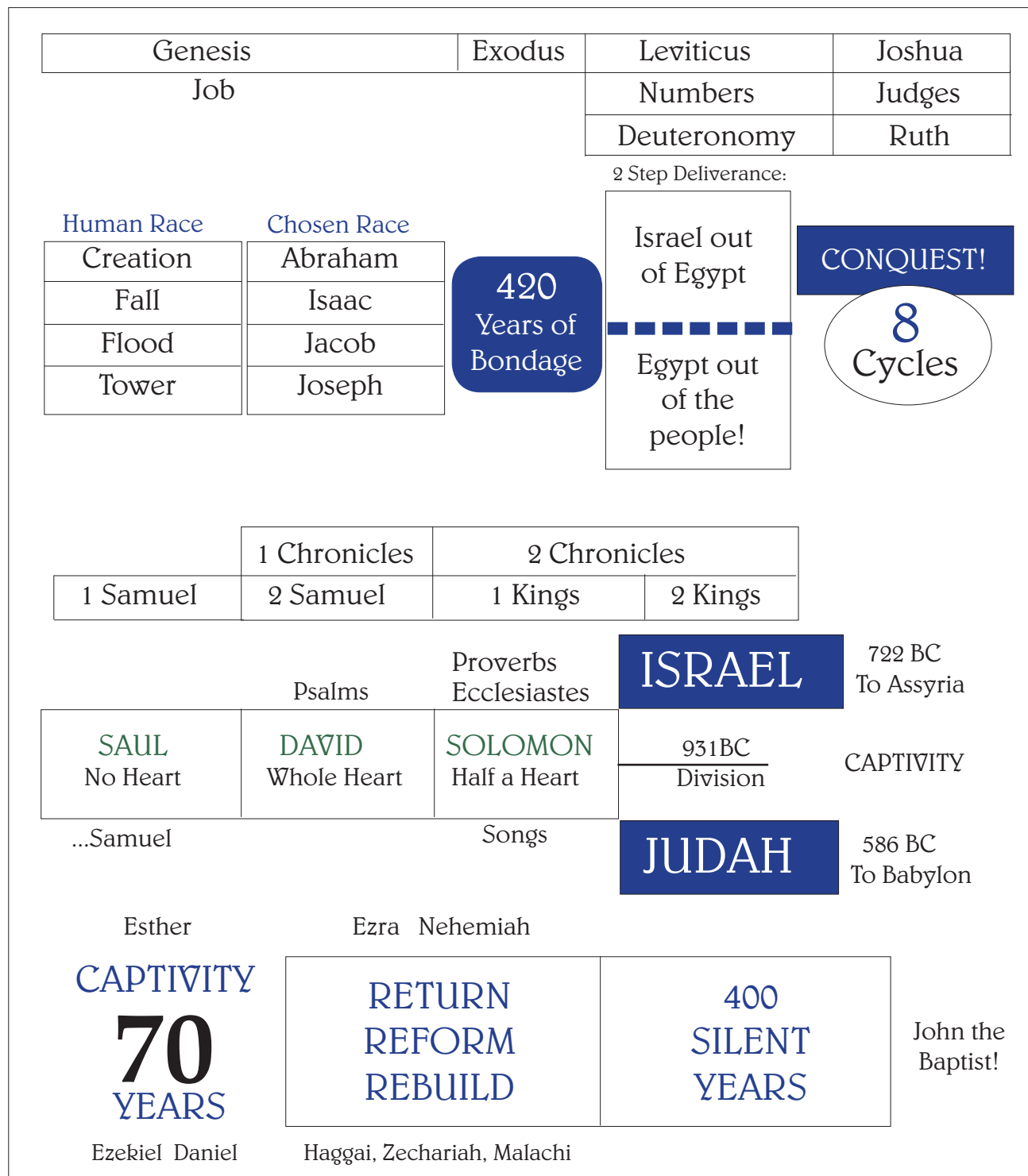
## THE RETURN

After about 70 years of captivity it was time to return to Israel. God used Cyrus the King of Persia to effect this return, and the book of Ezra calls the captive Jews to **Return/Reform the Temple** and consequently the worship of their lives. The book of Nehemiah is the account of the rebuilding of the broken down walls of Jerusalem and encourages the people to **Renew/Rebuild the Walls** of the spiritual community of Israel! Two prophets are given to stimulate this work: Haggai encourages Obedient Building and asks that the Jews rebuild the Temple and the walls as a higher priority than building their own houses and personal kingdoms. Zechariah focuses the people on the majestic **Lord of Hosts** and promotes worship as the basis for spiritual success. Malachi records **Sin's Dialogue** as God addresses the excuses of His people for not doing their spiritual jobs after returning to the land. This begins 400 silent years that will not be broken until the voice of the one crying in the wilderness, John the Baptist, proclaims and prepares the way for THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, Lamb of God, that takes away the sin of the world! This is called "the fulness of times" by the prophets.



# THE BIG PICTURE ON THE “OLD” TESTAMENT!

Men call the Old and New Testaments “old” and “new.” The Scriptures do not. There is only “One Testament.” Before the events of Genesis 1 the Son had always existed. The so-called “Old Testament” is a preparation for the coming of Christ. He would invade time, give Himself for the sins of the world, and bring those who believed in Him to eternal life. This is what “the Testament” is all about.



*What do you see?*

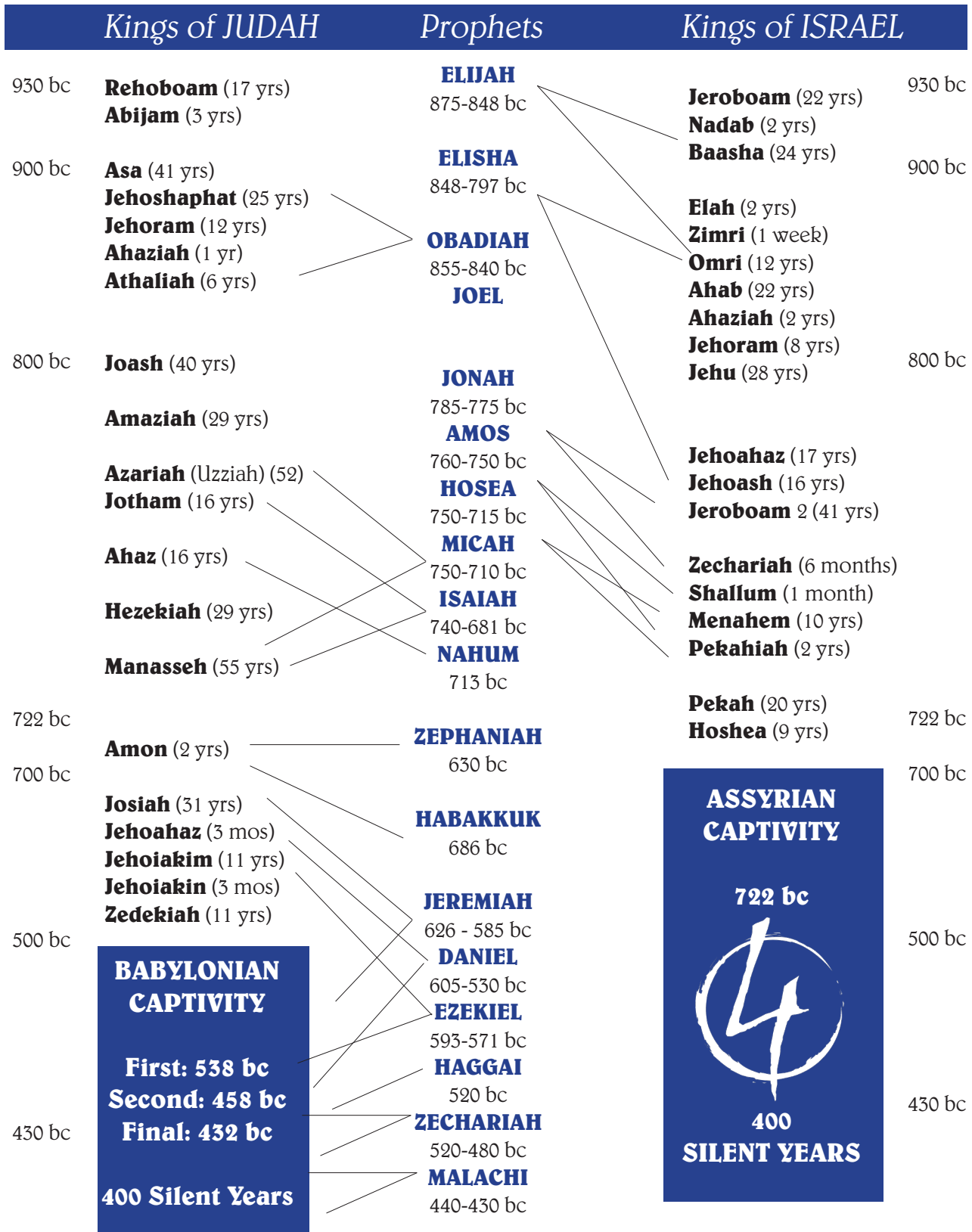
Look up the key verse for each book and highlight them in your bible! Also write the theme at the beginning of each book in your bible. You will be glad you did!

## THE OLD TESTAMENT GOD-STORY at a Glance!

Book	Theme	Key Verse
<b>5 LAW</b>		
Genesis	Origins	12:2
Exodus	Exit	12:51
Leviticus	Worship	11:44
Numbers	Wander	33:1
Deuteronomy	Standards	10:12
<b>12 HISTORICAL</b>		
Joshua	Conquest	11:23
Judges	Cycles	17:6
Ruth	Love's Redemption	2:12
1 Samuel	People's King	8:6
2 Samuel	God's King	5:2
1 Kings	Solomon/Split	12:20
2 Kings	Exile/Scatter	17:7
1 Chronicles	Throne Secured	14:2
2 Chronicles	Temple Revered	6:18
Ezra	Return/Reform...the Temple	7:10
Nehemiah	Renew/Rebuild...the Walls	5:16
Esther	God Delivers	4:14
<b>5 POETS</b>		
Job	Sovereign Suffering	1:21-22
Psalms	Prayer/Praise	100:4
Proverbs	Wisdom Above	1:7
Ecclesiastes	Vanity Below	2:11
Song of Solomon	Intimate Love	8:6
<b>5 MAJOR PROPHETS</b>		
Isaiah	Christ is Salvation	53:6
Jeremiah	Sin's Condemnation	6:16
Lamentations	Weeping Prophet	1:16
Ezekiel	Exiles-Ruined/Restored	21:27
Daniel	Future Things	7:27
<b>12 MINOR PROPHETS</b>		
Hosea	Love/Apostasy	14:4
Joel	Blow the Trumpet	2:31,32
Amos	Roaring Punishment	1:2
Obadiah	Brother Violence	1:10
Jonah	Compassion's Voice	1:3
Micah	Unchanging Love	7:18
Nahum	Nineveh's Doom	3:19
Habakkuk	Just/Rejoice	2:4
Zephaniah	Last Chance	2:3
Haggai	Obedient Building	1:4,5
Zechariah	Lord of Hosts	4:6
Malachi	Sin's Dialogue	2:2

# OLD TESTAMENT KINGS & PROPHETS

This chart is provided to help you place the Old Testament Prophets in proper relationship to the Kings of Israel (north) and Judah (south). Scholarship differs slightly on the timespan and somewhat on the order of the prophets, but the following chart will give you a more than adequate "big picture" on their placement.



For future reference!



# Between the Testaments!

Knowledge of the events between Malachi & Matthew is not necessarily vital but is desirable.  
The Old Testament canon was completed with Malachi in about 397 bc.

## THE SILENT YEARS ARE ESTABLISHED...Malachi 4:4-6

Elijah is promised...The Word is lifted up...The Blessing & the Curse are restated. Note Psalm 124:9 for a relevant teaching and/or prophecy on this time period. Here is a summary of the events describing the condition of the Jewish Nation leading up to and during the 400 silent years...587 B.C. Babylonian exile...Fifty years later the Babylonian empire was overthrown by Media-Persia (Daniel's Babylonian prophecies are fulfilled)...536 B.C. Cyrus, the Persian Emperor decrees the return of the Remnant...50,000 returned with Zerubbabel...21 years later the temple is completed (515bc)...458bc Ezra returns with another remnant 57 years later, it is a small remnant, but through them law & ritual are restored...446bc Nehemiah returns (12 years later) and rebuilds the walls...The remnant is indeed just that, for the balance of the Jews choose to remain in Babylonia.

## THE PERSIAN PERIOD (536-333 B.C.)

Pretty uneventful, the Jews often enjoyed favor apart from one incident of rebellion. In 721 B.C. (see 2 Kings 17:24-41 the Assyrian Emperor repopulates Samaria with foreigners. These transplants were the ones who provided most of the resistance to the returned remnant. Apparently the rival worship of these peoples was established toward the end of Persian rule (John 4:19-22) by the founding of the Samaritan temple.

## THE GREEK PERIOD (333-323 B.C.)

Alexander the Great rules from age 20 to 32 and politically transforms the face of the world. He is the "horn" of Daniel 8:1-7. J. S. Baxter says: "In his Syrian campaign he marched southward on Jerusalem. Josephus tells how the high priest Jaddua...issued forth to invoke the conqueror's clemency. Alexander, who is said to have recognized in Jaddua the fulfillment of a dream, not only spared Jerusalem and offered sacrifice to Jehovah but also had the prophecies of Daniel read to him concerning the overthrow of the Persian empire by a king of Grecia; and thereafter he treated the Jews with marked preferment, according them full rights of citizenship with Greeks in his new city, Alexandria, and in other cities. This, in turn, created decidedly pro-Greek sympathies among the Jews, and, along with Alexander's spreading of the Greek language and civilization, had it's far-reaching repercussions in the Hellenistic spirit which developed among the Jews and greatly affected their mental outlook afterward."

## THE EGYPTIAN PERIOD (323-204 BC)

The early death of Alexander resulted in the division of his kingdom between his four generals. These are the "notable ones" of Daniel 8:21,22. The Ptolemaic Dynasty now covered Palestine. During this period the renowned Alexandrian library and the singular Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek was accomplished. The Jews were so numerous that this Greek translation was necessary. This made the availability of the Scriptures to the Gentiles complete. When Ptolemy Epiphanes took the throne at the age of five, Antiochus the Great invaded Egypt. Thus Judea came to be under Syrian control.

(Continued)

### THE SYRIAN PERIOD (204-165 BC)

During this period Judea, Samaria, Galilee, Perea, and Trachonitis emerge as divided areas within Palestine. With the assuming of the throne by Antiochus Epiphanes, a reign of terror began upon the Jews. He interfered with the temple & priesthood. Baxter says "He wreaked a terrible havoc in 170 B.C.. Jerusalem was plundered, the wall torn down, the temple coarsely desecrated, and the population was subjected to monstrous cruelties. Thousands were massacred. The women and children were sold into slavery. The temple sacrifices were abolished. The Holy of Holies was rifled and its costly furniture carried away. Jewish religion was banned. Circumcision was prohibited on pain of death.

A foreign governor was appointed, a traitor made high priest, and paganism forcibly imposed on the people. A commissioner was appointed to pollute both the temple at Jerusalem and that at Samaria, and to rededicate them, respectively, to Jupiter Olympius and Jupiter Xenius. All copies of the Law which could be found were either burned or defaced with idolatrous pictures, and the owners executed. The first book of Maccabees says that many Jews apostatized, and that some even joined in the persecution. In 168 B.C. Antiochus caused a sow to be offered on the altar of sacrifice, and then, on the very altar, had a statue erected to Jupiter Olympius. In this awful decade Palestine Jewry was indeed in the valley of the shadow of death."

