

Treasures Of Truth

- *Studies for personal spiritual growth.*
- *How to deal with addictions and besetting sins.*
 - *How to get along with difficult people.*
- *How the power of the Word of God will equip you.*

Written by Dr. Edward Watke Jr.

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Revival In The Home Ministries
3206 Woodhaven Ct.
Augusta, GA 30909

706-737-5762
rithejw@earthlink.net

www.watke.org

Preface

As I work with many people in an ongoing counseling situation I find that many are hurting and do not seem to find answers. I have been burdened that I can help people find the answers that bring healing for hurt, wholeness for brokenness, joy for pain, and beauty for ashes. In a thrilling way, the Lord desires to heal us in the midst of the failures, heartaches, and pains. Often these come from devastating events and sinful practices from which every Christian ought to desire to be set free.

I think that this series of studies will bring individuals to an understanding of God's answers and a recognition that God's Word does indeed meet the needs of their hearts and lives.

It is my thought that the person studying through these lessons may desire to skip around, or first do those lessons that may help them the most. The lessons are not given in a particular order for a special reason. I think each of the thirteen lessons is vital and would help any newly saved person as well as someone who has been saved for many years.

The lessons are the result of sharing these truths with many individuals in counseling situations. May the Lord bless these to your heart and life and give you many thrilling answers to the hurts and pains we so often face from ongoing failure in our lives or those who are near us.

-- Dr. Edward Watke Jr.
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Table of Contents

Lesson # 1	Growing In Righteousness	pg. 4
Lesson # 2	Clearing The Conscience	pg. 8
Lesson # 3	Why We Feel As We Feel and Do As We Do	pg. 13
Lesson # 4	God's Provision Through His Word	pg. 20
Lesson # 5	Bringing About Changes We Need	pg. 25
Lesson # 6	Some Purposes of Good Communication	pg. 32
Lesson # 7	Some Principles of Good Communication	pg. 37
Lesson # 8	Experiencing and Giving Forgiveness	pg. 41
Lesson # 9	Walking In Truth	pg. 45
Lesson # 10	Prayer Is God's Provision For Us	pg. 49
Lesson # 11	Getting Along With A Difficult Person And Solving Problems	pg. 54
Lesson # 12	Provision Through The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit	pg. 60
Lesson # 13	Overcoming Besetting Sins That Defeat Us	pg. 64

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Growing In Righteousness!

One of my aunts, a lady skilled in crafts, found a lovely piece of wood. Then she hunted around the country in western Nebraska until she found an old abandoned church building. In this building she found some lovely stained glass windows. Taking the glass home and then working with her router she created a very lovely large plaque upon which she had inscribed Isaiah 40:10. Above the verse she created two small indented areas like church windows which she filled with the crushed glass. The result is a very lovely plaque that I greatly cherish.

In much the same way, God wants to work in our lives. He wants to mold us, make us, form us, and create in us a beauty of His making. To do this He must be given the right of way to remove what He desires to remove, to cut where He needs to cut, to drill where He needs to drill, and to have free course to make us more like the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Godliness Through Discipline, Dr. Jay E. Adams states: *“There are only two kinds of life: the feeling-motivated life of sin oriented toward fulfilling self, and the commandment-motivated life of holiness oriented toward godliness.”*

Godliness is the chief goal of the Christian life. Only as we are godly will we be able to be fruitful in soul winning and exhibit all the other fruits which ought to be in our lives. The Bible shows us how to please God by being, doing, saying, and feeling what He desires. The application of the truths of this lesson can help you build your life for God.

I. GOD PROMISES US THAT WE CAN CHANGE.

1. Read God's promise in I Corinthians 10:13, and copy it below.

2. When Christ was tempted, what was His source of strength as He answered Satan? Do we have the same source? (Read Matthew 4:2-11.) _____

3. Read the following passages and note the three sources of temptation which we must face if we are to build a righteous life.

a. James 1:13,14 _____

b. I John 2:15, 16 _____

c. I Peter 5:8; II Corinthians 11: 13, 14 _____

4. Notice four ways in which God's Word is profitable so that we can overcome sinful habits (II Timothy 3:16, 17).
- a. _____ b. _____
- c. _____ d. _____
5. What did Christ say should be our attitude if we are to grow in Christ likeness and in righteousness? (See Matthew 5:6) _____
- _____
- What did Christ promise in Matthew 5:6? _____
- _____
6. According to the next two verses how should we view our lives as Christians
- a. II Corinthians 5:17 _____
- b. Romans 6:11 _____
7. What does God promise in Romans 8:28? _____
- _____
8. What is God trying to do in our lives according to Romans 8:29? _____
- _____
9. Read Romans 7:18-25 and 8:1,2.
- a. Who made it possible for us to walk after the Spirit ? _____
- _____
- b. We are to be free from the law of sin and death or the working principle of sin in our bodies. In our daily walk with Christ what is possible? (Romans 8:2) _____
- _____
10. In what way are we able to identify with Christ?(Note Galatians 2:20; 5:24.)
- a. 2:20 _____
- b. 5:24 _____
11. Romans 8:10: "And if _____ be in you, the body is _____ because of _____; but the Spirit is _____ because of _____."
12. According to I John 4:4, why is it possible for us to have victory and to exercise our lives unto righteousness? _____
- _____

II. GOD COMMANDS US TO CHANGE.

1. What three words do you find in Ephesians 4:22-24 and Colossians 3:8-14 that tells us to change? (_____ and _____ on)

2. What does God command in I Peter 1:15,16 ? _____

3. What does God desire of us according to Romans 12:1? _____

4. What negative action does God ask of us according to Romans 12:2 ? _____
_____, and positively _____
_____? What are we to prove in our daily living? (*that _____ ,
and _____, and _____ will of God*)
5. What is the command given us in Romans 6:12 that shows us that we are to change? _____
6. What is the command in Romans 6:13? _____

7. What three things does Paul tells us to do in Ephesians 4:22-24?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
8. What is the fruit of the Spirit according to Galatians 5:22,23? _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____, _____,
_____.
9. What does Ephesians 5:9 teach us about personal fruit? _____

10. If we are to change, what are we to pursue according to I Timothy 6:11? _____

III. THE CHANGE GOD COMMANDS REQUIRES DISCIPLINE.

We may wish for instant godliness, but that will never happen. Change comes only through consistent effort. *We are to exercise ourselves toward righteousness* as a person who exercises strenuously for the sake of health or as an athlete.

Such exercise also demands discipline which is sustained *daily effort*. The word Paul used in I Timothy 4:7 is the one from which the English word gymnastics has been derived. It takes years of regular practice to achieve athletic skill and it will take consistent self-discipline in order for change to take place in our lives. Only in this way can we have practical godliness or righteousness.

1. How does godliness develop according to the following verses?

- a. I Timothy 4:7 _____
- b. Hebrews 5:11-14 _____

- c. Hebrews 12:1, 2,11 _____

God does not expect us to be perfect but He does expect us to be growing toward Christ likeness, toward change and godliness. We need to exert sustained daily effort as we apply the Word of God toward change.

2. Consider and write down several areas in which you need to change.

3. List the steps that are necessary to accomplish your goal. _____

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Clearing The Conscience!

Paul wrote that he had a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men. (See Acts 24:16.) If we are to grow in Christ-likeness, have a blessed marriage and fulfilling personal relationships with others, we must deal with personal sin and failure. Far too often we continue in our failure, suffer emotionally from our guilt, continue to hurt others, and do not know the peace of a cleansed heart and life.

Our old way of treating sin must change. It is too easy to be like Adam and Eve (Genesis 3) and practice the blame game. The Genesis three kind of person runs from tree to tree, hides, blame shifts, rationalizes, and tries to cover over sin so that God and others cannot see it. God's way is to grow in transparency and openness. *We must walk in the light as He is in the light* which means to walk in total openness. (See I John 1:7.) To walk in the light of the Word of God and deal with sin properly is to bring about a clearing of the conscience and to remove guilt by confession, repentance, and restitution.

God expects the believer to experience growth, not perfection. Since we have the old selfish thought patterns, as well as the new nature, we still sin. Every selfish attitude, thought, word, deed, and habit is sin. Too often we continue to practice our sinful ways.

If we are to grow, then we must learn how to rebound from sin, and have victory over the practice of constant sinning. And we must learn the way that God has given to clear the conscience, to stay in fellowship, and to continue to grow in grace.

I. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF DEALING WITH GUILT GOD'S WAY.

1. As you read Psalm 32:3-4, list three results of keeping silent about sin.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

2. List at least five good results from dealing with sin and guilt biblically.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____

3. What does God say regarding sin in James 4:2-4?
vs. 2 _____
vs. 3 _____
vs. 4 _____
4. What is God's attitude toward the proud person who doubtless does not confess his sin? (James 4:6b) _____
5. What does God want of us according to James 4:8-10? (List a number of things.) vs. 8 _____
vs. 9 _____
vs. 10 _____
6. As you read Psalm 51:10, what did David ask of the Lord? _____

7. Reading Psalm 51:12, 13, what two things did David expect **after** his sin was dealt with properly?
a. _____
b. _____
8. James 5:15, 16 implies that one cause of a believer's sickness may be _____
_____ (It is not that all illness is due to unconfessed sin, but sometimes sin causes illness.)

II. UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF REPENTANCE

We need to understand what repentance does not mean. It is not simply sorrow. Some have supposed that repentance simply means having remorse about sin and the web of complications that it has caused. Often people are very sorrowful, depressed over their wrong and seemingly repentant, but they never change. Did they truly repent?

Paul carefully distinguished between godly sorrow which brings repentance, and the sorrow of the world, which brings death. (See II Corinthians 7:10.)

There are several reasons why a person may show remorse, or the sorrow of the world.

1. He may simply be sorry he was caught and others know about it.
2. He may be sorry he is causing others pain, heartache, and sorrow.

3. He may be sorry that he cannot continue in his sin peacefully.
4. He may be sorry that his great plans for doing his thing did not work out to fulfill his sinful feelings and desires.

It is interesting that Judas faced his wrong against Christ. But what did he do about his sorrow? Was it godly sorrow unto repentance? What did he do instead? (See Matthew 27:3-5)

What Does True Repentance Mean?

1. The word repent simply means to change ones direction or to turn around and to go the opposite direction. Repentance is a change of mind, will, emotions, and direction concerning sin, self and God. We must change our minds about our sin and the wrong we have committed.
2. Repentance involves being determined to turn away from the patterns or habits of sin we have been living.
 - a. Therefore it involves understanding that the sin hurts a Holy God and being genuinely sorry that we did it. How did each of these persons express the meaning of repentance? (Remember: All sin is, first of all, against God.)
 - David in Psalm 51:14-17 _____

 - Paul in II Corinthians 7:9, 10 _____

 - Christ in Matthew 5:3, 4 _____

 - b. Repentance also involves hating our sin and forsaking it through Christ's power. What do the following passages say regarding forsaking sin?
 - Matthew 3:8 _____
 - Proverbs 23:13 _____
 - Acts 26: 20 _____
 - c. Repentance involves humbling ourselves and surrendering our wills to serve God with all our hearts. (See Acts 9:6.)

Repentance itself is the gift of God. (See Acts 5:31.) God can give such a gift because Christ has already paid the price for our forgiveness on Calvary's cross. We do not deserve the privilege to get right with the Lord. God's goodness ought to lead us to repentance. Though we do not deserve it we can appropriate it or claim it.

III. UNDERSTANDING THE STEPS TO CLEARING THE CONSCIENCE

There must be an agreement with God about our sin! If we do not agree with God, and like David, see that our sin is first of all against a Holy God, we will probably do little about it. (Study Psalm 51.)

1. According to I John 1:9, what is the Christian to do when he has sinned?

2. The word, **confess**, means to **say the same thing**, or in other words to be in agreement with God about the sin. (Circle the right answers from the following list which you think would be a true biblical confession.)

"Lord, forgive me. You know I just could not help it. I would like to be different. "

• *"Lord, you know I don't know why I did it; I was just careless, Lord."*

• *"Please forgive me. You know I did it because of the way so-and-so treated me"*

• *"Lord, I had no excuse. I see how wrong I was. Please forgive me. "*

• *"Lord, I will try to do better next time, I just wasn't myself today. "*

• *"Forgive me, for I have sinned against you."*

• *"Lord, I hate my sin, oh please, give me victory over it and cleanse me just now for I admit my sin is terrible."*

3. What did David say about his sin in Psalm 51:3, 4, 14-17 (List some statements) _____

There must be a thorough confession to God and to man against whom we have sinned.

1. What are we to do when our sin has caused a break in our fellowship with another person? (Matthew 5:23, 24; Luke 17: 1-3) _____

2. What two things does God expect according to Proverbs 28:13? _____
and _____ shall have mercy.

God expects us to make restitution or to make things right. Notice in the following verses what may result from our failure to make restitution and solve problems with other believers against whom we have sinned.

1. Matthew 5:23 (When should it be done?) _____

2. James 5:16 (What can be affected?) _____

3. I Peter 3:7 (What can be hindered?) _____

Consider the following statements and decide which ones contain statements of genuine restitution. (Circle the one (s) which apply.)

• *"The other person really does not know about it because I was only thinking it and I never said a word. "*

• *"But he hurt me also, so I don't see why I have to go to him. "*

• *"If I do go, it won't make any difference. "*

- "I will go to him immediately and get it right. "
- "Oh, he probably has forgotten about it by now. "
- "I know that there is no need to ask, he won't forgive me anyhow. "

God also expects us to change for without change we will remain the same. True repentance demands that we work at change. If we are to clear our conscience and truly have abiding victory over sin, we must keep working at change.

Consider the following statements from the pen of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer:

"True confession is the expression of a very real repentance, or change of mind, which turns from sin. This is the exact opposite of becoming accustomed to the sin, or becoming careless about it. This very revelation (of how to be restored) is given, we are told, not to encourage or license us to sin, but rather that we sin not (be not sinning). (See I John 2:1-2.) According to the Scriptures and human experience, the believer's safety in the faithfulness and justice of the Father and the advocacy and propitiation of the Son is the greatest incentive for a holy life. It is clearly revealed that God has, by other and sufficient means, guarded against all careless sinning on the part of those whom He has eternally saved through the merit of His Son. "

1. What great truths are spoken of in I John 2:3-6 immediately after he dealt with the problem of sin in I John 1:5-2:1?
 - a. I John 2:3 _____
 - b. I John 2:4 _____
 - c. I John 2:5 _____
 - d. I John 2:6 _____
2. Remember God says in Proverbs 28:13 that he who covers his sin will not prosper.
3. Reading Ephesians 4: 22-24, what three things does Paul say must take place if we are to bring about change?
 - a. vs. 22 _____

 - b. vs. 23 _____

 - c. vs. 24 _____

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Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Why We Feel As We Feel and Do As We Do!

Introduction:

I. CONSIDER THE BASIS AND BACKGROUND OF FEELINGS OR EMOTIONS:

Feelings are largely produced as seen in the following progression. As you move from left to right each builds on the other. This does not mean that feelings or emotions are not a part of all the other aspects, but I believe that emotions or feelings are primarily produced by the programming, self-talk and attitudes. I think that in the final analysis, behavior is largely the product of the outworking of the first four!

Programming----> Self Talk (or beliefs) ----> Attitudes---> Emotions---> Behavior
(feelings)

1. **We all have past programming which can be either good or bad programming.** Programming includes all the significant things that have happened to us. This includes the **events, circumstances and people** that have impacted our lives either in the past or in the present and either for good or bad. *Our programming has impact on our beliefs and our self-talk.* Programming is primarily produced by our own habits and patterns of sinful doing. We practice sinful habits until they become a consistent pattern in our daily living. From the time we were small children we built patterns of responses in our lives. This has such a dramatic effect upon our lives that we build our own programming as we would program a computer by what we put in it.
 - a. Consider David's programming or pattern of response as seen when he was willing to face Goliath (I Samuel 17:15-47). What had David built into his life that made him ready to face Goliath?
 - b. What kind of child (or teen) was David when Samuel sought a person to anoint as the next king after God had rejected Saul? What do you see in I Samuel 16:1-13 (Note especially vss 11,12.)
 - c. Why could Paul and Silas sing at mid-night in the Philippian jail with their backs bleeding? What had they built into their lives that would have given them this response? What do you think was their self-talk as you read Acts 16?
2. **We self-talk or evaluate almost everything of significance that takes place in our lives.** We talk to ourselves in the inner mind and heart about events, circumstances, and people that are a part of our lives. Much of the time our self talk is made up of a belief system of lies. Much of the time our self-talk, belief system and our self-talk lies guide our attitudes; we do much self-talking about our beliefs whether they be good or bad.

a. What does the Word of God say about truth in the following portions?

