

Christian Life Digest

Featuring:

Divine Healings, Holy Spirit Gifts, Fruits of The Spirit, Walking In The Spirit, Where Is Your God, How To Overcome Temptation, Count It All Joy, the Battle of The Ages, The Beast Within, The Devil's Tool Box, And The Believer's Authority

*Bible Teaching
For Today's Walk of Faith*

we walk by faith, not by sight

*Volume
#4*

*Written By Rev.
John Marinelli*

Copyright

Rev. John Marinelli,
johnmarinelli@embarqmail.com
Ocala Florida (November 2019)

All Rights Reserved

Volume #4 Introduction

This Book is Volume Four of Five Volumes. Each volume focuses on different Biblical Teachings. The goal of each volume is to edify, and educate the Christian in the deeper things of God. This forth volume addresses such concepts as Divine Healings, Holy Spirit Gifts, Fruits of The Spirit, Walking In The Spirit, Where Is Your God, How To Overcome Temptation, Count It All Joy, he Battle of The Ages, The Beast Within, The Devil's Tool Box, And The Believer's Authority.

The KJV of the bible is used most often as examples and referred to many times. It is considered by the author to be the most reliable source of knowledge and revelation in matters of Christian Living.

Fewer believers know what it is to walk in the Spirit. They do not read their bibles on a regular basis. Nor to they spend time alone with God to fellowship with Him and learn of Him. They are taught but not by God. Walking by Faith is almost a forgotten art. Folks that go to church and those that don't are mingling together so much that the world can't see any difference between them. The wisdom of God remains a mystery while the wisdom of this world rules the day. Times have changed drastically in the Christian World, at least in the United States. We are in need of revival, renewal and refreshing by the Spirit of God.

Volume #4 of Christian Life Digest is an attempt to refresh, renew and reunite the Christian believer with the, "Walk By Faith" way of life. This volume is meant to bring back the right perspective, equipping the believer to withstand the fiery darts of the enemy and overcome the temptations of this life..

Most of us live our lives based upon assumptions that may or may not be true. Some folks don't even question the thought process that society says is the basis for living. "**Real Truth**" and, "**Absolute Truth**" must emerge once again in the minds of God's people.

Divine Healings

Introduction

Does God want us to be well, free of sickness and disease? Where does sickness come from? Is healing conditional on what we do or not do? Are disease and sickness always the result of sin and rebellion against God? Is divine healing limited to a specific group of people? Why do some folks get healed and others do not? Can divine healing cease once it happens? What does the Bible teach about divine healing?

I am sure you can offer more questions than what I have mentioned. However, these are a good start in discussing the concept of divine healing.

Divine Healing By Definition

By definition, divine healing is, “Healing attributed to the direct agency of God usually in response to faith.” “Healing through divine intervention as in response to prayer or because of faith.”

The very definition of divine healing suggests that it is reserved for those who ask and believe. This is for sure a select group of folks. However,

God is still sovereign and can heal when and where He wants. He does not need prayer or faith to heal but He does most often require them.

I believe He operates that way to involve us, those that are suffering so we can see His mighty hand and miracle working power. It will mean more to us if we have partnered with God than just been given it outright. It’s like working to buy something opposed to having it given to you. It has more value in our own eyes. We appreciate Him and His grace far more when we pray for something and see it actually happen. It strengthens our relationship and dependence upon the Lord.

Where Does Sickness & Disease Come From?

A.) From The Devil... Acts 10:38 tells us “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were *oppressed of the devil*; for God was with him.” Notice that Jesus healed all who were oppressed. He did not cast demons out of the people. He healed them.

Demonic oppression... according to Got/Questions.com, is when a demon is temporarily victorious over a Christian, successfully tempting a Christian to sin and hindering his ability to serve God with a strong testimony.

If a Christian continues to allow demonic oppression in his/her life, the oppression can increase to the point that the demon has a very strong influence over the Christian's thoughts, behavior, and spirituality.

Christians who allow continuing sin open themselves up for greater and greater oppression. Confession and repentance of sin are necessary to restore fellowship with God, who can then break the power of demonic influence.

The apostle John gives us great encouragement in this area: "We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him" (1 John 5:18).

A recent **Charisma magazine article** offers seven symptoms of demonic oppression.

Symptom 1: Incapacity for normal living (Mark 5:1-5)

Just as the actions of Legion made the man unsuitable for normal social interaction with friends and family, an unusual desire for solitude, accompanied by a deep loneliness, will often set in. The person will often become very passive with no desire to change.

Symptom 2: Extreme behavior (Mark 5:4)

Violence will often be evident in the victim's life. An explosive temper and extreme, uncontrollable anger are dangerous behaviors that control the individual and the people who love him or her.

Symptom 3: Personality changes (Mark 5:9, 12)

Multiple personalities exist in some of the most serious cases of demonic control. This man had a "legion" of spirits within his life. All cases of multiple personality may not be demonic, but in most cases demon activity is involved. Changes in personality, extreme or mild, may be evidence of demonic activity.

Symptom 4: Restlessness and insomnia (Mark 5:5)

In verse 5, we see this man crying in the tombs "night and day." He could not sleep. Insomnia can be a sign of a physical problem or a sign of a spiritual problem. God has gifted His children with sleep (Ps. 127:2). So when you cannot sleep night after night and there is no medical reason for this disturbance, the devil maybe tormenting you. Don't forget: You have the right to rest in Jesus!

In Psalm 3, we see a picture of warfare. Here David was hounded by his enemies. In verse 3, he cried to the Lord, "You ... are a shield for me." In verses 5 and 6, he cried, "I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around." He also said in Psalm 4:8, "I will

both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.” Sleep is God’s gift to all who trust in Him.

Symptom 5: A terrible inner anguish (Mark 5:5)

This man was deeply tormented in mind and heart. Various levels of anguish are evident in those who are afflicted by demons. Grief and anguish are normal emotions for us all. Yet persistent, unresolved anguish that will not leave after normal therapies of counseling, encouragement and prayer could well be demonic.

Symptom 6: Self-inflicted injury and suicide (Mark 5:5)

Here we see the demonic man cutting himself. If you read Mark 9:14-29, you will see the story of the man whose son was both deaf and mute because of a demon: “Wherever it [the evil spirit] seizes him, it throws him down ... Often he [the demon] has thrown him [the boy] both into the fire and into the water to destroy him” (vv. 18, 22). Jesus cast out the demon: “The spirit cried out, convulsed him [the boy] greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead ... But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose” (vv. 26-27). Demons can cause people to injure themselves. They even incite suicide.

Symptom 7: Unexplained illness with no obvious medical cause

When medical testing produces no physical cause for an illness, then we should look to the mind and spirit for answers. Sometimes illnesses are psychological, and good counseling can result in a cure. Other times the battle is with demons. A scriptural example of this is found in Luke 13:11-16, the story of a woman afflicted by a “spirit of infirmity” (v. 11). Jesus called her “a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound” (v. 16). Obviously she was a child of God and faithful to her synagogue, with a desire to know more about the Lord. Then, “Jesus ... said to her, ‘Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.’ And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God” (vv. 12-13). There are physical illnesses caused by a class of demons known as “spirits of infirmity.”

B.) From Our Own Negligence... Galatians 6:7-8 tells us “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

” How man folks have come down with cancer from smoking? How many get drunk, become alcoholics and destroy their liver? How many do not dress properly in cold weather and get sick? We reap what we sow. The list of causes and affects can go on and on. The point is, we do things that hurt us and can even bring sickness and disease. This is not demonic oppression.

C.) Genetic Disorders... Some genetic disorders are caused by mutations in the DNA of genes. Other disorders are caused by changes in the overall structure or number of chromosomes. The results are evident in diseases like Musclar Distrophy and the like.

D.) Sin... **Ezekiel 18:20 tells us that** “The soul that sins, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” Sin causes death and can work inside of us daily bringing us to a point of death. Thus we experience a slow death as sin rules over our body.

E.) God’s Judgment... Ever heard of the plagues of Egypt? God’s judgment and power was demonstrated to the Pharoah through a series of plagues that one actually turned the river into blood. **II Kings 5:27** says, “The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper [as white] as snow.”

I am sure you can find other reasons for sickness and disease. The point I want to make is because there are many causes, not all who get sick or come down with a disease get healed. Some are reaping what they sow. Some are under the judgment of God. Others are just neglant in good hygiene.

What About The, “Name It & Claim It” Teaching

This has been a big debate in the church for years. Some say it is pure heresy while others live by it and shape their faith around it. I can see it being true in one respect and heresy in another. It’s like two sides of the same coin.

The basic idea is that when you speak it out, your words make it happen. Your words are like capsules that carry divine power. Some say this is why it is heresy, because it makes you a god. This is not Biblical.

It is heresy when...you name something and claim it that is not promised by God’s word. I can name and claim three wives and 4 expensive cars but that does not obligate God to deliver them.

It is true when...However, if I read in the scriptures that Jesus died for my sins and God wants me to follow Him and thereby find salvation, I can name it can claim it, knowing that it will come true. There are over 2,000 other promises that I can discuss with the Lord and apply at His direction.

It’s all based upon the divine will of God as shown to the believer. God’s word does not return to Him void. It always accomplishes what He sends it to do. (“So shall my word be

that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.”) **Isaiah 55:1**

The promises of God are written for us. They are hooks to hang our faith on. They are given so we can walk by faith and not by sight. When we believe them, we demonstrate faith. This is pleasing unto God and His word goes forth on our behalf. We can rest assured that if God said it, it will come to pass. In this sense, we can name it and claim it.

However, most folks stumble because the waiting for it to materialize is unknown and their faith eventually fails. This was not so with Abraham, or the others that we identify as “Heroes of Faith” in Hebrews. They all believed beyond hope in what God said. When God speaks a word into your life, you need to hold on to it with all that is in you and never let it go. It will come to pass in God’s timing.

Naming And Claiming Without Understanding

I have had friends in my past that were of the name it and claim it persuasion. They would jump on a scripture and claim it but had no real understanding from God. He has to speak it to you so it settles in your spirit and you know that you know. This can only come from a prayerful relationship with God where He communicates His will to you.

I have found that as I read the scriptures, He speaks to me. My heart and ears are open to His voice and I receive all that He wants me to know. Then I name it and claim it. Abraham did the same thing. He first heard from God.

Believing Beyond Hope

Romans 4:17-25 (NKJV)



(as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “So shall your descendants be.” And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb.”

“He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

“Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.”

Romans 4:17-25

Talking Points

1. God Must Say It First... V-17
2. What is said is usually beyond hope, Out of reach, Not Logical, Impossible-V18
3. Our consideration has to be on what God Has Said, which is the promise. Nothing else is applicable, especially what we see or feel. Thus a dead womb is not really dead... V 19
4. There is always a Promise...a hook to hang your faith on. Abraham hung on to God's word...A Father of Many Nations... V20
5. It is imperative to give glory to God before we receive the promise...v..20
6. We must be fully persuaded that God gave us the vision/promise and will bring it to pass...v21
7. Abraham, “Believed and Became” and so can we If we do not stagger at His Word...V 24

Here's a checklist.

- Hear the Word
- Accept and believe it
- Trust in who gave it, that it will happen
- Focus on the promise, not what others say or think
- Bless God for it along the way
- Do not stagger between it and other things

A graphic with a yellow background and purple text that reads: "With GOD All Things Are Possible!"

Question?..... Does God really want you healed? To answer this question, I want to discuss some Assumptive Logic before we look into what the Bible says.

Assumptive Logic

Assumptive Logic is the logic of making a conclusion based upon certain assumptions. Here we go.

1. God created man in His image and likeness. Can we assume that this image and likeness was healthy? **I believe we can.**
2. Jesus said in **John 10:10** “The thief comes not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” This abundant life, do we assume it to be full of wellness in body, mind and spirit? **I think so.**
3. The Lord kept the Israelites healthy and well for all of the 40-years in the wilderness. “Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.” If He did that for them, wouldn’t He also do that for us?” **Deut. 8:4.... I think so.**

You can see how assumptive logic can help us to draw an accurate conclusion. God does want us well. Now let’s look at the Bible. God’s word is what we are to live by and the Bible tells us His word. Here are a few scriptures to consider.

1. “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with **his stripes we** are healed” Isaiah 53:5.... Our healing comes to us because Jesus bore the suffering of the cross and took stripes from the Roman Soldier’s whip. There is healing in the blood of Jesus.
2. “who our sins himself did bear in **his** body, upon the tree, that to the sins having died, to the righteousness **we** may live; by whose **stripes** ye were healed” **I Peter 2:24**Peter tells us that we were healed.
3. “Dear friend, I pray that you may prosper in every way and be in good health physically just as you are spiritually.” **3 John 1:2...**

The apostle John prayed that we should all be in good health physically and spiritually. This is the apostle that was the beloved of Jesus, who took care of His mother and was the only disciple at the cross. This tells us that it is God’s will that we be in good health.