### THE MACCABEAN PERIOD (165-63 BC)

To respond to the excesses of Antiochus, God raised up an old priest from Moden named Mattathias. He had five sons, and his son Judas carried on his work, and came to be known as Judas Maccabeus, from the Hebrew word for hammer. For years a faithful band resisted and defeated enemy armies from their homes in the wilderness. Their knowledge of the territory made the ensuing guerilla warfare very difficult for Antiochus and his troops. They defeated (with God's help) armies of 50, 65, and 120 thousand men. Judea was freed from alien troops about 142 B.C. and enjoyed independence under very orthodox leaders.

### WHAT IT ALL MEANS:

*This freedom ended in 63 BC when Pompey annexed Judea, and Judean freedom was dissolved with the emergence of Herod the Great (the usurper). Hopes focused on a new political deliverer. At the time of Christ there were over forty persons making the claim to be the promised deliverer, or Messiah. It was the responsibility of Israel's religious leaders to investigate the credentials of each.*





# THE BIG PICTURE ON THE NEW TESTAMENT!

The God -Story is all about Jesus. We have to decide how we feel about this Man. Here is how He spent His life. Note that His life did not end with His death. There was and is ample evidence that shows that the Son has always lived and is still alive today.

<b>MATTHEW</b>	<b>MARK</b>	<b>LUKE</b>	<b>JOHN</b>
<b>KING COMES</b>	<b>SERVANT SACRIFICED</b>	<b>MAN SUFFERS</b>	<b>GOD REVEALED</b>
<b>Jews</b>	<b>Greeks</b>	<b>Romans</b>	<b>World</b>

## The Gospels!

THE SACRIFICIAL SERVING MINISTRY OF JESUS CHRIST

**BIRTH**

**BAPTIST**

**TRAINING THE TWELVE**

**JERUSALEM TEACHING**

**JERUSALEM KILLING**

## Acts of the Holy Spirit!

THE MINISTRY OF THE RISEN CHRIST  
ACTS 1:8

**JERUSALEM**

**JUDEA &  
SAMARIA**

**ENDS OF THE EARTH**

JOURNEY 1

JOURNEY 2

JOURNEY 3

ROME

**WOMEN  
DISCIPLES**  
500

**JAMES  
HEBREWS**

**ROMANS  
1 & 2  
CORINTHIANS**

**GALATIANS  
EPHESIANS  
PHILIPPIANS  
COLOSSIANS**

**THESSALO-  
NIANS  
TIMOTHY  
TITUS**

**PETER  
JOHN  
JUDE**

## Yet to come!

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF JESUS CHRIST

**REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST**

**THE VISION - SEALS - TRUMPETS - BOWLS**

**RAPTURE - MILLENNIUM - JUDGMENT - ETERNAL LIFE**

Daniel's Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:24-27)

*What do you see?*

Look up each key verse for each book and highlight them in your bible!  
Also write the theme at the beginning of each book in your bible. You will be glad you did!

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [GOD STORY TWO VIDEO HERE](#).  
\*\*\*\*\*

## THE NEW TESTAMENT GOD-STORY at a Glance!

Book	Theme	Key Verse
<b>5 HISTORICAL</b>		
Matthew	King Comes	4:17
Mark	Servant Sacrificed	10:45
Luke	Man Suffers	19:10
John	God Revealed	20:31
Acts	Church Witnesses	1:8
<b>12 CHURCH LETTERS</b>		
Romans	Our Salvation	1:16,17
1 Corinthians	Carnality's Consequences	3:1,3
2 Corinthians	Authority's Care	2:17
Galatians	True Gospel	3:3
Ephesians	Christ's Body	4:16
Philippians	Christ's Joy	3:1
Colossians	Christ's Headship	1:17,18
1 Thessalonians	Excel More	4:1
2 Thessalonians	Day of the Lord	2:1,2
<b>5 PASTORAL &amp; 7 GENERAL LETTERS</b>		
1 Timothy	Church's Ministry	3:15
2 Timothy	Church's Minister	2:15
Titus	Sound Teaching	1:9
Philemon	Forgive & Beget	10
Hebrews	Better Covenant	8:6
James	Tested Faith	1:12
1 Peter	Trust in Trials	4:19
2 Peter	Full Knowledge	1:19
1 John	True Fellowship	1:3
2 John	Wrong Hospitality	10
3 John	Right Hospitality	6
Jude	Contend & Build	3,20
<b>PROPHETIC</b>		
Revelation	Judge Revealed	19:16



## *Courageous Journeys of faith from the God-Story*

The Bible is unique among literature and stellar in spiritual quality. If mankind were going to write a book about our history and our accomplishments, it would certainly contain little of what the Bible records. The picture is simply not that flattering. The focus of the God-Story is not upon mankind, but upon the One who made us. Together the scriptures paint any part of the God-story that is not already written in the stars or upon the building blocks of life, or etched upon the conscience and heart of every man and woman.

After personal investigation the supernatural quality of the scriptures makes it plain that even though human authors were used, the Holy Spirit's hand was upon them and their words. The argument that the Bible is "just the teachings of men" has been firmly challenged by history, modern scholarship, and the personal examination and encounter of millions.

Within the pages of the Bible is one account after another of men and women in different times and different places who are all struggling to find God and ultimately meaning during these brief years upon the earth. The Bible tells the story in the words of actual men as well as people who have experienced God firsthand, and these people's lives have been recorded for us so that we, too may search for God and find Him, and along with Him, eternal life!

These next pages will help you to immerse yourself in the lives of some everyday men and women who have found God - men and women whose lives invite you to do the same - at great benefit to your soul.

*"Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow us to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."*

- 1 Corinthians 10:1-13



## Men and Women of God from the Bible

*These men and women of God in history can enrich your faith through their experiences!*

<b>Adam</b>	.....Lost Heart.....	Genesis 1-5
<b>Job</b>	.....Tested Heart.....	Job 1-3
<b>Noah</b>	.....Faith Heart.....	Genesis 6-11
<b>Abraham</b>	.....Chosen Heart.....	Genesis 12-33
<b>Joseph</b>	.....Wounded Heart.....	Genesis 34-52
<b>Moses</b>	.....Humbled Heart.....	Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
<b>Joshua</b>	.....Courageous Heart.....	Joshua 1-9
<b>Ruth</b>	.....Following Heart.....	Ruth 1-4
<b>Samuel</b>	.....Listening Heart.....	1 Samuel 1-8
<b>Saul</b>	.....No Heart.....	1 Samuel 9-31
<b>David</b>	.....Whole Heart.....	2 Samuel
<b>Solomon</b>	.....Half Heart.....	1 Kings 1-11
<b>Elijah</b>	.....Flint Heart.....	2 Kings 1-2
<b>Elisha</b>	.....Miracle Heart.....	2 Kings 3-7
<b>Isaiah</b>	.....Promise Heart.....	Isaiah 1-2,36-40
<b>Daniel</b>	.....Future Heart.....	Daniel 1-6
<b>Jonah</b>	.....Running Heart.....	Jonah 1-4
<b>Ezra</b>	.....Penitent Heart.....	Ezra 1-6
<b>Nehemiah</b>	.....Builder's Heart.....	Nehemiah 1-6
<b>The Baptist</b>	.....Subjected Heart.....	John 1-3,6
<b>Peter</b>	.....Honest Heart.....	Matthew 14, John 21
<b>John</b>	.....Warm Heart.....	John 20,21
<b>Paul</b>	.....Devoted Heart.....	Philippians 3:1-17
<b>James</b>	.....Straight Heart.....	James 1-5
<b>Jesus</b>	.....True Heart.....	Hebrews 5:7-9

***With whom do you most identify?***

## *Timeless lives from the God-Story*

### **ABRAHAM: GOD'S CHOSEN MAN**

#### **Genesis 12-25**

Think about the times you have felt truly special in your life. Perhaps it was that someone noticed your uniqueness or something about your special contribution to those around you. Or possibly the party planned by your friends that came out of nowhere - just to honor you or encourage you in the midst of a particularly tough time.

Abraham's life is built around the fact that he was chosen to be used by God despite his lack of suitableness for God's purposes. His life is an up and down series of wrong impressions about God as well as some pretty tacky decision-making. What made him special? That God chose him for His purposes! And through the years Abraham became what we would consider a very unconventional man of faith.



Read Hebrews 11 and note each statement made concerning Abraham or his family. What qualified him to be a man of faith? What would make Abraham any different from you regarding his start and finish of his spiritual sojourn on the earth? What were God's promises to Abraham? What are God's promises to you?

#### *Hebrews 11*

Who took initiative, Abraham or God? What was Abraham's response?  
What were the conditions of Abraham's life? What was he looking for?  
What was the promise made to Abraham?  
What appears to be the essence of faith in Abraham's life?  
What was the "better country" and in what way did it belong to him?

#### *Genesis 12-14*

Why is Abraham called Abram at first? What specifically was promised to Abraham? What do you learn about Abraham as a person from the events of this chapter? What was the significance of the difference between Lot and Abraham's choices? What do the wars of chapter 14 reveal about the condition of Abraham's world? Why didn't Abraham want to owe anyone anything?

#### *Genesis 15-18*

What was the significance of Abraham being promised a son? Why did God allow the conditions for Ishmael and Isaac's problems to occur? Why was the covenant of circumcision so radical? Why did Sodom have to be judged? How does chapter 19 reflect upon modern day issues?

#### *Genesis 19-25*

In what ways is Abraham's faith growing? Is it still incomplete? How could Abraham even consider what he is considering in chapter 22? Why the shift in focus to Isaac? Who are Abraham's blood relatives today? Who are Ishmael's blood relatives today? What does this tell you about current events?

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## *Timeless lives from the God-Story* **JACOB: WRESTLING WITH GOD**

### **Genesis 26-35**

Everything we find in the scriptures about God indicate that He is intensely interested in what is happening with the souls of men. He is not aloof, He is not passive, He is not reactive. He is seeking out men and women who want to honor Him because He wants to honor them. He has designed life in such a manner that those who look for Him can find Him, just as Jacob wrestled with God we wrestle with God - and find our identity in His grace - or not.

### *Genesis 26*

In what ways is Jacob like his father? His grandfather? What is happening to the nation of Israel as time is passing? What part do you suppose that wells of water played in this culture?

### *Genesis 27-28*

Why were Jacob and Esau in conflict (see the end of chapter 25)? What is the big deal about stealing a pot of soup? What was the “blessing” and why did Esau regard it so lightly? Who appears superior in character, Jacob or Esau? Why was Jacob’s “ladder” dream so significant to his life of faith?

### *Genesis 29-31*

What are your observations on Jacob’s family life? Jacob appears to be a deceptive person and ends up being deceived himself. What had Jacob learned while in the house of Laban? What kind of progress do you think Jacob is making in his life of faith?

### *Genesis 32-35*

Jacob’s life was turbulent on many levels. Why was he afraid of his brother Esau? The account of Jacob wrestling with an angel is a curious one. Why do you think this happened? Why do you think it happened when it did? Why wouldn’t Jacob’s family intermarry with the family of Shechem? What does their response tell you about what God is doing in His chosen people? What is the significance of changing Jacob’s name to Israel? Why was this done with Jacob rather than his father Isaac or his grandfather Abraham?

### *Read Hebrews 11*

*What is the significance of the blessing being passed on in verses 20 and 21? Jacob wrestled with God and the world and prevailed. He was blessed with knowledge of God and meaning in life! How rich is your standard for evaluation of the ultimate meaning of your life?*

---

---

---



## *Timeless lives from the God-Story* **JOSEPH: SOVEREIGN CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **Genesis 37-52**

Who doesn't wonder about their lives? Did I get a fair shake? Is my life counting for something? Is there more to this life than living and dying? What about bad things happening to good people? Is there any true justice in the world?

Joseph found himself asking these questions in excruciatingly painful circumstances. He is a shining example of living life with perspective and having faith in the One who exists far above our circumstances!



#### **Genesis 37-38**

What was at the root of Joseph's brothers' anger? What do you pick up in the attitude of Joseph? His father? What does the story of Judah and Tamar reveal about what was going on within God's chosen people?

#### **Genesis 39**

Joseph's experiences were really up and down. Just as it would look as though his life was turning around the bottom would fall out! Why was Joseph successful in Egypt? Why wasn't he rewarded for the choice he made with Potiphar's wife? How would he have felt being accused of something he had not only resisted but rejected?

#### **Genesis 40-41**

Imagine Joseph's emotions during the events of these two years. What do we learn about his spirituality at this point in his life? Why do you think he chose to stay in the land of Egypt? What was the outcome of the dream he had interpreted?

#### **Genesis 42-44**

What were Joseph's reasons for continuing the process of sending his family back and forth from Egypt to Canaan? What was the purpose of holding Simeon hostage? What part of this is payback? What part is wise? A test?

#### **Genesis 45-48**

How does the emotion of Joseph as he reveals himself to his brothers make you feel? What are the implications of the entire "family of the promise" relocating in the land of Egypt? What is the significance of being settled in the region of Goshen? Why do you think they were placed there? How many went in to Egypt? How many will come out from there?

*Joseph gives us hope that there is a God who transcends circumstance. When you belong to God you must always consider that His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 40). There is great comfort from the events of Joseph's life - he was blessed despite all odds and beyond all measure!*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## Timeless lives from the God-Story

### MOSES: HUMILITY IN HEART

#### Exodus 1-20

Imagine having authority over the life or death of millions and seeing wonders on a level that would occur one of only two times in all of human history! This was the 120 year saga of Moses, man of God. He led God's chosen people on an incredible journey that would ultimately result in the deliverance of the entire world from the domain of darkness.

##### Exodus 1-2

What do you notice has occurred since the time God's people came to Egypt 420 years earlier under Joseph's protection? What were the reasons that the Jews were prospering? What transition has taken place in the circumstances in which find themselves? What do you surmise about Moses at this point in his life?



##### Exodus 3-5

What can Moses' encounter with God tell us about our encounter with God? What was Moses' core mission? How did he feel about shouldering the responsibility? Why was Aaron necessary as a spokesman for Moses? What specific powers were given to Moses? What was the result of going before Pharaoh and how do you think Moses was feeling? How were the people feeling? Pharaoh?

##### Exodus 6-11

Why do you think each plague was necessary? These plagues were targeted at the Egyptian gods. As each one intensifies what are the various responses of Pharaoh? What do you sense Pharaoh desires his human response to be? Why is his heart so hard? What would be happening in Goshen while the firstborn of Egypt were dying? Why do you think Moses' anger was so intense before the last plague?

##### Exodus 12

What was the significance of the Passover? What does it teach you about Jesus Christ and His Gospel? What was the Jews' responsibility toward their children? What made Pharaoh go after the Jews after he had let them go? What would it have felt like to be Moses at the parting of the Red Sea? Pharaoh? The people crossing on dry land? How would you think this would impact the faith of the Jewish people?

##### Exodus 15-18

How did God provide for the personal needs and leadership needs of the people after they came out of Egypt into the wilderness? What is unique about how God's people pursued military action?

##### Exodus 19-20

Why did God give the Ten Commandments to the Jews? What application do these have to the people of God today?

*Moses was incredibly blessed, used, and tested by God. His trials as God's spokesman for the people of God will never be repeated except by Jesus Christ Himself (Deuteronomy 34:9-12)!*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## Timeless lives from the God-Story

### **JOSHUA: GOD'S WARRIOR**

#### **Joshua 1-9**

Moses was a hard act to follow. Joshua had been watching incredible events and works through Moses for decades. But now Moses was gone, and Joshua had to step up and walk his own journey of leadership faith! This is the story of his encounter - hearing the voice of the Living God and working out his own walk of faith as a very challenging life was unfolding for both himself and God's chosen people.