- II John 1 _____
- II John 2 _____
- II John 4 _____
- III John 1 _____
- III John 3 _____
- John 8:32 _____
- Ephesians 6:14 _____

b. As you read John 8:44 write down all the significant things about Satan as the *father of lies*. _____

What does that mean in the light of Genesis 3 and the temptation of Eve? Did Eve speak truth? _____ Did the Devil speak truth through the serpent? _____

c. On the basis of all the above, what do you think is our greatest need? _____
_____ Do you think our inner self-talk is made up more of lies or the thoughts of what is true? _____

3. Our attitudes are largely produced by our programming and inner self-talk, and then generally our attitudes guide our feelings or emotions. Almost universally we automatically build our attitudes through our self-talk about the events, circumstances, or people about which we are concerned.

a. As you read Malachi 2:11-16 carefully, what was it that God spoke about that we are to carefully guard? "... *therefore take heed to your _____ and let none deal _____ against the wife of his youth.* " (vs 15) "*therefore take to your _____ ; that ye deal not _____ .*" (vs 16). God is saying that we are to take heed to our spirit or attitude that we deal not treacherously. Where does the inner spirit or attitude come from? It has to come from our inner mediation or self-talk and our motivations.

b. Notice Hebrews 4:12 and think about the fact that the Word of God was given to help us make discernment of the _____ and intents of the _____.

4. Then our feelings (or emotions) are largely produced by attitudes and beliefs. Our self-talk is bound to have an effect upon our feelings or emotions. Our emotions or feelings do not come upon us like the wind. If it was like the wind we could not tell where it comes from nor where it is going and we would not be accountable. Emotions for the most part are produced by other things. **For example:** If we think positive, joyous, victorious thoughts based on the Word of God our emotions or feelings are also effected. If we think negative, censorious, grudging, complaining, griping thoughts our emotions are produced by what we are thinking.

Write a **phrase** from the following verses that proves the power of our thoughts upon our lives: (Or a condensation of the thoughts.)

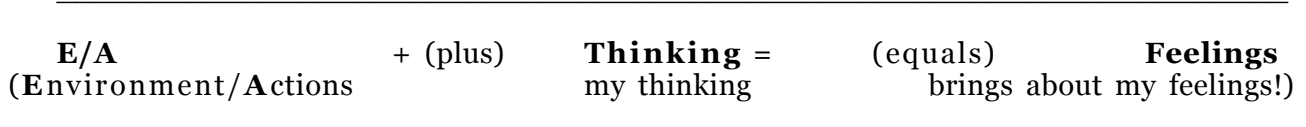
- Proverbs 23:7 _____

- Isaiah 23:6 _____
- Matthew 12:33-36 _____
- Matthew 15:18-20 _____
- Romans 8:5-8 _____
- Romans 12:2 _____
- Ephesians 4:23 _____

5. In conclusion these four things -- programming, self-talk, attitudes, and feelings or emotions -- have a great bearing upon our behavior.

II. CONSIDER A PRACTICAL FORMULA TO HELP US ANALYZE OUR SITUATION

We see (below) that our Environment (events, circumstances) or Actions of others plus our Thinking bring about our Feelings or emotions.



A thorough study of Psalm 42 and 43 will show the truth of this. At this point I would encourage you to read these two chapters a number of times. Look for and write down the events that must have taken place -- where the psalmist found himself, how he felt about his condition, what he wished was different, and both his negative and positive statements as he grasped the truth.

1. Our feelings are consequences. They are the product of other causes. Feelings are the results of the our thinking about events, people and circumstances. Feelings are not like the wind. We can know where they came from or where they will lead us. They are basically brought about by our programming, self-talk, and attitudes which flow from one to the other.

a. They are faithful signals; emotions are not necessarily wrong; they are the results of our programming; they are effected by our beliefs, our attitudes and our programming.

Sinful emotions are the result of our wrong beliefs and our wrong attitudes. Out of control (sinful) emotions bring the wrong sinful behavior.

b. Did you Examine Psalm 42,43? Note the writer is far from where he wanted to be for he was in captivity in another land. Write a number of facts below.

- 42:2 _____
(As an Israelite musician he could not perform in worship for the Lord, and he was in a foreign land being mocked, etc.)
- 42:3 _____
- 42:4 _____
- 42:5 _____

- c. His environmental condition was bad therefore he was cast down and disquieted (42:5,11; 43:5). What did he say about this?

Difficult things had happened. He had been kidnapped and taken from the temple area and could not serve the Lord. The Psalmist also had been harassed. Socially and physically things were not what he desired (Psalm 42:3,10; 43:1-2).

- How did he respond in his beliefs and attitudes which helped to produce his feelings and behavior? 42:6 _____
42:7 _____ 42:9 _____
_____ 42:10 _____

- d. In regard to actions - he could not get away. He was in another country in the enemy's camp. Like all of us he had no control over his environment or personal condition, but he could learn to trust the Lord in all of it.

- e. In regard to his thinking -- the Psalmist was greatly affected by his circumstances, or actions of others around him. By wrong thinking he distorted what was taking place. He thought God had forgotten him and that He did not care. We also are so prone to automatically think negatively. It is a pattern of reaction that we build over many years.

- 2. Our feelings are usually related to our circumstances:** In Psalms 42,43 we see that the Psalmist is depressed, despairing, grieving, and irritated. He could not change his circumstances. But he could have control over his thinking (or beliefs and attitudes about his circumstances). We engage in much sinful self-talk and therefore many misbeliefs in which we further exaggerate and create many of our problems.

The circumstances may never change, but right, Biblical thinking can give meaning to the circumstances. Briefly write something about the following portions that would prove -- *thinking affects our lives*.

- II Corinthians 10:3-5 _____
- I Peter 1:13-16 _____
- Proverbs 23:7 _____
- Romans 12:2 _____

- 3. Our feelings, (emotions) are primarily responses to our thinking:** We usually engage in an evaluative type of thinking based on prior programming and patterns we built, as well as on our beliefs and attitudes. We must "get a handle" on our programming and examine our belief system. Our self-talk, mediation, and attitudes produce our feelings (or emotions) and our behavior.

- a. We talk to ourselves consciously or just below the awareness level as we evaluate everything we experience. We must challenge ourselves about our thinking and programming. We must consider our self talk for much of it is from our former thinking, and our mental reflection on the past.
- b. We can alter our feelings to the degree that we can correct our evaluative self talk. *OUR FAULTY FEELINGS ARE A RESULT OF OUR "STINKING THINKING"*. We talk about 1300 words a minute to ourselves. We verbalize our self-talk, our thoughts, and we thus give meaning to circumstances.

Often we give a wrong meaning, or a *sinful-response-meaning* to our circumstances.

- c. It is said that we have 10,000 tapes in our mental library by which we read into our circumstances. We replay the tapes of our mental library again and again in living color with all the emotions intact.

Personal Assignment:

- CONSIDER YOUR TROUBLESOME SELF-TALK BELIEFS.
- DISCOVER SOME POSSIBLE ATTITUDES YOU MAY HAVE THAT AFFECT YOUR FEELINGS AND BEHAVIOR.
- MAKE A LIST AND WORK ON THAT LIST.

III. CONSIDER SOME REPROGRAMMING METHODS TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE:

1. **Learn the truth;** memorize the Word of God; meditate on the Word of God; spend time saturating your mind with the truth.
2. **Use "stop cards!"** Apply biblical answers replacing misbeliefs and lies with truths. Write down the lie and the new truth you are determined to put into your life. Write a verse on the card that you plan to apply.
3. **Restate to yourself...** specific, positive, present tense affirmations.
4. **Have a friend, mate or counselor test your conversation** to help you to be aware of your wrong belief system, and your wrong, sinful self-talk.
5. **Tape record biblical answers** and replay them, listening to biblical affirmations.
6. **Translate self-talk into right, biblical behavior patterns.** Bring to mind previously used helpful Scriptures that focus on hope and help you to bring about change.

IV. CONSIDER WHAT THE PSALMIST SAID AS HE CORRECTED HIMSELF
(Psalm 42:5b, 8, 11b; 43:2a, 3, 4, 5b)

In the midst of his negative statements, his fears, depression, and unbelief, he burst into positive answers as he turned to the Lord and reminded himself about the Lord's love and power. Write the answers to his problem in the following blanks. In this we see that he talked to himself about the answers in the Lord. We must do the same thing. (Verse 5b would mean the last part of the verse.)

1. 42:5b ". . . hope thou in _____ ; for I shall yet him for the help of his _____."
2. 42:8 "Yet the Lord will _____ his _____ in the daytime, and in the night his _____ shall be _____ and my prayer unto the God of my life. "

3. 42:11b- _____
4. 43:2a "For thou art the of my _____ . . . (vs 3) O send out thy _____ and thy (In the balance of verse 3 and 4, he speaks of the things he would do in answer to his prayer). 43:5b ". . . hope in _____ : for I shall yet _____ Him, who is the _____ of my _____ , and my God."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE A GOOD BELIEF SYSTEM?

If we have a biblical belief system we will have an absence of mental and emotional discomfort and pain when we deal with sin and guilt and apply the Word of God to our daily lives. Happiness is a "by-product" of right thinking and right biblical attitudes. We could define it as a continuing sense of well-being, a state of good feelings about life, others and self.

The Bible calls happy..."blessed"! BLESSED means happy, fortunate, prosperous and enviable is the man who walks and lives not in the counsel of the ungodly, but his delight and desires are in the law of the Lord, and in His law (the precepts, the instructions, the teachings of God) he meditates day and night. (see Psalm. 1; Joshua 1:8)

We do not have to be the victims of circumstances, events, relationships. We do not have to be trapped by persistent, painful emotions. But we have so many "misbeliefs" and by them and through them we have been speaking lies to ourselves. As human beings we are not doomed to a cold, emotionless, machine-like existence. We are creatures throbbing with mental, emotional and physical energy. We can replace the irrationalities, the lies from our thoughts with the TRUTH, we can lead satisfying, rich and fulfilling emotional lives. (See Colossians. 3:15-17.)

The irrationalities and lies are not always easy to label. Most of what we tell ourselves is not in word form but thoughts are often images and attitudes without words attached to them.

It is not the event's past or present which make us feel the way we do, but our interpretation of those events. Our feelings are not caused by the circumstances of our long-lost childhood, or the circumstances of the present. ***Our feelings are caused by what we tell ourselves about our circumstances -- whether in words, mental images, or in attitudes.***

What Are Misbeliefs?

It is the appropriate label we can give to any lie we tell ourselves. Much of the suffering we experience is due to sustained periods of sinful and negative thinking, and emotional turmoil. Misbeliefs are the cause of much of the destructive behavior people persist in even though they are fully aware of its harm to themselves.

1. Misbeliefs generally appear as truth to the person repeating them to himself.
2. Misbeliefs usually appear to be truth, because they often contain some shred of truth, and partly because the sufferer has never examined or questioned these erroneous assumptions.

Treasures of Truth

3. Misbeliefs are lies we tell ourselves, and are often directly from the pit of hell. They are hand engraved and delivered by the devil himself as the "father of lies". Satan is very clever in dishing out misbeliefs or lies. He does not want to be discovered so it always appears as if the lie he is telling us is true. (examine Genesis 3; James 3:13-18)
4. God does not want His children to suffer depression, worry and unmanageable anger, but we may think it has to be that way.
5. One of our misbeliefs can be..."Others can be happy, others can have victory; others can correct and change their misbeliefs and their lives; others can be free from anxiety depression and anger, but I can't." (See Proverbs 23:7)
6. The misbeliefs or lies in "self-talk" are the incorrect things we tell ourselves in our thoughts. They are the wrong things we tell ourselves about people, self, experiences, and life in general.
7. We need to consider -- what are the lies and half-truths we repeat to ourselves? What are the misbeliefs and lies that keep us unhappy and upset and that hurt many others? We need to work on and get rid of them before they totally control us.

THE PEACEFUL PERSON IS ONE WHO IS AT PEACE WITH HIMSELF,
BECAUSE HE IS AT PEACE WITH THE LORD.

HE KNOWS HOW TO WALK IN TRUTH! "A MAN WHO IS AT WAR
WITH HIMSELF WILL BE AT WAR WITH OTHERS."

REMEMBER, ANY THOUGHTS THAT REFLECT HOPELESSNESS,
DESPERATION, HATE, FEAR, BITTERNESS, ANGER, JEALOUSY OR ENVY
OFTEN ARE THE WORDS AND THOUGHTS GENERATED BY
DEMONIC FALSEHOOD. WE HAVE LISTENED TO LIES
AS EVE DID AND HAVE BEEN TRAPPED.

THESE LIES COULD BE THE WORDS AND THOUGHTS THAT WILL BE
CHANGING AND DESTROYING OUR LIVES.

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

God's Provision Through His Word!

The greatest source of the Christian's growth and victory is the Word of God. So many Christians are hurting because they have not availed themselves of the promises and the power that is theirs through the Word of God.

God put life in the seeds we plant in the ground. It is tremendous how a very small seed has within it the power to give forth life and reproduce itself in the plant that comes forth. The germ of life in the seed has power to bring forth a plant that grows to many, many times the weight and size of the seed. God has invested life in the seed and in like manner **God has put life in His Word. It has power to bring forth life, God's life in the believer.**

When we receive Christ as our Savior His power is available to us, for "*greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world*" (I John 4:4). However, in order to overcome sinful habits and patterns, grow in righteousness, and obtain guidance for our lives, we must act upon God's Word in faith. Whenever God requires anything of His children, He always provides the instruction we need and the power to meet those requirements through His Holy Word.

What should our attitude be to the Word of God? Our attitude greatly effects whether the Word of God is applied in daily life. Without the Word of God being of supreme importance in the home and marriage, the family will never be what God wants it to be. **The Word of God must be read and lived out in daily life in the Christian home.**

I. WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD'S WORD?

1. We need an attitude of love and reverence for the Word!

- a. According to II Timothy 3:15, the Word of God is literally God breathed. It is _____ of _____ and since that is the case we ought to be deeply reverent to His Word which came from God Himself, by the Holy Spirit.
- b. The writings of the Word of God are also profitable for _____, for _____, for _____, and for _____ in righteousness. (II Timothy 3:16)
- c. God gave His Word that the *man of God* may be _____, and _____ furnished unto all _____. (II Timothy 3:17)
- d. II Peter 1:16-21 tells us how the Word of God came to us. God used about 39 men who wrote the Scriptures under the inspiration of the _____ as they were written over a period of about 1,500 years. We ought to be deeply awed by what God did to bring us His Word which is forever settled in heaven. It is indeed a more sure word of _____.