Hooks For Our Faith And Healing

There are numerous scriptures that tell us that God wants us well. They are hooks that we can hang our faith on and hold fast to in our ongoing belief in what God has said. Herein is the truth of the, “Name It And Claim It” teaching. This is Biblical.

If we know that God wants us well and that our healing is in the blood of Jesus, we can begin to confess it. We can say, “I am healed by the blood of Jesus.” Confessing it before the sickness, in the face of the devil and often until it gets into your spirit is a demonstration of your faith that what God believes about you is true and His desire is for you to be healed.

The Biblical premise for this is **Hebrews 11:6** “But without faith it is impossible to please him: **for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**”

Diligence plays a key role in obtaining your healing. Saying, “I am healed by the blood of Jesus” once is not enough. God wants to know, more than that, He wants you to know, if you are serious about your faith. We do not have to beg, only claim it as ours because it is ours.

Why Aren't All Healed?

I know what you might be thinking. What about all of those that pray and do not get what they ask for? I prayed for healing but it never came, why? Here are a few possibilities.

1. Some give up too soon, thinking that it is silly.
2. Others have been shown a pathway to their healing but refused to take it...like loosing weight or to stop smoking.
3. Yet others feel unworthy and end up believing they did too much sin to be favored by God. Thus they give up.
4. Others are denied because of God's sovereign will that has them on track for another destiny. An example is in **Hebrews 9:27-28** “And just as it is appointed for people to die once--and after this, judgment--So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

We hate to see a loved one die or someone we are actively praying for. However, if they do not get healed, and pass away, there must be a good reason for that. It may be because their appointment with death has come and God is being merciful to them. We may never know this side of eternity and once we cross over to be with Jesus, we probably won't care.

Our focus is to use the Word of God as a, “HOOK”, and hang our faith on it and leave the outcome to God.

Other Hindrances To Divine Healing

Excerpts From Touch of God is a Christian Healing Ministry of Jesus.

#1- Unforgiveness (bitterness, resentment, retaliation....). This I believe is the #1 reason for so many people do not get healed. Read this scripture and you will get an

understanding. **Matthew 6:15** “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

#2 – Not Discerning the Lord’s Body –1 Corinthians 11:27-32 says” Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” **For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.**

For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.” We are to examine ourselves to see if we have any unforgiveness towards any brother. Make peace first before taking communion. Otherwise, Satan has a right to put a disease on your body.”

#3 – No Expectation in Healing (does not believe).

#4 – Flagrant Sin (Habitual Sin) Galatians 5:19-21 – will not enter the Kingdom of God. Habitual sin. What is flagrant sin is habitual sin. It is those who know the truth and choose not to repent and stay in sin for their benefit.

#5 No Intimacy or no relationship with the Father.

#6 Complaining, Murmuring & Grumbling (Israel not allowed into promise land because of murmuring and complaining). You want to loose blessings, start murmuring and complaining.

#7 Chasing after Signs and Wonders **and not seeking God.**

#8 – Expecting God to Heal **on their conditions and not God.**

#9 Looking to Man Rather Than God.

#10 Involvement With Occultism, new age medicine and Humanism.

The biggest reason why we are not healed is bitterness either towards another, self or God. **The second biggest reason** is lack of faith or trust in God. Then **the third biggest reason** is not having a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ our Lord. **The Lord promised in Ps. 103:2-3 that He came to heal ALL diseases.**

Different Ways To Receive Divine Healing

There are several ways to receive a healing from God. Just to refresh your memory, as divine healing is a supernatural event where God heals and delivers us from sickness and disease or other maladies. It can be both spiritual and physical.

1. **Through Spiritual Gifts**...we haven't spoken of this one as yet but it is in the Bible. Listed in the gifts of the Spirit are Gifts of Healing and Working of Miracles. **I Corinthians chapter twelve**

Notice that, a person can be anointed by the Holy Spirit with the working of miracles and various gifts of healing. Surely they are divine in origin. The healings are multiple. This means another with the same Holy Spirit anointing can heal several different things like deafness, inability to walk, pain in the body, diseases like cancer and so forth. The operation of these gifts can manifest in the laying on of hands as well as during a worship service.

2. **Personal Prayer And Faith**...most often we can see healing in our own lives through exercising personal faith. Jesus said, "Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you." **Matthew 9:29**

I have said before that the scriptures hold many promises. These promises are hooks suitable to hold our faith. The famous **Isaiah 53:5**, By His Stripes, verse is a perfect example. We believe in it and declare it as done; calling forth healing that does not yet exist as though it did. This is the essence of **Romans 4:7** where God did just that for Abraham and the play-out of **Hebrews 11:1**.

3. **The Elder's, "Prayer of Faith"**... "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." **James 5:14-15**

The Prayer of Faith is the faith of the elders in the church. They are reportedly the more mature Christians with a prayer life and dedication to Jesus and the leading of the Holy Spirit. When they pray, things are supposed to happen. However, it is still called, "The Prayer of Faith" because some church elders are not spiritual and do not operate in the gifts of the Spirit. Be sure your elders are men or women of God.

4. **Through Doctors....** I add this because many folks have been healed by conventional medicine as a direct result of the wisdom and expertise of a doctor. I believe that all healing comes from God. The doctor is only an instrument just like an elder.

I will caution you to do your homework when looking for a good doctor. Many are in it just for the money and will do surgical procedures when it is not really necessary.

Healing Is Always Subject To Your Knowledge of God's Word

A person can't receive from God beyond his actual knowledge of God's Word. So to develop faith for healing, you must discover what the Word says about it. Then meditate upon those scriptures until your heart is settled on the fact that healing is God's will for you!

It's important that you don't hinder your prayers, saying, "If it be Thy will." God has already made His will known concerning healing, so approach Him on the authority of His Word. **James 1:6** says we are to ". . . ask in faith, nothing wavering . . .," or we will not receive what we desire from Him.

Continually confess and believe that "by Jesus' stripes, I was healed"—nothing wavering—and meditate on **Isaiah 53:5**, **First Peter 2:24**, and **Matthew 8:17**. Then as **First John 5:14–15** states, be confident (1) that you've prayed according to God's will; (2) that He has heard you; and (3) that you have the petition you desire of Him! (Kenneth Hagan Ministries)

Logic In Action

Peter 2:24 says "Who his own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, By whose stripes we were HEALED." Another scripture tells us "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sickness".

Answer me this...if Jesus took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses, why are we still carrying them? We need to visualize them being left at the cross and walk away healed.

Conclusion

Even though deliverance from sin and sickness has already been provided to us through God's great and precious promises, they don't do us any good until we mix them with faith. We need to actively take possession of these promises and make them ours.

The key is to stand in faith for our healing, knowing that God wants us healed and well in body, mind and Spirit. We cannot afford to slide back into doubt or unbelief. The

scriptures do not lie. God is for us and has already provided for our healing. Receive it now and hold fast to it until it becomes a part of you.

God Bless You In All That You Do

Holy Spirit Gifts & Fruits Introduction

This volume is a study of the Gifts and the Fruits of the Holy Spirit of God. The KJV Bible will be used as source text with references typed out so the reader does not have to stop and look up scripture passages.

I will be giving a biblical explanation of each gift and fruit with definitions to be sure accuracy and clarity is maintained.

Our study will look at the operation of gifts and fruits in the life of the believer. I will address such questions as:

1. Do all gifts apply?
2. Are gifts more important than fruit?
3. Which gift is the best gift?
4. How do I know what fruit I have and which gifts are in operation?
5. Are there other gifts not mentioned in the bible that I could obtain?
6. And other questions of interest.

My desire is to inform, educate, counsel and be a blessing to new and growing Christians so they can develop a deeper understanding of the Holy Spirit and His operation in their lives.

This study is not meant to promote one group over another. Most of us are aware of the Charismatic Renewal that swept through the church in the last 50 years. This renewal focused on the Holy Spirit and the use of Gifts in the believer's life. Many new denominations and independent groups have sprung up around the world. There is, however, an on-going controversy between main line protestant and charismatic groups on the gifts of the Holy Spirit being applicable for today.

The fruit of the Spirit is widely accepted by most all Christian Groups. It is the single most evidence of being a real follower of Christ.

I will be looking into the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit to determine their validity, use in daily life and purposes for the modern church of today.

The Gifts of The Holy Spirit



When I was a young Christian, my church taught that the gifts passed away with the deaths of the Apostles. They used a text in **I Corinthians 13:8-10**, “Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part, But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away’

It seems as though Paul is telling the church that the time will come when the gifts will no longer be needed. The error in the reading by most mainline churches is the timing. Paul tells us the timing will be when “That which is perfect has come.”

“That which is perfect has come.” Refers to the coming of the perfect one, Jesus. Until that time, the gifts are in effect and needed in the church to validate its existence.

Paul goes on to say, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” **I Corinthians 13:12**

Listen to I Corinthians 13:1-7, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Charity (or Love) suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

The above scriptures are a masterful presentation of how fruit and gifts operate together in the life of a believer. The gifts operate through Love, which is a fruit. Otherwise, the administration of the gift is like a person singing off key.



Fruit of The Spirit

Let's look more closely at the fruit of the spirit before we get into the gifts. I was always taught that there is only one fruit. Even the bible refers to the, "Fruit" as in singular. The FRUIT is then manifested into nine different functions. They are found in **Galatians 5:22**, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Together, they reveal the character or personality of God. When someone wants to know what is God like, they can point to these attributes to explain. Also, when you want to know what Love is, you can look no further than right here. Here to is where you look to analyze a person's love. Are they like this? If so, then you know they are of God and worthy of your love in return.

Let's look at each one individually.

1. **Love**...God is love. Therefore His character is one of pure love. There is no evil in Him.

God is Love, and His love is very different from human love. God's love is unconditional, and it's not based on feelings or emotions. He doesn't love us because we're lovable or because we make Him feel good; He loves us because He is love. He created us to have a loving relationship with Him, and He sacrificed His own Son (who also willingly died for us) to restore that relationship. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." **Romans 5:8** In this verse and in John 3:16, we find no conditions placed on God's love for us. God doesn't say, "as soon as you clean up your act, I'll love you;" nor does He say, "I'll sacrifice my Son if you promise to love Me." In fact, in **Romans 5:8**, we find just the opposite. God wants us to know that His love is unconditional, so He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for us while we were still unlovable sinners. We didn't have to get clean, and we didn't have to make any promises to God before we could experience His love. His love for us has always existed, and because of that, He did all the giving and sacrificing long before we were even aware that we needed His love.

2. **Joy** ...Joy is a state of mind and an orientation of the heart. It is a settled state of contentment, confidence and hope. It is something or someone that provides a source of happiness. It appears 88 times in the Old Testament in 22 books; 57 times in the New Testament in 18 books.

Christians should always find reasons to be joyful. There are many ways to define joy. Joy isn't just a smile or a laugh. Joy is something that is deep within and doesn't leave quickly. When we have the joy of the Lord, we'll know it and so will others. Since joy is given by God and something that He wants us to have, we need to be joyful! In addition to being joyful, we should let others have their joy and not bring them down when they are excited about good things. **The only thing worse than not having joy is stealing someone else's.**

Ask for joy! If we can't find reasons to be joyful, our perspective must have changed. God lets us have blessings every day. We should be able to see them and thank God for them. Additionally, we should ask for God's blessings! Some think they should be blessed with joy automatically, but God's Word says "you have not because you do not ask." (**John 15:16**)

God's Holy Spirit produces joy. Joy is a product of Christ-likeness. When we seek God through His Word and prayer, we will receive joy! Thank God that joy is something He wants us to have!

Joy is the second "fruit of the Spirit," according to **Galatians 5:22** "But the fruit of the Spirit is...joy...."

Reading the scriptures will bring us joy! "And these things we write to you that your joy may be full." (**1 John 1:4**) We will also see where the Bible gives us specific times to be joyful.

Philippians 4:4 "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!"

Proverbs 12:20 "Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy."

Proverbs 21:15 "It is a joy for the just to do justice, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity."

Nehemiah 8:10 "for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

3. **Peace...** The Hebrew Bible uses a familiar but significant word, "*shalom*". In its purest sense, *shalom* means "peace."

The connotation is positive. That is, when someone says, "Shalom," or, "Peace unto you," it doesn't mean, "I hope you don't get into any trouble"; it means, "I hope you have all the highest good coming your way."

Most people in our world don't understand peace as a positive concept. All they know is the negative aspect of peace, which is merely the absence of trouble. The definition of peace in many languages of the world illustrates that. For example, the Quechua Indians in Ecuador and Bolivia use a word for peace that literally translates, "to sit down in one's heart." For them peace is the opposite of running around in the midst of constant anxieties. The Chol

Indians of Mexico define peace as "a quiet heart." Those may be beautiful ways to put it, but they still seem to leave us with only the negative idea that peace is the absence of trouble.