#### **Joshua 1-2**

What were God's expectations for Joshua? What were His promises to him? What was the response of the people to this change of command? Why is the story of Rahab so central to the events of this book? What does this teach us about God's view of those nations that are distinct from the Jews? People who are not Jews? What is the significance of a "scarlet thread" in the window, and why do you think that the spies kept their word?

#### **Joshua 3-4**

Why was it important for the people to see the Jordan river held back? Why was it important to Joshua? How do you think that people from the surrounding areas responded? Why did the ark of the covenant play the roll that it did in this river crossing? What is the significance of these memorial stones and what would they have meant in the years to come?

#### **Joshua 5-6**

Why was it necessary for Israel to be circumcised once again? What was the purpose of this sign? How would Israel's experience in taking the land have differed had not the waters of the Jordan been dried up? What is the significance of the timing of this Passover? How does Joshua's encounter with God make you feel? What is the bottom line message the angel is giving to Joshua? What is supernatural about the conquest of Jericho and why is it so key to Israel's future in the land that God has given them?

#### **Joshua 7-8**

What was the root cause of this defeat? What would be the application of "things under the ban" for the people of God today? Why was Achan's judgment so harsh? How active was God in this warring process? Why was it necessary to kill so many people and how does this fit with God being a God of compassion? Why was it necessary to build altars to mark various victories and events?

**Joshua 9** What does this chapter teach us about compromise?

*Joshua was a unique leader in Israel's history. Rather than live on the coattails of Moses, he encountered God personally and lived his life of faith without looking back, but rather looking forward. If we are in a war (and we are) then the life and example of Joshua can provide insight and encouragement as we find our own "leadership faith!"*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---

## *Timeless lives from the God-Story* **ELIJAH & ELISHA: PURE HEART IN THE WILDERNESS**

### **1 Kings 17-19; 2 Kings 1-7**

Do you ever feel like your life is just a speck in the ocean - a drop in a bucket - a wrinkle in time...well, you get the idea. When humans look for meaning it can seem futile because of circumstance, our obscurity, and the incredible limitations of being human. The lives of Elijah and Elisha are cool on two levels. God used them to speak in some pretty powerful ways, and the supernatural works that they did gave a clear picture of the Miracle Worker who was to come!



#### **1 Kings 17-19**

Why did God appoint prophets to speak to His people? (note: if these prophets were not accurate, they were stoned!) What kinds of pressures did drought place upon a nation? Why was raising the widow's son from the dead so significant? Why was Obadiah the prophet so freaked out by his encounter with Elijah the prophet? What happens on Mount Carmel is intense! What was God trying to show the people? Why was a showdown necessary?

Why would somebody who wielded such power be afraid of a mere human like Jezebel? Why was Elijah so weary? What do we learn about God from how He spoke to Elijah on Mount Horeb?

#### **2 Kings 1-3**

What kind of relationship did Elijah have with the kings of Israel? Why do you think God gave Elijah this kind of authority and power? Why do you think he was "taken up" into heaven the way he was? Why did Elisha have to be with Elijah when God took him from the earth? What did Elisha request? What is the deal with the bear story? What does it teach about Israel? About Elisha? About God?

#### **2 Kings 4**

These next recorded miracles should have given the Jewish nation a very clear picture about Jesus. If John the Baptist was the Elijah that was to come (Malachi 4) then Jesus Christ certainly came in the power and presence of Elisha! What does the Widow's Oil teach us about God's providence in difficult times? Why did God hide the Shunnamite woman's pain from Elisha? What are the emotions that are being expressed in this story? Why was the poisonous stew event recorded and what spiritual significance does it have?

#### **2 King 5-7**

Why was Naaman so angry? How did God show him grace through the words of those closest to him? Naaman was a non-Jew. Why does this make this story so much more incredible? Did Jesus ever refer to this situation in His teachings? Why was Gehazi dealt with so severely? Why did it matter? What is the spiritual significance of the axe head story related to the spiritual condition of Israel?

*There is absolutely no way that the Jews watching Jesus should not have looked at the works He was performing and not know they were in the presence of God's Son. And yet how different are we - the Word has lived among us and we still do not believe!*

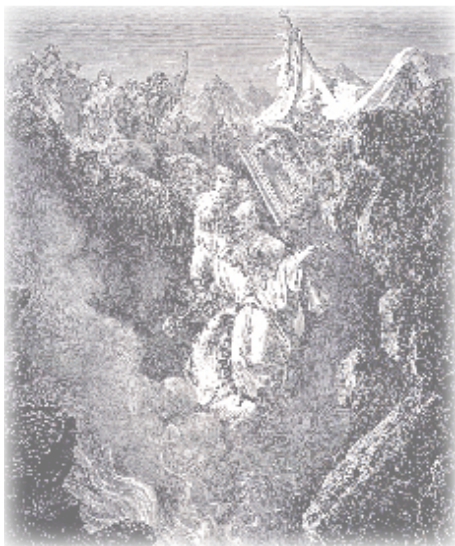
*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---





## Timeless lives from the God-Story **OUT OF EGYPT: LESSONS IN GRUMBLING**

### **Numbers 9-14**

Do you find it easy or difficult to reign in your complaints? Is the issue of “fairness” an obsession with you? One thing is clear from the example of God’s chosen people - it is very natural for people to complain - especially about adversity!

As Moses led the people through the wilderness (a forty day journey that took 40 years) God was in the process of “getting Egypt out of the people.” A mere change of location does not result in a change of heart, and God is in the business of changing hearts!

#### Numbers 9-10

Once again the Passover is significant in the life of the Jews. How was God leading them to camp or move? What was being “clean” supposed to teach the Jews about the condition of their hearts? How would it have impacted men, women, and children to be led the way these people were being led? Why were the silver trumpets necessary? How many people were moving and how would this have worked? What part was the Ark playing in their travels? What kinds of pictures do these passages paint in your mind?

#### Numbers 11

What was the source of the Israelite’s complaint? What would have been the practical challenges for the situation they were in that may have been putting pressure on them? What was the main transition they were struggling with that made Egypt more appealing? Why is it necessary to give them both meat and a plague? What is God trying to accomplish? Why was greed such a severe problem?

#### Numbers 12-13

How would Moses have felt about the murmuring of Miriam and Aaron? What was the source of this discontent? Why was God so harsh in His response? Why is Moses’ response so striking? What were the people struggling with as the spies returned? Why were their hearts so fearful? Did they have good reason not to put faith in God? Why were Joshua and Caleb ready to go?

#### Numbers 14

Israel begins to whine! Why do they turn on their leaders? How volatile is this situation? How do you feel about Moses’ response? What does God want to do? Why is Moses becoming someone who intercedes rather than someone who leads? What is the consequence of these people’s unbelief?

*It is comfortable to follow God when our lives are comfortable! Apparently God is interested in those who follow Him even in the middle of tough times. This is why Joshua, Caleb, and Moses stand apart from the rest of the people. They were willing to believe and follow even when circumstances were not optimal, and the rejected “easier” routes. Are you this kind of man or woman of God?*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## Timeless lives from the God-Story **DANIEL: HEART OF A LION**

### **Daniel 1-12**

Imagine the claustrophobic smells, the feelings of fear, and all the other emotions of being thrown into a lion's den! Daniel's devotion (and Satan's opposition) is what got Daniel into hot water...it was God who brought him through. Daniel lived his lifetime over the span of several kings and dynasties. He lived in a foreign land and represented God before the Jewish captives as well as other people's and their kings. He was given insight into dreams, the future, and the depths of people's lives.

#### **Daniel 1-2**

How do you see God's hand in these four young men's lives? Why was Daniel so stubborn and wouldn't it have been better to have blended in with the other young men? From where did Daniel derive his dream interpreting abilities? Why did he ask for Arioch to spare the other wise men of Babylon? What was Nebuchadnezzar's response?

#### **Daniel 3**

Why did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego draw a line where they did? Why was Nebuchadnezzar so enraged? Who was the fourth man in the fire? Where was Daniel during this fiery furnace situation? What do you think God is trying to accomplish in the King's life?

#### **Daniel 4**

Notice the transition from verse 3 to verse 4. What is it? What do you know about Nebuchadnezzar from an historical perspective? Why is this such an amazing story? What does this king seem to learn over his years of experiences with Daniel and his God?

#### **Daniel 5-6**

How would it have felt to be Belshazzar? What emotions would he have been experiencing? Why was God so harsh with this king? What was Daniel's reputation in the kingdom? What kind of influence did he have? What was going on politically at the time? With each change of kingship there were new challenges for Daniel. What conditions led to Daniel being thrown into the lion's den? What was the immediate result? The long term result?

#### **Daniel 7-12**

These chapters record visions that Daniel received and give of keys to "end of the age." Just as there was a beginning there will be an end, and Daniel paints a picture of this end with a very broad brush. What do you learn about Daniel's relationship with God from these visions? What other insights do you get into what his life was like? Look for what he did, what he saw, what he felt, and what he did!

*There is a bravery based upon principle that shines from Daniel's life, His path was certainly not easy or picture perfect, but he meets change and challenges with faith toward God and grace toward others. This is the true heart of a lion!*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---

## DAVID: WHOLE HEART

### 1 SAMUEL 16-31

God is intensely interested in the heart conditions of humans. He knows that our bodies will wear out, and He knows that each of our souls has a rendezvous with eternity.

King David was a man after God's heart. He cared about what God thought, said, and required from him as a human leader. His life was filled with ups and downs and he made many mistakes, including adultery and murder. These choices cost him dearly, but through all of his troubles and challenges he continued to pursue God with a whole heart! Many of the Psalms are ascribed to David, and give us further insight into his heart.



#### 1 Samuel 16-17

Why was David chosen over his brothers? What was Samuel's role in the process? What was David's initial relationship like with King Saul? What functions did he perform for Saul and what kind of access would this have given David? Who were the Philistines? What gave David his courage to fight Goliath? What strikes you about this conflict? What are your impressions of David as a young man?

#### 1 Samuel 18-20

What are your impressions of the relationship between Saul, David, and Jonathan? Why did Saul become so dissatisfied with David? What are the root problems here?

#### 1 Samuel 21-24

Jesus talks about the situation with the "consecrated bread" (set apart) in Matthew 12:1-7. What does He say and how does He read this situation? How does David's feigning of madness stack up with his courage in confronting Goliath? What is happening to Saul's heart and how is it impacting his actions and relationships? How does Saul's obsession with David reflect upon his relationship with God? Why was Saul chosen as king in the first place? Why in the world didn't David kill Saul when he had the chance?

#### 1 Samuel 25-31

What do David's experiences with Abigail tell you about where his spiritual life is headed? What has happened to David's wife, Michal? Once again David spares Saul's life! Is this restraint or cowardice or something else? Why would Saul consult a witch? What does this tell you about his spiritual path? How would it been possible for him to call up Samuel? Saul is all form and no substance. He is tossed by the waves of circumstance.

*David and Saul are an interesting contrast. David is all heart for God but still makes many mistakes. Saul appears to be more concerned with what people think rather than what God thinks. How well do you deal with this trap? Read 1 Samuel 8 for more background on Israel's desire for and choice of a king.*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---





## Timeless lives from the God-Story

### **SOLOMON: HALF A HEART**

#### **1 KINGS 1-11**

How can the wisest man who ever lived end up separated and alienated from his Creator? Solomon's life is an incredible story of privilege, wealth, political alliances, and ultimate idolatry. Probably the richest king who ever lived, Solomon's wisdom was a marvel that brought people from kingdoms all over the earth to pay homage.

While Solomon may have been the wisest man who ever lived, he fell into the trap of thinking that he did not need to rely upon God for the condition of his heart.

#### **1 Kings 1-3**

How does David's family history impact his heirs? What is going on here relative to the transfer of power? How does David "bless" his son Solomon? In your mind, what would be David's epitaph? What are your perceptions of Solomon as a young ruler? Why were there so many executions and how should that make us feel about God and His people? What appears to be Solomon's core desire for his reign? Why is the story of the two women and the baby so telling?

#### **1 Kings 4-7**

What are your impressions of Solomon as a leader? Solomon makes many alliances, including the one with King Hiram. Why were these alliances necessary and what do you think is their impact? Whose idea was it to build a temple? Why was it necessary? Why was it so ornate? What would have been the scope and impact of this kind of craftsmanship? Compare Solomon's house with the building of the Temple. What were the similarities? The differences?

#### **1 Kings 8-10**

What was the significance of the Ark's introduction into the Temple? What do you learn about Solomon's relationship with God at this point in his life? What is the significance of the extent of sacrifices made at the dedication of the Temple? What was God's response to Solomon and how does it make you feel? What were Solomon's relationships like with those around him? Why is the story of the Queen of Sheba given so much emphasis? How much was a talent of gold? What was the extent of Solomon's wealth in today's terms?

#### **1 Kings 11**

What do you feel was Solomon's vulnerability? How could he have avoided it? With what he knew, how could Solomon possibly have made this kind of spiritual error? What was the result of his choices?

David had a whole heart for God. Saul had no heart, and Solomon appears to have half a heart *when it came to his spiritual life? What instruction does this give the Christ-follower today?*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## **THE FAITH OF MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS**

### **LUKE 1-2**

Mary (and many other women) hold a very special place in the scriptures and in the life of Jesus. The portrayal of Mary and her Son Jesus in the movie “the Passion of the Christ” is quite moving. It shows her faith, her suffering, and her beautiful humanity.

To be privileged to see what her eyes saw and to hear what she heard - to be the human mother to the Son of God - how incredible! She stands as an example of faith among believers and followers throughout history. She treasures truth, embraces obedience, and humbly serves the One who made her.



#### **Luke 1:26-38**

Mary was probably a teen-aged woman. What emotions would she have felt? What would she have had to endure? How important is her experience with Gabriel in preparing her for what was to take place? What do you learn about her faith? her maturity as a person?

#### **Luke 1:39-56**

What kinds of things were happening and how did they encourage her? What is her cousin's view of Mary? What do you make of John the Baptist and Jesus' interaction en-utero? Mary's song reveals her heart. What do you learn about her experience at this point?

#### **Luke 2:15-20**

What is Mary's response to these remarkable events? What particulars do you suppose were reported and what do you think was communicated by way of emotions?

#### **Matthew 12:46-50**

Why do you think Jesus' family shows up at this point? What place does Jesus' human family play in His spiritual Kingdom? Does this appear harsh to you? How do you think His family received it? As a non-family member, how does this make you feel?

#### **John 19:23-27**

How do you think Jesus felt about His mother? What is He communicating about her as He dies? What do you think was going through her mind? Why do you think He gave this responsibility to John the apostle?

*Mary is a wonderful woman of faith. The Scriptures (and the Jewish people) honored women, probably more than any other historical culture. We can look at her life and see an up-close portrait of love, devotion, motherhood, suffering, faith, and ultimate hope!*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## Timeless lives from the God-Story

### **JOHN THE BAPTIST: ELIJAH HAS COME!**

#### **JOHN 1-3, 6**

400 years before John the Baptist was born the last Old Testament prophet said “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.” (Malachi 4:5,6) Many years before that Isaiah the prophet spoke of a voice crying out in the wilderness (Isaiah 40). Jesus left little doubt that this prophet was none other than John the Baptist (Matthew 11:14; 17:12).

#### John 1-3

Who does John identify himself to be? What is the essence of his description of who Jesus is? What convinced John of Jesus’ identity? In what ways did John prepare the way for Christ? In what ways were there similarities between Jesus’ and John’s ministries and teachings? Why were people coming to John to be baptized? What did John see as the most important transition from himself (the voice) and Jesus (the Lamb of God)? What strikes you about this man (John)?