- e. God commands us to _____ the Scriptures (II Timothy 2:15).
- f. How would you describe the Word of God in the following passages?
(write a phrase from the portions)
 - Psalm 119:24 _____
 - Psalm 119:72 _____
 - Psalm 119:89 _____
 - Psalm 119:138 _____
 - Psalm 119:140 _____
 - Psalm 119:142 _____
- g. Write down the facts about the Word of God as you find them in Hebrews 4:12. _____

- h. According to these verses what should be our attitude toward the Scriptures?
 - Psalm 119:35 _____
 - Psalm 119:42 _____
 - Psalm 119:62 _____
 - Psalm 119:117 _____
 - Psalm 119:164, 167 _____

2. We need an attitude of submission and obedience!

- a. We can only prove that we love the Lord by our obedience. Write what you find in John 14:15, 21, 23 about this fact. _____

- b. As you read Luke 8:5-15 you will note Christ's story of the sowing of the seed. Three of the four kinds of soil do not produce any fruit. These are responses to the Word of God and typify people today. What are these responses as seen in verses 12-14?
 - vs.12 _____
 - vs.13 _____
 - vs.14 _____
- c. God expects us to bring forth fruit, more fruit, much fruit. According to John 15:4-10 what three requirements are necessary if we are to have fruit? • _____
• _____

- _____
- d. What does God desire according to James 1:22? _____
- e. Are God's commands too difficult for us? (note I John 5:3) _____

- f. How did the psalmist view the Word of God in the following?
 - Psalm 1:1-3 _____

 - Psalm 119:11 _____

3. We need to depend upon or totally trust the Word of God!

There are many things that God desires to do in our lives through the Word of God. It is profitable for our growth, wisdom, instruction, admonition, yes, everything we would ever need for our continued Christian living. We can depend on the Word of God because:

- a. Luke 21:33 _____
- b. Acts 20:32 _____ and _____
- c. II Peter 1:4 *"They are exceeding _____."*
- d. He can sancti_____ us through His truth, for His word is _____ John 17:17
- e. His word is a _____ Psalm 119:105
- f. We can prosper and _____ Joshua 1:8

II. HOW SHOULD WE USE GOD'S WORD?

God has certain specific things that He desires to do in our lives through His Word. We have seen some of them in the above verses. Let us note some more things.

1. We need to apply God's Word for certain needs and reasons.

- a. Notice four profitable purposes in II Timothy 3:15-17 and write them down.
 - for _____
 - for _____
 - for _____
 - for _____
- b. God's Word becomes profitable as we do the following necessary things on a daily basis:

Hearing the Word of God because it -

- builds our faith, for _____ cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. (Romans 10:17).
- brings us wisdom, _____, (Proverbs 2:6), and then discretion shall _____ and understanding shall keep thee. (Proverbs 2:9-11).

Reading the Word of God and looking for what it has for us, such as:

- Commands to obey
- Sin to avoid
- Principles to live by
- Examples to follow
- Promises to claim
- Seeing Christ, God, and the Holy Spirit

Studying the God's Word

- Desiring the Word of God as _____ babes so that we grow thereby. (See I Peter 2:2,3.)
- Studying the Word of God that we might be unapproved unto God, a workman that needs not be _____. (See II Timothy 2:15.) It is only as we *rightly divide the Word of truth* that we are able to help others.

(We are able to do this when we study the context of any portion, and when we understand the purpose of the text or why God gave it to us, and when we interpret the Word of God carefully as we compare Scripture with Scripture. The use of a good concordance and Vine's Expository Dictionary will be a great help.)

- We need to study so that we can handle the meat of the Word and not continue to be on the _____ of the Word. Strong meat belongs to them of full age, who by reason of USE have their senses _____ to discern both good and evil. (See Hebrews 5:12-14.)

Memorizing the Word of God (write a phrase that applies)

- The following verses teach us the importance of memorization.
Psalm 119:9, 11 _____
Matthew 4:4 _____
Matthew 12:35 _____

(We must recite, recite, and recite in order to memorize a passage. Plan to say it out loud a part at a time, possibly up to a comma. Keep saying that part until it is mastered, then add the next part. Repeat the reference each time so you master the portion along with the place of the text. Try to understand it and picture it in your mind, as you recite it again and again. Work on it until you know it!)

Meditate on the Word as you apply it!

- If we delight in the Word of God then we will _____ on it day and night according to Psalm 1:2.
- In the book of Proverbs 2:1-4 you will find eight action verbs. What are they? (I will give you the first two.) vs. 1 -- receive and hide, vs. 2 _____ and _____, vs. 3 _____ and _____, vs. 4 _____ and _____.
- Then in Psalm 119:15,16 we have four more action verbs. What are they? vs. 15 _____ and _____, vs 16 _____ and _____.
- What does God command us to do in Colossians 3:16? _____

(Meditation is the process by which we translate the Word of God from head knowledge to heart knowledge and to definite applications to daily life. This necessitates taking action based on the Scriptures. This will cause us to work at change by putting off the old sinful habits and putting on biblical patterns toward conformity to Christ.)

III. HOW DO WE BENEFIT FROM THE WORD OF GOD?

1. It makes us sure of our salvation! (How would we know outside his Word?)

a. What does God tell us in his Word in the following verses?

- John 5:24 _____
- John 6:37 _____
- I John 5:13 _____

b. According to the following verses why was the Word of God written?

- John 20:30, 31 _____
- Ephesians 1:13 _____
- I Thessalonians 2:13 _____

2. It makes us sure that God answers prayer! (Read and write about the following.)

a. I John 3:21, 22 _____

b. John 15:7, 8 _____

c. Psalm 66:18 _____

3. It is important for our fellowship.

The Word of God is the vehicle by which God speaks to us and fellowships with us. If we do not read the Scriptures the Father has no opportunity to speak to us!

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Bringing About The Changes We Need!

God expects us to change. In fact, in all counseling, the primary goal is to effect change in lives. Most people bring many misconceptions and sinful attitudes to marriage which causes many problems. Possibly the biggest problem in marriage is the fact that we live selfish lives. No marriage can be what it ought to be unless there is change on the part of both spouses. (I would urge you to study Lesson 3 along with this one -- it is vital.)

1. There are a number of barriers to change that include the following:

- a. *Many Christians passively expect God to bring about the change in their lives, and they think they have no accountability. They have been taught that it is just a matter of -- let go and let God. With that premise they feel they only need to pray about a matter, ask God to change it and then they can passively wait for God to do it. We will answer this matter later in this study.*
- b. *Other Christians feel that if they make a decision all is cared for. A decision to pray about a matter, or to give it to God, or to even make a concrete decision to change -- does not make it so! You see, the decision only opens the door to change, for the decision is only the beginning. When you were married the decision did not end it -- it only began it! So we must go further than just making a decision.*
- c. *We do plan to change, in fact, possibly we have made many decisions many times about changing. Possibly this took place at revival meetings a number of times, or at watch-night services. In fact we feel good about feeling bad! You see, since we had conviction about the need we are glad. Satan has tricked us that having conviction about the problem is enough. Didn't we plan to change? God knows that we really want to change. Being convicted is not enough, we must change!*

2. There are three basic facts that we must consider!

- a. *In every aspect of the Christian life there is GOD'S PART and then there is MY PART! Whether we are examining our prayer life, witnessing, godly living, service, or whatever it may be -- there is always God's part and my part. God gives the boldness to witness, but there is my part, for I must be willing to go. God answers prayer, but I must be willing to do the praying. We can't be passive and expect God to do it without our part in it.*
- b. *God will never do my part! This is true in any area of life. God will not go to work for me, but He can give the open door for employment and the health and ability to fulfill the work. He will not go and do the witnessing for me, but He will give the words, the boldness and direction based upon my going. He is not going to pay my bills, or get my meal, but there is His part in all of these things.*

- c. *God does His part when I am in the process of doing my part!* Think about this! God cannot and will not do His part until I have done my part. God gives hundreds of promises with conditions. I must meet those conditions before He will work. God does not give the boldness to witness, for example, when I am asleep and it is two o'clock in the morning. In fact, He probably will not give me boldness unless I am at someones door ringing the door bell.

HE DOES HIS PART WHEN WE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF DOING OURS!

Can you imagine a farmer rocking in a rocking chair all spring and summer. He has never sown a bit of seed, never started the tractor or tilled any soil, but he is praying over each field and asking God for a good crop. We would laugh at such an idea! But are we much different? Don't we expect things from God even though we have not done our part that He sets forth in His Word. God cannot do His part of holding back the hail, giving the rain, and prospering the farmers work -- until the farmer has done his part. The farmer cannot cause the germ of life in the seed to bring forth the plant, nor give the rain. He can only pray believing and trusting, when he has thoroughly done his part.

So, HOW do we bring about change?

I. BY "PUTTING OFF" WHAT GOD COMMANDS US TO PUT OFF

(See Ephesians 4:22-24 -- notice vs. 22; Colossians 3:8,9; Ephesians 4:31)

To **put off** is something very specific and is very personal. No one can put off anything for me, it is my obligation. Putting off demands that I take a stand against my sin, hate it, reject it, and plan by God's grace (which is His part) to see it removed from my life. It may take all the effort and will-power that I can muster on my part. In fact, possibly the thing that I face is an addiction or an obsession that I have practiced and held on to for many years. Therefore, I must be ruthless against the thing (s) that I must put off. I must come to the place of hating it with all my heart!

- 1. **God commands us to put off the old man with his deeds.** He states that this is the "former conversation or manner of life" (from before we were saved) *"which is CORRUPT according to the deceitful lusts."* These lusts (improper, wicked desires) are from the pit of personal corruption. And these lusts are deceitful for they appear to the flesh to be very desirable, profitable, enjoyable, and fulfilling. Often they become strongholds of sinful living which become a complete addiction of the worst sort.
- 2. **What does God command me to put off?** (Study Colossians 3:8,9, fill in the blanks.)

"But now ye also put off all these;

a. _____, b. _____, c. _____,
d. _____, e. _____ out of
your mouth, f. _____,
seeing you have put off the old man with his deeds."

Time and space will not allow me to give a discourse or study of these words, if you don't know what God is saying here, then look them up in a good Bible dictionary, or Vines Word Studies. (Possibly the person who gave you these studies will help you with this.)

II. BY "PUTTING ON" WHAT GOD COMMANDS US TO PUT ON

(See Ephesians 4:22-24, notice vs. 24; Colossians 3:10-14; Ephesians 4:32)

We are commanded to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. The new man is the new nature given of God when we were saved. Colossians 3: 10 tells us that this new man was created after the image of Him Who created him. (Read Colossians 3:10-14.)

Also in that text we are told that this new nature is renewed in knowledge after the image of God who created it. This new nature is a creation or a work of God. I am to **PUT ON** this new nature or to be clothed with this nature. Only as I walk in the new man will I walk in righteousness and true holiness!

1. First notice what God says about those who are to put on this new man.

a. In Colossians 3:12 God calls us the *elect of God*. (Fill in the blanks from the verses below.)

- We are His chosen ones for He chose us before the foundation of the world. (Ephesians 1:4) _____
- We were called of God as His own. What a truth to embrace. It is because of this fact that we should be all the more desirous to be rid of the bondage of sin by putting off the things we need to put away. And we should be keenly desirous to put into our lives the qualities that are mentioned in this text.
- God's adopted us into His family. This was in His mind and plan before the world was ever made; therefore, we ought to be determined to please Him. (Write some aspects of this truth from the following.)

_____ Galatians 4:5,6

_____ Ephesians 1:4,5

_____ Revelation 17:14

b. Then God calls each one of us *His holy child*.

- Praise the Lord we have a positional holiness that is ours in the finished work of Christ. He is our righteousness. (See II Corinthians 5:21; Romans 3:21-26.) (Write a phrase!) _____
- We are put in Christ and totally accepted in Him, who is the Beloved One. Ephesians 1:6 _____
- Our position is a very important truth that ought to thrill us to the depths of our hearts. (Study Ephesians 1:3-9.)

c. Lastly, He *calls us His beloved*.

- This seems impossible for us to understand because we see our failures, sinfulness, frailties, and at times deliberate wrongs.
- Praise God for our position as His beloved because of the finished work of Christ.

It is because of our position in Christ and His finished work on the Cross that we are **called to put off and put on** those things that He commands. The lists in Ephesians four and Colossians three are not complete. There are other portions of Scripture that deal with the "**put off and put on**" principle as well. We need to study them also!

2. **What does God command us to put on?** If I put on the new man, the new nature, there will be certain virtues that I will put on. (Study Colossians 3:12-14.)

a. _____, b _____, c. _____, d. _____, e. _____, f. _____, and g. Yes, above all these things put on _____ (or love), which is the bond of perfectness.

Putting on these things is a direct command of God. It is something He expects us to work at, not something He is going to do for us. I can't do it for a child or for a spouse and they can't do it for me. **It is my responsibility.**

The things we are to put off should be replaced with the things that God commands us to put on. This is a process as we will see in the next point of this study.

III. BY RENEWING OF THE MIND (See Ephesians 4:22-24, notice vs. 23; Colossians 3:10; Romans 12:2; Proverbs 23:7)

Change takes place by *putting off* and *putting on* and by *renewing our mind*. These three steps makes change possible. *Renewing the mind* must be understood and applied or the practice of the first two points will never take place. **Renewing of the mind is the KEY to change!** It is vital that you thoroughly understand what is involved in the renewing of the mind.

Ephesians 4:23 reads, "*And be renewed in the _____ of your mind;*"

In Colossians 3:10 we read, "*And have put on the new man, which is renewed in _____ after the _____ of him that created him:*"

Then in Romans 12:2 we read the following, "*And be not conformed to this world; but be ye **transformed** by the _____ of the mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*"

1. What Does It Mean to Renew The Mind?

It is a process. It takes much daily determination. We must apply the Word of God to our lives as we allow truth to replace lies, and the new practice of victory replaces the old habits and patterns of sin. .

By way of example:

Every day parents renew the mind of the child about getting out of bed, taking a bath, studying homework, doing chores, etc. This means we have to remind them, and remind them, again and again, seemingly endlessly until they automatically do what we have commanded.

We practice sin until it is an automatic response. So we will have to practice the reverse until it is automatic. This is a process. Because God made us creatures of habit -- the bad habits keep us in failure and sin, and the good habits help us build and maintain good character. A basketball player practices until his moves are automatic and we practice sinful ways until we do them without conscious thought.

When a child is learning to walk, moving from crawling to walking is a long and sometimes tedious process. The child has to learn how to walk. It is not automatic. He will fall many times in this process and for some it takes weeks if not months. *It is a learned process of building a new habit.* The child engages his mind with determination and desire that makes overcoming of the obstacles worth it all. A renewing of the mind takes place on the part of the child as he overcomes the hurts from the falls and determines to succeed.

By way of practical application:

- a. It necessitates building new habits by daily renewing the mind or reminding myself about the truth of the Word. For it is _____ that will set me free. (See John 8:32.) The truth of the Word must be applied to daily life.
- b. It will demand constant practice like learning to drive a car until it is mastered and the change has taken place. It is like the _____ and _____ process, and if I am not weary in I _____ shall reap if I faint not. (See Galatians 6:7-9.) Too often we give up too soon. It will take from three to five weeks to build a new habit for it is a sowing process in my life. I must sow new habits, new thoughts, new attitudes and new responses if I am to have a different harvest of change in my life.
- c. It will take the same process involved when a child is learning to walk, for it will be _____ upon _____ and precept upon _____. (See Isaiah 28:10.)
- d. *Practice makes perfect so I must practice* like a professional ball player if I am to change. Transform _____ takes place only as we renew the mind on a daily basis. (See Romans 12:2.) A player may be conformed to bad habits in his practice time. The coach works to bring change and this necessitates renewing the mind of the player until he actually does change. So in our lives as well.
- e. In this process we will fail many times. That is true of the one learning to drive a car, the small child learning to walk, the athlete who is learning new concepts of playing the game, and the individual who is learning to renew the mind toward change.
It demands the reversal of the practice of sin that we have done for years.
- f. To change demands concentration of thought, surrender of our wills and then determined action. The putting off and putting on process demands that first the mind is engaged in this battle for most sin begins first in the thinking process.
If we are to **put on and put off** then we must decide in the mind to battle against sinful temptations, the past practice of sin, and the patterns of habitual failure in which we have been engaged. Along with this we must be in the Word of God as the source of truth and direction. Only then can we have a renewed mind.

2. What Is God's Part When We Work At Renewing The Mind For Change?

- a. The Lord will be there **actively to strengthen us!** "Be _____ in the _____ and the _____ of His might." (See Ephesians 6:10.)