The biblical concept of peace does not focus on the absence of trouble. Biblical peace is unrelated to circumstances; it is a goodness of life that is not touched by what happens on the outside. You may be in the midst of great trials and still have biblical peace. Paul said he could be content in any circumstance; and he demonstrated that he had peace even in the jail at Philippi, where he sang and remained confident that God was being gracious to him. Then when the opportunity arose, he communicated God's goodness to the Philippian jailer, and brought him and his family to salvation. Likewise, James wrote, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials" (**James 1:2**).

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful. (John 14:27)

The peace Jesus is speaking of enables believers to remain calm in the most wildly fearful circumstances. It enables them to hush a cry, still a riot, rejoice in pain and trial, and sing in the middle of suffering. This peace is never by circumstances, but instead affects and even overrules them. (Excerpts from John MacArthur's article, The Gift of Peace)

4. **Longsuffering...** Having or showing patience in spite of troubles, especially those caused by other people.

What is longsuffering? It is the godly patience and mercy we need to show to others that mirrors as closely as possible the patience and mercy God shows to us. It is when we bear with others, put up with their mistakes and inconsiderate actions and truly forgive them for real or imagined offenses against us. It is enduring trials and waiting patiently and faithfully for God's intervention.

As with all the other fruit of the Spirit, God wants us to be like Him. God cares for all humanity; and He does it with tremendous compassion, mercy and longsuffering. God's people are in training to become kings and priests to rule with Him in the future (**Revelation 1:6**), and this involves learning to forgive others, to show mercy and to be forbearing—or else we would be just like the worldly leaders of today.

Psalm 130:7 states: "O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption."

God set the example of mercy and redemption. God patiently waits (and has waited) for us as humans to repent and to stop destroying ourselves. God desires that we turn to Him, and when we do, He even promises to help us overcome.

Longsuffering self-examination Questionnaire

- Am I slow to wrath or quick to condemn? Why am I like this?
- Do others describe me as calm and laid-back or impatient and easily offended? What are some examples?
- Does my patience with others mirror God's patience with me? How do I know?
- Do I truly forgive others, or do I hold grudges? What makes it hard for me to forgive people? (Excerpts from Eddie Foster's Article on Fruit of the Spirit)

5. **Gentleness...** is the quality of being kind and careful. Your gentleness with a frightened stray dog will eventually convince her to let you feed and pet her. The noun gentleness is perfect for describing the way someone acts when they are soft and calm and sweet to other people.

Galatians 5:22-23 says that the Holy Spirit works in us to be more like Christ (**Ephesians 4:14-16**), and part of the fruit, or results, of that work is gentleness. Gentleness does not mean weakness. Rather, it involves humility and thankfulness toward God, and polite, restrained behavior toward others. The opposites of gentleness are anger, a desire for revenge, and self-aggrandizement.

When we are filled with the Spirit's fruit of gentleness, we will correct others with easiness instead of arguing in resentment and anger, knowing that their salvation is far more important than our pride (**II Timothy 24-25**). We will forgive readily, because any offense toward us is nothing compared to our offenses against God—offenses He's already forgiven (**Matthew 18:23-35**). Competition and sectarianism will disappear, as the goal becomes less about ourselves and more about preaching the gospel (**Philippians 1:15-18**). John the Baptist was a fiery preacher, yet he evinced true gentleness when he said, "[Jesus] must become greater; I must become less" (**John 3:30**). (Taken from www.gotquestions.org)

6. **Goodness...** As the Holy Spirit works in our lives, our character changes. Where we had harbored selfishness, cruelty, rebelliousness, and spite, we now possess love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Everything in the list reflects the character of God, and goodness is one that relates directly to morality.

Goodness is virtue and holiness in action. It results in a life characterized by deeds motivated by righteousness and a desire to be a blessing. It's a moral characteristic of a Spirit-filled person. The Greek word translated "goodness," *agathosune*, is defined as "uprightness of heart and life." *Agathosune* is goodness for the benefit of others, not goodness simply for the sake of being virtuous.

Goodness is not a quality we can manufacture on our own. **James 1:17** says, "Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights." This certainly includes a life characterized by goodness. In letting the Holy Spirit control us, we are blessed with the fruit of goodness. As others see our good works, they will praise our Father in heaven (**Matthew 5:16**).

7. **Faith...** Faithfulness is steadfastness, constancy, or allegiance; it is carefulness in keeping what we are entrusted with; it is the conviction that the Scriptures accurately reflect reality.

Biblical faithfulness requires belief in what the Bible says about God—His existence, His works, and His character. Faithfulness is a fruit of the Spirit; it is the result of the Spirit working in us. But the Spirit is also our seal of faithfulness. He is our witness to God's promise that if we accept the truth about God, He will save us.

Hebrews 11 gives a long list of faithful men and women in the Old Testament who trusted God. Abel's understanding of God made his sacrifice real and authentic. Noah trusted God's word about the coming judgment as well as God's promise to save his family (**Genesis 6-9**).

Abraham and Sarah believed against all evidence that they would have a child (**Genesis 21:1-34**). Rahab trusted God to protect her family when the Israelites destroyed Jericho (**Joshua 6**). Gideon's mustard-seed faith routed an entire army (**Judges 6-7**).

In that list in **Hebrews 11** is the example of Enoch, who "obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God. And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him" (vs. 5b-6). Faith, or a faithful commitment to who God says He is, is basic to walking with God. As Jesus traveled, He responded to people's faith and curtailed His involvement where there was no faith (**Mark 6:1-6**).

Faithfulness is believing that God is who He says He is and continuing in that belief despite the vagaries of life. Functionally, that means we trust what God says in the Bible, and not necessarily what the world or our own eyes tell us. We trust He will work out everything for good. We trust He will work His will in us. And we trust that our situation on earth is nothing compared to our future reward in heaven. The only way we can have such faith is by the Holy Spirit's influence. He testifies to the truth and impels us to seek God. The Spirit makes us faithful.

8. **Meekness...** There are two essential components for this quality to come into play in the Bible: a conflict in which an individual is unable to control or influence circumstances. Typical human responses in such circumstances include frustration, bitterness, or anger, but the one who is guided by God's Spirit accepts God's ability to direct events (**Gal 5:23 ; Eph 4:2 ; Col 3:12 ; 1 Tim 6:11 ; Titus 3:2 ; James 1:21 ; 3:13**).

Meekness is therefore an active and deliberate acceptance of undesirable circumstances that are wisely seen by the individual as only part of a larger picture. Meekness is not a resignation to fate, a passive and reluctant submission to events, for there is little virtue in such a response. Nevertheless, since the two responses-resignation and meekness are externally often indistinguishable, it is easy to see how what was once perceived as a virtue has become a defect in contemporary society.

The patient and hopeful endurance of undesirable circumstances identifies the person as externally vulnerable and weak but inwardly resilient and strong. Meekness does not identify the weak but more precisely the strong that have been placed in a position of weakness where they persevere without giving up. The use of the Greek word when applied to animals makes this clear, for it means "tame" when applied to wild animals. In other words, such animals have not lost their strength but have learned to control the destructive instincts that prevent them from living in harmony with others.

Therefore, it is quite appropriate for all people, from the poor to ancient Near Eastern kings, to describe their submission to God by the term "meek" (**Moses in Num 12:3**). On the other hand, this quality by definition cannot be predicated of God, and therefore constitutes one of the attributes of creatures that they do not share with their Creator. Nevertheless, in the incarnation Jesus is freely described as meek, a concomitant of his submission to suffering and to the will of the Father (**Matt 11:29 ; 21:5 ; 2 Cor 10:1**).

The single most frequently attested context in which the meek are mentioned in the Bible is one in which they are vindicated and rewarded for their patient endurance (**Psalm 22:26 ; 25:9 ; 37:11 ; 76:9 ; 147:6 ; 149:4 ; Isa 11:4 ; 29:19 ; 61:1 ; Zeph 2:3 ; Matt 5:5**).

9. **Temperance...** Many times, people think of the word "temperance" only in connection with alcohol. One might remember the "temperance" movement of the 20th Century, where this nation succeeded in outlawing all alcohol from legal consumption for a time.

"Temperance"...meaning in the first century. The word "temperance" literally means "self-control" (Strong's Hebrew/Greek Lexicon). In other word studies and commentaries, we find similar definitions. J. H. Thayer says the word "temperance" means, "the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites" (New Greek-English Lexicon, p. 166-167). Mike Willis, in his commentary 5:23, on Galatians defines temperance as: "the dominion which one has over oneself or something... the dominion that one has over his thoughts, words, and actions." (**Truth Commentaries, The Book of Galatians, p. 271**).

Other writers have expressed similar thoughts as well. Therefore, to combine what we have learned, we see that temperance has to do with the self-control of the mind, or will, and that all words and actions are also kept under control. Specifically, the control of the mind, mouth, and body must be held by God through His word.

Therefore, while "temperance" can have reference to one not drinking alcohol (**1 Peter 4:3-4**), we see that the definition of temperance encompasses much more than not drinking. The term "temperance" has an effect on all aspects of our lives as we learn to control our thoughts, words, and actions. As Paul said, "...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (**2 Corinthians 10:5**). That is temperance!

Of course, the best way to determine the meaning of a Bible word is to examine it in a Biblical context and see how God used this word. The word "temperance" (as well as its various forms and tenses) is found six times in the King James Bible. We find its definition "self-control" (and its various tenses) found eight times in the New King James Bible and New American Standard. Let us look at some of the times temperance, or self-control is used in the Bible and make some applications to ourselves.

The first mention of the word "temperance" (self-control) is found in **Acts 24:25**. In context, we read of Paul preaching to Felix and his wife Drusilla (**Acts 24:24**). Paul was in the custody of Felix because he was preaching the gospel, and in order to keep from being killed by the Jews, he appealed to Caesar. In the process, more than forty Jews took an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul (**Acts 23:13-14**).

When the chief captain heard of this plot, he sent Paul on to Felix the governor with 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen, and sent a letter to Felix telling him why Paul was being sent there (**Acts 23:17-30**). It is at this time that Paul had the opportunity to speak to Felix (**Acts 24:24**). In the process, the Bible says Felix "heard him concerning the faith in Christ." What did he hear? "He (Paul,) reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come" (**Acts 24:25**). Paul obviously knew what this man needed to hear, and thus spoke to him concerning righteousness, i.e., God's will (**Psalms 119:172; Romans 1:16-17**), as well as self-control! In the Roman world, self-control (temperance) was almost unheard of.

Yet, they needed to control themselves in thought, word, and deed, as much as anyone today. Paul reasoned concerning the judgment as well, because "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." We will one day stand before Him to "receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (**2 Corinthians 5:10**). Felix's response was to tremble and send Paul away until he had a "convenient season." So far as we know, that season never arrived. Are we guilty of the same thing? Let us not put off the most important decision -- saving our soul (**Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38**)!

In thinking about other occasions in which the Bible speaks of temperance (self-control) let us not forget that self-control is something that needs to be added to our faith. Looking to **2 Peter 1:5-8**, we read, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This passage states the need for continued growth in the life of a Christian. His faith must increase, or grow, as he continues on his journey as a Christian. Peter stresses the point of adding qualities to one's faith as he matures. Here, I hope we can understand the need for adding temperance (self-control) to one's life. Without this control, how can we fight off temptations that come our way? How can we "resist the devil" (**Jas. 4:7**)? It cannot be done without self-control, and the willingness to fight Satan as he tries to advance.

We read of another occasion calling for self-control when Paul wrote to the Corinthians. He wrote to encourage them in their service to the Lord. He said,

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (**1 Corinthians 9:24-27**).

Here, Paul compares the life of the Christian to one competing in a sport (boxing v. 26, running v. 24); and the fact that in such sports, it requires patience, dedication, and control (being "temperate"). If we understand this when considering competing in athletics, how much more ought we to be self-controlled when it comes to obtaining the "incorruptible crown"?

Paul made it clear that even he was not exempt from the admonition to be self-controlled. He said that he had to "keep under" (buffet, NAS; discipline, NKJ) his body lest he should be a castaway (disqualified). It was possible for Paul to lose in this race, just as it is possible for any other Christian. Therefore, he stresses the importance of self-control, to hold fast, and see Heaven at the end of this life. Yes friends, without self-control (temperance) we will not see Heaven! (Article prepared by Jarrod Jacobs)

Nine fruits of the Spirit reveal the nature and character of God. However, as I said from the start, I believe that Love is the only fruit and all the other attributes listed above describe Love. So, if you want to know God, know that He is Love, (I John 4:8) and that love is clearly revealed so you know what kind of love you are dealing with.

In today's society, love is everything else except what is defined here. It is self-seeking, self-centeredness and self-absorbed. This type of Love does not characterize God.

(The Gifts of The Holy Spirit)

Now that you have realized that the fruit of God's Spirit is actually His character, lets look deeper into His Gifts. Remember what Paul told the church.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” **I Corinthians 13:1-7**

The obvious truth is that the gifts were to profit every believer. In order to do that, they needed to be administered, or operated, through the Spiritual fruits, in particular, LOVE.