#### Matthew 3:1-12

How did John relate to the religious leaders of the Jews? What was the source of his conflict with them? What was he trying to tell the people? The religious leaders?

#### Matthew 11:1-6

What were John’s challenges of faith? What passage does Jesus quote and why and what kind of effect do you suppose it had on John in prison?

#### Mark 6:14-29

In what ways was John’s death impacting King Herod? Why is there confusion over who John the Baptist and Jesus were? How does the story of John’s death make you feel? How do you suppose it impacted his followers (many of whom were now following Jesus)?

*John the Baptist knew his role was to decrease so that Jesus could increase. This is a huge lesson in spiritual servanthood. It is precisely our willingness to die to our own desires and personal “rights” that qualifies us for use in God’s purposes. While other men posture to improve their position spiritually or materially, servants of the kingdom subject both to the honor of the King!*

#### *My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## *Timeless lives from the God-Story*

### **JOHN: HEART TO HEART!**

#### **JOHN 20,21**

What would it have been like to reach out and touch Jesus Christ? To lean against Him at dinner, to hear His words, and to seek miracles worked right before your own eyes! There is little doubt this provided much motivation for faithfulness as the years after the resurrection unfolded.

John the apostle speaks from a vantage point that only a handful of eyewitnesses enjoyed - and he gives us volumes of insight into the remarkable character, resolve, and authenticity of the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

#### *John 20, 21*

The “other disciple whom Jesus loved” is the John who wrote this Gospel. What is his part in the drama that unfolds in this chapter? Why did he record the events of this book? What appears to be different after Jesus has risen from the dead? What would be the difference between John and Peter’s destiny and how was it interpreted by others? How much had John and the rest of the disciples seen during the time they had followed Jesus?

#### *John 19:23-27*

What was John’s human relationship with Jesus? What was the level of love and trust? What kind of man was John? What unique expectations did Jesus have for John?

#### *Revelation 1*

Later in life John the apostle is exiled to the island of Patmos, where he is in a very real sense a prisoner. Here he receives a vision that will become the book of Revelation. This is not the Revelation of John but the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John. How fitting that this disciple would be entrusted with such important understanding - and information!

How is this vision of Christ different from the previous picture we have of Him? What is John’s response? What would it have been like to receive this vision? How did John pass on this vision? What does this vision teach us about the difference between the first coming of Christ and His second coming?

#### *1 John*

Read the book of 1 John and use your high lighter and pen. Distill John’s message into five or six central themes. What kind of man do you think John was? What impact do you think he had on people who knew him? On the early church?

If John were writing this letter to you personally, what would he be saying to you?

*John gives us deep relational understanding into what it means to know God. His heart of love and devotion to Jesus is a huge key in forming our perceptions of what it means to pursue God!*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## *Timeless lives from the God-Story*

### **PETER: PURE IN HEART**

What a roller-coaster life! From this one man come insights into power, grace, and forgiveness few men and women will ever understand! If you were to graph the life of this impetuous man throughout his years of contact during Jesus' life on earth you would see an up and down experience that would make a great made for television drama!

Peter was the kind of "rock" in whom Jesus saw deep value, and He continued to call Peter to something greater than he could have ever been merely by his own effort.

#### *Matthew 14:22-36*

What insights into Peter do you get from this account? What kind of long-term impact do you think this had upon Peter? What are the spiritual insights from this encounter?

#### *Matthew 16:13-28*

What is it about Peter that excites Jesus? Why do you think his faith was so pure? What is Jesus trying to tell Peter about the extent of his ministry on the earth? Doesn't it seem cold to rebuke Peter so sharply for his comments concerning Jesus' death? What was Jesus trying to do for Peter and the other disciples?

#### *John 13:1-20*

This was a real stretch for Peter. As usual, he speaks what is on his mind! What did Jesus want Peter and the other disciples to understand? What is the significance of being "clean"?

#### *John 18:1-27*

What do you think went through the disciples minds when everyone fell to the ground? What was Peter's response to Jesus being arrested? What does it tell you about Peter?

#### *John 21*

How do you think that Peter felt when Jesus pressed him about feeding His sheep?

#### *Acts 1,4*

What do you notice about Peter's demeanor after Jesus is raised from the dead?

#### *1 and 2 Peter*

Read 1 and 2 Peter for insights into how Peter applied his encounter with Jesus into the way he conducted himself for his remaining stay on earth.

*Peter was an initiator. We can learn a lot about quality spiritual devotion from watching Peter respond to his circumstances and the expectations of his Master!*

### *My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## Timeless lives from the God-Story

### PAUL: HEART SET FREE

#### PHILIPPIANS 3:1-17

Of all the choices a person would make for his or her life, the road Saul of Tarsus travelled would be way down on the list. He experienced deep joy and deep pain - often beaten and abandoned - and he followed his path until it's final destination!

Perhaps the fire in Paul's heart came from the fact that he had been such a zealous, feared Pharisee. He had thought nothing of chasing down, persecuting, and locking up loyal Christ-followers. In encountering Christ He had grasped Jesus' words "He who has been forgiven much - forgives much" (Luke 7:47).



#### Acts 9

What was Paul's disposition at the beginning of this chapter? What does that tell you about what is going on in his heart? Why did Saul/Paul need to have such an animated encounter with Jesus? Why was Ananias' situation so difficult? How long did it take Paul to follow though on his face to face with Jesus?

#### 2 Corinthians 11:16-12:10

Why would anyone question Paul's legitimacy as a Christ-follower? What had Paul's life been like since he encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus many years earlier? What had Paul experienced in subsequent encounters with God? What helped Paul keep his ego in check? What does this teach us about how God works?

#### Philippians 3:1-17

As Paul writes to this early church community it is obvious that he has made huge transitions in what he does or doesn't value. What do you learn about this transition from these verses? What kept him going? What were his core values? How did these values impact the choices he made for his life?

*Paul experienced conviction, joy, and intense challenges. He shouldered this as the "normal" life for someone who wished to leave everything and follow Him! Do you feel you have this kind of freedom of heart!?*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---

---



*Timeless lives from the God-Story*  
**STUDIES IN RELIGIOUS FORM OVER  
SUBSTANCE**

**LUKE 11:14-54**

Jesus had a very acrimonious relationship with religion and the religious leaders of His day. He was “in their face” calling them to repentance, at one point calling a group of leaders a “brood of vipers.” It appeared to bother Jesus that not only were these leaders hypocrites in how they lived, they were also unwilling to provide any true help for those who were looking to them for guidance. Their emphasis on religion had buried God’s intention for compassion.

*Matthew 15,16*

How did Jesus feel about tradition? How direct was He with the Pharisees and scribes? What appears to be at the core of His displeasure? When His disciples are concerned about the Pharisees being offended, how does Jesus respond? What is at the core of what He is trying to teach them here? Why did the leaders ask for a sign? Why are they beginning to intensify tests of Jesus?

*Matthew 23*

By confronting the Pharisees in front of the people, what difficulties began to intensify for Jesus? What were the true goals of these leaders? Why is recognition among men so powerful and why should it be avoided? Jesus intensifies the confrontation. What does He attack? What do you think He was hoping to gain from such direct communication? What could have been added to this tongue-lashing that could have made it worse? It is no wonder they eventually found a way to have Jesus killed - legally.

*John 3*

Many of the religious leaders ended up believing in Jesus! John 3 is the story of one Pharisee, Nicodemus, and what turmoil Jesus was putting these men through. What astounded Jesus about Nicodemus? What didn’t Nicodemus understand? What did he learn from Jesus?

*If you want to recognize a modern day Pharisee look for:*

*Externals rather than issues of the heart.*

*Form over substance and a choice to regulate behavior rather than win hearts.*

*Tradition above the Word of God.*

*Position and recognition rather than servanthood.*

*Be careful, there is more Pharisee in the human heart than many religious Christ-followers wish to admit!*

*My conclusions from this study...*

---

---

---



## **Quality Character!**

*And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

- Romans 5:3-5

**Jesus sets us free from the inside out.  
He fills us with His character - and we become free.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE **QUALITY CHARACTER** VIDEO HERE.  
\*\*\*\*\*



## QUALITY CHARACTER!

Whether or not you aspire to the office of an overseer (elder), the qualifications displayed in Titus and Timothy can bring great strength and richness to your household. Take the time to consider each one and implement them as a standard for personal evaluation! May we be the kind of men and women who reflect reliance upon God's Word, being Spirit led, and who desire God's order and holiness in our lives!

Leaders and leadership office (elders, deacons) were given to the church by Christ (Ephesians 4) and pursued in Paul's teaching and direction to the church (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1) with definite responsibilities (Proverbs 25:23; Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17; Ezekiel 33:6; Jeremiah 3:15; and 1 Peter 1:1-5). They are appointed by God (Ephesians 4:11; Titus 1:5); recognized by the congregation (Acts 14:23); submitted to (Hebrews 13:7,17); submitted (Ephesians 4:18-21; 1 Peter 5:5); ordained (Acts 14:23; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Timothy 5:22) and given to lead through delegated authority (not arbitration) and shepherding concern (Romans 13:1-6; Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-11). They were to be men of character and to have become:

- ☐ Above Reproach
- ☐ Husband of One Wife
- ☐ Temperate
- ☐ Prudent
- ☐ Respectable
- ☐ Hospitable
- ☐ Able To Teach
- ☐ Not Addicted To Wine
- ☐ Not Pugnacious
- ☐ Gentle
- ☐ Uncontentious
- ☐ Free From the Love of Money
- ☐ Manages His Own Household Well
- ☐ Not a New Convert
- ☐ Good Reputation Outside the Church
- ☐ Not Self-Willed
- ☐ Not Quick-Tempered
- ☐ Loves What Is Good
- ☐ Just
- ☐ Devout
- ☐ Holding Fast the Faithful Word





## THE QUALITIES AT A GLANCE

Here is a brief description of each quality. A more in-depth treatment follows.

### Above Reproach

The over-arching qualification with all others is contained in this one. It means you "can't get a handle on a flaw in his character." An example of a man who was above reproach was Job: "...there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil." (Job 1:8)

### Husband of One Wife

Six possible interpretations here:

1. Prohibition against polygamy view.
2. Necessity of marriage view.
3. Prohibition of remarried widower's view.
4. Faithfulness to one wife view.
5. Prohibition of divorce at any time in life view.
6. Faithfulness to one wife and prohibition of divorce while a believer view.

An example of a husband of one wife was the prophet Hosea who was married to a woman named Gomer who lived the life of a harlot. In spite of her adultery Hosea still loyally loved her (Hosea 3:1-5).

### Temperate

Moderate, well balanced, calm, careful, steady, and able to rule others because he rules himself. An example of a temperate man was Dr. Luke, "...having investigated everything carefully from the beginning." (Luke 1:3)

### Prudent

Clear judgment, common sense, a man who can make decisions, not given to quick and superficial decisions based on faulty judgment. An example of a prudent man was King Solomon. "When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had handed down, they feared the king; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice."

(1 Kings 3:28)

### Respectable

This is the same root word that is used to describe clothes or outward appearance in 2 Timothy 2:9. When applied to character it means orderly in life where everything isn't a mess within. It is much easier for people to show respect to a leader if he is responsible. A good example of a man who had an orderly life and was highly respected as a leader and administrator was Nehemiah, the builder of Jerusalem's walls (Nehemiah 2:4-18).

### Hospitable

This word literally means a friend of strangers. He meets them at their point of need physically, emotionally, and spiritually. An example of a hospitable man would be Abraham as he showed hospitality to the three strangers in Genesis 18:1-8 or of Onesiphorus whom Paul said "often refreshed me..." (2 Timothy 1:16). This is an important requirement because it shows care for people.

### Able to Teach

This is not the same thing as the gift of teaching but rather one who is qualified to teach. The minimal requirement here is seen in Titus 1:9 "holding on to the faithful word which is in line with sound doctrine in order that he may be able both to encourage by means of his sound teaching and refute those who contradict it." An example of a man who was able to teach was Apollos who was a gifted orator, mighty in the Scriptures, and instructed in the ways of the Lord, but was still willing to be taught by Priscilla and Aquila in order to learn the way of God more accurately (Acts 28:26). Apollos clearly shows us that to be able to teach, one must also

be teachable. Another good example of one who was able to teach was the Apostle Paul about whom we are told "his personal appearance is unimpressive, and his speech contemptible" (2 Corinthians 10:10).

#### Not Addicted to Wine

The same inspired author who advises Timothy to use a little wine for the sake of his stomach and frequent illnesses (1 Timothy 5:23) also declares that one who fails to practice moderation has no right to be an elder. An example of those who were guilty of the sin condemned here were the believers at Corinth, "one is hungry and another is drunk" (1 Corinthians 11:21).

#### Not Pugnacious

Literally this word means "not a striker." This can be in reference to either physical or verbal striking. An example of a pugnacious spirit would be James and John who wanted to call down fire from heaven on some Samaritans who rejected Jesus (Luke 9:54).

#### Gentle

The opposite of pugnacious is one who is characterized by forbearance and tenderness. Though he never compromises with respect to the truth of the Gospel he is willing to yield when it comes to his own rights in the spirit of 1 Corinthians 6:7: "Why not rather suffer wrong?" The word "yielding" corresponds with the root idea of gentle. An example of a gentle man was Joseph who was forbearing and tender to the brothers who sold him into slavery (Genesis 50:15-21).

#### Uncontentious

This word goes even deeper than pugnacious. It describes a person who does not necessarily strike out physically or verbally but one who subtly, behind the scenes, seeks to divide through innuendo, gossip, or selfish argumentation. An example of contentious people would be the false teachers described in John 16, "These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage."

#### Free From the Love of Money

Not a lover of silver or stingy with his material possessions or blessings. He is not under the influence of affluence. He must be far removed from making the acquisition of earthly treasure his chief goal in life even though the means employed may be honest. This is a character requirement because it indicates better than anything else wrong priorities in life (Matthew 6:25). An example of one who was not free from the love of money was Judas (John 12:6), the rich young ruler (Mark 10:21-22), and Demas who "loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4:10).

#### Manages His Own Household Well

Presides over or manages in every area -- this would include an orderly household where the husband is submitting to Christ, the wife respects her husband and the children obey the parents. The home is a proving ground for a man's ability to give oversight. He will treat the church like he treats his family. An example of one who manages his own household well would be Philip the evangelist who "had four virgin daughters who prophesied" (Acts 21:9).

#### Not a New Convert

Not a baby in Christ. He must have been a Christian long enough to demonstrate the reality of his conversion and the depth of his maturity. This will hopefully prevent him from becoming puffed up with pride. An example of not a new convert would be the Apostle Paul who probably spent three years in the desert of Arabia after his conversion before he did any work in his hometown of Tarsus and Antioch, and was not commissioned to go on his first missionary journey until ten years after his conversion (Galatians 1:17-18; 2:1).

#### Good Reputation Outside the Church

Unbelievers must also respect his character and integrity. Often such "outsiders" know more about the man in question than do the members of the church. Besides, the church seeks to exert a powerful influence for good upon the world by leading sinners to Christ. An elder's bad reputation with the world will not be of

any help in achieving this purpose. An example of a man who had a good reputation with those outside was Cornelius who was “well spoken of by the entire Jewish nation” (Acts 10:22).

#### Not Self-Willed

One who is stubborn and tries to have his own way. This person is insensitive and seeks to force his own ideas and opinions on other people. An example of not being self-willed is seen in Daniel and his three friends who did not force their own ideas regarding wine and rich foods on others in their group (Daniel 1:10-13).