- b. He has told us that His _____ is **sufficient for us!** ". . . *My grace is _____ for thee: for my _____ is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my _____, that the _____ of _____ might rest upon me.* " (See II Corinthians 12:9.)
- c. God has promised us victory for we are to **triumph** in Christ! "*Nay, in all these things (what things? note Rom.8: 28-36) we are _____ than _____ through him that loved us.*" (See Romans 8:37.)
- d. The Holy Spirit is our _____, and **He will comfort us** in all things! He is the One-along-side to strengthen and support us! ". . . *I will give you another _____, that he may abide with you forever.*" (See John 14:16.) The word means a support alongside to help! The Holy Spirit dwells within us that He might give us the support we need as we wrestle with failure and work at change. *He applies the Word to bring comfort.*
- e. We can change; God expects us to change; He has commanded us to change. God never commands us to do something that He can not give us the ability to do! (See Philippians 2:13.) "*For it is _____ that **worketh** in you both to _____ and to do of His good _____.*"
- He will work in us to bring about His design, plan, and purpose to produce holy living in us that we might be more Christ-like. (See Romans 8:28, 29.)
 - This can take place because we are His _____ in Christ Jesus. (See Ephesians 2:10.) *We must be in the Word of God for this to happen!*
 - He is at work to make us _____ creatures in Christ Jesus. (See II Corinthians 5:17.)
 - The _____ that God desires is the work of God in our hearts as He does His part, and as we do our part by the _____ of the mind as we work at change. (See Romans 12:2.)

We cannot *put off and put on* without the daily, hourly renewing of the mind about sin, and about our failure and practice of the patterns and habits of sinful words, attitudes and actions. ***Change can take place -- it is really up to us!***

How do we enter into the process of renewing the mind?

We can't control those wrong, sinful thoughts simply by trying to stop thinking about them. Our determination not to think lustful thoughts only reinforces them in our thought processes.

1. **By replacement we can be set free.** (Consider Luke 11:26.) In this story a man who had been inhabited by a demon rejoiced when that sinister spirit was expelled. The wicked spirit came back later because the original house had been swept but unoccupied. Nothing had taken his place. He came back with seven more spirits more evil than himself. When the temptation comes immediately replace it with praise, prayer, and rejoicing.
 - a. None of us can overcome evil just by renouncing it. (See James 4:7.)
 - b. Sinful habits cannot be broken without replacing them with righteous ones.
 - c. How, then can we be set free? Freedom comes by filling your mind with God's thoughts. To diffuse the power of sin, you need to have your thought patterns replaced by the memorized Word of God so that you can meditate on it when the wrong thoughts come.

2. **You must be prepared for a battle.** (Study II Corinthians 10:3-5.)

- a. We have the **weapons needed** to destroy the fortresses of the mind. Vain reasoning, powerful imaginations and perverted attitudes can be routed out of our lives.
- b. **Identify the alien thoughts** that you want to replace. You must name the fantasies, imaginations, and attitudes you want to get rid of. To say "I want to be a better Christian or I want to be more joyful," will not do. Specifics are needed. I assume that you know the sins in your life that won't budge. Take a sheet of paper and jot down the thought patterns that have to go.
- c. **Be prepared for the discipline of a spiritual battle.**
 - The world, the flesh, and the devil do not surrender without a struggle.
 - A lazy, undisciplined Christian falls apart when the pressure is on.
 - Declaring war on your thought life means that you must set aside time every morning to begin your offensive attack. Use at least 10-20 minutes in the Word. Meditation takes time. You must assimilate a passage, applying it to your life and remind yourself of the thoughts throughout the day.
- d. Be prepared to **memorize** the Word of God.
 - Remember Psalm 119:11; Find verses that answer your troublesome thought patterns.
 - Type verses on cards and carry them with you. Memorize and think about how you will answer your inner temptations when they come.

3. **Use your artillery;** as soon as you wake up give your life over to the Lord. Get into the Word of God early in the day. Remind yourself of Luke 1:37; Romans 8:28; Philippians 4:13. Trust God's power for the temptations that come your way. When the temptation does come take time to praise God. Turn immediately to praise and rejoice in Him - Satan will flee as you apply James 4:7. (See Nehemiah 8:10c.)

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Some Purposes Of Good Communication!

There are many biblical and practical reasons why we need good communication! We all communicate but not always in the way we should. Sometimes it is in anger, wrath, bitterness, disgust, or impatience. We communicate both in word, action, and with body language. In fact, it is said that over fifty percent of our communication is not with words. When we examine some basic principles of communication we note the following in Scripture:

1. *"Can two walk together, except they be "* (Amos 3: 3). 2. *"also, caused the people to the law; ... So they in the book of the law of God, and gave the, and caused them to the reading"* (Nehemiah 8:7.8).

In communication one shares with another what he knows, understands, and feels so that he can be understood. It involves correct speaking and accurate, careful listening.

I. CONSIDER SOME PRACTICE PURPOSES OF COMMUNICATION

There are a number of practical, everyday reasons why we need to work at developing good communication skills in our homes and all the other relationships of life.

1. Good communication is a means of cultivating family living.

We cultivate a garden plot by tearing up the soil so it is soft and ready for the seed or plant that we plan to put into the ground. In like manner, we need soft, tender hearts so we are receptive to the good seed of good words and actions of others. So often we have the opposite problem of hardness of heart and criticalness of spirit. (In your own words write a brief summary of the following verses.)

Colossians 3:19 _____

Hebrews 12:14-15 _____

Cultivating the soil of our hearts includes planting the good seeds of kind words, praise, compliments, etc., in our communication. We all have a great opportunity to make the meal times around the table a blessed time together.

- 2. Good communication skills will be evidenced in sharing and understanding.** Nehemiah, Ezra, and the others who taught the Word of God desired to share in such a way that they would be understood. They gave the sense and caused the people to understand. This should be a major goal of all communication.
- 3. Good communication is the basis of all problem solving.** Problems are inevitable. They are a part of life and must be solved. This will not take place without good communication skills.

4. **Good communication is the basis of a Christ centered home.** We will never have a godly home where we share spiritual things naturally as a matter of course unless we can converse about anything and everything. Show me a home where the family does not share, build understanding, or solve problems biblically in love and I will show you a home where Christ is not Lord and prayer together does not take place.

Without good communication:

We will not talk things out to a harmonious, happy, God-honoring end.

We will not build or have close friendships.

We will not do well at work because all relationships are built on communication.

We will not fellowship with God because reading the Word of God and building a prayer life depends upon our desire for spiritual fellowship or communication with the Lord on a daily basis.

II. CONSIDER SOME BIBLICAL PURPOSES OF COMMUNICATION

At this point I would like to encourage you to carefully read and meditate on I Peter 3:8-11. We will outline this now, and encourage you to fill in the blanks along the way.

1. **The purpose of meeting needs** (All of the following is from verse 8.)

- a. *"Finally, be ye all of _____ ."* God expects us to build oneness which includes all these: unity, harmony, having the same -- goals, aspirations, priorities, and purpose in life.

Oneness is not an accident, but the result of our building it on a daily basis. This should be a major purpose in our communication.

- b. *"having _____ one of another."* Compassion is greatly needed in the home. It must be communicated by word and action. Because of unforgiveness, hardness of heart, and indifference of spirit we readily ignore others when they desperately need our compassionate input. Others need:

- Colossians 3:12 " _____ of mercies."
- Romans 12:10 ". . . in honor _____ one another. "

- c. *"love as _____."* Brotherly love is friendship, or companionship kind of love. It is the Greek word, phileo, which means a love of sharing in fellowship. Too often married couples are not even good friends. The only love they may know is actually lust and physical passion. When that has been fulfilled they have nothing in common and don't even care to truly know the other person. (Write in part of the verse below.)

- Romans 12:10a _____
- Romans 12:9a _____

- d. *"be _____ , be _____ ."* (vs. 8) To be pitiful and courteous is something seldom seen in homes today. Common courtesy is so often laid aside as soon as the couple are married. No longer does the husband court his wife, but since he has won her, she is taken for granted.

2. **The purpose of being a _____ and receiving a _____.**

(Note verse 9.)

- a. If we are to receive a blessing and be a blessing it will necessitate our **NOT** practicing “_____ for _____ and rendering _____ for _____.”
- b. It is so easy for us to give back what we think the other person deserves and what they gave us. (Note the following and write in part of the verse.)
 - Romans 12:10a _____
 - Romans 12:14 _____
 - Romans 12:17a _____

3. **The purpose of having _____ days and to _____ life.** (Read verse 10.)

- a. God's plan is for marriage and home to be an exciting, blessed place to be. He desires that you build mutual respect, honor, oneness, and trust.
- b. If we are to have good days and love life then we must _____ the tongue from _____, and see that our lips do not speak _____. (Note verse 10.)
- c. God expects us to hate _____, and to do _____; to seek _____, and _____ it. (See verses 11.) That is, we are to pursue after the things that make for peace or tranquility. That is up to each one of us to do. If we pursue peace we will strive for it as an athlete strives to win on the playing court.

III. CONSIDER SOME POINTERS ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. **Be a good listener!** Listen purposefully, compassionately, and effectively as you listen for overtones, and undertones. What does God say about listening in the following verses? (Copy in a phrase.)

- a. Hebrews 3:7,8 _____
- b. Hebrews 3:15 _____
- c. Hebrews 4:7 _____
- d. James 1:19 _____
- e. Luke 8: 8,18 _____
- f. Proverbs 17:27,28 _____
- g. Proverbs 18:13 _____
- h. Proverbs 18:15 _____

2. **Avoid quick reactions!** (Note the following and copy in a phrase.)

- a. James 1:19 _____

- b. Proverbs 15:28 _____
- c. Proverbs 17:28 _____
3. **Avoid quarreling** (Read each of the following about quarreling; write a phrase.)
- a. Proverbs 15:1 _____
- b. Proverbs 15:15 _____
- c. Proverbs 16:32 _____
- d. Proverbs 17:28 _____
- e. Proverbs 25:8 _____
- f. Proverbs 25:28 _____
4. **Admit sins and wrongs, and seek forgiveness!** (Read and write in the following.)
- a. Proverbs 28:13 _____
- b. I John 1:7 _____
- c. I John 1:9 _____
5. **Accept the offender's apology!** Offer to forgive; give forgiveness before the other person has even asked to be forgiven. (Read and write in the blanks.)
- a. Luke 17:3,4 _____

- b. Colossians 3:13 _____
6. **Avoid nagging, complaining, griping, and murmuring!**
- a. Proverbs 19:13 _____
- b. Proverbs 21:19 _____
- c. Numbers 11:1 _____
- d. Psalm 106:24 _____
- e. I Corinthians 10:10 _____
- f. Philippians 2:14 _____
7. **Maintain a humble disposition!** Put away pride, for it is our chief sin! Pride is the root of all sins. Because of our pride we get angry, answer back, pout, hate, get hurt, and clam up. (Note the following, ponder, and write in a portion of each.)
- a. Proverbs 18:13 _____

- b. Proverbs 11:2 _____
- c. Psalm 34:18 _____
- d. Psalm 51:17 _____
- e. James 4:6, 10 _____

- f. I Peter 5:5,6 _____

In conclusion:

Too often we don't even think about our words. We get up in the morning and begin the day without even thinking about the words we say or the way we say them. What happens, happens and we have a lot of unhappiness. We must examine the content of our communication and work on making it pleasing to the Lord and edifying to those around us.

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Some Principles Of Good Communication!

Surveys tells us that the average couple spend only about seven minutes a week in meaningful communication. Oh, it does not mean that no one talks; they talk about the trivial and the meaningless. Far too often conversation never touches on the thing that really matters and the things that need to be discussed and solved. Sometimes a person wonders why some couples got married because after marriage they talk so little, and they seem to practice ignoring the other person.

Consider these questions

1. Why is there such a breakdown in marriages?
2. Why do couples drift apart?
3. Why is coldness, hardness and indifference evident in many homes?
4. Why do marriages fail?

Probably one of the major reasons is because of poor communication. I have never counseled a couple who communicated well. Usually their communication level with each other was very poor.

It is said that some men could live on ten thousand grunts! Possibly that is true, but I have met many women who also knew how to seal their husband out of their lives. As a couple you will never build oneness, trust, respect, honor, and love without also building good communication skills.

While traveling in meetings during the past fifteen years I have had so many couples who shared with me their inability to truly communicate. After being convicted about it, some spent time together until one in the morning, discussing things they previously lacked the courage to do.

***Life is not made up of a few crises, but of 10,000 different happenings.
Life is made up of a multitude of little things.***

It is in these little things ---

1. that feelings and resentments build,
2. grudges are held,
3. anger begets anger and forgiveness is so seldom given.

If we cannot discuss and solve the little things, what will we do with the weighty things? If we can't discuss and solve our problems from day to day, how will we ever solve the issues that are so important to rearing children, managing money, showing affection, and all the nitty-gritty things that make up life?

In this study we want to deal with the major biblical principles of good communication. If these things are practiced it will make a tremendous difference in any marriage and home.

I would urge the reader to memorize these four points, put them on small posters, or type them and put them in different places in the home, such as: on the mirror, in the hall, near the kitchen table, etc. The goal is so the whole family is reminded on a daily basis.

I. SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE (Ephesians 4:15, 25)

This principle is so basic and yet so neglected. Instead of speaking the truth in love often we speak with resentment as we hold on to grudges and unforgiving attitudes. Some people do not obey this command but instead they withdraw and hold on to their hostilities. This is called **passive aggressive behavior**.

What is it that God commands us to do according to verse 15?

1. **There must be** _____, not clamming up, denying, pouting, crying, ignoring, or using whatever means we can to withdraw from talking.
2. **We must speak the** _____. Not making implications or statements which go beyond the statements or answers of the other person. Too often our answers imply things the other person did not say, nor did they intend to say. If we don't speak the truth then we are speaking _____. (See John 8:44; Ephesians 4:25.) Never should we practice disguised conversation.
3. **Also truth must be spoken with** _____. Our speech must be controlled by love. We ought to build up the other person.

This is a two way street. Not only do I need to practice speaking the truth in love but I must allow the other person to speak the truth in love to me. Maybe that is harder to do. Often we do not want to hear what the other person has to say to us even if it is spoken in love.

4. Write Ephesians 4:25 on the following lines: _____

II. SOLVING PROBLEMS DAILY (Ephesians 4:26, 27)

*"Be ye _____, and sin _____ : Let not the sun go down upon your _____"
Neither give _____ to the _____ ."*

Anger is a part of life, but God says we are not to go to bed angry and if we are angry we must put away the anger lest we give place to the devil. There are some definite principles and applications here.

1. **Do NOT go to bed angry.**
Go to the person and solve it before you retire if you possible can. Don't allow the anger to linger in your heart for it will fester, grow and develop into _____. (See Colossians 3:19.)
2. **Do NOT allow the devil to get an advantage or further sin will take place.** If we do not solve things little things become big _____ s. Mole hills become mountains. If we don't solve things quickly we will be guilty of further sin and opening the door to resentments. Every future problem will be distorted into something big because we did not solve each thing along the

way. All the emotions of past problems will come into the picture with each new conflict.

III. ATTACK THE PROBLEM -- NOT THE PERSON (Ephesians 4:29)

"Let no _____ communication proceed out of your _____, but that which is _____ to the use of _____, that it may minister _____ unto the _____." (4:29)

We so easily practice attacking each other. It becomes the normal and easy thing to do. We just don't plan to do it, but we do it anyway. Generally, couples find that attacking the other person becomes a quickly learned habitual response. As we cover our own sin, generalize and rationalize it, we blame the other person. Practicing the blame game becomes the **norm** in many homes.

1. **This corrupt communication includes the caustic, cutting, harsh and hard words.**
2. **Communication becomes a repetition of abrasive, hostile words that cut the other person to the quick.**
3. **When we use this kind of speech, we:**
 - a. bypass the real issue,
 - b. zero in on the other person's character,
 - c. tear up and rip up the other person with our words,
 - d. and, thereby grieve the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:30).