Here are a few questions relative to these gifts ending with the death of the Apostles.

1. If, as we have seen, the gifts were for **edification** or profiting the church, why would God stop them?
2. The **population** of the world back then, when Jesus walked the earth, was approximately 300 Million. Today it has exceeded 7 Billion and is expected to top 9-Billion in the next 5 years. It seems to me that the gifts are needed more today than ever before. Why would God cause them to cease?
3. We are living in the “**End Times**” where Satan is on the warpath against God's children more so than ever before. Why would God stop the gifts of the Holy Spirit when we need them to fight the wilds of the devil? (Especially the discerning of spirits, wisdom, etc.)
4. The gifts were manifested to validate Jesus as the true messiah. We need that just as much today as they did back then.

The answer, at lest in my mind, is God did not stop the gifts. They are in operation today as before and are edifying the church, aiding the believer in his or her walk in these final days, Validating the truth to those who see, and helping in the evangelism of a much bigger world than ever before.

That being said, let's look at the gifts of the Spirit.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God, which worketh all in all.

⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. ⁸ For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; ⁹ To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; ¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

¹¹ But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. **I Corinthians 12:7-11**

This passage of scripture tells us that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man and is for his edification so everyone can profit. The Holy Spirit manifests Himself through the gifts. The gifts are spread out so all have several but no one has them all.

I Corinthians 12

1. The Word of Wisdom... A good definition of the word of wisdom is the supernatural ability to apply knowledge the right way. This gift can be a verbal gift but it is not really considered a gift of utterance. We can receive a word of wisdom and keep silent unlike a message in tongues and interpretation or a message of prophecy. Usually we will at the right time share the word of wisdom. This word can come by a dream, revelation, a vision, some have heard the audible voice of God, but usually it is the still small voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to our own spirit.

2. The Word of Knowledge... A divine gift at the will of the Holy Spirit giving someone certain facts from the mind of God. It is only a word and it is supernatural. The person doesn't have to be naturally gifted in wisdom or knowledge. This gift is supernatural. It is spontaneous and it is not planned ahead of time. We can't just decide before coming to church that we are going to receive a word of knowledge. It is according to the will of the spirit and not our own will.

3. Faith... The definition of faith, according to the bible, is the "substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen with our natural eyes." It is something we all should develop and possess as we read the word and communicate with our Father in Heaven. The gift of faith though is still a little different. It is the supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit that places the assurance of an answer to a certain prayer in our hearts at a certain point in time. It is similar to the gift of knowledge in that when this occurs we know ahead of time supernaturally that what we prayed for is going to happen. This is not guesswork. When we receive this gift of faith at a certain time, whatever our spirit is saying will happen, will most certainly occur.

4. Gifts of Healing... There are gifts of healing, meaning multiple. The purpose is to prove that the word of God we preach and teach is true. It proves the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We must never major on any gift and remove it from the foundation of Jesus Christ because the main reason for all nine gifts is to prove that all need to be born again by the spirit to be saved and that Jesus is the only way of salvation. Signs follow to prove what we say is true. The Holy Spirit brings people to Jesus and then we are to disciple others to bring more people to Jesus. We must not be moved away from that foundation. Jesus is the foundation.

5. The Working of Miracles... The working of miracles occurs as the will of the Holy Spirit at the right time, when and where He wills. We do not just decide that we are going to

have a miracle today. In fact all nine gifts work this same way. Miracles bring glory to God, bring the lost to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and demonstrate with visible outward signs the truth of God's word. It is to convince unbelievers that God's word is true, Jesus is truly the way of salvation and the only way to God and that what we are speaking and teaching is true. It is not to glorify men and cause men to be in control of a group of people. It is not to show off or use as a side show for the gift itself. The gift is to glorify the Lord.

6. Prophecy..... Prophecy is to speak for God, from the mind of God. It is an inspired word usually short in duration but can be longer. It is a vocal utterance in one's own language that is understood by all present. It is similar to the interpretation of tongues but no tongues precede it. Tongues and an interpretation are equal to a word of prophecy. The purpose for the gift of prophecy is in **1 Corinthians 14:3** "But He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort."

7. Discerning of Spirits... Those of us that have this gift have been given the ability to discern spirits. They fall into these categories: The spirit of Antichrist, The spirit of God, The spirit of the flesh, Lying spirits, The spirits of evil that bring infirmities, sickness and disease. The believer can usually look at a person and discern what spirit they are of.

8. Various Kinds of Tongues... A language spoken somewhere in the world or in heaven either in the past or at the present time. Some call it a heavenly language. However, I've heard languages that sound like French, Arabic, Italian, Hebrew, Russian, and Vietnamese. It is a fluent language complete with accents. Not all experiences are the same so I say this with caution, not to make anyone feel that if their experience is not like I describe, it means that something is not right.

9. The Interpretation of Tongues... A Supernatural manifestation that comes at the will of the Holy Spirit to give meaning to a message one has previously spoken verbally in tongues or in another language as the spirit of God gave the utterance. Both the tongues and the interpretation are spontaneous unplanned and by the will of the Holy Spirit. Like all the gifts of the spirit, we do not plan ahead of time that we are going to have a message in tongues or an interpretation of tongues. All supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit are unexpected, unplanned and spontaneous just like the coming of the Lord is going to be. Maybe these things prepare us for that great event.

So there are nine gifts of the Holy Spirit and when you see them in operation, you see a manifestation of the Holy Spirit in your midst.

Here are a few points to remember concerning the gifts:

- Gifts will never contradict the written word of God.
- Gifts will always be presented in an orderly fashion.
- Gifts will always glorify Jesus.
- Gifts will never exhaust any individual.

Which is the best gift? I believe that the best gift is the one that is needed to do the job at the time you need it. If you need healing and someone says, “I can discern spirits”, that gift will not do the job. You’ll need the Gifts of Healing.

Most Christians are familiar with the nine gifts of the Spirit mentioned above, that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12:4-10. But did you know there are many more? Though the exact number is debatable, here are at least 15 more spiritual gifts the Holy Spirit gave to the early church—and continues to give today. (Presented by Charisma Magazine)

1. **Helping** (1 Cor. 12:28)
2. **Administration** (1 Cor. 12:28; Acts 6:2-3)
3. **Ministry/service** (Rom. 12:7; 2 Tim. 1:16-18)
4. **Teaching** (Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11-14)
5. **Encouragement** (Rom. 12:8; Heb. 10:24-25)
6. **Giving** (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 13:3; Acts 4:32-35)
7. **Leadership** (Rom. 12:8; Acts 13:12)
8. **Mercy** (Rom. 12:8; Luke 5:12-13)
9. **Apostleship** (Eph. 4:11)
10. **Evangelism** (Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5)
11. **Pastoral guidance** (Eph. 4:11)
12. **Grace** (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 3:7; 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10-11)
13. **Willingness to face martyrdom** (1 Cor. 13:3)
14. **Intercession** (Rom. 8:26-27)
15. **Hospitality** (1 Pet. 4:9)

The first nine gifts presented by Paul are supernatural and operate independently from the free will of man. Though he may have a certain level of control over the gift, he does not require pre-training to participate. He is a vessel through which the gift flows.

The remaining fifteen gifts are subject to man’s will to participate or not and usually require some sort of pre-training. These gifts operate in a joint effort between Spirit and Man, whereas, the first nine gifts operate exclusively at the pleasure of the Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the Spirit is automatically given to the believer when he or she gets saved. Walking in the Spirit is how the world sees Jesus in you. Godly fruit is manifested in us. Change occurs and Godly personality shines through. Staying in the Spirit will bring the image and likeness of God into the earth through the lifestyle of the believer.

The nine gifts of the Spirit spoken of here come to the believer through a Baptism of The Holy Ghost that is separate from the salvation baptism. Being filled with the Spirit refers to the gifts. Being “Anointed” for ministry through the Spirit Baptism refers to receiving one or more of the nine Holy Spirit gifts.

Both fruit and gifts are available to those who desire a closer walk with Jesus and a deeper communication with God.

Conclusion

Isn't it wonderful to see God at work in our lives? His fruit transforms us into His image and likeness. His gifts open the door for evangelism and body ministry.

God has seen fit to partner with us to crush the head of Satan and take back what has been stolen from us. The gifts and the fruits make us the Head and not the tail. We are the children of God.

It's high time to put aside the things of this world and be filled with the Spirit. It's high time to seek spiritual gifts and learn how to operate in them. You could be the one person that God has been waiting for to stand up and be counted among the children of God.



Go For It

Walking In The Spirit Introduction

We are commanded to walk in the Spirit of God. The purpose of this command is so we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Listen to what was spoken to the 1st century Christians.

“This I say then,” Paul says, “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (**Galatians 5:16**). Then again, “if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (**Galatians 5:25**).

Although they appear to be the same command in English, there is a significant distinction in the original Greek language in which Paul penned the letters.

Both the **Romans 8:1** and the **Galatians 5:16** passages use the word *perepeto*, which carries the connotation to “walk around” and to “be at liberty.”

The second iteration in **Galatians 5:25** uses *stoicheo*, which means to “step precisely,” to “march,” or to “go in procession.” Same command but different emphasis. (Excerpts from an article by Henry M. Morris III, D.Min. Institute For Creation Research)

The use of two different words tells me that we have liberty to hang around with god in his Spirit to fellowship with him but we also must walk percisely along the path He has shown us to achieve victory.

As A young christian, I often wondered what it meant to actually walk in God’s Holy Spirit. I was also courious to know how to live in the Spirit. Was there a set of rules? How does one live and walk in the Spirit of the Living God? Is it actually possible? As I grew in Bible knowledge, it all became clear to me. I do have to admit that it is still hard some times to stay in the Spirit and even walk in Him because the devil is hard after me to walk in the flesh. I falter now and then.

Galatians 5 offers a contrast between a lifestyle of fleshly behavior and a life controlled by the Holy Spirit. The “deeds” of the flesh and the “fruit” of the Spirit are diametrically opposed. They continually fight for control of our minds so as to manifest their image here on the earth through us. However, they cannot exist together; they are not co-rulers. (**Romans 8:5-8**) We either “mind” the things of the flesh or the “things of the Spirit.” (**Romans 8:5**)

Only, “Born Again” Folk Can Walk In The Spirit

I’ll bet you didn’t know that you cannot be or live in Nutrality. We are created beings by God for one primary purpose...to reveal His image upon the earth. The original plan was that mankind would live and walk in the Spirit on this earth as a reflection of God. To see us would be like seeing God because we looked just like Him. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” **Genesis 1:27**

However, sin entered the world and replaced the image of God with the image of Satan. (**Romans 5:12**) Mankind now is ruled by evil instead of good. His nature and character reveals the sin that reigns in his heart. He has no choice but to live out this evil destiny.

All that God wanted for mankind was lost because he no longer dwelt in the Spirit of God. Even his love became distorted and his whole reasoning fell into a selfish gratification. God’s race of Godly children, fashioned in His own likeness, was lost, seemingly forever. Man became a distortion of mind and body that led to a worldwide flood, a sentence of death for all

who are called human after Adam's kind. *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* **Romans 3:23**

God's Plan Of Redemption

But, God did not leave man in such a depraved state with no choice. He honored His own plan for the ages which was to allow man to have a, "Free Will" and to be his own free moral agent. His Lordship over man would not be evil but righteous as He restored man to a status of being able, once again, to walk in His Spirit. The choice was given back to man. He can now choose to live in sin or walk in the righteousness of God.

We also know that it was God that designed this plan of redemption and set it in motion, even before the foundation of the world. That plan was Christ crucified, once for all, that whosoever believes in Him, this Jesus of Nazareth, who died as a penalty for sin, who was made sin for us, would not perish but have everlasting life. **(Ephesians 1:4, John 3:16, II Corinthians 5:21)**

So, only those that accept God's plan of salvation have the choice of walking in His Spirit. Those that do not believe and do not accept the free gift of salvation through faith are bound by their own evil nature to live out a destiny that is the image and likeness of Satan.

Two Natures In Conflict

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." **(Galatians 5:17)** We, that is, us Christians, are constantly being offered a choice. We can select the fruit of God's Spirit or the Works of the Flesh.

Galatians 5:22 describes the fruit and the works. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Galatians 5:19-21 tells us what the works of the Flesh are, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now here's the kicker..."And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." **Galatians 5:24**

We crucify the flesh by denying it access to our emotions. We put it to death by not allowing it to be manifested in us. We will still get angry but we do not allow that anger to be released. Instead, we focus on the fruit of God's Spirit to overcome the flesh, thus filling ourselves with the image and likeness of God. Instead of getting angry, we pray for and demonstrate longsuffering and love.

How Do We Walk In This New Nature?

The phrase "walk in the Spirit" occurs not only in Galatians verse 25 but also in verse 16, "But I say, walk in the Spirit and do not gratify the desires of the flesh." So here we see what the opposite of walking by the Spirit is, namely, giving in to the desires of the flesh.