#### Not Quick-Tempered

One who flies off the handle or gets angry quickly. An example of a quick-tempered man is King Saul (1 Samuel 20:30-33).

#### Loves What Is Good

Must be the kind of person who desires to do and see the will of God accomplished in everything and everyone. An example here would be Paul, “my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is for their salvation” (Romans 10:1).

#### Just

Fair and impartial and able to make objective judgments based on principle. An example of being just is seen in 1 Corinthians 6:1-7 where believers should be able to justify or fairly judge those among them who require a judgment to be made.

#### Devout

Holy and separated from sin. An example of this quality is seen in Simeon, a man who was “righteous and devout” (Luke 2:25).

#### Holding Fast the Faithful Word

Stable in his faith and not hypocritical by teaching one thing and living another. An example of those who did not hold fast the faithful word were the scribes and pharisees about whom Jesus said, “therefore all that they tell you do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say things, and do not do them” (Matthew 23:3).

### MY EVALUATION:

List the areas and issues where someone could get a handle on a flaw in your character (above reproach). Be honest with yourself!

---

---

---

What can you do to grow in these areas to become more like Jesus?

---

---

---

You may wish to seek some practical insights from someone experienced whom you respect!

---

---

---



## MY PERSONAL CHARACTER QUALITY EVALUATION!

Are you still a child in Christ even though you may have been a believer and follower for a number of years?

Rate yourself by circling the number that best represents your self-evaluation of each of the qualities we have looked over (rating from dissatisfied (1) to satisfied (7)).

1. How do you evaluate your reputation as a Christ-follower among believers?  
Are you a man of your word?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
2. How do you evaluate your overall relationship with your wife? If you are not married how well are you handling your sexual and companionship needs and desires?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
3. What kind of overall perspective do you have on your spiritual life? Have you developed a measured philosophy of life? Does it reflect TEMPERANCE?  
Are you calm? Do you rule yourself?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
4. Are you PRUDENT? Do you exercise common sense and biblical principles with your time, talents, and treasures?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
5. Are you RESPECTABLE? Do you have a well-adjusted life, adorning the Word of God? In what areas are you a mess?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
6. Are you HOSPITABLE? Do you use your home as a means to show kindness to other members of the body of Christ and unbelievers? Are you friendly?  
Do you use your resources for the benefit of others?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
7. Are you ABLE TO TEACH? Do you have that quality of life that enables you to communicate the Word of God to others in a non-argumentative, clear manner?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
8. Are you ADDICTED TO ANYTHING THAT IS CONTROLLING YOUR LIFE?  
Are you doing anything that is causing a weaker Christ-follower to stumble and sin against God (lust, drugs, alcohol, food, etc.)?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
9. Are you SELF-WILLED? Do you always have to have your own way?  
Do you pout?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

10. Do you LOSE YOUR TEMPER easily? Do you harbor feelings of resentment over a period of time? Do you fly off the handle?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
11. Are you a PUGNACIOUS-type person -- one who verbally or physically strikes out at others because of angry feelings?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
12. Are you CONTENTIOUS? Do you purposely take the opposite point of view from others, stirring up arguments and destroying the unity in the group? Or, are you a peacemaker, striving to create harmony and unity?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
13. Are you a MILD-MANNERED and GENTLE person, reflecting meekness, forbearance and kindness?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
14. Are you FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY? Do you seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness? Are you preoccupied with things or making ends meet?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
15. Do you have your HOUSEHOLD IN ORDER? That is, do your wife and children love and respect you and are they responding to your God and Savior and His claim on their lives? Is your household controlled and orderly?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
16. Do you have a GOOD REPUTATION with non-Christ followers? Do they respect you even though they may disagree with your views? What do your neighbors say about you? Your co-workers?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
17. Do you PURSUE AFTER WHAT IS GOOD AND RIGHT? Do you desire to associate yourself with truth, honor, and integrity and reject embracing things that have any appearance of evil?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
18. Are you JUST? Are you able to make objective decisions and be honest in your relationship with other people without showing partiality?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied
19. Are you HOLDING FAST THE FAITHFUL WORD? Are you consistently and radically committed to living out your faith and calling out hypocrisy?  
Dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Satisfied

The content of this two-page character evaluation is based upon Gene Getz' book Measure of A Man.





## **Spiritual Warfare**

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

*- Ephesians 6:12*

**We are born into a greater story.  
We are born into a world at war.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [SPIRITUAL WARFARE VIDEO HERE.](#)  
\*\*\*\*\*



# Two Fathers

According to the scriptures we have a heavenly Father, the Living God, who created us. He is perfect in every way. He walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden in the cool of the day. Our fellowship with Him was perfect in every way. Through the temptation in the Garden everything changed. Lucifer, one of three very powerful angels, used the arena of creation to usurp the Creator's authority. When Adam and Eve fell to temptation, we gained a new father through sin and rebellion.

## **THE PERFECT FATHER** (My Creator)

Matthew 5:48

Characteristics: Pure Fellowship, Clear Identity, Unashamed nakedness.

*THE TRUTH: "I am an adopted son, adopted into the Kingdom by the blood of Jesus Christ.*

*Christ has gone to prepare a place for me."*

*How secure do you feel as a child of God?*

---

---

---

## **THE IMPERFECT FATHER** (Satan)

John 8:41-59

Characteristics: Broken Fellowship, Clouded Identity, Hiding Nakedness from the Pure Light

*THE LIE: "I am better than God has spoken. I am like God and His authority must be*

*questioned. I take what is His and claim it as mine."*

*How familiar does this reality feel to you?*

---

---

---

*There is ample biblical data to paint the picture of this "two father" reality.*

God created the angelic realm (Psalm 148:1-6) and the affairs of men are linked deeply to the angelic dimension (Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 1:12).

Lucifer, Michael, and Gabriel appear to be archangels, and apart from the "angel of the Lord," are the only angels named in the God-story. They are extremely powerful.

**Demons** (angels who fell in Satan's rebellion) appear do the will of Satan (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6).

**Satan** is the originator of sin (Ezekiel 28:15) and needs God's permission to tempt men (Genesis 3:1-19; Job 1,2). He is the tempter (1 Corinthians 7:5) who appears as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), counterfeiting the works of God to tempt and accuse man (Revelation 12:9,10). He is immensely powerful and is subjected completely only to the power of God (Jude 1:8-10). He was judged at the cross (Colossians 2:15) and his sentence will be executed in the future in the lake of fire (Revelation 2:1-3,10).

The [angels who kept their place](#) before the holiness of the Father and did not follow Satan's rebellion will remain eternally before the throne of God where they cover and magnify the holiness of the Lord (Ezekiel 1:4-21). There are also those who go out as ministering spirits to those who will become heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14).

[Man](#) was created lower than the angels, and through the incarnation Christ subjected Himself to this lower place that He might lift us with Himself above the angels (Hebrews 2:9; 1:4). Satan's power is formidable - but subjected in every way to the will of his Creator.

We may live [wisely](#) (2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11) and [without fear](#) (Luke 22:31) in the midst of this war into which we were birthed.

*"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels,  
nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor  
powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing,  
shall be able to separate us from the love of God,  
which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

- Romans 8:38,39

### [Other Passages](#)

about the Prince of Darkness from which we can learn:

Luke 10:17-20; Job 1:6-2:10; Isaiah 14:3-19; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Zechariah 3:1-5; Matthew 4:10; 12:26; Mark 1:13; Luke 22:3; Acts 5:3; Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; 1 Timothy 1:20; Revelation 3:9; 12:9; 20:7

### [My thoughts about angels:](#)

---

---

---

---

### [Demons and Deliverance](#)

Demon Miracles: (10 non-people, 6 demons, 5 sick, 4 blind, 3 death raising, 2 paralyzed, 2 lame, 1 leper, 1 deaf person)

Synagogue Demoniac: Mark 1:23-28; Luke 11:14

Blind and Dumb Demoniac: Matthew 12:22; Luke 11:14

Gadarene Demoniac: Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-29

Dumb Demoniac: Matthew 9:32-33

The Syrophonecian's Daughter: Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30

The Demon Possessed Boy: Matthew 17:14-18; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:38-42

Demon Passages and teaching: (James 2:19; 3:15; Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:37; Matthew 10:8; 1 Corinthians 10:21; Revelation 9:20)

### [My thoughts about demons:](#)

---

---

---

---

# Bringing down lofty things

*“For though we walk in the flesh we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing that raises itself up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ...”*

- 2 Corinthians 10:3-7

There are **seven central strongholds** (the ravings of darkness) with their corresponding human protectors that obscure their existence. These protectors join with strongholds in producing an enclave (entrenchment). Many strongholds are rooted in our need for recognition or personal obsession.

Think about these strongholds and the impact of each you have seen in your life and in the lives of those around you. How would each of these hold you back in your spiritual life.

**IMMORALITY** (vs. an occupying purity)  
Protectors: pornography, incest, and adultery

---

---

**ANGER** (vs. a trusting peace)  
Protectors: critical discontentment, a biting or gossiping tongue, and abusive speech

---

---

**INDEPENDENCE** (vs. confident dependence & contentment with weakness)  
Protectors: non-commitment, aloofness, disengagement, isolated lifestyle, control and manipulation

---

---

**FEAR** (vs. quiet confidence and peace)  
Protectors: anxiety, isolation or unplugging, and lashing out

---

---

**ARROGANCE** (vs. humility)  
Protectors: superiority in knowledge or insight, partiality and value judgments of other's worthiness, self justification, and self obsession

---

---

**LYING** (vs. speaking truth and being set free in conscience)  
Protectors: slander, tall tales, twisted advantage, and flattery

---

---

**GREED** (vs. generosity and trust)  
Protectors: anxiety and anger, hoarding, partiality based upon economics, and workaholism

---

---

# Weapons of a Warrior

## THE ARMOR OF GOD

Read Ephesians 6

What are the items in the armor of God, and what is the function of each?

---

---

---

---

---

What are these weapons, and how do we use them?

---

---

Being a warrior is a choice and the armor works together to protect and prepare us!

Have you made the choice to be a warrior in the Kingdom?

---

---

*Are you an experienced soldier?*

---

---

Do you use weapons for the right hand and the left?

## THE SHIELD OF FAITH

is used to extinguish the missiles of Satan, launched upon our identity and our work.

*Is your faith and your shield increasing in strength?*

---

---

## THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

is used to "filet" and divide flesh from Spirit, good from evil, and heart from religion.

*In what ways is the sword of the Spirit doing it's work in you?*

---

---

*Do you know how to use the sword of the Spirit for the welfare of others?*

---

---

# Fortresses & Strongholds

Fortresses and strongholds are carefully and personally crafted plans which are employed for the destruction of the will of God in our own lives as well as in our life together. It is Satan's intent to bind us in chains for as much of our earthly life as possible, and to torment us with flaming missiles (the burning castings of Satan).

**A Fortress:** to make firm.

A strong place where Satan pushes my buttons at will.

**A Speculation:** human reasonings based upon conclusions of our fallen natures.

Unproven or untested things that have to be true or may be true because I am so sure I am so right (about myself or others).

**A Lofty Thing:** life issues lifted up by human pride.

Attitudes and actions born of my unwillingness to experience the probing and pain of light in my life.

How do each of the following "lofty things" tear us down?

Accusations...debilitating us because of guilt or time spent in self justification.

---

---

Deceptions...keeping us busy with non-kingdom pursuits and empty preoccupations.

---

---

Temptations...pushing harmful heart buttons that keep us in chains.

---

---

Divisions...destroying alliances of truth that would build us into a spiritual house.

---

---

The goal of Satan is to tear down, divide, and produce enmity.

The goal of God is to build up, unify, and produce love.

The Corinthian believers struggled with relationships - in that they restrained one another before the light. (2 Corinthians 6:11-13). They were not picking up the weapons for the left and right hand (6:7) but instead were picking up weapons of the flesh (10:3,7).

In order to take every thought captive and to be free from the ravages of arrogant speculation the Corinthians were exhorted to respond to God's authority (the Light).

# Disarming darkness in our lives

## AN IDENTITY STRONGHOLD

One of the central strongholds implemented by Satan relates to our identity. We become confused over the perfect, pure, compassionate, kind-hearted, unchanging love of my Father for me. They are often in the middle of enclaves that hide the identity root?

*"I must assert my worth and usefulness as a person. I must prove myself and work my way to acceptance through what I do so that I can be esteemed and recognized."*

*How familiar does the above stronghold feel to you?*

---

---

---

## WHAT ACCOMPLICES DO TO COOPERATE AND ESTABLISH ENCLAVES:

Strongholds are usually surrounded by an enclave, mostly to hide a root stronghold. They muddy the waters and hide the root of what is tormenting us. Do any of these look familiar?

- |                     |                   |                       |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| - Crushing emotions | - Impure defiling | - Deceptions and Lies |
| - Accusations       | - Abandonment     | - Anxiety             |
| - Alienation        | - Depression      | - Inflated Egos       |
| - Confusion         | - Stealer of Hope | - Divisions           |

*"Strongholds leave us hurt and scarred, impaired in our ability to trust. We are never sure or secure as a saved, loved, and accepted child. There is agitation and fear rather than rest and peace."*

## SOME TESTS FOR A PERSONAL IDENTITY STRONGHOLD

- \_\_\_ Am I comfortable with the fact that my parents are proud of me?
- \_\_\_ Am I doing what I do to feel like it lifts me in the eyes of God?
- \_\_\_ Am I doing what I am doing because I need acknowledgment, recognition, and association with "important" people?
- \_\_\_ Am I doing what I am doing to be ahead of others so I can be perceived as a leader?
- \_\_\_ Do have trouble submitting to those in authority over me?
- \_\_\_ Am I a law to myself?
- \_\_\_ Do kindness and truth reflect my deepest feelings about other people?

*The nature of an ENCLAVE (multiple strongholds) is that self-justification, inflated ego, judgmentalism, denial, failure to speak truth, strife, envy, factions, confusion, disorder, and secrecy rule the day.*

*How does this concept rock your world? Seem irrelevant to you?*

---

---

---



## *A summary of Warfare principles*

- *Our lives parallel and are inseparable from other dimensions.*
- *We are not supposed to be ignorant concerning Satan's schemes.*
- *Satan disguises himself as an angel of light because he was an angel of light.*
- *We make a huge tactical error when we choose to war merely against flesh and blood.*
- *God's permission must be obtained for Satan to tempt or torment.*
- *Satan and his demons are able to demonize through temptation, oppression, manipulation of circumstances, and control.*
- *Self-will is the human contact point for Satan.*
- *Light is the remedy for darkness.*
- *Self reformation is the enemy of deliverance.*
- *Satan is our accuser and Christ is our Advocate (and Judge).*
- *Strongholds are Satan's foothold into our lives employed through rebellion and lust.*
- *Speculations are to be destroyed.*
- *Lofty things must be cast down by faith in order for us to free.*





## **Talking with God!**

*Let us therefore draw near  
with confidence to the throne of grace,  
that we may receive mercy and  
may find grace to help  
in time of need!*

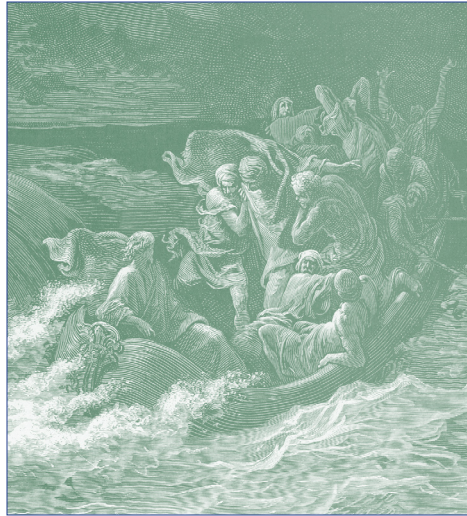
- Hebrews 4:16

Christ-followers are friends of God.  
God has spoken and still speaks to His friends.