Consider the following:

Unresolved conflicts tend to grow from the minor to the major, little to big, less to more, from the cold war to the hot war. (note below)

Difference of opinion ----- develops into a spat that develops into a confrontation.

The heated debate of argument ----- develops into a hot quarrel and a sense of division.

Next,

Intense physical anger become a full fledged fight and rejection of the other person sets in.

Finally, a Deep

Hostility develops ---- the war is on, the other person is treated as an enemy and soon a separation or divorce may take place!

***They did not work to edify and to attack problems together,
but they constantly attacked each other.***

IV. PRACTICING RIGHT ACTIONS -- NOT THE WRONG REACTIONS.

(Ephesians 4:31,32)

Many times spiritual, dedicated Christians find that their problems do not arise from overt, outward sinful actions, but from reactions to the events, circumstances and people around them. (Note the chapter on *Why do I Feel As I Feel and Do As I Do?*) Another principle of good, godly communication is the application of the negatives and positives of verses 31 and 32 of Ephesians 4.

God says, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all _____, and _____, and _____, and _____, and _____ speaking, be put away from you, with all _____. And be ye _____ one to another _____, _____ one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you ." (vss 30-32.)

1. **Sinful, destructive conversation grieves the Holy Spirit.** We can only grieve someone who loves us, and we are loved by the Holy Spirit. He wants to be our comforter and guide, but our failure in relationships with others can seriously grieve Him.
2. **God commands us to put away certain things.** (Answers are in verse 31.)
 - a. _____ is the refusal to treat someone as if they never hurt us. It is the refusal to forgive but instead we hold on to the wrongs and offenses.
 - b. _____ is flaming rage. It is all reason gone mad. It is the reaction of a very foolish person who destroys those he should love the most.
 - c. _____ is a settled indignation, the hostile response, and the reaction of a slow burn. Not all anger is immediately manifested in an outward way for often it can be held within for years. Such anger turned inward can easily result in depression and physical illness and breakdown. (Further study that would help in these problems is our book, *Emotional Problems in Marriage and Home* and our study, *Misbeliefs About Anger*.)
 - d. _____ is the harsh contention, and the strife and brawling that is so often allowed in the home between children and between the spouses as well. Clamor includes high pitched words, disorder, tumults, and the noise of contention.
 - e. _____ is speaking of slander, back-biting, tale bearing, reproaches, etc. The gossip is an evil person, for his speech includes all of these.
 - f. _____ includes the desire for revenge. What is malice? It is secret ill-will, just thinking evil. If allowed to remain in the heart, it brings spite that cannot rest until it works evil. Malice is the henchman of hate.

How serious these are! Oh, how we need to root these things out of our lives! I would encourage you to study the lesson five on Effecting Change!

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Experiencing and Giving Forgiveness!

Giving and experiencing forgiveness is one of the greatest needs of those who are hurting, and need counseling help. When I have worked through marriage problems with couples, giving forgiveness was one of the big issues. So often people keep a mental list of wrongs against others and never truly forgive, although they say they have forgiven.

At times people have a difficulty accepting God's forgiveness for their own sinful ways. It may be that the depth of the wickedness and practice of sin so overwhelms the person that he just can't believe that God would ever forgive him. I wonder if David felt that way? We see in both Psalm 32 and 51 how David thoroughly dealt with his sin.

I. WHAT EXAMPLE DO WE SEE IN PAUL'S LIFE?

First, in this study we want to look at the Apostle Paul. We will look at five of the biographical and autobiographical sketches from Paul's troubled past and as it seemed to him -- his persecuted present.

1. **Look at Paul's troubled past** (Acts 22:3-5; Acts 22:19-20; Galatians 1:13-14.)
 - a. After writing about his personal background in Acts 22, verse 3, Paul said that he _____ this way unto the _____, binding and delivering into _____, both men and women. Verse 5 tells us that he was determined to bind and imprison those who followed Christ.
 - b. In Acts 22:19 we read, "*And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and _____ in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the _____ of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, consenting unto his death.*"
 - c. In Galatians 1:13 Paul wrote of his manner of life (conversation) which was to _____ the church beyond measure, and _____ it.

Paul considered himself a murderer. Without doubt this deeply troubled Paul. He could have easily felt that he was of no value, that he could not serve Christ and would never be trusted or used by the Lord. He had to overcome his troubled past!

Consider some lessons here!

- Not one place in Scripture does Paul speak of self-hate over his past actions.
- He does not say, "See how terrible I am; I am no good, God cannot use me."

- At the same time you do not read of any pride, nor bragging about what he had done, and no glorying in his past sinfulness.

2. Look at Paul's persecuted present (II Corinthians 11:23-27; 4:7-11.)

a. In II Corinthians 11:23-27, Paul recounts the persecutions, afflictions and trials he had to face. List them below:

- *in labors* _____ , *in stripes above* _____
- *in prisons more* _____ , *in* _____ *oft,*
- *five times received I* _____ , *save one (39),*
- *in* _____ *often,* *in perils of* _____ , *perils of* _____
- *in perils of his own* _____ , *by the* _____ , *in the* _____ , *in the* _____ , *in the* _____ , *and in perils among false* _____ .
- *In* _____ *and* _____ , *in* _____ *often, in* _____ *and thirst, in* _____ , *often, in* _____ *and* _____ .

b. Again in II Corinthians 4:7- 11, Paul recounts the things that he faced in serving the Lord. (Have you thought about the fact that Paul was reaping what he had sown? He had sown death and suffering to the early church and now was reaping the same.) He stated that he was:

- *troubled on* _____ *-- yet not distressed;*
- *we are* _____ *-- but not in despair;*
- _____ *-- but not forsaken;*
- *cast down -- but not* _____ .

Consider some lessons here!

- In all of this there is no hint of malice or the desire for revenge.
- There is no hint of bitterness in his spirit.
- You do not find any blame-fixing, or anger with God for the wrongs that he had suffered.
- Instead, there is a hint of his rejoicing in the present struggle by faith, and the privilege of suffering for Christ's sake. (See Philippians 3:10; II Corinthians 12:9)

II. HOW DO WE HANDLE THE WRONGS AGAINST US?

Do we practice keeping a mental list of offenses? Do we feel we have the right to keep the wrongs close to our hearts and mentally dwell on offenses? If anyone had a right to feel bad about wrongs against him, Paul did. He could have so easily felt that God was not fair and did not minister to him in love.

Colossians 3:12-14 gives us a list of things that we need to practice and put into our lives. (You will study this in the lesson about Effecting Change.) It will take conscious effort to apply this to daily life.

So how to you handle wrongs? Consider these principles!

- 1. Life will be full of wrongs for life is not fair.**
- 2. God is far more concerned about building our godly lives than He is**

about our daily circumstances. He wants to use circumstances to build us.

3. **In everything we are part of the problem or a part of the solution.** We need to realize this. For in almost everything that touches us, we are partially responsible.
4. **We may not be responsible for the wrong,** or action, or offense against us, but we are responsible for our reactions.
 - Do we rationalize, and play the blame game?
 - What can we do to keep from having a list of mental wrongs done to us!
 - What can we do to be spared from the bondage of holding on to wrongs?

III. WHAT ARE SOME BIBLICAL ANSWERS TO WRONGS COMMITTED AGAINST US?

1. **Remember, God was there** -- a witness and a planner of my good.

- a. Genesis 50:20 _____
- b. Romans 8:28 _____
- c. God has a glorious purpose, see Romans 8:29 _____

2. **Study how God forgave you!** (read, write down a phrase)

- a. Colossians 3:13 _____
- b. Ephesians 4:32 _____

3. **Daily refuse to be grudging;** reject and resist holding on to wrongs. Rehearse and rethink about God's forgiveness to you; thank Him for His forgiveness.

- a. Psalm 103:12 _____
- b. Isaiah 44:22 _____

4. **Consider how serious it was** to be unforgiving in the story in Matthew 18:21-35.) The case is simple for Christ says, "*So likewise shall my heavenly father do _____, if ye from your _____ forgive not _____ his brother their trespasses.*"

5. **We must reject a feeling-based walk.** We must not allow our feelings to guide us. (Read Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 28:26.) But instead we must build our life on biblical truth, Bible doctrines, and not on past hurtful experiences.

6. **It will make a difference if we actively express love.**

- a. Matthew 5:44 _____
- b. John 15:7 _____

Will we make the right choices to forgive? Will we use reminders so we will forgive or relearn forgiveness? Will we obey the Word of God or will we follow our emotions?

Consider Some Important Truths About Forgiveness!

1. There will be a great joy and blessing from giving forgiveness. We will find ourselves free from the bondage of holding on to a mental list of wrongs.
2. If we do not forgive others we won't have any good alternatives. Really, what are the alternatives to love and forgiveness toward others?
 - a. We will probably experience a slow death of healthy emotions.
 - b. We will have a life marked by repression and bitterness.
 - c. We will experience emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental pain and illness.
3. Forgiveness means that we trust God to be all the vengeance we will ever need. (As you read Romans 12:19 fill in the blanks here and think through what God is saying to your heart.) *"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but rather _____ place unto wrath: for it is written, _____ is mine; I will repay, saith the _____."*

Here we are taught that we should allow someone else to be wrathful without our trying to settle the score. We are to give it to God and let Him handle our case for us!
4. It is not up to us to understand the wrongs and offenses that may have been committed against us, but to believe that God is at work for our best.

I would challenge you to read Psalm 18, 61, 62, and 63. I think that you will note a number of things about giving to God what we cannot change and what is His to care for in our behalf. Remember that David did not avenge himself when King Saul was on a hunt to find him and take his life. David gave the trial to God to care for him. What a lesson for us!

5. It may take time for the feelings of forgiveness to catch up with our act of forgiveness. The action of giving forgiveness will not fully free us from the emotions that we experience from the hurts we may have received.
Healing takes time.

What Does it Mean to Truly Forgive?

1. **True forgiveness will involve ACTION** -- whereby we totally release the other person from the wrong (s) that we received at their hand.
2. **Then it involves ATTITUDE** -- for we cease being resentful toward the person at whose hand we were hurt!

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Walking In TRUTH!

The Word of God puts a great premium on the subject of truth. We are either living in the daily application of truth, or we are -- speaking, accepting, embracing and acting out lies. There is no middle ground.

If you were to look up every usage of the word truth as found in the Scriptures, you would be amazed at how many times the subject is dealt with. Its importance is seen in the usage of truth as verbs, nouns, adjectives, and adverbs.

Earlier in this series of studies we have written much about self-talk lies and the fact that we build belief systems which are either made up of truth, lies, or a mixture of both. We build belief systems about every subject of any importance to us. Our public school system is doing all it can to build humanists, secularists who are plurists and are willing to embrace the teachings of the majority. They are doing a good job of it, too.

The source of much failure Christians experience in daily life is a lack of knowing and living in truth -- that is God's truth.

Note what God says about the wicked and their approach to truth.

(Write a phrase from the portions of Scripture.)

1. They are destitute of truth! (Hosea 4:1) _____
2. They speak not the truth! (Jeremiah 9:5) _____
3. They do not uphold truth! (Isaiah 59:14,15) _____
4. They are punished because of the lack of truth!
 - a. Jeremiah 9:4, 9 _____
 - b. Hosea 4:1 _____

Our victory as Christians can only take place as we esteem, understand, practice, and embrace truth to be the most important thing in life.

As a further background, note what we read about truth in II and III John. (Write in the phrases from these portions.)

II John 1 "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the _____; and not I only, but also all they that have _____ . "

II John 2 "For the _____ , which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever. "

II John 4 "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children _____ as we have received a commandment from the Father. "

III John 1 ". . . whom I love in the _____ . "

III John 3 "For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the _____ that is in thee, even as thou _____ in the truth."

III John 4 "I have no greater joy that to hear that my children _____ ."

We cannot overemphasize the importance of truth, its source and application to daily life. The goal of the counselor (or parent, pastor, leader) is to help others to understand truths they are not practicing in daily life.

Truth is so important!

God puts great emphasis upon truth -- about Himself, (He is truth, John 14:6), the commands concerning truth and how it applies to our lives.

I. THE DIVINE QUALITY OR CHARACTERISTIC IS TRUTH

1. **God is a God of truth.** (Write a meaningful phrase from each verse.)

a. Deuteronomy 32:4 _____

b. Psalm 31:5 _____

c. This is seen or exhibited in God's:

• counsels of old, (Isaiah 25:1) _____

• ways, (Revelation 15:3) _____

• works, (Psalm 33:4) _____

• justice, (Psalm 96:13) _____

• statutes, (Psalm 19:9) _____

2. **Christ Jesus is a Person of truth.**

a. John 1:14 _____

b. John 1:17 _____

c. John 7:18 _____

d. John 14:6 _____

e. John 18:37 _____

3. **The Holy Spirit is a Person of truth.**

a. John 14:17 _____

b. John 16:13 _____

c. The _____ of the Spirit is in _____. (Ephesians 5:9)

II. A DIVINE CONCERN -- THAT WE WALK IN TRUTH

1. **Because of the source of falsehood and lies**

- a. Satan is the _____ of _____. He was a _____ from the _____ and abode not in the _____. (See John 8:44.)
 - b. When we live in lies or do not practice truth-telling we are walking the path of _____, and we will do the works of satan.
 - c. Read Genesis chapter three. As you read of the fall of mankind into sin, what was the basic problem? How did Satan approach Eve? What did he use to get Eve to enter into temptation? What does he use today?
- 2. Because we are saved only by accepting truth.**
- a. Salvation is in Christ, Who is the way, the _____ and the life. (John 14:6.)
 - b. Read I Timothy 2:3-7. In verse four Paul wrote that God desires all men to be saved. In verses five and six he states clearly that salvation is in our mediator, Christ Jesus. In verse seven he said, "I *speak the _____ in Christ and lie not.*" (Note John 1:14, 17.) (We must accept all the Word of God about salvation as truth-- Romans 3:9-12, 23; 5:6,8; 6:23; 10:9,10, 13, then read II Thessalonians 2:10 and I Thessalonians 2:13.)
- 3. Because we are set free from sin's power and domination as we accept truth.**
- a. John 8:31 _____
 - b. John 8:32 _____
 - c. John 8:36 _____
- 4. Because we are sanctified, or made holy only through truth.**
John 17:17, 19 _____
- 5. Because truth is purifying.**
I Peter 1:22 _____

III. THE DIVINE DIRECTIVES ABOUT TRUTH FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN

- 1. We are to worship God in truth.**
John 4:24 with Psalm 145:18 _____
- 2. God desires truth in the heart.**
Psalms 51:6 _____
- 3. We are to meditate upon that which is truthful.**
Philippians 4:8 _____
- 4. The church is to be the _____ and _____ of the _____.**
(See I Timothy 3:15.)
- 5. We are to _____ the word of _____.**
(See II Timothy 2:15.)

6. **The truth is to be the _____ and the _____ to the saint.**
(See Psalm 91:4.)
7. **Sometimes we need to repent as we _____ the truth.**
(See II Timothy 2:25.)
8. **Our truthfulness is God's _____** (Proverbs 12:22). The lip of _____ shall be _____ for ever. (Proverbs 12:19) "*He that speaketh truth shewest forth _____.*" (Proverbs 12:17)

We have noted in an earlier study that God expects change in our thinking. This takes place when the Christian chooses to be transformed by the renewing of his mind by the Word of God.

God desires to set us free from sinful practices. Wrong thinking causes havoc with emotions and error in actions. When a person's thoughts, feelings and actions are based on the Word of God, he receives wisdom, peace, righteousness, and will walk in the blessed fruit of the Holy Spirit.

God desires accurate, truthful thinking! Erroneous thinking often gets a person into deep misery and complicated conflicts. (See Ephesians 4:15,25.)