Remember, "flesh" is the ordinary human nature that does not relish the things of God and prefers to get satisfaction from a sinful lifestyle. When we "walk in the Spirit," we are not controlled by those things. This is what verse 17 means: the flesh produces one kind of desire, and the Spirit produces another and they are opposed or contrary to each other.

Paul said in **Romans 7:18**, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing." He also said "for the mind of the flesh is hostile to God's law and does not submit to it because it cannot." (**Romans 8:7**)

The new birth creates a whole new array of desires that want to please God. Therefore, "walking in the Spirit" is something the Holy Spirit enables us to do by producing in us strong desires that are in accord with God's will. This is what God said He would do in **Ezekiel 36:26, 27**: "A new heart I will give you and a new spirit I will put within you . . . I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes."

Thus when we "walk in the Spirit," we experience the fulfillment of this prophecy.

The Big Question

This brings up a big question in my mind that you too may be asking... Do I just sit back and wait for new desires before I can walk in the Spirit? Ofcourse not!

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" **Ephesians 5:18-20**

There are several things we need to do in order to establish and continue our walk in the Spirit. I offer these as a starting point for your consideration:

- **Pray to be filled with the Spirit...** "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." **Ephesians 5:18**

Then do what Ephesians says...The more we sing, make melody, read psalms and pray, the longer we stay filled. When our thoughts are on the things of the Lord, they cannot be

dwelling on the things of the flesh. Some folks refer to this action as “Practicing The Presence of God.”

- **Have no confidence in the flesh...** “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh” **Philippians 3:3** (The Flesh is the unregenerate man that is led by Satan via a nature of sin)

When we have no confidence in the flesh, we do not put any faith in our own decision making power. We always consult the Lord about what to do in any given situation. *We do not rely on our emotions.*

- **Resist The devil and he will flee from you...** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: **I Peter 5:8-9**

When we resist the devil, we are resisting his many and different temptations to operate independently from God. He wants us to live in the flesh because it is his nature and we will, if we do so, manifest the image and likeness of Satan, the evil one. Thus the purpose of his temptations are to keep us from walking in the Spirit.

- **Walk By Faith...** “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (**II Corinthians 5:7**)

When we walk by faith, we walk in the promises of God that are given to us in the Bible. We actually live in them. If God said it, We will believe it and apply it in our lives. We will hold on to every word, knowing that God will cause every promise He has spoken into our spirits to come true. This keeps us free from any and all distractions that would lead us away from walking in the Spirit.

Spiritual Breathing

By Bill Bright

The Christian life, properly understood, is not complex nor is it difficult. As a matter of fact, the Christian life is very simple. It is so simple that we stumble over the very simplicity of it, and yet it is so difficult that no one can live it!

This paradox occurs because the Christian life is a supernatural life. The only one who can help us live this abundant life is the Lord Jesus Christ who empowers us with His Holy Spirit.

One of the most important truths of Scripture, the understanding and application of which has enriched my life as has no other truth, is a concept which I like to call “**Spiritual Breathing.**” This concept has been shared with millions – with revolutionary results – through our literature and various training conferences and seminars.

As you walk in the Spirit by faith, practicing Spiritual Breathing, you need never again live in spiritual defeat. Spiritual Breathing, like physical breathing, is a process of exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure, an exercise in faith that enables you to experience God’s love and forgiveness and walk in the Spirit as a way of life. (*You breath in the Word of God and you exhale the negative destructive emotions*)

The moment you invited Christ into your life as Savior and Lord, you experienced a spiritual birth. You became a child of God and you were filled with the Holy Spirit. God forgave your sins – past, present and future – making you righteous, holy and acceptable in His sight because of Christ’s sacrifice for you on the cross. You were given the power to live a holy life and to be a fruitful witness for God.

But the average Christian does not understand this concept of Spiritual Breathing as an exercise of faith and, as a result, lives on a spiritual roller coaster. He goes from one emotional experience to another living most of his life as a worldly Christian, controlling his own life – frustrated and fruitless.

If this is your experience, Spiritual Breathing will enable you to get off this emotional roller coaster and enjoy the Christian life that the Lord Jesus promised to you when He said, “I came that they might have life and might have it abundantly.” **John 10:10** As an exercise in faith, Spiritual Breathing will make it possible for you to continue to experience God’s love, forgiveness, and the power of the Holy Spirit as a way of life.

If you try to live the Christian life by your own fleshly effort, it becomes complex, difficult and even impossible to live. But when you invite the Lord Jesus to direct your life; when you know the reality of having been crucified with Christ and raised with Him by faith as a way of life; when you walk in the light as God is in the light in the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus simply lives his abundant life within you in all of His resurrection power.

I’m not suggesting that the Christian who walks in the fullness of the Spirit will have no difficulties. Problems of poor health, loss of loved ones, financial needs and other such experiences are common to all people. However, many of our misfortunes are self-imposed because of our own worldly, selfish actions.

The spiritual person is spared most of these self-imposed hardships. But when the problems do come, the spiritual person can face them with a calm, confident attitude because he is aware of God’s resources, which are available to him to deal with adversity. (Excerpts from Bill Bright’s article from *The Power to Change*)

There is but one indwelling of the Holy Spirit, one rebirth of the Holy Spirit, and one baptism of the Holy Spirit -- all of which occur when you receive Christ.

Being Continually Filled

The command of **Ephesians 5:18** is given to all believers to be filled, directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, however, is a continuous experience. In the Greek language in which this command was originally written, the meaning is clearer than that in most English translations. This command of God means to **be constantly and continually filled**, controlled and empowered with the Holy Spirit as a way of life.

If you look at the scripture from verse 15-18 you see a truth that few have really understood. See if you see what I see.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” **Galatians 5:15-20**

Here’s what I see:

1. We are to use wisdom and not to be as fools. In doing so, we can redeem the time lost to the past in living in sin.
2. We are not to drink in excess but in contrast to that life style, we are to be continually filled with God’s Spirit. This is the will of the Lord.
3. The way we keep ourselves filled with the Spirit is to sing, make melody in our hearts and give thanks to our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus.

The process of praise, prayer and reading the psalms will keep you from the flesh and drunkenness. It will also continually fill you with the Spirit. We receive faith by reading the Word. We are filled with Joy by singing. We are blessed with peace by giving thanks. It all comes together inside of us to continually keep us in the Spirit.

Note: Some have said that we leak and the spirit, like water, drains out of us. This is nothing more than foolishness. We are faced with a choice in life, to dwell in the flesh and to ride the emotional roller coaster or to be filled with the Spirit and walk in peace with God through this upside-down world.

Back And Forth

We can, however, fall back into the flesh. Paul wrote to the Galatians and said, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes

Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? ² This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³ **Are ye so foolish having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Galatians 3:1-3**

The Galatians started out in the Spirit but somehow believed a lie and went back into the works of the law, which opposed the grace of God. Paul called them foolish. This example shows how the devil can lead you away from the truth and cause you to operate in the flesh. That's how he defeats Christians. He spins a lie and we get confused and end up believing it and eventually it changes our thinking.

Remember, non-believers do not have two natures. They can only operate in the flesh. Seeing the state of our current society with so much evil, the flesh is running rampant.

However, we are blessed with a new nature that is holy and righteous in every way. It is the same nature of Jesus and the very likeness of God. It is His image. We can choose the new and reject the old and walk in His Spirit. This is a benefit of the New Birth experience when we are "Born Again."

Some Hindrances

When we strive to walk with God and fellowship with Him, we are always attacked by the devil because the devil does not want us doing that. He wants us in the flesh so he can torment us. However, he cannot even get to us when we are "In The Spirit." He has to draw us away with some sort of temptation or lie.

Let's look at a few hindrances.

1. **Fear of Rejection...**"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."
Gal. 6:14

In the above scripture we find that the cross is the *mark of distinction* between the world and me. Sometimes I hear people say, "I want to walk with God but I don't know how I could ever give up my friends." And my answer to that is very simple: If you begin to walk with the Lord, you won't have to worry about giving up your friends; you won't have time for that--they will give you up first. That is how the cross is a mark of distinction.

2. **LIVING BY YOUR FEELINGS AND NOT BY FAITH...**As we have already said, living in the flesh is living by your feelings. It offers only a terrifying ride on that emotional roller coaster.
3. **FAILURE IN SIMPLE OBEDIENCE...**Again we look to Galatians where Paul tells the church, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" Disobedience will always stop the flow of God's anointing and kick us out of His Spirit, back into the flesh.

4. **ALLOWING OTHERS TO HINDER YOU...**Again in Galatians, it was someone or many that hindered the church from obeying the truth. We cannot allow others to sway us from the truth.
5. **GIVING IN TO TEMPTATION...**Temptation will do it every time. It will cause you to fall if you give into to it. Paul, in **Galatians 3:1** said, *“Oh foolish Galatians”* He knew that they had given into the pressures and expectations of others. Their desire to be politically correct was stronger than their desire to obey the truth. We can never give in.

Seeing What’s Not Visible

As I mentioned before, the Christian has two natures and must choose one or the other. Both natures will calmer for attention and the chance for expression. One is Holy and the other is Evil.

The evil nature has polluted our souls, invaded our DNA and dominates our emotions. Its rule over us is cruel. Its goal is to manifest wickedness as a lifestyle and image.

The holy nature is newly fashioned as a “Born Again” experience where we repented of our sin and put our faith in Jesus. Its goal is to manifest the fruit of God’s Spirit through a gentle Lordship where we can be blessed and live an abundant life.

Because we have the dominant nature of evil ruling, we see life through its eyes and process events on an emotional level. The new nature of holiness is equally capable of sight but looks only into the spirit realm. It sees and discerns spiritual things. It processes events based upon the Will of God and the believer’s divine destiny.

Most Christians see only with their human nature, which relies on its emotions. Seeing with Spiritual eyes is different. The holy nature in you relies on divine revelation from its creator. The result is divine wisdom that enhances our ability to make Godly decisions. You cannot walk in the Spirit without seeing in the Spirit. The eyes of the Spirit are the scriptures. It is there that our eyes are opened and our focus made clear.

Now that you kind of know about how the two natures operate in us when called upon, it is important to realize that there is another, “Free Will” choice to be made...which nature to call upon. We are bent on the evil nature. Holiness is contrary to our natural feel. To allow it to advise and control our decisions is not automatic. That’s why we are encouraged to deny the flesh by crucifying it with all its lust and evil affections. We have to deny the evil in order to live in the Holy/Spiritual nature.

When we are faced with a situation or happening, we automatically make a decision on what to do. As a Man, I am often confronted with women crossing my path or coming into my line of sight. If my human nature is ruling, my emotions will spike and I will most likely fall into some sort fantasy. If, on the other hand, my holy nature is in control, I

automatically hear the scriptures speaking in my head telling me what the Word of God says about the situation and what I need to do to stay in the Spirit.

If you do not know the scriptures, you will walk as a blind man and be unable to discern the times you live in, the snares of the devil, the demonic temptations that, as fiery darts, are hurled at you and the many day to day decisions that fill your life.

The psalmist said, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” **Psalm 119:11** Without the hiding of God’s Word in your heart, you have nothing to draw from to make a holy decision. You are blind and usually fall back into the human nature that once ruled your life and wrecked your emotions.

Conclusion

The Christian walk has great liberty (**Romans 8:21**), but that liberty must “step precisely” in honesty (**Romans 13:13**), good works (**Ephesians 2:10**), and in truth (**2 John 4-6**).

Our walk is expected to be by faith and not by sight (**2 Corinthians 5:7**) We are to conduct spiritual warfare in the Holy Spirit’s power (**2 Corinthians 10:3-5**) We are to protect ourselves by putting on the full armor of God (**Ephesians 6:10-18**).

However, the most important thing to remember is that we need to stay in the Spirit and we can only do that by reading the scriptures to gain faith, singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord and giving thanks to our heavenly Father in the name of Jesus. That is what keeps us in the Spirit.

As Christians, we are faced with not one but two natures, one of evil that came with our physical birth and the other that is Holy and righteous that came to us in our Spiritual birth. It is our choice to walk in one or the other. We cannot walk in both at the same time.

I will caution all that read this eBook. It is not advisable to move back and forth from one nature to the other because it creates an emotional rollercoaster that will drive you crazy and keep you from your divine destiny.

May our Lord bless you as you walk with Him. If you are not a believer,

Where Is Your God?

Introduction

Introduction

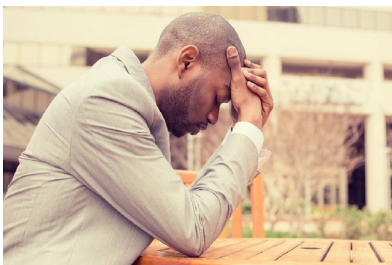
Has anyone ever questioned your faith? I had an experience in my early Christian walk where a guy that was not a Christian challenged me as to the validity of my belief in God. He said that God was “Man-Made” and therefore unable to save, heal or anything else. It was his belief that fate drove human life, not God’s love and power.