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [TALKING WITH GOD VIDEO HERE](#).

\*\*\*\*\*



## Lord, teach us to pray!

*Prayer is talking to and with God. It is conversational and personal, and is to be open and natural from the moment we awaken to the time we sleep (and even in our dreams)!*

When we pray we enter the PRESENCE of God! In what ways do you experience the presence of God?

---

---

---

When entering His presence PROTECTION from sin, Satan, and self is offered as we face our personal weaknesses. How have you seen His strength perfected in your weakness?

---

---

---

In His presence HARMONY in the Spirit and Oneness of mind is found! In what ways do experience harmony and oneness with GOD?

---

---

---



In His presence JOY is kindled by the Spirit!

What part of your life is reflecting joy?

---

---

---

A GRATEFUL HEART is unavoidable in His presence!

How does your life reflect gratefulness?

---

---

---

Look for God's HEARTBEAT...listen for it!

Recall His works. Recite His character. This can help as you look for His heartbeat!

---

---

---

Then allow Him to guide REQUESTS on behalf of yourself and others.

How easy do you find it to “pray in the Spirit?”

---

---

---

*Remember:*

*The God-story is living, powerful and eternal.*

*The Spirit is willing even though our humanity is weak.*

*God is waiting for us! He wants us to want Him.*



# *The teaching of Jesus about prayer.*

*“For the eyes of the Lord run throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is devoted toward Him.”*

- 2 Chronicles 16:9

## *What do you see?*

What do each of these passages teach you about talking with God?

Matthew 6:5-8

---

---

Matthew 6:9-13

---

---

Matthew 6:14-15

---

---

Matthew 18:15-20

---

---

Matthew 21:20-22

---

---

Matthew 26:36-41

---

---

Mark 11:15-26

---

---

Mark 12:38-40

---

---

Mark 13:33-37

---

---

Mark 14:32--42

---

---

Luke 11:1-13

---

---

John 14:1-14

---

---

John 15:1-11

---

---

John 16:23-33

---

---

Also note Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 - What do you see?

---

---

---

---



# The teaching and example of Paul about Prayer.

*“I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with a clear conscience,  
that without ceasing I have made mention of you in my prayers.”*

- 2 Timothy 1:3

## **Paul's Teaching**

Romans 8:26,27

---

---

Romans 12:9-13

---

---

1 Corinthians 14:13-17

---

---

2 Corinthians 1:11

---

---

Ephesians 6:18-20

---

---

Philippians 4:6,7

---

---

Colossians 4:2-4

---

---



1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

---

---

1 Timothy 2:1,2

---

---

1 Timothy 2:8

---

---

1 Timothy 5:5

---

---

### **Paul's Example**

Acts 26:29

---

---

Romans 1:8-10

---

---

2 Corinthians 13:5-10

---

---

Ephesians 1:15-23

---

---

Ephesians 3:15-23

---

---

Philippians 1:18-20

---

---

Colossians 1:9-14

---

---



## *Some thoughts to consider when praying alone or together as a group:*

- 1) Requests to God are only a part of prayer. Prayer includes praise, remembering, and focusing upon the person of God as well as making requests of God. It is very appropriate to **read His Word back to Him as we pray to Him!**
- 2) When praying in a group it is easier to be effective in prayer when requests are clear and succinct. **Listen** to where God is taking the group - not just you personally.
- 3) Be selective but don't hold back. Learn to **be sensitive** to the Holy Spirit when making request for yourself or one another.
- 4) **Be bold.** God is not concerned so much with how we say things than with the heart that is behind our words. "Nice prayers" may do nice things for the listeners but not necessarily anything for God.
- 5) **Be honest.** Pray concerning issues in which God truly stirs your heart and conscience. Always be discreet in what you share about others.
- 6) **Be quiet.** When God burdens your heart it does not necessarily have to be shared publicly. When we do pray verbally in a group we do so to honor God and to encourage those around us toward love and good deeds.
- 7) **Listen to the Spirit and to each other.** Approach God together and be responsive to the Holy Spirit as you pray. Ask God to give you the grace to come to God with "one voice" rather than as a group of individuals taking turns at prayer.

### **SOME ISSUES FOR PRAYER:**

- 1) Passion concerning others' belief in the Gospel
- 2) Moral, governmental, and quiet life issues in our culture
- 3) Pressing needs that put pressure on others
- 4) Confessing sin
- 5) Praises that bless God for His greatness
- 6) Reading Scripture reflecting God's lovingkindness and character
- 7) Thanksgiving for specific mercies that you have observed
- 8) Success of the growth of the Good News through our lives and to our lost neighbors!

### **WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PRAY:**

- 1...It may be time for you to listen! (Romans 8)
- 2...It is possible you are too concerned about what others think.
- 3...Pray for those things that are prayed for in the Scriptures!





## **A threefold cord!**

*“Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.*

*Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone. And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him.*

*A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.*

*- King Solomon in the book of Ecclesiastes*

**Christ-followers are supposed to grow up and mature.  
We are destined to become Kingdom builders.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [RELATIONAL FARMING VIDEO](#) HERE.  
\*\*\*\*\*

# Relational Farming

<i>Those who need Christ.</i>	<i>In-Common Christ-followers.</i>
<i>Friends and Companions.</i>	<i>Older, Wiser Christ-followers.</i>

*Kingdom builders make associations with those who desire to know God!*

People were made to thrive in relationships but interpersonal isolation is more common in the world in which we live. If the Kingdom is going to grow in our lives we will need to invest significant time in each of the quadrants outlined above!

Relational farming is a term to describe the life of a Kingdom builder in cultivating relationships that will benefit God's plan for the Kingdom. By using this four-quadrant approach we can quickly assess what God is doing in our lives - what are the connections He is bringing about through me to build His Kingdom?

WHO IS IN AND AROUND MY LIFE WHO DOES NOT KNOW GOD?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

HOW AND IN WHOM IS THE KINGDOM GROWING AMONG MY FRIENDS?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

WITH WHOM DO I SHARE AN IN-COMMON KINGDOM VISION?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

WHO DO I KNOW HE IS MORE EXPERIENCED IN BUILDING THE KINGDOM?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# Our Life With One Another: Romans 12:5; 14:19

BASED UPON THESE PASSAGES, WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL  
EXAMPLES OF HOW WE CAN ACCOMPLISH SUCH DEPTH OF RELATIONSHIP!?

CONSIDER One Another (Hebrews 10:24)

---

---

BUILD UP One Another (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

---

---

Be DEVOTED to One Another (Romans 12:10)

---

---

LOVE One Another (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8)

---

---

Be ACCEPTING of One Another (Romans 15:7)

---

---

ADMONISH One Another (Romans 15:14; Colossians 3:16)

---

---

WAIT FOR One Another (1 Corinthians 11:33)

---

---

CARE FOR One Another (1 Corinthians 12:25)

---

---

SERVE One Another (Galatians 5:13)

---

---

BEAR WITH One Another (Ephesians 4:2)

---

---

COMFORT One Another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

---

---

BE KIND to One Another (Ephesians 4:32)

---

---

SPEAK AND SUBMIT to One Another (Ephesians 5:19, 20)

---

---

REGARD One Another (Philippians 2:3)

---

---

BE AT PEACE with One Another (1 Thessalonians 5:13)

---

---

CONFESS to One Another (James 5:16)

---

---

PRAY FOR One Another (James 5:16)

---

---

ENCOURAGE One Another (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13)

---

---

*A key to this kind of commitment is found in 2 John 1:5!*

*In what ways do you feel prepared to live this way?*

---

---

---

*In what ways do you feel unprepared or non-committal?*

---

---

---





\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [KINGDOM SEED VIDEO HERE](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

You are familiar with the visible “church” in history and in your world today. But Jesus has quite a different view. He is preparing His followers as a Bride for a future wedding day. He is choosing her out of every century and decade, every country, and every race. She is being prepared as a beautiful bride for her Husband.

Jesus placed high priority on keeping the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40). He encourages us to devote our lives to the work of the Gospel on this earth (John 4:34-38; Matthew 9:37,38). *To Christ this meant to move from being followers to active laborers and then to co-laborers with one another.*

Even Jesus did not choose to “go it alone.” He selected, trained, and commissioned partners in ministry. Though each had different gifting and functions all of the “laborers” were to recognize who accomplished the true work of ministry (1 Corinthians 3:5-9). Christ also told us that these co-laborers would be few and that together we were to pray to the Lord of the Harvest for additional co-workers (John 4). *We are not meant to merely “GO” to church, but we are to “BE” the Church. I am the King’s ambassador in the world, helping others to be reconciled to God through Christ (2 Corinthians 5:11-19).*

## Chosen Lady

**2 TIMOTHY 2:2  
KEEPING THE GREAT  
COMMANDMENT TO THOSE  
YET TO COME:**



**WE FULFILL THE GREAT  
COMMANDMENT IN OUR OWN LIVES &  
BECOME WORKERS IN THE KINGDOM**



**WE LIVE A LIFESTYLE  
THAT SERVES OTHERS**



**WE HELP OTHERS TO  
DO THE SAME FOR OTHERS**

**Matthew 22:36-40**

**Matthew 9:37,38**

**John 4:34-38**

**1 Corinthians 3:5-9**

*Key Questions to ask concerning my personal vision as a part of the King’s Kingdom:*

1. How strongly do I feel about being devoted to the Great Commandment and how is this being [evidenced](#) in my household?

---

---

2. In what ways do I feel I am a worker in the [Harvest](#)? A [co-laborer](#) with others?

---

---

3. What gifts and abilities have I been given to [equip](#) others? To labor? (Ephesians 4)  
How is my household evidencing involvement in the kingdom of the Gospel?

---

---

4. How do I define **my part** in planting and watering? (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)

---

---

5. Who are the **faithful** men and women in my life?

---

---

6. How does a man or woman become an “instrument of **reconciliation**?”

---

---

## Personal Vision

*If we truly care about the fulfillment of the great commandment of Christ we will make ourselves available to the Kingdom lifestyle that Christ lived.*

This diagram distinguishes three areas that make us available to God's Kingdom. *Embracing the vision* refers to a heart that sets itself to know Christ personally. To truly be alive to the Head of the Body energizes the believer, and consequently the life of the Body. By embracing Christ's vision we make decisions that focus the purpose of our lives and place ourselves directly responsive to the desires of Christ. This allows for a mature view of serving Christ that transcends anything we might accumulate or accomplish during our lives on earth.

**PROVERBS 29:18**

### **EMBRACE AND APPLY GOD'S VISION TO MY LIFE**

**Alive to Him!  
A Labor Lifestyle!  
Mature Expectations!**

**1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-27**

### **MAKING CHOICES**

**Keeping Priorities  
Expending Resources  
Taking Initiative**

**ROMANS 12:10-16**

### **MAKING KEY CONNECTIONS**

**Reaching Out  
Functioning as a Team  
Putting People Together**

It is then time to *make choices* that allow us to fulfill God's vision for our lives. This involves taking personal initiative, putting resources to good use, and making and keeping priorities that truly allow us to be available for living out this vision!

The heart to *make connections* with people becomes the proving ground of our faith and our commitment to make our life pleasing to God. A desire to reach people in our own personal sphere of influence necessitates prayer and reliance upon God to impact those around us. This is also accomplished by encouraging the relationships of others and functioning as a team with others who are committed to the same vision.

*Critical Questions concerning embracing of a vision, making connections, and making choices:*

1) Is your **personal** relationship with the Head of the Body enough of a motivation to make you an engaged believer? Why or why not?

---

---

2) Do you feel you have adopted a **labor-effective lifestyle** for the Kingdom of God?

---

---

3) In what ways do you see yourself as one who sets and keeps **priorities**?

---

---

4) What resources are you appropriating to **strengthen** your faith?

---

---

5) In what areas are you taking **initiative** to labor?

---

---

6) In what ways are you **connecting** into the world around you?

---

---

7) How have you learned to **work together** with other believers in connecting with others?

---

---



It falls to every believer in every age to align himself with distinctives that will focus the desire of God in the midst of his or her current culture. More than ever before, the following distinctives need to be kept. Our secularizing society must see a truthful, powerful representation of the Living God. These three distinctives paint a clear picture of a heart that is biblically centered and culturally focused.

#### A LOVING ACCURACY

From Job we learn that those who speak accurately about God are a minority (Job 1:8-12, 20-22; 42:1-9). Those who are faithful to this accuracy are rewarded with uniqueness, purpose, and spiritual blessing. Comprehending and achieving this accuracy involves an active commitment to search the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). It originates from a love and concern for the heart of God embracing the hearts of men (Psalm 119:97-104).

#### A STRONG HOUSEHOLD

Immediately after the giving of the Law and stating the great commandment God saw fit to explain the foundation through which He would honor Himself. This foundational strategy was the family (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). Many talk about family life. A spiritual family, however, requires devoted leadership and the heart of every member to make it work. In Psalm 128:1-6 we find an accurate picture of a truly spiritual household. Becoming this kind of a heart-family is a glaring spiritual need in our culture. It is through becoming experienced men and women in Christ and a devotion to teaching younger men and women in Christ that we focus the longevity of our spiritual impact in the world around us.

#### IMPACT CONTACT

To reach our world for the Gospel takes personal dedication. To sow seeds and water plants with the goal of bearing fruit one must accomplish the work of a farmer. Few farmers who ignore basic farming principles find success. We must lovingly cultivate the work of preparing, planting, and watering. It is up to God to provide the rain!

1 Peter 3:8-16 speaks of the attitudes of faith-farmers. The book of 1 John is filled with this approach to labor. Note all of the times that the phrase love one another is mentioned in the book of 1 John. What do you learn from these two contexts about making an impact upon the unreached?

#### HOW DO THESE DISTINCTIVES LINE UP WITH YOUR PERSONAL VISION FOR YOUR OWN LIFE?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



## Critical Questions about our Labor:

1) How much do you care about giving an [accurate](#) representation of God?

---

---

2) How [motivated](#) are you in learning about God?

---

---

3) Do you feel [equipped to explain](#) God's Word to others?

---

---

4) In what ways does your household evidence the [fruit of the Spirit](#) (Galatians 5) and 1 Corinthians 13 love?

---

---

5) In what ways does Psalm 128:1-6 reflect the [condition](#) of your household?

---

---

6) In what ways are you [best fitted](#) to share your faith?

---

---

7) Give a description of your "[farm](#)" as it relates to sharing the Gospel.

---

---

\*\*\*\*\*

LISTEN TO THE [KINGDOM HARVEST](#) VIDEO HERE.

\*\*\*\*\*

## PLANTING AND WATERING IN THE FIELD OF OUR LABOR

**Read: John 15:1-11 and Psalm 51:10-13**

### **OUTREACH**

*“Individually  
& Together”*

1 Peter 3:15

Acts 2:46,47

### **UPREACH**

*“Knowing God”*

Psalm 27:4,8

### **INREACH**

*“Building Up  
One Another”*

Colossians 3:15-17

*Planting and watering are the life of the Kingdom worker. To truly labor we must devote ourselves to a life-style of sacrifice for the sake of the Gospel. This work includes three often overlapping works of faith.*

*WHAT DO EACH OF THE PASSAGES LISTED ABOVE TEACH ME ABOUT WORKING IN GOD'S FIELD?*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### UPREACH

The experience of personal devotion to God is critical for the laborer. This involves the nourishing relationship spoken of in John 15:1-11. Here we find guidance that can make our planting and watering effective. God receives our praise (Psalm 27:4,8) and is honored and responsive to our requests for kingdom success. This is a cleansing and empowering success that renews the heart of the laborer (Psalm 51:10-13). Christ is the captain of laborers and co-laborers!