1. **The mind is a battleground** on which thoughts from the world, the flesh, and the devil vie for control of the Christian.
2. **Vain imaginations** can include fears, doubts, and other forms of sinful unbelief which can undermine the Christian walk.
3. **Thoughts can be evil continually.** Sinful imaginations and falsehoods can form strongholds in the mind and then in the will. (See II Corinthians 10:3-5.)
4. **As our thought-life changes,** behavior will change also. Thinking God's thoughts will free a Christian from the bondage of sin, Satan's lies, and self-deception.
5. **One of God's primary concerns is that we walk in truth.**
6. **It is human (sinful) nature to pervert and distort truth.** (See Jeremiah 17:9.) But our minds can be controlled by the Lord and His Word. ***We must WALK in truth!***

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Prayer Is God's Provision For US!

Prayer, oh what a privilege and blessing! I doubt if any of us realize how much God desires to hear and answer our prayers. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges that belongs to the saint of God.

God has planned that the needs of His children should be met in answer to prayer. He moves on our hearts and invites us to ask of Him in our time of need. Christ urges us to ask that we shall receive, to seek for we will find and to knock for it will be opened unto us. (See Matthew 7:7,8.)

Prayer is imperative to the Christian who is hurting, who needs victory over sinful, habitual patterns of wrong living. Many Christians battle with obsession to sinful activity -- be it in thought, attitude and action. Christ taught us to ask in His name (John 14:13,14 and John 16:24) and to ask in faith believing. (See Mark 11:23, 24.) We are reminded that a father had a son who threw himself into the fire while under the tyranny of demon activity. (See Mark 9:14-29.) As Christ set the son free from this satanic obsession, so our victory is in the Savior's power. **We can tap into that power through prayer!**

I. SOME "IF'S" IN PRAYER

1. **The "IF" of asking in faith believing** (Matthew 21:21,22; Mark 11:23,24))
 - a. Faith is the only means of communication with our invisible Heavenly Father. ". . . *that He is a rewarder of them that _____ seek Him*" (Heb. 11:6).
 - b. Christ said, "*All things are _____ to him that believeth* " (Mark 9:23).
 - c. Great faith results in great blessing. (Read Mark 11:23, 24, write in the proof.) _____

While prayer is the key to all the treasures of heaven, faith is the hand using that key. Our Lord wants us to realize the necessity of acceptance by faith. We must believe that God already has the desire to answer our prayers before we have even brought the burdens to Him in prayer.

2. **The "IF" of abiding in Christ** (John 15:7)
 - a. To abide in Christ is to rest in Him, to stay close to Him, and not allowing known, willful indulgence in sin. *To abide is to stay at home in Him.*
 - b. If we abide in Him, and His Word abides in us, we can _____ what we _____ and it shall be done unto us. To abide in Christ is to be at rest in His presence, His purpose and power in our behalf. This takes place as we

fellowship with Him in prayer on a daily basis -- claiming His Word in prayer as we exercise faith.

3. **The "IF" of agreement!** (Matthew 18:19, 20)

- a. Here is the principle of united prayer in which two or more people agree before God as they claim promises and trust God to answer their prayers.
- b. This is a tremendous privilege -- that two people -- a husband and wife can come together in prayer and claim answers from the Lord based upon the Word of God and it's promises. As they lay claim to God's promises by faith they can tell the Lord that they are claiming His answer and His intervention. This is based on God's Word. The promises become theirs only by appropriation through prayer by faith. They have the biblical right to claim the answer before God has done it. (See I John 5:14,15.)
 - *"For all the promises of God in Him are _____ and in Him _____, unto the glory of God by us."* (II Corinthians 1:20)
 - *"Call unto me and I _____ thee, and shew thee great and _____ things which thou knowest not."* (Jeremiah 33:3)

II. SOME BASIC HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

1. **The hindrance of time**

God desires that we would pray that He might bless us. God created us, saved us, loves us, and desires to fellowship with us in prayer that He might encourage us, meet our needs and give us the joy of His presence.

- a. What does I Thessalonians 5:17 urge us to do? _____
- b. What did Christ's disciples desire according to Luke 11:1? _____
- c. Christ said, *"Men ought always to _____, and not to _____"* (Luke 18:1).
- d. What does Christ want us to do and what did He promise in Luke 11:9,10?

- e. What does James 4:2 say about prayer? _____

Andrew Murray said, *"There is so much talk about lack of time and many distractions that the deep guilt of not praying is often not recognized."*

2. **The hindrance of a guilty heart**

- a. What can hinder our prayers according to Psalm 66:18? _____
- b. What can hinder a husband's prayer life according to I Peter 3:7? _____

- c. What kind of heart is necessary if we are to have answered prayer according to Hebrews 10:22? _____

- d. What does God say about confessing sin in:
- I John 1:9 _____
 - I John 1:7 _____
 - Matthew 5:23-26 _____

e. What does Matthew 6:14,15 teach us about forgiving others? _____

3. The hindrance of asking amiss (James 4:3)

- a. When we ask amiss what has taken place according to James 4:3?

- b. What did Christ say about desire in Luke 15:12? _____

- c. What should our motive be in prayer? _____
(See Ephesians 1:12; I Peter 3:12.)
- d. What is God's promise in Philippians 4:19? _____

- e. What did Christ urge in Matthew 6:25,31,34? _____

4. The hindrance of unbelief and indifference

- a. According to James 1:6,7 what is a basic prerequisite for answered prayer?

- b. What is needed in praying for the sick? (James 5:15) _____

- c. What two requirements are given in James 5:16 if we are to see the sick healed? _____

- "The effectual _____ prayer of a _____ man availeth much. "*

III. SOME BASIC PARTS OF PRAYER

1. Adoration or worship is a very important part of our prayer life.

- a. *Adoration* is another word for giving worship, or reverence.
- b. We adore someone because of what they are in character and what they mean to us in relationships. Christ taught his disciples to begin prayer with *"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. "* This is for us today! (See Matthew 6:9.)
- c. We need to practice worship in our prayer life. It would be wise to begin our time in prayer by telling God that we love Him, thanking Him for who He is, for His power, wisdom, might, and greatness.

(Note the following verses. Write in a phrase from each verse.)

- Psalm 95:6 _____
- Psalm 96:9 _____
- John 4:24 _____
- Matt 4:10 _____
- Revelation 4:10 _____

d. There is a tremendous picture of worship in Revelation 5:8-14. In this portion find all the different things involved in worship and write the ideas below.

Revelation 5:8-14:

- 5:8 ". . . fell _____ before the Lamb . . . "
- 5:9 ". . . Thou art _____ to take the book. "
- 5:11,12 (Note that a multitude worshipped Christ because He is worthy.)
"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive _____, and _____,
and _____, and _____, and _____,
and _____."
- 5:14 ". . . fell down and _____ him that liveth for ever and ever."

2. **Thanksgiving and praise** is another very important part of prayer. Before we begin to ask in prayer, we ought to spend time thanking and praising.

a. Praise is a major theme of the Book of Psalms. At this point read Psalms 145 through 150 and notice the emphasis on praise. Surely God desires our praise!

b. Praise and thanksgiving go together. We are living among unthankful people today. Christians also are guilty of ingratitude and indifference to what God has done for them. (Note what God says about thanksgiving.)

- Psalm 26:7 _____
- Psalm 50:14 _____
- Psalm 95:2 _____
- Psalm 100:4 _____
- Ephesians 5:20 _____
- I Thessalonians 5:18 _____

Since we neglect thanksgiving and praise we often put all the emphasis on asking for favors. We are like little children with the "*gi-me's*, " (*give me!*).

3. **Confession of sin ought to be an integral part of our prayer life.**
(Write these in your own words.)

a. What does it mean to confess? (Note answers in lesson 2, pgs. 8,9.)

b. What was David's attitude about his heart condition? (See Psalm 139:23,24.) _____

c. Read Psalm 19:13; what did the psalmist desire from the Lord? _____

d. What was the psalmist's prayer in Psalm 19:12? _____

e. Lastly, in Psalm 19:14, what was his prayer? _____

The Holy Spirit uses God's Word to search our hearts. We must confess actions and attitudes that are contrary to the Scriptures. We need to beseech Him for His grace to put off sin in the future and to determine to put on godly actions and attitudes to please God.

4. **Intercession or supplication for others is the fourth part of prayer.**

Supplication really means to beg, beseech, or cry out to God for some need!

a. What did Paul desire of the saints? (Romans 15:30) ". . .that ye _____ together for me in your _____ to God for me: " (Paul continues in verses 31 and 32 about certain things he desired they would pray about for him.

b. What did Paul exhort us to do according to I Timothy 2:1? "I exhort therefore, that, first of all _____, _____, _____, and giving of thanks be made for all men: . . ."

c. In I Timothy 2:8, Paul urges, "I will therefore that _____ pray every where, lifting up _____, without wrath and doubting."

Make prayer lists of those whom God lays on your heart and for whom you feel accountable to pray -- your spouse, children, parents, sisters, brothers, pastors, teachers, missionaries, grandchildren, etc.

We all need to daily intercede for our immediate family. Also list unsaved people and pray for their salvation. We ought to have a burdened heart causing us to supplicate with strong crying unto the Lord for needy saved and unsaved ones. (I urge you to read and ponder what Hebrews 5:5-9 says of Christ. These verses ought to touch our hearts.)

5. **Supplication for yourself is the last of the five parts that make up prayer.**

a. In Philippians 4:6 we read: "Be careful for nothing (or anxious) but in every thing by prayer and _____ with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Too often our anxiety is over our own personal needs.)

b. Note the emphasis upon crying unto the Lord in the following verses.

- Psalm 6:9 _____
- Psalm 5:3 _____
- Psalm 61:1 _____

It would be good to list personal needs and pray over them. Ask the Lord to show you habits, attitudes, thoughts, and actions that are not pleasing to Him and study the Word of God for answers. Consider Psalm 19. In it you will see the importance of the Word of God for your own life. You will also see a number of things to pray over for yourself.

Claim the promise: "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory. ." Ephesians 4 :20, 21

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Getting Along With A Difficult Person and Solving Problems!

We can never get away from relationships that bring problems of various kinds. As long as we are in the flesh and have this carnal, sinful, wicked nature we will have difficulty getting along with others from time to time. Many times in life we will experience either being the offender or being the offended one! In many situations we will offend at the same time we may possibly be offended. What is the answer to this dilemma? For one thing we need to walk in God's love as described in I Corinthians thirteen.

Twelve times we are commanded in the Scriptures to love one another! Christ told His disciple: "By this (your love for one another) shall all men know that you are my disciples." (John 13:34,35.) There are numerous places in the Word of God where we are exhorted to practice love, forgiveness, forbearing, and attitudes of longsuffering and humility.

Our love and care for others is not to depend their being perfect. When another person does wrong or fails us in some way we are not to cease obeying the command to love (See Ephesians 5:32-5:2.) In fact, God commands us to be involved in a ministry of *restoring others!* Galatians 6:1 commands us to work to restore anyone who is *overtaken in a fault.*

- God's love is to motivate us! Love should cause us to reach out to others who have failed rather than to ignore or to destroy them like some do!
- Love cannot stop when conflicts arise; love must work to restore. When do people need us most? When they are the most unlovely and have fallen into some fault or sin.

The greater the problem, difference, or conflict, the greater the love that must be shown and the greater the need to follow Christ's principles stated in Matthew 18.

I. WE ARE TO KEEP FROM BEING OFFENSIVE.

1. **Far too often we are like the disciples in actions and reactions** as seen in Matthew 20:20-28. They all desired prominence and some of them sought it.
 - a. Christ said the Gentiles exercise dominion and they that are great exercise authority upon them. (20:25)
 - b. "*But it shall not be so among you: but _____ will be great among, let be your _____ ; . . . Let him be your _____ ; Even as the Son of man came not to be _____ unto, but to _____ and to give his life a ransom for many*" (20:26-28).

2. **The disciples brought a question to Christ which showed their hearts.**
What was that question? (See Matthew 18:1.) _____
Is this a problem we also face in life? _____ If so why? _____
- a. What had Christ taught them prior to this as found in Mark 9:31-37 (Note especially verse 35.) _____

- b. What was the disciple's great desire? (See Luke 9:46-48.) _____
". . . for he that is among you all, the same shall be great. "
3. **Christ warns us about being an offense in Matthew 18:1-10.** (Write in brief answers.)
- a. What was the setting of this teaching as found in verses 1-2? _____

- b. Note some words in Matthew 18:3-5 that describe the characteristics of the person who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. _____

4. Christ spoke of the need of our self discipline in Matthew 18:8,9. How serious is this from Christ's viewpoint? _____

5. How far should we be willing to go in self discipline in order to do right, to correct an offense, or to keep from offending? (18:8,9) _____

6. What are we apt to do or how are we apt to respond IF we despise younger believers? (18:10) _____
7. Rather than to *hurt, cut off, despise, drive away, or offend*, what do verses 11- 14 teach us to do? _____

II. WHAT WE SHOULD DO IF WE HAVE OFFENDED

We will all experience offending others. Christ said, "*Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh* " (Matthew 18:7).

Since so often we cause a breach in relationships in our homes, at work, and in the church, what does God teach us to do about it?

1. **If we are about to worship**, and there is an offense between us and another person, what are we to do" (Matthew 5:23,24) _____

In the Scripture we are commanded to ask for forgiveness, to seek to get right with the one whom we have offended. If we cover our sin, God states in Proverbs 28:13 that we will not prosper, and if we deny it we will never be right with those whom we have offended.

2. **What direction are we given in Romans 12:19?** _____
3. **What kind of responses** do we need to practice according to Romans 12:9-10, 14-18!
- vs. 9 "Let love be without _____. Abhor that which is _____, _____ to that which is good."
 - vs. 10 "Be kindly _____ one to another with brotherly love; in _____ preferring _____ another."
 - vs. 14 "Bless them which _____ you; bless and curse not."
 - vs. 16,17 "Be of the same mind one to _____. . . . condescend to men of low estate. Recompense to no man _____ for _____."
 - vs. 18 "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you. live _____ with all men. "
4. **What should be our action** according to Romans 12:20,21? _____

According to the biblical directions above, if we have offended a brother we should not only get right with him but also watch our attitude and response during the process of making restitution. We are in the greatest danger when we have done right and we feel the other person has not responded as we thought he should.

III. DEALING WITH A BROTHER WHO HAS OFFENDED

Both Galatians 6:1 and Matthew 18:15 give us directives for our response to someone who has injured us. Far too often we are not biblical in our response, in fact, we may retaliate, gossip, and in general make the situation worse.

1. **Notice that God is concerned about our response** to a brother when the brother has offended us. "**If thy brother...**" has offended you, (has been overtaken in a fault), Christ tells us what we are to do in Matthew 18:15.
 - a. Note the command in John 13:34,35: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love _____ ; as I have _____ you . . . By this shall all men _____ that ye are my disciples, if ye _____ one to another. "
 - b. In Galatians 6:1 we read: "**Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, _____ such an one in the spirit of meekness: considering thyself, _____ also be _____.** "

To be overtaken in a fault means if the person has trespassed or sinned against us, we are to seek to restore that person. This is not based on our whims, wishes, desires, or preferences. If a brother (or sister) has sinned, or is caught in a fault, our desire should be to help him or her, even if that sin is against us.

Are we to take action if it is mere hearsay? Is action necessary if a brother falls in an area of his life, but seeks quickly to bring about restoration? _____

2. **Christ set forth the steps** we are to take if a brother has offended and has not quickly taken care of the problem. (See Matthew 18:15-17.)

a. Step one -- "**Go** and tell him his fault" (vs. 15).

- We are to GO! This is a test of brotherly love for it may be easier not to go, or to face the person about the problem at hand. (Maybe that person is a wife, a husband, a child, a family member or a friend.)
- We are NOT to wait until God has to bring judgment in that persons life, or until someone else has been hurt. (Notice the following related verses: II Timothy 2:24-26; James 5:20; John 5:16.)

b. Step two -- "**Go** and **tell** him his fault" (vs. 15).

- The word tell is a strong word that implies to convict or to convince the person of his wrong. (The Greek word here is the word reprove which is used also in John 16:8.)