When sickness came knocking at my door, the guy would say, “So, where’s your Christianity now?” “If your God is all-powerful, why doesn’t He heal you? When I lost my Job, he again said, “So, where’s your God now.” Can’t your God do anything?

I was a brand new Christian and not very knowledgeable. I didn’t have an answer for him then. Now, after 60 years of walking with the Lord, I know a few things.... mainly that God does things His way and in His timing. Fate has no power. Things just don’t happen without a reason, even if we do not understand why. God is a Just God. He is the epitome of Love and Righteousness. Even though we go through difficulties, He is still there beside us to comfort us and deliver us from the calamities of life.

How many know that friends do not angrily say, “*Where Is Your God?*” It is the job of your enemy to say such a thing. That enemy wants you dead. If that can’t happen, he will go for confusion, backsliding and a faith failure if at all possible.... anything to cause you to turn against God. This strategy has been the key tool of Satan for centuries because it is a lie that is aimed at the less informed and can shake their foundation to the core.

The psalmist wrote in Psalm 42 about his enemies. They attacked him with the same strategy, “*Where IS Your God?*” The verses of this psalm tell a store of a man that is overwhelmed, frustrated and confused but not in utter despair. His faith did not fail. It kept him through the storm, even though he didn’t know why he suffered so.



Let’s look at his life situation. If we look closely, we can see God in the life of a believer and learn how to deal with difficult circumstances.

The God Seeker

The writer of the psalm was not your average believer that seeks spiritual things on Sunday and only at church. He was a God seeker. Read psalm 42 about his lifestyle and see if it fits yours.

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” Psalm 42:1-2

When your relationship with God turns into a mere religion, you lose that hunger and thirst and slowly but surely stop seeking God. Then you fall away from the quest for real truth and cease from exercising faith. Is that happening to you? I hope not.

We need to be “God Seekers” that long for and seek after the presence of the Lord. We cannot live without it. We continually ask for it and seek after it. God is our refuge, our shield, our strength, and our very life. We move and live and have our being in Him.

This psalm teaches us that even though we are God Seekers, we can still experience vicious attacks against our faith and trust in God and suffer under cruel accusations from our enemies that are meant to destroy our relationship with God and kill our faith. In other words, we are not exempt because we are the children of God.

Evil At Work !!! Read All About It !!!

“My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, **“Where is thy God?”** I will say unto God my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, **“Where is thy God?”** **Psalms 42:3-9-10**

Here’s what Jesus said about the enemy and Himself. He compared His goal for mankind with the goals of the devil, known as “The Thief” in Biblical literature.

“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

Note that the accusation, “Where Is Your God” brought tears to the write of Psalm 42. The continual mocking by his enemies overwhelmed him. It even caused him to go back to his rock, that being God, where he always found answers and refuge and question Him saying “why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”

In today's language expression, we would probably say, "Why Me Lord." "What did I do wrong that you should stop protecting me from my enemies? He is feeling sadness. He is actually mourning over his situation. His focus has been shifted to himself instead of God where he once drew all of his strength and well-being.

Question? Why does he care about what his enemies think? So what if they continually mock his God. Hasn't the psalmist had enough encounters with God to know He would never really forsake him? Unless, he is beginning to believe that God really has forgotten him. This is what the psalmist is indeed thinking... a lie of the devil that is like a fiery dart that, if allowed into the soul, will kill, steal and destroy.

The Recovery

We all go through tough times and experience ridicule and even mocking from those that reject our Savior and our faith. You know how I know that's true? "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." II Timothy 3:12 It's not what happens to us that alters our thinking or keeps us from walking with the Lord. It is rather how we react to what has happened that defeats us or brings us into victory and peace. See how the Psalmist deals with his situation.

He remembers the past, when he was so happy with the Lord; he rebukes his own soul for being cast down; and he makes an incredible statement of faith right in the face of his oppressors.

"When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance." **Psalm 42:4-5**

Note: The Psalmist has not as yet learned why God has not been there for him. He is still sad about not knowing and the continual mocking from his enemies is getting to him, yet he puts his trust in God anyway. His trust is based upon past experiences where God was there and he was delivered. Though he did not understand it didn't mean that God wasn't working things out and has a good reason for what He is doing. This is not blind faith but rather faith based upon past experience.

If you are in a similar situation, there is no need to blame God...that is, if you know that He is a loving, kind, longsuffering and caring God who has your best interest at heart. God just doesn't bring evil our way.

Sometimes God will share His reasoning for what He does in our lives. Sometimes He won't. You'll remember Job and all he went through. He too cried out for an audience with God and had people telling him to repent and even curse God, yet he held off from blaming God and in the end never did find out why all those things fell upon him.

Again, it is not what happens to you but how you react to what happens that defeats you or delivers you.

Oh My God Pray, Pray And Pray Some More

When we are cast down, we are somewhat incapacitated. We don't want to think, sometimes eat or even work. Being cast down is otherwise known as "Depression" and it's a killer if not overcome. It creates a feeling of being overwhelmed. You lose interest in life and your countenance shifts from happy to sad.

All of this was happening to the Psalmist. He was feeling all of this and probably even more. Could it be that all of this "Down" is a result of believing a lie that was drilled into him by his enemies?

"Where IS Your God" brings up additional questions and statements that are inferred in the original accusation. Statements like:

1. If you cannot see or feel God, Is He real?
2. If God is silent, does that mean He's not real or doesn't care?
3. If God doesn't meet my timing, am I less important than others?
4. If I do not see the hand of God, does it exist?
5. If God doesn't come to my rescue, is He all-powerful?

Because He is not acting like a bellhop tied to your every whim doesn't mean He isn't real or care or all-powerful. It only suggests that He is God and not you. Remember, with God, there is no finality unless He says so. He can raise you from the dead. He can cause old dry bones to live again. He can heal even after doctors give up. He is God and there is none beside Him.

Here's what the psalmist did in the midst of his depression.

"O my God, my soul is cast down within me: **therefore** will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar. Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet

the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.” **Psalm 42:6-8**

It sounds to me like the psalmist is saying...”even though I am overwhelmed, sad, depressed and just not with it, I will remember you everywhere I go”

It seems like God has forgotten me but deep within my soul, I know He has not forgotten. In fact, I believe that God will be with me day and night. He will show me His love while I am awake and His song will comfort me as I sleep. What a powerful declaration of faith. Note that it is based upon past experiences with God. It isn't just blind faith based upon a glimmer of hope.

Self Examination Instruction And Comfort

When there is no one to help in times of trouble and God seems to be occupied somewhere else, what do you do? Some folks just fall apart under the stress. Others buy self-help books and listen to TV talk shows where popular actors give advice. Not so with this psalmist. He speaks directly to his own soul with Godly counsel that probably came to him from God a thousand times before in different situations. Here's what he tells himself.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.” **Psalm 42:8**

His counsel to himself is to chill out, calm down and get back to hopping in God. He tells himself that his future will be bright and that he will once again praise God for the help he needs. He actually call forth something that does not exist based upon all the other times that it did exist and demonstrates trust in God to be there for him, even though it seems like God is not there now.

How great is that? When we can speak for God based upon what He has done in the past. How great it is that we can also comfort ourselves with our past experiences with God. If He did it then, He'll do it again. I don't know how. I don't know when but He'll do it again because that is who He is.

Conclusion

Now let me ask you the same question that the enemies of the psalmist asked him. **“Where Is Your God?”** Can you honestly say that you know where God is? Will He be there for you in times of trouble? Is He God or not? If He is not all-powerful, He is not God and you are kidding yourself and your faith is in vein.

Christianity is a living relationship with the only true and living God. It is not a religion or a crutch to get you through. You actually do hear the voice of God and see His handiwork

in your life. There is a back and forth, not just a one-way communication. He answers prayer and leads us to a divine destiny.

The Bible tells us where God is. That's how we know and why we can put our trust in Him. Here are a few references so you know I am not just making up a story.

1. "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." **Hebrews 13:5**
2. "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" **Deuteronomy 31:6.**
3. "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." **John 14:18**
4. "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." **Joshua 1:9**
5. "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee." **Isaiah 41:13**
6. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." **Psalms 23:4**
7. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." **Proverbs 29:25**
8. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." **II Timothy 1:7**
9. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." **Romans 8:15**
10. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." **Matthew 10:29-31**
11. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." **Luke 12:32**

12. “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;” **John 14:16**

Do you now understand that God is with you, even if you don't see or feel Him. Your enemy will mock and ridicule you for following Jesus and being a “God Seeker” but that's ok. You want to know why it's ok?

Because, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:”

Next time you are challenged to defend God, tell those folks that your God needs no instruction from them. He is doing His own thing and will accomplish all that He has chosen to do.

God is an **All-Powerful God**. That means He is never late. He can reverse anything that has been placed upon us, even after we die. He is the God of Resurrection and we are His children.

“Where Is Your God” If you are a child of God, God is your Heavenly Father and He is by your side at all times to be sure you make it through every calamity in life. His counsel and wisdom is at your disposal. His love and blessings are continually upon you. You are highly favored by God because of what Jesus did.

“Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!” **Psalms 31:19**

Don't be afraid to trust Him and praise Him and worship Him in all that you do, even when He seems somewhat aloof. He is still there. Above all...don't give place to the mockers and critics that attack your faith and try to get you to doubt God's love.

They will reap what they sow and die in their sins as you walk with the Holy Spirit straight into glory.



How To Overcome Temptation

Introduction

Matthew Chapter Four

Overview

The book of Matthew is a Gospel that contains Narrative History, Genealogy, Parables, Sermons, and some Prophetic Oracles. It was written by Matthew (Levi), the Disciple of Christ around 48-50 A.D. The key word in Matthew is "Kingdom" and is used 28 times.

The personalities of this book include the Messiah Jesus Christ, His parents Mary and Joseph, the Twelve Disciples, the prophet John the Baptist, and other kinds of leaders. These leaders include those in government like Pilate and religious leaders such as the Pharisees (who attempt to hinder the work of Jesus).

The book of Matthew is the first of the synoptic gospels and it was written to reveal the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, the King of the Jews, from the lineage of David. It also was written to convince the Jews that Jesus Christ was indeed their long-awaited Messiah. (The gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are referred to as the **Synoptic Gospels** because they include many of the same stories.) Synoptic means to present or take the same or common view.

Matthew chapter four records a time when Jesus faced His enemy, the devil in the wilderness, and was tempted. We can draw several conclusions from the text, one of which is **“How to overcome temptation.”**

The devil attacked Jesus in four ways. He tried to get Jesus to:

1. Doubt His true identity.
2. Act independently from the will of His Father.
3. Satisfy self with food created from a miracle.
4. Attain power and authority through deception and illusion.

The devil appealed to Jesus' need for food and desire to rule. His subtle suggestion was that He could do no wrong and even the angels would protect Him from harm...Verse 6-7

Finally he offered Jesus authority over the nations...verses 8-10 All Jesus had to do was to fall down and worship the devil. **I John 2:16** tells us, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Bible Codes

There are those that sell books based upon the idea of a secret Bible code, supposedly found in this account that reveals a pathway to healing. But in reality, there is no secret formula or code in Matthew chapter four that addresses healing. There are many life-applications that can be seen from this account including healing, however, healing would be an indirect application because sickness is often used by the devil to overcome the saints. Healing or good health is a plain revelation written in the pages of the Bible. It is not hidden in a code.

If we follow the indirect application of good health in Matthew chapter four, we can conclude that good health is a result of overcoming the attacks of evil. However, all sickness is not a result of an evil attack. We can be the cause of our own sickness. A good example is lung cancer that overtakes the heavy smoker. I am sure you can find other self-inflicted examples.

The devil's attacks are often disguised as sickness and disease. His temptation is aimed at causing us to blame God. However, temptation is not from God. (**James 1:13** "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.")

The devil's attack always blames God for what has come upon us and suggests that there is no hope of deliverance or way to overcome what is happening. The lie is that because God is above all and all-powerful, it must be His fault that bad things happen. The subtle suggestion is that God is a bad God and not worthy of our worship. The truth is that God has given man a free will to make decisions that may or may not coincide with His will.

Our choices do direct our destiny. The drunk was not forced to drink. His choice was to go beyond a safe limit. He then gets into his car to go home or to another bar and crashes into another vehicle killing two people. His "free will" affected the lives of others and most likely would land him in jail. God did not cause the fatalities. In fact, His Holy Spirit is always at work in the earth, convicting us of sin and seeking to lead us into repentance. The scriptures tell us in **II Peter 3:9**, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Jesus, referring to when the Holy Spirit would come, said, **John 16:18**, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:"

Listen to what Jesus said in **John 10:10**... "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." He also said, in **John 3:16**, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

It is obvious that God is a loving God. He wants us to be well, prosperous and to live life to its full potential. However, things still happen and sometimes they are bad. Yet some folks will still cry out, "Why did God let this happen?" Somehow God is blamed for our bad choices. Go Figure!