### INREACH

It is critical for the laborer to not work alone. A three-fold cord will succeed (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12) and that we are to pray for harvest laborers (Matthew 9:37,38). An honest day's spiritual labor must include a choice to build up others by the use of our gifts and sharing our God experience with one another (Colossians 3:15-17; Ephesians 4:14-16). Laboring together that we find encouragement to persevere!

### OUTREACH

Reaching out to the world around us is critical for the health of the believer and the welfare of the Church, not to mention the obvious benefit to the soul who receives the God-story. We are to work within our individual sphere of influence (1 Peter 3:15) in a manner that is respectful and connecting. We are to share as well in the context of Christian love and personal growth in the Gospel (Acts 2:46, 47).



### *Some Critical Questions about working in God's field:*

1) What kinds of seed am I sowing in my personal relationship with God? Am I growing to know God?

---

---

2) In what specific ways is grateful praise a part of my life?

---

---

3) How does God give me success and the encouragement to persevere?

---

---

4) Whom do I consider my "fellow-workers" in the Gospel and how do we encourage one another?

---

---

5) What are my most effective avenues for sharing my faith and bringing the news of the Kingdom to others?

---

---

6) How can I make time and balance three such demanding areas of labor?

---

---

*Write a paragraph on UPREACH, INREACH, & OUTREACH. Give your conclusion thus far about these three aspects of working in God's field.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

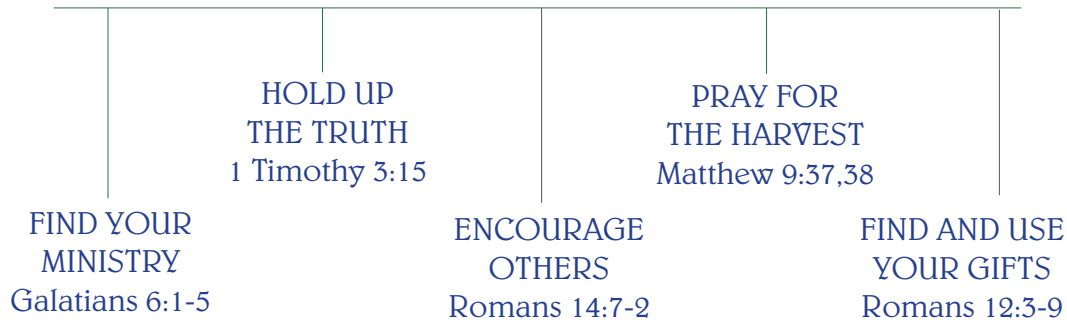
---

---

---

## 2 TIMOTHY 2:2

# THE BODY DISCIPLES HERSELF



Jesus Christ chooses followers. He wants to work in us and through us. The function of a group of followers is to lift up Christ and to be examples in personal devotion. In this way the body of Christ “builds up” itself.

Quality “Follow Me” relationships are crucial in growing the Gospel (2 Timothy 2:2). One important key appears to require associating with faithful men and women who will in turn teach others also. By applying following principles in the context of faithful “brothers and sisters” the church is built up in the likeness of Christ.

Here are five key areas in which the body disciplines itself:

### HOLDING UP THE TRUTH

Christ said, “If I am lifted up I will draw all men to myself.” The Church holds up Her Lord and is intended to be the pillar, support and pinnacle of God's redemptive truth (1 Timothy 3:15). When truth is the standard for our relationships we disciple one another. Ephesians 4:25-32 cuts to the heart of the importance of speaking truth to one another in love. In this way we defeat speculation and disarm ungodly anger and untangle roots of bitterness. Christ-followers cannot afford to succumb to the dangerous trap of discord, and are exhorted by Christ in Matthew 18 to discern the difference between personal preference and truth, and to speak face to face truth with one another. In this way the body disciplines itself in love.

How do you see this dynamic among those with whom you walk your spiritual walk?

---

---

---

---

---

---

## PRAYER FOR THE HARVEST

Often the army of God appears to be undermanned. We are exhorted to pray to the Lord of the Harvest for workers for the Harvest (Matthew 9:37, 38). In our Harvest work, discouragement all too often can become stifling. Elijah experienced this in 1 Kings 19:10,14 when he twice said, "I alone am left." God made it clear that this was not true. In verse 18 He indicates that He will leave 7,000 men who have not bowed to Baal. We need to pray to the Lord of the Harvest to help us not only with workers to join in the work but also to help us recognize those among us He has already sent! In this way the body disciplines itself through prayer for growth.

How do you see this prayer dynamic among those with whom you walk your spiritual walk?

---

---

---

---

---

## YOUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Many rely on culturally outdated approaches to sharing Christ. We must return to authentic strategies as we tell the Good News to others. In the first century this centered around the home or the "household" as the launch-point for the Gospel. Are you focused where your most effective potential for sharing faith truly lies: your own home and your personal sphere of relationships?! Those we meet at work, in our neighborhoods, and at leisure are right in the middle of our sphere of influence.

How do you see this insider among those whom you walk your spiritual walk?

---

---

---

---

---

## CULTURAL AND RELATIONAL RELEVANCE

Peter (a strong personality and certainly a man of definite conviction) was acutely aware of the need for sensitivity in Christ-sharing (1 Peter 3:15). He believed that to impact our "personal sphere" required the attributes of gentleness and respect. All approaches to sharing the Good News that are not love-driven are of no use in penetrating the generation that now populates the earth.

You and I desperately need to move the focus in our generation from "bring them to church" evangelism to "open home and open life" sharing of the hope that rules my life. In this way, the body disciplines itself by assisting new Christ-followers into the Church.

## ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER

It is difficult to find a man or woman who encourages another without motivation for personal gain. Romans 14:7-12 reveals just how accountable we are to God in our relationships with other people. In a world that desperately needs encouragement, we must take the lead and live to build up those around us!

Hebrews 10:23-25 also considers the importance of gathering together to encourage one another and focus our preparation for the return of Christ! *Can a person develop his or her skills to be an encourager? Do you feel that you have encouraging relationships? In what ways do you find yourself being an encourager to others?* When we set ourselves to encourage one another the body builds up itself in love!

*In what ways do you see yourself as able to encourage?*

---

---

---

---

---

## USE YOUR GIFTS AND STRENGTHS

We are to work together for the combined welfare of the Bride of Christ by using our gifts and abilities for the purpose of love!

1 Peter 4:7-11 makes it clear that *employing our gifts* is critical to serving one another which in turn is key to serving Christ! Romans 12:3-9 teaches us the practical aspects of using diverse and complementing gifts for the good of the Gospel. It is very difficult for a group of believers to grow to maturity without spiritually alive and functioning members (Ephesians 4:11-16)!

*In what ways do you employ your gifts?*

---

---

---

---

---

*In what ways do you see others employing their gifts?* When we use our gifts, talents, and abilities for the welfare of other Christ-followers the body disciplines itself in love. When we apply our spiritual gifts in serving those “who do not know,” the opportunity to love is magnified many times!





## THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

Expressed in local gatherings of believers...

The body of Christ is much more than an organization, it is a [living organism](#). Because She is alive and made up of [living stones](#) (1 Peter 2), Her ministry should also be [vibrating](#) with life. This flows out of the grace measured to each of Her God-ordained members. It is unnecessary to exist merely to design programs that focus on meeting people's "needs." Rather, we exist as "churches" for the purpose of honoring God. Any attempt to organize must be based upon the sound principles of body life reflected in the Scriptures. By understanding and applying these principles we can fulfill our individual roles in the Body of Christ and find fulfillment in Christ's command to [love one another](#).

### The Foundation: The Authority of the Son

According to the God-Story there is only one reason that the believer-priest exists: to give Christ pre-eminence in all things (Colossians 1:15-20). All things fall under the umbrella of Christ's authority (Philippians 2:9-16). Authority has been placed in the Son and the Son delegates that authority to various institutions: principalities and powers (both seen and unseen), governments, the Church, and the home.

It is Christ's purpose to [reconcile all things](#) to Himself by His grace. His Lordship is to have pre-eminence over our personal rights and our relationships with one another. [There can be only one King](#) - only one Sovereign. The testimony of Scripture and history cry out that Christ's authority alone brings life to the earth. When mankind exerts and usurps authority only pain and oppression result. If the gathered body of Christ desires to please Him, all of our attempts to organize will reflect this basic truth of Christ's Kingship. This is in direct opposition to the intentions of Satan and the personal kingdom-building of men.

### The Anatomy of Christ's Body

[Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31](#)

Just as this great Body of Christ has a Head and has many members (12), the church is to be the ultimate in diversity and oneness. [Comparison](#) with other members is of no value (15,16). Because God has sovereignly placed us as He chooses, it is our recognition of what God has done in us that should be our focus. God made it this way to break the hold of futility upon our lives. As each of us connects with our God-ordained placement in the Body (and in the world) we lose our selves and find our soul at the same time.

[Pride](#) is the chief tool that Satan uses to keep us from reconnecting with God and one another (21,22). We are meant to have equal care and concern for one another and devote ourselves to being Christ-followers, joyful when God works through any one of us (25,26). This diversity is reflected in the gifts we have been given and is governed by the principle of excellent love (28-31). We become "someone" not by our god-like individualism and isolationism, but by surrendering to the Head and giving ourselves to His body. This was Paul's purpose. This was Christ's purpose. It can bring [true purpose](#) to our lives as well.

## The Attainment of Christ's Body

Read Ephesians 4:1-16

God created us to experience **oneness** with Him and with one another. There is "one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." This oneness is not found in religious organizational attempts and triumphs, but in fulfilling our individual and gathered destinies as we **submit to Christ's authority**. By choosing to love our brother we pursue a path of humility, gentleness, and patience as we show forbearance to one another in love. Grace appears to have been parceled out to each one of us in a specific and personal way (7). God has blessed the body with those who are meant to **equip** saints for works of service (12) so that the body can enjoy the process of being built up. This focus is not pursued by one or two professionals who DO the works of service, but those gifted to EQUIP others for serving others so that we can all grow to maturity (15). It is God's goal that the whole body be fitted and held together by that which **every joint supplies as each part works properly** (15-17). This maturity should fulfill the longing of our heart and take the place of self-centered perspectives - building our own kingdoms rather than the Kingdom of God.

## The Gathering of Christ's Body

Read Colossians 3:12-17; Hebrews 10:24,25

It appears that the body is to **gather** because we belong to God. Not merely for what we can receive but for what we can supply. We are to treat one another the way we have already been treated by God, **forgiving** others because Christ has first forgiven us (13). Rather than **complaining** (as those who have no hope or no understanding of forgiveness) we are to put on a heart of compassion, overlooking and accepting the shortcomings of others. This appears to be something we choose to do - it is not natural for us. We choose to put on love because it is right. This sets us free so the peace of Christ may rule in our hearts (15) and gives us the grace to be thankful. The word of Christ is then free to **richly dwell inside our hearts** and gives us the ability to experience spiritual relationships with one another. Such active involvement in each other's lives eclipses a Sunday relationship and focuses our responsibility to teach and admonish one another. Expressed in word and action (17) this involves the use of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs...resulting in hearts that sing with overflowing thankfulness.

It would be a great disservice to the Scriptures to limit gathering together to a building or certain appointed times. The whole nature of body life is that we make room for one another in our hearts, not merely in our schedules. **Hebrews 10:23-25 ties gathering together with not wavering**. We are to give careful thought and consideration to stimulating one another to love and good deeds, and are warned that a failure to do so will result in negative impact upon our faith. We have been delivered from isolationism and we are to be active about our faith and useful to others. It is very difficult to function as a body without gathering. God has designed the body so that by supplying love to one another, we are supplied in return. **After all, the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many!**

## The Activity of Christ's Body

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11

Gifts of body members are given for the **welfare** of the church and fall into two basic categories: speaking gifts and the serving gifts. We are to engage in **serving** one another in whatever way we have been gifted. Apparently this involves **hospitality** (9) and a choice to remain committed in our love for one another (8). In so doing we do not squander our gifts for futile purposes, but invest them to **multiply the kingdom of God!**





# PRINCIPLED LIVING

---

*A Consideration of Life Priorities!*

*"...Therefore be careful how you walk,  
not as unwise men, but as wise, making the  
most of your time, because the days are evil  
So then do not be foolish, but understand  
what the will of the Lord is!"*

*- Ephesians 5:15-17*

**If our lives belong to God,  
shouldn't this include all of our time,  
all our talents, and all our treasures?**

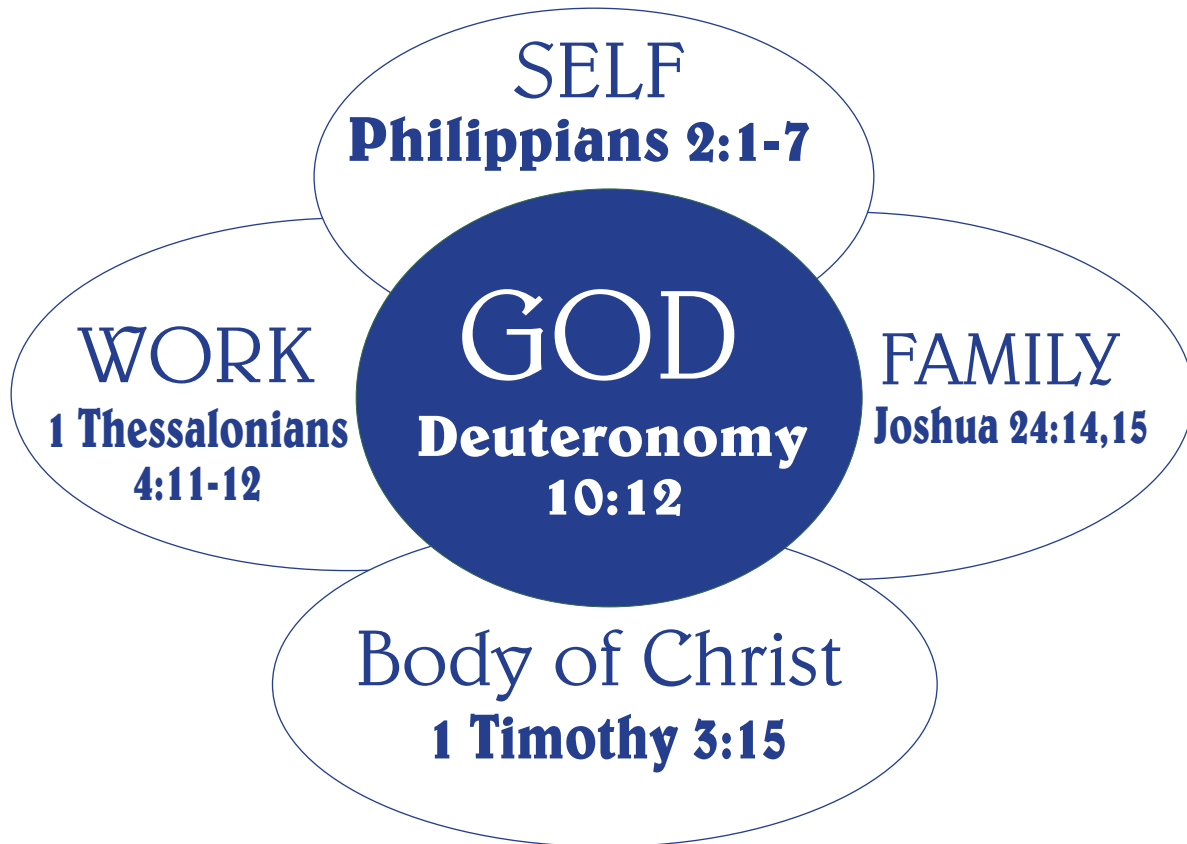
\*\*\*\*\*

**[LISTEN TO THE PRINCIPLED LIVING VIDEO HERE.](#)**

\*\*\*\*\*



*An integrated view of Life Priorities!*



Priorities are often viewed in descending order of importance. God first, family second; etc. A more biblical perspective is reflected above. *God comes first*. He desires to be #1 in our marriage, our family life, our work life, our neighborhood; etc. *Christ has come to have first place in everything*. It is our quest to make what is already true in heaven true in our hearts and in our daily lives!