Why should we in great love and deep concern go to convince? There were different responses when Adam and Eve fell into sin.

- 1) They hid themselves.
- 2) They practiced blaming others.
- 3) They were soon living lives of loneliness.
- 4) They doubtless felt great guilt.

If we don't go in love, patience and forbearance we probably will not win the offender from his sin and wrong.

- How are we to go according to verse 15? ". . . between thee and him _____."
- What is the goal? ". . . if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained _____
_____." (Matthew 18:15). ". . . ye which are spiritual, _____
such a one. . ." (Galatians 6:1).

c. Step three: "**And if he shall neglect to hear thee. . .**" (Matthew 18:16).

- We are to take one or two witness with us.
- We are to go with the purpose of evaluating and establishing the truth.
- We are to go with the intent to lovingly urge settling the problem and to bring healing.
- What kind of person should go according to II Timothy 2:24-26? "*gentle, apt to _____, _____, in meekness _____.*"
- The goal according to James 5:20 is to: "*_____ the sinner from the error of his _____, save a soul from _____, hide a multitude of sins.*"

d. Step Four: "**And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.**"

- It is expected that by bringing it before the church the problem will be solved and those in error will not stubbornly continue to be unrepentant.
- If the former steps fail, then this is the next resort.
- The purpose of bringing the problem to the church is to give opportunity for restoration, repentance, and restitution.
- The Corinthian church faced a serious problem -- a man living in incest with his mother. They were to deal with the problem (I Corinthians 5:1-13) The church must have thought that under God's grace it was not serious.
- The result was a repentant, restored man and a church cleared of the wrong they had previously countenanced. (See II Corinthians 7:8-16.)

- The strong command of I Corinthians 5:5 brought a successful conclusion.

If there are signs of progress there ought to be a continued effort to help the offender as long as there is no great danger or deterioration of the situation.

- e. If there is no progress in clearing up a serious problem brought about by the offense and the offender, certain steps are to take place. ". . . **but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an _____ man and a publican**" (Matthew 18:17).
 - This is the last resort.
 - We are talking about church discipline. (I will not go into greater detail at this point for this is a study in itself.)
 - The goal is still to restore! We are to be friendly and kind, but not recognize the person as a brother in Christ. (See I Corinthians 5:11.)

.....
*The goal is restoration! Why? Because Christ died for sin, He was made sin for us and we are to hate sin. We are to desire others to be set free from the sin that put Christ on the Cross.
 We are to take God's side against sin and urge saints to repent who walk in sin. We are to honor God's Word by obeying it!*

Conclusions:

1. What truths did Jesus teach about forgiving those who repent in the parable of Matthew 18:21-35? _____

2. What did Christ say in Luke 17:3,4 about how we are to respond to the repentant person? _____
3. What was the setting of all this teaching? _____
 _____ (Matthew 18:1-3)
4. If someone comes to you to share a problem about a third person how should you tell him to handle it according to Matthew 18:15? _____

5. Have you known of Christians who did not practice Matthew 18:15, but who instead spread discontent or gossip? _____
 Were they negligent or indifferent to the problem? _____
6. Have you known of Christians who have gone astray because of neglected sin which brought great guilt and shame? _____ Did they leave the church? _____
 Did anyone try to restore them according to Matthew 18? _____
7. To whom did Christ promise a blessing in Matthew 5:19? _____
8. If we have a quarrel against any, what are we to do? (Colossians 3:13.) _____

9. What is the horrible result if sin is not confessed, or the offender is not forgiven though he seeks it, or the problem is not biblically resolved? (Note the verses below.)

- ". . . lest any root of _____ springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled" (Hebrews 12:15).
- I referred to the man of the Corinthian church who had grievously sinned. He did repent (See II Corinthians 7:8-13.) and afterward the church needed direction to treat him properly. (See II Corinthians 2:4-11.)
"So that contrariwise ye ought rather to _____ him, and _____ him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch _____"(vs. 7).
". . . that ye would confirm your _____ toward him." (vs. 8).

Note:

People readily become bitter if they feel that they are unforgiven or rejected because of their past failure.

Horrible grief can take place in the lives of the unforgiven who may be finding it hard to accept God's forgiveness for their sins or misdeeds.

When people fail they need understanding love with firmness about sin, and yet a sense of acceptance -- not of their sin, but of their personhood. There is a difference.

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Provision Through The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

In this series of studies we are particularly concerned about helping the Christian who is beset with many problems that may come from many different sources. You may feel that defeat is to be your constant lot. But it does not need to be so! Even if you are overcome with obsessions and feel oppressed by satan, God has provided a way out for you. The Holy Spirit wants to work in your life to bring a ministry of victory to you.

The Person and work of the Holy Spirit is greatly neglected today. Many of God's people are occupied with the gifts of the Spirit rather than with Him. In most Christian circles little reference is made to the Holy Spirit, and only an obscure place is given to Him in public ministry, personal life, and in private conversation. **He is often referred to as it and treated more as an influence, or a power, or an indescribable intangible something, rather than a person.**

The Holy Spirit's ministry is so vital and our relationship to the Holy Spirit often is the pivotal difference between victory or continued defeat. Even our spirituality depends upon a harmonious relationship with the Holy Spirit. He is the Holy one who works a work of sanctification in our lives, who brings the desire of a holy life.

Knowing Christ as Savior makes me saved -- knowing the Holy Spirit in my life and allowing him to work in my life makes me a holy, dedicated disciple, a truly spiritual person.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD'S GREAT GIFT TO THE BELIEVER.

When we consider the many gifts God has given to us: grace, mercy, forgiveness, salvation, the Word of God, joy, peace, justification, sanctification, etc., none is any greater than the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Too many Christians are living a carnal life; they have not made the gift of the Holy Spirit personal in their own lives. Ignorance of biblical teaching and lack of personal understanding of the personal work of the Holy Spirit is one basic reason why many Christians are powerless over sin's domination. We lack the power of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

1. The Holy Spirit is the Father's choice gift.

(Read the following: John 7:37-39; 14:16; 15:26; 16:1-13.)

- a. Only the saved have the Holy Spirit. (John 14:16; Acts 2:38,39; Acts 10:44, 47.)
- b. Regeneration or being saved is the work of the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3:5)
"Not by works of righteousness we have done by the _____
of regeneration, and _____ of the Holy Ghost."

- c. Christ promised the Holy Spirit to his own! (John 14:16, 17) *"And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another _____, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, . . . for he _____ with you, and shall be _____."*
Christ prayed to the Father that He would send the Holy Spirit to live in the lives of the saved ones! (See John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15.)

2. The Holy Spirit came to flow in us and through us in blessing.

- a. The Holy Spirit is to be a well of water springing up bringing blessing in us and through us. (Read and ponder John 7:37-39.)
- b. The Holy Spirit is the Divine inflow of our lives to bring the supernatural presence of God to us and to bring supernatural power in our daily living.
- c. Our part is to be thirsty, that is, to have a thirst after the overflowing blessing of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. We are to come and drink. By faith we ask the Holy Spirit to fill us, control us, and empower us.

3. The Holy Spirit is an *all-wise, all-powerful, all-present, and eternal person as much as the Father or the Son.* As Christ put himself under the Father to carry out the will of the Father, so the Holy Spirit came to carry out the will of the Godhead three. (Read the following and write a phrase that is taught about the Holy Spirit as a Person of the triune God.)

- Romans 8:27 _____
- Acts 1:8 _____
- Ephesians 4:30 _____

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS MANY MINISTRIES TOWARD THE BELIEVER.

Christ said that we were to know the Holy Spirit. (John 14:17) Do you know this One who is the Father's choice gift to you? Many of his ministries are revealed in his names.

1. He is the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, 15:26; 16:13).

*"Even the _____ of _____, . . . and shall be _____" (John 14:17).
". . . whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the _____ of _____
which proceedeth from the Father, he shall _____ of me" (John 15:26).
"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all _____,
for he shall not speak of himself. . . ." (John 16:13).*

- a. He came to lead you into all truth. His ministry includes making us aware of what is false, deceitful, hypocritical that would grieve him. (Ephesians 4:30)
- b. The Holy Spirit, who moved upon men to give us the Word of God, lead John to write about the importance of truth. (Study the lesson on truth.)
According to II John 1,2,3,4 and III John 1,3,4 we are to walk in truth, to live a life of truth.

2. He is the *Spirit of Life* who brings spiritual life and desire.
(Romans 8:2,3)

- a. We are to be *fervent in spirit* according to Romans 12:11. As we allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives he will make us fervent in our prayer life, fervent in love to the Lord, and fervent in our interest in the Word of God.
 - b. As the *Spirit of Life* he would take away the lukewarmness, dullness, and deadness and cause us to be alive to spiritual things. The work of the Holy Spirit, in making us alive, would cause us to put away indifference.
 - c. *"For the law of the Spirit of _____ in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of _____ and _____."* (Romans 8:2). *"That the _____ of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after _____."* (Romans 8:4).
3. **He is the Spirit of Holiness**, and will work in our lives to help us become holy. (See Romans 1:4) Don't forget he is the **H O L Y S P I R I T**, for he is holy. Twenty seven times in the Book of Acts the Holy Spirit is referred to, for he is the **H O L Y S P I R I T**.

"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the _____ of , by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4).

- a. It is his ministry to make us aware of sin, defilement, anything unclean, or impure. He convicts of that which degrades, grieves and quenches his work in us. We can only grieve someone who loves us! (Ephesians 4:30; I Thess. 5:19)
- b. It is his work to create in us a love for the pure and holy. It grieves him if we allow impurity in thoughts, pictures, books, etc.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us _____ ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting _____ in the fear of God." (II Corinthians 7:1)

4. **He is the Comforter, the One alongside to help us.** (John 14:16; 15:26)
- a. He is the One who indwells us (I Corinthians 6:19,20), imparting hope, teaching us, edifying us, communicating joy and helping us to grow up in Christ.
 - b. As the Comforter, he gives us grace and strength to face the temptations, trials and testings of life. We do not need to fall into sin and failure.

He will bring healing for your hurts and wholeness for you brokenness. When you are down, the Holy Spirit will lift you up. When you are sad, he will make you glad. When you are despairing, he gives you the glory of his presence, and grace, victory, and blessing in the midst of trials.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE GIFT OF FULLNESS TO THE BELIEVER.

(Look at Ephesians 1:23; 3:19; 5:18, Colossians 2:6,7.)

In the divine plan, the gift of the Holy Spirit has as much purpose as the gift of the Son for salvation. Some of these reasons we have studied in the previous section.

Through the Son the sinner has life and salvation; through the Holy Spirit the saved have abundant life, or fullness of spiritual life.

Through the Son the sinner left the sphere of the nature to enter into the plane of the spiritual; by the Holy Spirit that saved one is led into God's fullness in the plane of the spiritual.

1. **The Holy Spirit lives in us for the purpose of leading** us into the fullness of God for our lives. He:
 - a. reveals to us the Word of God that we might have the fullness that is to be ours in Christ,
 - b. creates in us the desire for that fullness,
 - c. and then, acts as the channel for the transmission of fullness from God to us.

"And be not _____ with wine, wherein is excess; but be _____ with the _____ " (Ephesians 5:18).

In contrast, Paul uses the word **"I"** twenty five times in Romans chapter seven, and the Holy Spirit is mentioned once. But when Paul entered into the fullness of truth of the Holy Spirit as set forth in Romans chapter eight, *he then mentions the Holy Spirit **nineteen** times and himself only once.*

2. **This fullness is our birthright in Christ.** By virtue of being saved it is the right of every believer to have all the fullness of God. It is the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit to make this real to us.
 - a. Our part is desire. *"If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and _____ . "* (See John 7:37.) We must have a thirst for his fullness.
 - b. Our part is to believe. *"He that _____ on me, as the Scriptures hath said, out of his inner most being (literally) shall flow _____ of living _____ . (But this spake he of the _____ , which they that believe on him should receive: for the _____ was not yet _____ ; because that Jesus was not yet glorified (or gone to heaven)" (John 7:38,39).*

Consider:

1. Possibly our greatest need is to be *filled with the Holy Spirit!*
2. All that we are, all that we do, all that we will be, hinges directly upon this.
3. Our powerlessness, fruitlessness, and joylessness all depends on our relationship with the Holy Spirit.
4. If we are to be used of God we must be filled with the Holy Spirit.
5. If we are to have victory over sin, then we need His power, control, and ministry in our lives.
6. In prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to take charge of your life.
7. Surrender your body to him as the One who dwells within and wants to control, so Christ is real and God's fullness is known. (See I Corinthians 6:19,20.) 61

Treasures of Truth

Studies to Help Us In The Time of Our Greatest Need

Overcoming Besetting Sins That Defeat Us!

When Christ walked upon this earth --

1. He encountered many whose lives were controlled by besetting sins, oppressions and satanic obsessions.
2. Did He have a deep burden and compassion for those whose lives were blasted, or maybe nearly destroyed by sin's bondage?
3. The gospel accounts give us many stories of Christ forgiving, cleansing, and setting people free from a sinful lifestyles.
4. Christ came not only to redeem fallen man, as He offers eternal life, but also to bring freedom to those oppressed by sin and satan.
5. If the Son shall make you free you shall be free indeed. (See John 8:32-36; Acts 10:38.)

Seneca cried, "*Oh that a hand would come down from heaven and deliver me from my besetting sin!*" His pleas have been echoed down through the centuries. We've all wished for the same miracle.

1. Sinful habits often seem innocent, but if we don't master them, they will surely master us in due time.
2. We have all experienced the cycle: enjoy a forbidden pleasure, feel guilty, determine never to do it again, take pride in brief moments of self-control, then fail once more.
3. Each time we repeat this pattern we cut the ruts a bit deeper, the cords of sin tighten about us and we feel as if we are chained to sin and wrong. Paul must have felt that way as his struggle is put before us to see in Romans 7:7-24.

There are many who struggle under domination of some kind of sinful habit, thoughts or destructive attitudes. ***Bondage to sinful practices comes in many forms: such as an obsession to gambling, drugs, promiscuous or sensuous desires, covetousness, envy, bitterness, and an ongoing battle with an angry spirit.*** This list could be endless for many Christians grapple with sinful bondage in many different areas of daily life. Bondage to sin, or its domination has been described as a moral weakness, a lack of will power, an obsession to live out a certain desire or lifestyle, a propensity to give oneself over to sin or sinful desires or practices we have built into our lives.

Consider:

- It is so easy for us to excuse our sinful behavior because we are human.
- We become pessimistic, even defiant, and soon find ourselves bound by that sin.
- Usually we are gradually building our own bondage to the cords of sin that seem to strangle our godly desires and promises to both Christ and to ourselves.
- This behavior pattern becomes so familiar that eventually we don't even want to change. Change is too big a struggle, too difficult, and to a degree we are enjoying the very sin that is binding us.
- As we settle into our uneasy smugness, we come to feel at home in our anger, lust, worry, gluttony, laziness, bitterness, covetousness, unforgiveness, and selfishness.

- Only rarely or occasionally do we put forth effort to change. Despite our sincere attempts at yielding ourselves to God, we retain certain weaknesses or sinful bondage. We have concluded we can never conquer them. "*After all, no one is perfect, so we will have to live with the sin problem,*" is our personal inner thought.

I. WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT TEMPTATION

Why is sin so powerful, so attractive, enticing, tantalizing, and desirable? Temptation is so attractive, unrelenting, and powerful that we wonder why God does not adjust the degree of our temptations so that we would never be bound. Surely God-- the One who made all things, possesses all power and authority -- could make it easier for those of us who are saved and love Him. Since so many believers succumb to one sin or another, often ending in ruin and great sorrow, it seems logical to feel that God ought to clear the way before us and keep us from temptation in the first place.