The New Testament says that temptations are common to man. They are not the result of God's handiwork. We, by nature of our "New Birth", have a hedge around us. His name is Jesus. **Acts 17:28** tells us, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." In Him, we have victory. In Him we can overcome. The devil is still out there trying to steal our joy, destroy our relationship with God and kill our bodies with sickness and disease but God is faithful and will not let a temptation come our way without a way of escape being available. We need only to look for it.

So many people react to crisis and tragedy by asking, "Why Me?" blaming God for their pain, and even turning away from the Lord. Others conclude that the suffering is their personal cross to carry through life. Most of today's Christians do not even know that, "the devil, as a roaring lion, roams the earth, seeking whom he may devour and that they can resist him and he will flee from them." **I Peter 5:8**

Why Does God Allow Bad Things To Happen?

The big question that people have asked through the years is why does God allow bad things to happen? The answer is, He doesn't. God does not cause or direct bad things in His children's lives. Listen to what Isaiah said (**40:29-31**), "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: ³¹ But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Now look at **Psalm 37:23-28** "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. ²⁴ Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. ²⁵ I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. ²⁶ He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed. ²⁷ Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore. ²⁸ For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off."

God is not to blame for bad things. He is with us every step of the way through a crazy mixed up world. He offers us His love, grace, respect, power and deliverance. Just before Jesus ascended into heaven He said this, "lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world."

A Reality Check

We all have our own realities. Our worlds can be very different at times but one thing is common to all Believers. It's a clear perspective that says, God is good. Bad things come from the devil or are caused by our own choices. Jesus is the only Son of God and Savior of the world. One day, we shall behold Him, Face-To-Face.

Attacks against our good health are as much a temptation as those presented to Jesus. In fact, Jesus' temptations in chapter four are actually a repackaged ploy that was originally used on Adam & Eve. The phrase, "Hath God Said" in the Genesis account carries the same intent as "If thou be the Son of God" in chapter four of Matthew. The devil will repackage it for us too but it's the same old trap meant to pull us away from the protection and love of God. Adam failed the test but Jesus did not. Jesus was indeed tempted but He overcame, proving that standing on the Word of God can bring victory.

Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. **Verse #1-** Jesus was led by or under the control of the Holy Spirit.

Does God Lead Us Into Temptation?

Part of the Lord's Prayer in Matthew chapter six is, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." God tempts no man. For God to tempt, in the sense of enticing to sin, would be inconsistent with His nature, and altogether contrary to His known character! However, we know that there is a real devil that is called the accuser of the brethren. **(I Timothy 4:13)** He is bent on our destruction. God does not sanction his attacks on us. He was tossed out of Heaven and now is loose upon the earth to wage war against the saints. **Luke 10:18** records Jesus' words on the subject,

**“And he said unto them,
I beheld Satan as lightning, fall from heaven.”**

One can only conclude that we are actively involved in a life and death struggle and our Heavenly Father wants us to win. That's why the Apostle Paul said, ("For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.") **II Corinthians 10:4-10** and "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." **Eph. 6:11.**

That's why Peter said in **I Peter 5:8-9**, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Resist him, steadfast

in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brethren in the world.”

The battle is the Lord’s. It always was and still is. **Ephesians 1:4** “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:” God’s plan was to SAVE us not set us up for a fall. That was decided before creation.

(Object Lesson #1) Even when we walk with God, we can come under attack. It is important to note that Jesus was led into the wilderness, a place where He would fight with His enemy and win. It was God that led Him to the battle. But that was Jesus. It is different for the Saints. We are instructed to pray against being led into temptation and instead, pray to be delivered from it altogether.

Jesus was and will always be the captain of our salvation. He obtained that title by making an open show (utterly defeating) the devil, death & hell. His Word says to us, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous but God will deliver us from them all.” **Psalm 34:19** Jesus can do this because He is the Captain of our salvation, the author and finisher of our faith. We stand in His victory, not our own.

(Object Lesson #2) God knows how we will react in a situation and what the outcome will be. If we find ourselves in a situation, specifically sickness, we are encouraged to look to God. His wisdom is crucial in obtaining victory over sickness or any other difficulty. He will tell us what to do and when to do it. **Psalm 18:34-36**, “He teacheth my hands to war, so that a bow of steel is broken by mine arms. ³⁵ Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy right hand hath holden me up, and thy gentleness hath made me great. ³⁶ Thou hast enlarged my steps under me that my feet did not slip.”

Temptations are like fiery darts. They are thorns in the flesh, buffetings, siftings, wrestlings, and combats, all of which denote hardship and suffering. However, we are tempted only when we are led away into our own lust. (**James 1:14** But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.) This lust could be for power, acknowledgement, wealth, sex or any other self-exalting thing. We, by our sinful nature, lust for things. It is the lust that draws us away. It is the devil that entices.

If we didn’t lust, we would not even experience temptation but we do and so we are captured by its allure. All the devil has to do is to wait until we are caught up in our own desires and suggest a course of action that would take us away from God. This subtle form of persuasion has been the attack against mankind since the beginning. Following after things that are not good for us can sometimes result in sickness, disease and even death.

Can We Sin Without Being Tempted First?

The Apostle Paul tells us in **Romans 3:23**, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” Again in **Romans 6:23**,” For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” We, meaning every person since and including Adam & Eve, have sinned and fallen short of God’s Glory. Sin is a shift in loyalty that is evidenced in our actions. Jesus said, **Matthew 15:11**, “It’s not what goes into the mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.”

We don’t need the devil to lead us into temptation in order to sin. We do that as a natural course of action. See Galatians chapter five for the works of the flesh. Remember, the purpose of temptation is to pull us away from God. This usually happens only when we are walking in the Spirit. If we are already in the Flesh, we’re taken by the devil at his will. (**II Timothy 2:24-26**). There is no need for temptation. Our sinful nature emulates the same character found in Satan. His subtle suggestions seem normal.

However, Jesus was never caught up into His own lust, yet He was tempted. He fought face-to-face and won the battle. That’s why we call Him the Captain of our Salvation.

Why Is It Necessary For Us To Pray, “Deliver Us From Evil”

As has been stated, many are our afflictions because we are righteous in God. Praying for deliverance would be a normal thing to do. Also, we, by nature, deceive ourselves and fall into lust that leads to temptation. Most of the time we are unaware of poor decisions due to pride or other selfish factors. A call for help is appropriate when we discover that we have fallen into a fault. “Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.” **Psalms 107:13** This is a clear call for help and a divine act of grace by God to deliver them. That’s what it’s all about.

Now back to overcoming temptations.

1. **Verse #3** The enemy will always challenge our authority and try to get us to question who we really are in God. Note the, “If” word proposed by the devil. “If thou be the Son of God, turn these stones into bread”

We must know that we know and not question ourselves or doubt what God says about us when someone else questions us. If we have been, “Born Again” we are a child of the Most High God. That’s a fact no matter who thinks differently. Being “Born Again” is not being religious. It has nothing to do with joining a church. It does not happen as a result of following a set of laws or rules and regulations. Listen to what Jesus said about being “Born Again.” He spoke these words to Nicodemus, a religious leader.

Being “Born Again”

Jesus answered and said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." - **John 3:3**

Jesus answered, “Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.” – **John 3:5-7**

Jesus said, “ For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.” –**John 3:16**

Here’ what the apostle Paul said in Romans about how to be saved which is a result of being Born Again.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.- **Romans 10:13**

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God have raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.- **Romans 10:9-10** But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.- **John 1:12**

The path to life eternal is Repent, Believe, Confess & Receive

What does being, ”Born Again” have to do with temptation and good health? Only this...Your temple or body can not be filled with the Holy Spirit without you repenting, believing, confessing and receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord. Without the guidance and support of the Spirit, you are lost in life and left to grope in darkness. You are open season for evil forces to take you at their will. It is the Spirit of God that shows us the enemy’s traps and snares so we can sidestep them. Otherwise we fall as a result of a lack of wisdom and truth and end up in a fault that could lead to sickness and even death.

(Object Lesson #3) The devil’s goal, in tempting Jesus was to cause Him to sin against God rendering Him forever incapable of being a Sacrifice for the sins of the world. Now, the temptation was aimed at bringing Jesus to despair of his Father's goodness; to presume upon his Father's power and to alienate his Father's honour, by giving it to Satan. He does this with us as well.

The purpose of our temptations is the same: to render us ineffective and useless in the hands of God. Victory is found in rejecting the evil suggestions and staying in the father's will. This keeps us on track. The devil's path is full of torment, suffering, sickness and sorrow. But we do not have to walk down that road.

2. **Verse #4** here's the real essence of healing for not only the body but also our whole being. It all hangs on the implications of the word, "Live". "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God"

Mankind is sustained by bread (It's a portrait of good food that is healthy and able to sustain good health.) Life and good health are found in God's Word. If we know it, believe it and practice it, we will be sustained by it.

We are sick, first of all in our soul (**mind, will and emotions**). If we fail in the days of temptation it is because we did not know or did not live by His Word. We all live in the valley of decisions and are obligated by life itself to choose our own destiny.

The pathway to health is to get back under the Lordship of Christ through the leading of God's Holy Spirit where we can learn of Him and abide in His will. It is only then that we can stand fast against evil in whatever form it may appear.

3. **Verses #6-7** "And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

Again, we see the "If" word. "If thou be the Son of God" We are encouraged by evil forces to prove that we are who God says we are by doing something that would take us away from the leadership of God's Holy Spirit. If we fall for the deception or respond to the devil's challenge, we end up outside of the protection and leading of the Lord, thus opening us up to physical and emotional stress and even sickness.

Note: Jesus knew that He was indeed the Son of God. He didn't need the voice of the devil to question that fact. If we know that we are indeed a child of God, blessed and anointed by and filled with, the Holy Spirit, we can stand fast against any temptation.

4. **Verses #8-10** "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; ⁹ And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. ¹⁰ Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

The temptation was to reject the wisdom of His Father and follow after the devil for personal gain. The devil wanted Jesus to worship him instead of God. The benefit of treason was to gain all the kingdoms of this world. However, they were not the devil's to

give away. The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. **Psalm 24:1**

True worship is to mirror or reflect the personality you most admire. The Bible again says, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” **I Corinthians. 6:19** We were created as a temple to reflect the image and likeness of God here on this earth. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” **Genesis. 1:26** whose image? and whose likeness?, God’s image, not the devil’s. We were never created to be neutral or independent. Our entire being was designed to reveal God’s nature and personality. If we emulate another spirit, other than God, He would view it as high treason.

This indwelling image is the highest form of worship that a person can offer. It is clearly seen in one’s lifestyle and personality. The worship or indwelling likeness can easily be seen by a simple examination of the temple. If we can see God, we can see Him in every temple we look at, that is, if He is there. If another image or likeness is visible, we can also see it.

To worship the devil is to relinquish your right to protection by God and your God-given authority over evil. Walking in the, “Flesh” is a good example of worshiping Satan. See Galatians chapter five for the works of the flesh and the attributes of God’s Spirit. The “Works of the Flesh” are the very nature and image of evil. Jesus told the devil to take a hike. We can also tell the devil to take a hike, declaring that we serve and worship only the Lord.

Healing is a quality of life that occurs when we live by every Word that comes from God’s own mouth. His Word energizes our immune system and our strength is in the belief and practice of His promises as written in the Bible. (There are over 3,000 promises to choose from.)

Consider This

Living right and doing the right thing does not exempt us from being attacked by the devil. These afflictions are common to man but the Word says He, the Lord, will deliver us from them all. (**Psalm 34:19**)

That deliverance is more than not a truth that says we can resist the devil and he will flee from us (**I Peter 5:8**) We know this, because of Jesus, and we have absolute authority over sin, sickness, disease and all the demons that bring them our way.

Remember! You’re in a fight, a battle for your life. The devil has no power over you unless you give it to him. God has given you His amour, weapons, promises, and even His

Spirit in you. Hear what Timothy said to the 1st century believers...”God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.” **(II Timothy 1:7)** Pray and let God lead you. By praying and reading His Word (the Bible) you will see the Word of God come alive...true revelation. You will begin to walk in the Spirit and stand fast in your faith.

Note: Jesus always replied to the devil’s attack with, “**It is Written**” He held on to what was already in revelation to man and used it to defeat his enemy. If we know what is written, we can use it to silence the fear, anxiety and worry that surrounds evil’s onslaught against us.

It’s In The Genes

There is, however, a big difference between Jesus and us. It’s in the genes or DNA. Ours is poisoned by sin and therefore incapable of rendering us righteous. We are indeed in need of a Savior. **Romans 5:12** says, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

Jesus’ DNA was pure, free from sin. His nature was already righteous. Though He was tempted in all ways as we are tempted, He was yet without sin. “(For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.)” **Hebrews 4:15**



*Now
Hear This*

God, by His Word, has said we are healed by the stripes of Jesus. **(Isaiah 53.5)** If I know that God wants me well and that the blood of Christ was given for my healing as well as my salvation...that they are all wrapped into one, then I can stand against the sickness and tell it and the evil forces that bring it to be gone...in the name of Jesus. If the sickness is a result of my poor choices, I can call upon the Lord for wisdom to get me back on track.