Read the “God Passage” found in Deuteronomy 10:12.

Is this passage currently reflected in my life? How is it not reflected?

How do I feel about having this kind of relationship with God?

---

---

---

---

---

# MY INTENTIONS: PREPARING TO PLAN PRIORITIES

Christian priorities often become hazy in the turmoil and tests of life. We live in a day and age where planning and its subsequent follow-through are difficult. *We are continually bombarded with “good things” and activities that vie for our time and seemingly good things that can often become enemies of the best!*

Throughout Scripture it is apparent that God desires that we redeem our time despite the adverse circumstances of life. Take this opportunity to reflect upon [Ephesians 5:15-17](#) (below). Our prayer is that through proper planning and execution of priorities each of us will be better able to experience the outcome found in [Matthew 25:21](#)!

What is taught from each of the following passages that gives us insight into the importance of preparation, planning, and focusing our lives?

Proverbs 4:20-27 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proverbs 11:14 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proverbs 13:12 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proverbs 16:3,9 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proverbs 20:5 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Proverbs 29:18 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*What does the following passage tell us is key to living a life of godliness?*

“...Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is!” - Ephesians 5:15-17



# BEING A CHRIST-FOLLOWER

Here are some selected passages for each area of priority.  
What is God teaching us in each category?

## What does the Lord desire for us?

Deuteronomy 10:12

2 Corinthians 11:3

Romans 12:1

Micah 6:8

1 Peter 2:9,10

Matthew 6:24

John 3:30

John 4:23,24; Proverbs 3:1-2

Luke 17:10

Leviticus 11:44,45

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## How should I be viewing myself?

Philippians 2:12,13

Luke 9:61,62

Titus 2:14

James 4:17

Ephesians 3:16-19

2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16,17

1 Peter 4:1,2; Hebrews 12:12-15

Hebrews 13:7-19

Philippians 4:8

Proverbs 4:13

1 Timothy 4:14-16

Matthew 10:8

Luke 6:27-38

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What are God's desires for my family?

Ephesians 5:15-33

Ephesians 6:4

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Psalms 127

Colossians 3:18-21

1 Timothy 3:4,5

Proverbs 22:6

Philippians 2:3-5

1 Timothy 1:5

Proverbs 5:15-21

Song of Solomon 8:6,7

1 Samuel 8:1-3

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What should be my commitment in and to the Church?

2 Corinthians 8:5

Romans 15:5-7

Romans 12:3-8

Romans 12:9-21

Romans 13:8-14

Romans 14:1-23

Acts 2:42-47

Philippians 2:3-5

1 Peter 5:1-11

Ephesians 4:11-16

1 Timothy 3:15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What are my priorities in my vocation (or at school)?

Ephesians 6:5-8

Colossians 3:23-24, 4:1

*The entire book of Proverbs!*

Luke 6:27-38

Genesis 3:17-19

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# PLANNING PRIORITIES

What is God saying to me about my priorities?

*Goals are overarching things to attain that relate to overall meaning in life. Objectives are specific steps to get us to our greater goals.*



## **My Current PERSONAL Goals:**

Pertinent passages:

GOAL \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **My Current GOD Goals:**

Pertinent passages:

GOAL \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**My Current FAMILY Goals:**

Pertinent passages:

GOAL \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**My WORK AND SCHOOL Goals:**

Pertinent passages:

GOAL \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





**My Current KINGDOM-GROWTH Goals:**

Pertinent passages:

GOAL \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



# *How to Plan & Follow-through in Strength!*

CHECK THESE OUT!

What do they teach you about pulling off a principled life?

Strong in Spirit! Luke 1:80

---

---

Strong in Wisdom! Luke 2:40

---

---

Strong in Spiritual Character! Luke 14:25-35

---

---

Strong in Spiritual Insight! Romans 4:20

---

---

Strong in Spiritual Fruit! Romans 15:1-15

---

---

Strong in Self-Weakness! 2 Corinthians 12:9,10; Hebrews 11:32-34

---

---

Strong in Spiritual Warfare! Ephesians 6:10

---

---



***Young men are to be strong and wise!***  
***Older men are to be wise and strong!***

1 John 2:12-14

*In what do you identify with each analogy below?*

*The Farmer is Faithful.*

He is faithful to Christ Himself in Word and prayer!

He is faithful to Christ's Body in Word and deed!

He makes himself specifically accountable for the hope within him!

---

---

---

---

*The Athlete is Teachable.*

He is willing and ready to learn and respond to truth even at personal cost!

His goal is to become mature in the truth and to teach others how to run!

---

---

---

---

*The Soldier is Available.*

He prioritizes his life to allow for drastic spiritual focus!

He then makes himself available for the kingdom of God through his own household, his neighbors, and his local gathering of believers!

---

---

---

---



## **The Holy Spirit!**

*Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'*

*"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

*- John 3:5-8*

**The Holy Spirit is the breath of God.  
He is living inside of us to lead us to true freedom.**

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [HOLY SPIRIT VIDEO HERE](#).  
\*\*\*\*\*

# Living by the Spirit

When Jesus ascended to the Father after His resurrection from the dead He sent the Holy Spirit to fulfill a very important role in our hearts. There had never been a need for the "Comforter" because the lost world had never known the presence of the Savior before. The Holy Spirit is intimately involved in revealing God to us, as well as guiding us into lives that will honor our Father. He is our companion in designing and living a Kingdom life that will please Jesus and set us free!

Look up each of these references and note them in your bible. What conclusions are you coming to about the Holy Spirit's role in your spiritual life?!

Romans 8:1-39

## **Operating by the Spirit**

1 Thessalonians 5:19

## **Do not quench the Spirit**

Ephesians 4:30

## **Do not grieve the Spirit**

2 Corinthians 10:3-7

## **Tearing Down Lofty things**

Galatians 5:22-24

## **The Evidence of the Spirit**

## **The Fruit of the Spirit**

Galatians 5

Love

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Self control

Faithfulness

Gentleness

*These indicate spirituality!*

## **The Fruit of Wisdom!**

James 3...the gentleness  
of wisdom!

Pure, peaceable,  
gentle, reasonable,  
full of mercy and good fruits,  
unwavering,  
without hypocrisy.

## **Disciplines of the Spirit**

The Word

Prayer

Fellowship

Worship

Insider living

*These indicate maturity!*

# The Role of the Spirit in my Life

*Check out these passages and think about ways you are experiencing transformation!*

## **The Spirit: disclosing God's voice to me:**

- It is a familiar voice..... John 10:27-29
- It is a strong, expectant voice..... Hebrews 12:7-11
- It is a gentle, quiet voice..... 1 Kings 19:9-14
- It is a comforting, honest voice..... Matthew 16:17-19; John 21:15-18
- It is a King's voice..... Revelation 1:12-16
- It is a friend's voice..... John 15:12-17

*How can I learn to distinguish and listen to my Father's voice?*

*Through quietness, deep understanding of the God-Story, wise counsel, and giving, truth-speaking relationships.*

## **The Spirit active and faithful in binding my brokenness and the brokenness of others:**

- In dismantling personal strongholds..... 2 Corinthians 10:3-6
- In healing my past hurts..... Psalm 27:7-14
- In teaching me a heart for others..... 1 John 4:19-21
- In supervising my personal growth..... Philippians 1:6

*Do I believe that God is able and willing to lovingly go with me where no one else can go?*

## **The Spirit fighting evil with me in the war for my soul:**

- Putting on the full armor of God..... Ephesians 6:10-20
- Teaching me Satan's schemes..... 1 Peter 5:6-11
- Equipping me to fight courageously..... 2 Corinthians 6:7
- Giving me spiritual discernment..... James 1:5

*Do I believe that I am in a life and death battle over my soul and others?*

## **The Spirit helping me to live wisely and to walk with the wise:**

- The companionship of friends..... Proverbs 18:24
- My choices for life input from co-workers, media, etc..... Philippians 4:8
- Leadership of teachers and shepherds..... Hebrews 13:7,17
- Partners in kingdom building..... 1 Corinthians 3:9

*Are my companionship choices for media, meditation, and relationships wise choices?*

*In what ways am I experiencing transformation?*



*Spiritual gifts are given to each person. They are activated or energized by the Spirit when we choose to be obedient to God and fulfill His commandment to love one another. Then our gifts are applied to our “community” of relationships to build up others in the faith! Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and 1 Peter 4 are central teaching about spiritual gifts.*

## SPIRITUAL GIFTS THINKSHEET:

Our **field** is where our lives touch others as we choose to place God first and follow His command to “go.” The **threshing floor** is the gathering of believers where our gifts are shared with others and special challenges and needs are addressed. **Co-laboring** is how we join both in the field and at the floor with others to be more than we can be alone! Read John 4:34-45 and Luke 10:1-27. What do you know of your own spiritual gifts as well as of those with whom you walk “in Christ?”

Gift:	In the Field:	At the Floor:	As Co-laborers:
Administration			
Apostleship			
Discerning Spirits			
Evangelist			
Exhortation			
Faith			
Giving			
Healing			
Helps			
Knowledge			
Mercy			
Miracles			
Pastor-Shepherd			
Prophecy			
Ruling-Leadership			
Serving			
Teaching			
Tongues/interpretation			
Wisdom			

### ASK FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SPIRITUAL GIFTING ISSUES.

*The way we relate to God is inseparably linked with how we relate to one another. Knowing and using your gifts and being aware of the gifts of others can make us more effective for the glory of God, inasmuch as God made us to be interdependent before Him. Explore your gifts with those whom you walk through life!*





## **Kingdom Leadership!**

*“Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*

*- Matthew 18:3-4*

Kingdom leadership comes through servanthood.  
In what ways does Jesus want me to engage?

\*\*\*\*\*  
LISTEN TO THE [KINGDOM LEADERSHIP VIDEO HERE.](#)  
\*\*\*\*\*

# How do I become useful to the King?

God may tolerate “big shot” egos but He delights in humility of heart.

John 3:30; Micah 6:8; James 4:6

True leadership is true humility.

Is this something you are able to apply as a maturing disciple-maker?

My weaknesses are my greatest assets.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 5:7,8

True leadership embraces weakness and encounters God.

Are you able to accept your weaknesses as God’s tool for your usefulness to Him?

The King’s Kingdom is one of shelter.

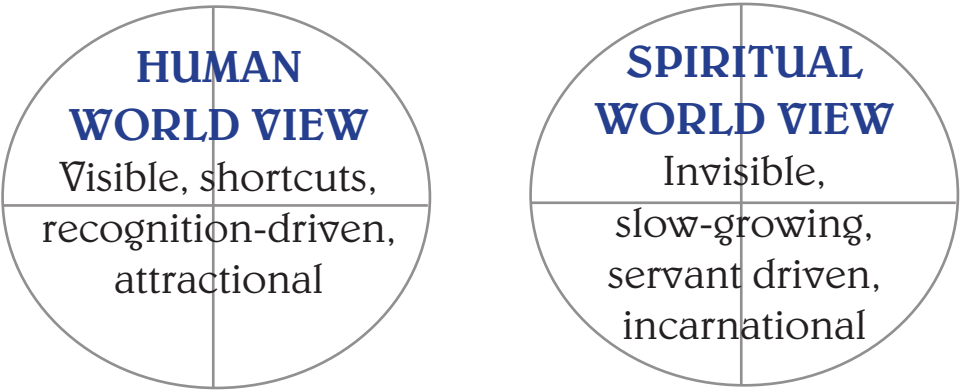
Mark 4:30-32

True leadership serves the sheltered growth of others.

Do you feel you are on the road to building a life that shelters others?

My small world is God’s big world (Matthew 25:21)

Which diagram best reflects your world view?



“Church” is only as effective as our connections to Kingdom DNA (small world). So a Kingdom LEADER is one who humbles himself or herself before God and men, embraces weakness, provides shelter, and understands the King’s heart. He or she rejects the idea of being called a leader: Matthew 23:8-12.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR OWN WORLD VIEW?

---

---

---

---

# What is a Kingdom Leader?

What do you admire in a leader? (character, personality, approach to life, credibility)

---

## WHICH OF THESE PASSAGES INSPIRE YOUR KINGDOM IMAGINATIONS AND WHY?

Matthew 4:17; 5; 7:21; 8:11; 11:11; 13; 16:19; 18:1-3; 18:23; 19:14-23; 20:21; 23:13; 25:1

---

## THE POWER OF STORY IS UNLOCKED WHEN:

- we have belief in a BIGGER story
- we embrace significance and personal worth
- we recognize the VALUE of our personal story
- we see our PLACE in the meta-story (Fourthstream.com can help with this)

## WHAT IS A KINGDOM LEADER?

Simply put, a Kingdom leader is a faith leader. He or she prays, investigates, understands, translates, pursues, and waits for the Kingdom to materialize - and then joins in!



## THE CHOICE TO ENGAGE

There are four great God-themes of engagement: Pure Heart, Know God, Do Kindness, and Grow Life. Each finds root in His call to “Love the Lord your God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength - and love our neighbor as we love ourself.”

## WHAT IS THE DEPTH OF YOUR DESIRE TO BECOME A SPIRITUAL LEADER?

---

## WHAT MAKES ME A “LEADER” ONCE I HAVE CHOSEN TO ENGAGE?

Learning to listen to as well as whisper to the soul.

- Cultivating a Listening Heart (vs. isolated living)
- Patient engagement and relational farming (vs. self-preoccupation)
- Storytelling (learning/internalizing is superior to accumulating knowledge)
- The Sense of Wonder and Awe (rather than a submission to the mundane/no supernatural)
- Giving Extraordinary Love (vs. self-interest love)
- Illuminate how God is connecting and working (vs. a preoccupation with tower building)
- The Centrality and power of Jesus (over and above religion and or philosophy)

## WHICH OF THE ABOVE CHARACTERISTICS ARE MOST TRUE OF ME?

---





## Where do I go from here!?

Read Luke 9:18-27

What does Jesus want from you?

---

---

What are your personal barriers to offer this kind of heart back to Him?

---

---

Who are your companions who encourage you to live for nobler ideals?

---

---

*This book was prepared so that you could have a process to evaluate and encourage yourself in living a Kingdom life. It also gives you a beginning and ending point to prepare someone else for the journey - perhaps a co-worker, neighbor, family-member, or even your own children.*

### REMEMBER:

*"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." - John 6:63*

*"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." - John 8:31,32*

*Calling them to Himself, Jesus said to them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great men exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you, "but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life a ransom for many."*

*- Mark 10:42-45*

*"If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul?" - Matthew 16:24-26*





*Fourthstream.com*  
MORE RESOURCES!

[MyCuriousJourney.com](http://MyCuriousJourney.com)

[MyStrongHome.com](http://MyStrongHome.com)

[TheGodStory.com](http://TheGodStory.com)

[Streamsbook.com](http://Streamsbook.com)

The Eight Great Epochs in the Fabric of Time