1. We were all born with a sin nature.

- a. This inner *fifth column* combines with our inner response to outward stimuli from the world system. (See I John 2:15-17) Our sin nature responds to the tantalizing temptation that satan and his cohorts would put in our way. (See Matthew 4 and Christ's temptation.)
- b. We are drawn away by our own sinful inner nature. "*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am _____ of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every _____ is _____, when he is drawn away of his _____ lust, and enticed.*" (James 1:13,14)

Note: John Knox, wrote these words before he died: "*Now, after many battles, I find nothing in me but vanity and corruption. For in quietness I am negligent, in trouble impatient, tending to desperation; pride and ambition assault me on the one part, covetousness and malice trouble me on the other; briefly, O Lord, affections of the flesh do almost suppress the operation of Thy Spirit.*" If this man of God had such struggles, is there hope for any of us? Yes, if we will find there it! Do you feel you are alone in your difficulties and failures? Well, you aren't!

2. We face a world system that draws us to sinful practices.

- a. The world lies in the lap of the wicked one. Satan is behind the seductive nature of the world's enticements to sinful living. The world is *orchestrated* to make all kinds of sinful living appear attractive. (See I John 5:18, 19.)
- b. I John 2:15-17 teaches us not to love the things of the world. The world system is made up of the *lust of the _____, the lust of the _____, and the pride of _____*. In all realms of philosophies, ideologies, governmentally pressures, educationally, etc., we see the impact of practices, thinking and teaching that is contrary to the Word of God. There are *rulers of the darkness of this _____, and spiritual wickedness in _____*. (See Ephesians 6:11,12.)

3. We face a very cunning enemy-- satan.

- a. We must face the wiles of the devil.

The word wiles denotes an enemy who lies in wait to deceive. It means that satan uses craft, deceit and cunning craftiness (See Ephesians 4:14) and manipulations to bring us to failure. He does not care how long it takes him, just as long as he succeeds. God desires that we *stand against the _____ of the _____*. (See Ephesians 6:11.) ***To do so demands that we watch and pray.***

- b. Much of the evil in the world, including our own struggles, can be traced to the interference of the evil one. Satan is the tempter who does all he can to lead us into sin and failure. (See I Thessalonians 3:5.)
- He is the wicked one. (See I John 5:18.)
 - He is the accuser of the brethren. (See Revelation 12:7-12.)
 - He is the liar. (See John 8:44.)
 - He is the prince of this world. (See John 14:30.)
 - He is the prince of the power of the air, of this world. (See Ephesians 2:2.)
 - He appears as an angel of light while he is the author of the darkness spread by false apostles and deceitful workers. (See II Corinthians 11:13-14.)

But praise the Lord, greater is He (the Lord Himself) that is in you (as a saved person) than he that is in the world. "*Ye are of God, little children, and have _____ them: because _____ is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*" (I John 4:4). Satan is a defeated foe, Christ had victory over him for all of us. (See Colossians 2:13-15.) "*And having spoiled _____ and _____, he made a shew of them openly, _____ over them in it*" (vs. 15.)

IV. THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT BONDAGE TO SIN

Bondage to sin is something that is often seen in the Word of God. God does not gloss over the depth of man's depravity. Many of the Old Testament stories vividly set forth the wickedness of the human heart. God says the old sinful nature is corrupt to the core, the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked. (See Romans 1:18-32; Jeremiah 17:9.)

With a compassionate heart, Christ ministered to the needs of mankind while on the earth. Often he ministered to those who were blasted by their sin, and held captive to sinful living. Some were in such bondage to demonic delusions and control that they were not even sane.

I don't think we fully understand the extent of the corruption of the man's sinful nature or the potential of complete bondage to sinful ways and what it brings. What men call a lack of mental health -- paranoid disorders, anxiety disorders, psychosomatic disorders, and schizophrenic disorders are often and largely the result of unconfessed sin. Guilt has eaten away at the personality until the person is deranged to some degree by the very sinful lifestyle that has brought the bondage.

There is a very powerful portion where Paul lists some very devastating, life dominating sins and sinful lifestyles and the work of salvation which sets people free. Paul was concerned for those who were brought under the power of sin or a sinful lifestyle. (Read and study I Corinthians 6:9-12 with me here.)

1. **The list in verses 9 and 10 are of life-controlling sins;** (write them in the blanks given): *"Be not deceived: neither _____ nor _____ , nor _____ , nor _____ , nor abusers of _____ with mankind, nor (vs. 10) _____ , nor _____ , nor _____ , nor _____ , nor _____ , shall inherit the kingdom of God."*

2. **Paul then states what had taken place** in their lives because of salvation in Christ. Salvation in Christ should bring deliverance from sin's bondage. (Read I Corinthians 6:11.) *"And _____ were some of you: but ye are _____ but ye are _____ , but ye are _____ in the name of the _____ , and by the Spirit of our God."*
 - a. **But ye are washed!**
 - We can have washing - the removal of the defilement of sin. They had lived sin-controlled lifestyles, but were now washed from it all by the power of the gospel of Christ. (See Isaiah 1:18; 44:22)
 - When we fail as God's children we can have the washing that confession and repentance brings. David spoke of that in Psalm 32:1-3.

 - b. **But ye are sanctified!**
 - Sin does two things -- it makes us unholy and it makes us guilty.
 - When we receive Christ as Savior not only are we washed, but we are sanctified, (set apart) by the offering of Jesus Christ once for all. (See I Peter 1:2.) We are His to live for Him. (Note what God says about Israel in Isaiah 44:42-45.)
 - As Christians, when we fail or fall into sin or a habitual sinful lifestyle God will deal with us. (See Hebrews 12:5-9.) He desires that we will deal with the sin, that is, confess it, repent of it, forsake it, and cast ourselves on His mercy and know His redeeming, sanctifying, and cleansing grace. (Mediate on Psalm 51.)

 - c. **But ye are justified!**
 - When we confess our faith in Jesus, the guilt of our sin is removed and we stand justified before God. We are cleared from all sin and declared righteous by redemption through Christ's blood. (See Ephesians 1:7.)
 - As a saint of God, when we sin, or fall into a pattern of a sinful lifestyle out of neglect of the things of God -- God will deal with us. He will not reject His own, we still have the position of justification and He will bring whatever discipline is necessary to bring us back to him.

3. In I Corinthians 6:12, Paul says *"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are _____ expedient:" (or helpful, or a blessing) ". . . but I will not be brought under the _____ of any."* Paul was deeply concerned that he would not be brought under sin's power.
 - a. Paul said, *"I will not be brought under the _____ of any."* Paul was determined sinful practices would not gain mastery over him. He exercised himself in self control. (See I Corinthians 9:24-27.)

 - b. Here Paul was saying although many things were lawful, they were not in God's will, nor did they honor Him.

- c. Behind this was the fact that the Corinthians used two arguments to defend their sensuality. First, "All things are lawful unto me." This was a popular phrase in Corinth, based on a false view of Christian freedom. We have not been set free so that we can enter into a new kind of bondage! As Christians, we must ask ourselves, "Will this enslave me? Is this activity really profitable for my spiritual life?"
- d. Their second argument was, " _____ for the belly, and the _____ for meats" (vs. 13). They treated sex as an appetite to be satisfied and not as a gift to be cherished and used carefully.

Note: *Sensuality is to sex what gluttony is to eating; sensuality and gluttony are both sinful and bring disastrous consequences. There is certainly excitement and enjoyment in sexual experience outside of marriage, but it is not enrichment.*

Sex outside marriage is like a man robbing a bank; he gets something, but is is not his and he will one day pay for it.

The fact that the Christian is free from all legalistic demands does not set him free from the moral law of God. Fornication was a common sin in Corinth. Many defended the lifestyle and probably many were addicted and obsessed with sexual activity like we see in our country today.

- Many Christians are dulled by over-indulgence in lawful things.
- Many a Christian is bound to what may seem to be harmless, but will discovery to their dismay and defeat that it has gained mastery over them.
- TV, modern novels and many other things of the world have gained mastery over many Christians as they have fallen prey to sinful obsessions.

2. The Lord Jesus Christ dealt with the demonic oppressed maniac of Gadara. (See Matthew 8:26-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-37.)

- a. His condition was a terrifying one at best and the result of demonic influences as well as the bondage a sinful life brings. He lived among the tombs, was violent, dangerous, a menace to the area while controlled by a legion of demons.
- b. I don't think that his condition was much different than many who are living wicked lives today. Outward there are many differences. But desires of the heart for wickedness are the same.
- c. Only Christ can change the life. Only a life yielded to Christ can bring freedom from sin's domination and ruination.

Note: Dr. Merrill F. Unger, in his book, Demons In The World Today, says the following about demonic activity: "In demon influence, evil spirits exert power over a person short of actual possession. Such influence may vary from mild harassment to extreme subjection when body and mind become dominated and held in slavery by spirit agents. Christians, as well as non-Christians, can be so influenced. They may be oppressed, vexed, depressed, hindered, and bound by demons."

- d. We should never underestimate the power and devices of the enemy. The Bible confirms this. "Lest Satan should get an advantage over us: **for we are not _____ of his _____.**" (II Corinthians 2:11)
"Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to _____ against the _____ of the devil." (Ephesians 6:11.)

- e. In I Peter 5:8 we are told to be serious minded, on the alert because our adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

III. GOD HAS PROVIDED VICTORY OVER ALL OUR BONDAGE TO SIN.

We must be armed for battle so victory can be ours. (Study Ephesians 6:11-18.) Paul has given to us the means to stop the enemy's successful attack on us. The steps come directly from God's Word and can be used by all disciples of the Christian walk.

1. We must put on truth. (Ephesians 6:14)

- a. We have noted the seriousness of sin's corruption and how the person goes from a lesser to a greater degree of bondage. No one can be set free without coming to the place of being brutally honest about his condition.

Note: Those who are bound by sin often live lives of delusion, denying sinfulness, faults, and problems. If we are under some bondage then we must come to grips with what we are and what our lifestyle has done to us and to others as well. Truthfully taking responsibility for our actions must be the first step.

One man who struggled through bondage to sexual sins and was in fact convicted of attempted rape said, *"If you don't want to get rid of the problem confess it only to God. If you want to get rid of the problem, confess it to another person. And if you really want to get rid of the problem keep yourself accountable to another person."*

Another person who is now living in victory said, *"I confessed my sin to God for years. I mean I poured my heart out, begging for His forgiveness, but it was within weeks of starting to confess to another brother what I was doing that I had victory."*

- b. A person needs to be honest with himself and at least one other person.
 - There is great healing in confession. (See James 5:16.)
 - Telling another person ones decision to change reinforces his commitment to do so.
 - Knowing someone else knows and is praying and exhorting us, and checking on us makes a tremendous difference.
 - If we cover up or hide our sin we will not prosper. (See Proverbs 28:13.) The double life must be dismantled at all costs.
 - Satan knows the power he has within secrecy. That is why sin is so often done in secret -- because the person thinks he does not have to answer to anyone but himself and God.
 - The double minded life only leads to an unstable existence. (See James 1:8.)
- c. Satan is a liar (John 8:44), but the believer whose life is controlled by truth will defeat him.
 - The girdle holds the other parts of the armor together and truth is the integrating force in the life of the victorious Christian.
 - A man of integrity, with a clear conscience, can face the enemy without fear.
 - Unless we practice the truth, we cannot use the Word of Truth.
 - Once a lie gets into the life of a believer, everything begins to fall apart.

For over a year, King David lied about his sin with Bathsheba, and nothing went right. Psalm 32 and 51 tell of the price he paid.

2. Secondly, the defeated person must pursue righteousness.

(Ephesians 6:14) *"Stand therefore, having your loins . . . and having on the _____ of righteousness. "* (See I Peter 1:14,15; 2:9, 11.)
God's call is *"...be ye holy, as I am _____ ."*

- a. We have been called to live holy lives. For the saved there is a constant internal beckoning deep in our spirits that demands holy living. When we fail, we become consumed with guilt.
- b. Holy living happens only in conjunction with a yieldedness to the Holy Spirit.
 - It takes commitment by the Christian and the power of God working together to bring about growth in righteousness.
 - The defeated person must be committed to progress not to perfection. It will take far more than personal will power.
 - He must fight the enemy while at the same time he yields his body to God.
 - It will be a process of growth toward victory, overcoming and being set free.

3. We will need the shoes of the gospel. (Ephesians 6:15)

- a. In those days they wore sandals with hobnails in the sole to make it easier to *"... _____ in the evil day, and having done all, to _____ ."* (See Ephesians 6:13.)
- b. The most victorious Christian is a witnessing Christian. Wearing the shoes of the gospel involves our preparation to witness. Then we will be in an offensive war against Satan. This will help us to be overcomers in our own lives.

4. Victory comes to any Christian through a walk by faith. *"Above all taking the _____ of _____ , wherewith ye shall be able to _____ all the fiery darts of the wicked"* (Ephesians 6:16).

- a. The soldier of that day would hold a shield before him. It was usually about four feet by two feet made of wood covered with tough leather. This gave him protection from spears, arrows, and fiery darts. Our God is our shield as we trust Him by faith. (Study Psalm 18:1-3; Psalm 61.)
- b. Faith mentioned here is living faith, a trust in the promises and power of God. (Read and ponder Hebrews 11:6.) You must trust God by faith to protect you!
 - Faith is the defensive weapon which protects us.
 - In Paul's day, arrows, dipped in some inflammable substance and ignited, were shot at the enemy.
 - Satan shoots fiery darts at our hearts and minds: lies, blasphemous thoughts, hateful thoughts about others, doubts, and burning desires for sin.
 - If we do not quench these darts, by faith, they will light a fire within and we will disobey God. (Meditate on James 4:7.)

5. We must wear the helmet of salvation! (Ephesians 6:17.)

- a. Satan wants to attack the mind, the way he defeated Eve and way he so often defeats us. (See Genesis 3; II Corinthians 11:3-5.)

The helmet refers to the mind controlled by God. We need to be *"taught by Him as the _____ is in _____."* (See Ephesians 4:21.) We are to *"grow in grace, and in the _____ of our Lord and Savior."* (II Peter. 3:18)

- b. The reader should study some of the other lessons in this series which will especially direct him to the importance of our thoughts. No one will become an overcomer of sinful practices without a drastic change in thinking. In the at first place he is seduced in the mind and then the actions follow.

6. We are to use the Sword of Spirit which is the Word of God.
(Ephesians 6:17)

- a. The Word of God is a mighty sharp sword. (See Hebrews 4:12.) It is quick and powerful because God's power is upon His eternal Word.

- b. The Sword, the Word of God, is to be used against satan and to answer temptations to sin that come our way.

- Possibly nothing is more important than for the defeated Christian to apply the Word of God for personal victory.
- Christ said, ". . . *Man shall not live by _____ alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the _____ of _____.*" (Matthew 4:4)
- It is vital that the struggling, defeated Christian realize that he can only overcome his sinful nature and practices of sin by memorizing the Word of God. Only by meditating on the Scriptures day and night will he become an overcomer. Sinful thoughts are to be replaced by applying God's truth.

7. We can be an overcomer by supplications and prayers.

(Ephesians 6:18). *"Praying _____ with all _____ and _____ in the Spirit, and watching there unto with all _____ . . ."*

- a. The very essence of the Christian experience is entering into and maintaining a vital relationship with God.
- b. Having a vital, living relationship through prayer each day is one of the key elements of introducing the life changing powers of the Holy Spirit into the life. Real prayer is talking to God and receiving His strength in the inner man.

- c. There are three things that a daily time with God will do for a Christian:

- First, a good prayer time instills God's power in our lives for that day.
- Secondly, prayer time changes our behavior patterns. As we pray, the Holy Spirit works in our hearts to help us see our bad, sinful habits and He creates in us a desire to replace them with God-honoring habits.

- Lastly, as we continue on in a prayer life over a long period of time God is able to change our very personalities into who He had in mind all along.

If anyone is to be free from sinful, life-binding, defeating bondage they must --

- 1. live a life of continued surrender to the Holy Spirit,**
- 2. saturate their lives with the Word of God by meditation and memorization,**
- 3. and become a person with a vital, whole-hearted prayer life.**

May this be so in your life!