If we are to overcome, we will need a lot of self-examination to see what Spirit we are worshiping. What do others see in us? Is it the works of the Flesh or the Fruit of the Spirit?

Here’s a list of both so you can easily see where you are now.

Galatians 5:19-22

Verse 19 – “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹Envy, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

²²⁻²³ “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

The Apostle Paul continues in Galatians to say, ²⁴“And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

Jesus found Himself in God. If we are to make it through and attain life eternal, we must find ourselves in Him as well.



I Find Myself In God

I find myself in God.
He is my, "Everything."
I know that He is Lord,
My life, my Hope, and King.

I find myself in God,
Not the ways of sin.
Nor do I look to others,
To know who I really am.

I find myself in God,
To whom I bow on bended knee.
He alone is my joy and strength
And where I want to be.

Written By
John Marinelli

In God We Trust

Conclusion

Let's Review:

1. There is no "Bible Code" that offers a key or path to healing in Matthew chapter four. Bible Codes do exist but are not secret codes that tell us how to do this or that. They are hidden meanings that reveal names and dates of past events. They do not reveal how to be healed. Amazon.com carries books that deal specifically with Bible Codes.
2. Healing is a clear revelation that is easily found and read by those who seek God and read their Bible.
3. Sickness can be a result of bad choices, like too much smoking that leads to lung cancer or too much alcohol that leads to liver damage, and so on.

However, it is also a result of being oppressed by the devil. Listen to what the scriptures say, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."
Acts 10:38

4. Most of the time, there is a pathway to healing. Sometimes healing comes from losing weight, stopping a vice, changing our eating habits, etc.

However, sickness and disease can also latch on to us as a result of an attack by the devil. We are encouraged by God to fight back. We do this by Prayer, knowing God's will for us and standing on the promises of God. Standing on the promises of God can even lead us into divine healing, which is a miracle. It's a matter of whose report will you believe, God's report, as revealed in the scriptures or what?

5. There are many voices in today's world that speak to our emotions and tell us how we should live, act, do and be but there is only one voice that is worth listening to, the voice of our Heavenly Father, spoken directly into our hearts by His Holy Spirit.
6. We were originally created as a temple for the Holy Spirit for the expressed purpose of revealing the image and likeness of God on the earth.
7. The Holy Spirit of God will lead you, into or out of, life's every experience when you are submitted to Him.

8. Jesus was tempted in a face-to-face conflict but we are tempted only when we are drawn away from God's divine will by our own lust.
9. Know that the devil is always after us and the only way to defeat him is to accurately quote the scripture and tell him to get lost.
10. We are to cast down any reject any and all evil suggestions, from people or voices in our mind that go against what God has revealed to us. This includes our own imaginations.
11. Do not act upon a thing without first clearing it with the Holy Spirit through lots of prayer and even Godly counsel.
12. Being "Born Again" is the only way you can walk in the Spirit and escape the lust of the "Flesh."
13. Know who you are in Christ. Do not be deceived by accusations, threats or visions of the past. **Galatians 2:20** tells us that, "we were crucified with Christ nevertheless we live but the life we now live, we live by the faith of the Son of God."



Here are some healing scriptures to consider. They are precious promises from God to His people that were passed down from generation to generation. They are worth our attention.

- "And the Lord will take away from you all sickness, and will afflict you with none of the terrible diseases of Egypt which you have known, **but will lay them on all those who hate you.**" (Deuteronomy 7:15)
- "**So you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water.** And I will take sickness away from the midst of you. No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days." (Exodus 23:25)
- "He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." (Psalm 107:20)

- **“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities; who heals all your diseases ...”** (Psalm 103:2)
- **“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken.”** (Psalm 34:19)
- **“For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,”** says the Lord. (Jeremiah 30:17)
- **“O Lord my God, I cried out to You, and You have healed me.”** (Psalm 30:2)
- **“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds ... Great is our Lord, and mighty in power ...”** (Psalm 147:3)
- **“And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”** (Philippians 4:19)
- **“But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.”** (*Psalm 34:10*)
- **“The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.”** (**Proverbs 15:29**)
- **“For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.”** (**Psalm 84:11**)
- **“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.”** (**1 John 3:22**)
- **“My son, do not forget My law, but let your heart keep My commands; for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.”** (**Proverbs 3:1**)
- **“If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.”** (**Exodus 15:26**)
- **“A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.”** (**Proverbs 17:22**)
- **“Anxiety in the heart of a man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.”** (**Proverbs 12:25**)
- **“There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.”** (**Proverbs 12:18**)
- **“Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.”** (**Proverbs 16:24**)

The scriptures are spiritual food that will sustain us, physically and emotionally. All we need to do is pray; search them for answers and watch as God reveals to us His pathway to healing or His posture to stand against the enemy

Finally, listen to the Old Testament Prophet, Isaiah and what he said in chapter 53:3-5 about the stripes of Jesus as the source of our healing.

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, **smitten of God**, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; **and with his stripes we are healed.**”



Listen With Your Heart

“Then thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, that ye not turn to the right hand and that ye not turn to the left hand.”

Isaiah 30:21

Count It All Joy

Introduction

Everyone wants to be happy. I have never met a person that told me their ambition in life was to be sad. However, many of us, being Christian Folk, are sad, depressed, and just disappointed with life. Much of this attitude is because of how life has treated us. Things have not particularly gone the way we imagined them. People have let us down. We didn't get the breaks that others seem to get. We seem to have fallen under the stress of daily trials.

Listen to what Helen Keller said so many years ago. You'll remember that she was both deaf and unable to speak until Anne Sullivan taught her sign language. Here's what she said...

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.” —Helen Keller

I use her quote because it tiplifies the core problem with those that are not happy. They spend too much time looking at closed doors instead of searching for the open door that God has waiting for them.



Joy - - Pleasure - - Happiness

Psalm 16:11 ...You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

The Bible tells us where to find Joy. It is in the presence of the Lord. His right hand is full of endless pleasure. However, it all comes together when He makes know to us the path of life. It is in His will where we find our destiny, not in the things of this world.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. **James 1:2-4**

James tells us that we are to count or consider it pure joy when we experience diverse or various temptations. James explains further by saying it is actually the trying or testing of

our faith for the purpose of producing patience. The experience is meant to perfect the believer so they are wanting for nothing, complete.

There is something about patience that sustains us and keeps us from anger, envy, jealousy and all the other works of the flesh that are listed in Galatians chapter five.

Let's Explore

I'd like to explore the concept of various trials, otherwise known as temptations. Let's reason together and see if we can make sense of what James is really saying.

James is talking to believers, not pagans. He is teaching them a, "How To" truth about dealing with life in a corrupt and sinful world. He knows that his brethren are or will soon be persecuted for their faith. He doesn't tell them to get into an argument and fight with everybody that ridicules them for being moral, conservative, truthful and a lover of God. He leaves all that stuff up to the individual believer and their walk with God.

What James does say is astounding. He tells them how to deal with the attack from a supernatural, "Walk In The Spirit" perspective.

Point #1....."I' am Falling"

Notice in the scripture that James does not say, "When you are led into various trials". He says, "When you FALL into various trials".

We all try real hard to do the right thing, think the right thoughts and be a good person. However, all of us fall because we are still battling the, "Flesh", the, "Old Man", a "Sinful Nature".

Point #2...Not of God

That means the thing we are experiencing that is a temptation or trial is not of God. He is not responsible for our failures, we are...and that's ok because we are of a fallen race and have not as yet obtained complete salvation.

Yes, we are seated with Christ in heavenly places. Yes, we are more than conquerors in Christ. We are indeed forgiven through the Blood of Christ and saved by His Life. What we are not is perfected in the flesh.

Point #3...A New Perspective

So, when we fall, James tells us to laugh it off and focus our attention on a new perspective by considering the trial as a happy occasion...thus, 'count it all Joy'. How do you feel about that?

Here you are in the midst of a thing. It could be financial, marital, emotional or otherwise. You are depressed and struggling with it, not sure what to do or how to get away from it. Your focus is on, “It” all the time.

When, “It” dominates your thinking, you have no room for what God wants. In fact, you will find it hard to see into spiritual things or hear the voice of the Lord. That is why James says, “Count it all Joy”, because that is the pivot phrase that will open the door to an orderly escape from the temptation.

Point #4...Logical Ascent

Once we shift our thoughts to what God desires for us, we escape the torment for which the trial was intended. We move in a logical ascent from depression, fear, worry and all that other stuff towards a walk of faith.

The trial no longer stands as the primary subject of our thought life. We begin to seek the Lord and find His will. Yes, we will still be faced with the temptation but instead of a looming giant over us, it is just another attack by evil forces. The mountain thus becomes a molehill.

Point #5...Temptation’s Sources

The fact that we fall into temptation is indicative to the trial. It is a setup or snare, designed by Satan to enslave and torment us. By it’s very design, it is meant to keep us from enjoying our Lord and the joy of His fellowship.

There are two main sources of temptation. They are:

1. **The powers of darkness**, which include Satan, the devil, evil spirits and the like. They use their fiery darts and snares against us.
2. **The fallen nature** that is in all of us. Its deeds are seen in Galatians chapter five and its ambition is to rule over us. The Bible calls it, **“The Flesh”**. We are admonished to walk in the spirit so as not to fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Point #6...Understanding Life

Some younger or new Christians, when faced with a trial or temptation will cry out to God, Saying, **“Why Me Lord”**. They are unaware of why things happen and how God uses those things for good in their lives. When we surrender to the Lordship of Christ, we sign a spiritual pledge that Jesus is Lord, not we ourselves. It is His will that we seek and not our own.

So, if a thing enters our day that is not from God but is capable of tempting us to sin, we know not to follow its path. We understand that God's will is supreme and takes priority over our desires. This is understanding Life.

Point #7...The End Result

Romans 8:28 tells us how God responds to what is happening to us. Here's what it says.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”

God calls us all according to His divine will or purpose. We love God because He first loved us and saved us from our own sin. The scripture says if...we love God and are called by Him, He will work everything together for good, even the temptation or trial we have fallen into. The end result is good, not evil. That means the attack is nullified and the damage is repaired so we become more complete in Him.

It Came To Pass

I have noticed a phrase in the Bible that really stands out. It says, “And It Came To Pass”. Notice that says a lot about a thing...It comes our way but cannot stay. If we reject it, it passes by us and on to someone else.

So it is when we fall into a thing. It knocks at our door on its way, looking to leave a wake of destruction in our souls. Knowing that it will pass and that it is not here forever is a great comfort. It makes it all bearable as we call upon the Lord for our salvation.

Don't Panic... God Is On Your Side

It Came To Pass

Things often come to pass,
but seldom do they ever last.
They come into our busy day
for a while, and then pass away.

We hear their voices, loud and clear,
when they arrive and while they are here.
They speak both joy and misery,
some to you and some to me.

We say, "It came to pass,"
Or say, "It happened so fast."
Down life's beaten path
comes both love and wrath.

So say goodbye to sad and blue,
to all that is now troubling you.
For things will come, only to pass,
but God's love will always last.

Written By
Rev. John Marinelli

The Trying of Your Faith Worketh Patience

The temptation is used by God to try or test your faith. He did not send the trial your way but does use it never the less.

Is your faith a sustaining faith that will keep you? Are you just pretending when it comes to believing? Can you use your faith to move mountains? God takes advantage of what was meant for evil to show us what is really in our hearts. He wants us to know exactly where we stand...in faith or not.

He also wants to work into us a lasting foundation, made from patience that will endure hardship. If we are patient in dealing with trials, we are stronger in mind and spirit. It means we do not jump to conclusions, cry in desperation and fall apart in the face of temptation. We rather deal in faith according to the will of God. Here's an example of what I mean.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. **I Peter 5:8-9**

A Perfect Work

“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing”. This is a process over time. It grows with every trial taking us from glory to glory.

With each trial comes more patience that brings more peace and a clearer perspective. As we learn to deal with temptations of varying sorts, we grow in grace and faith. This expands our understanding of God, of evil, of life on earth and even eternity. We become more complete in Him having want for nothing.

Wanting For Nothing?

That is correct. There is a point in every Christian's walk with their Lord that the desires of the flesh and the lust of the world begins to fade away. That point is when we draw closer to Jesus in love and fellowship that all we really desire is more of Him. The lust for “Stuff” seems silly and the craving for power has no more appeal. We find ourselves at peace with God and comfortable in our own skin. All is well with our souls, even in the midst of chaos. We become content living in the will of God.

This is why James can say to us, “Count it all Joy” because he knows that the end result, if we allow patience to do its work, is that we will have overcome all the tricks and fiery

darts of the devil and the fleshly appetites of sin. We will overcome all of that and walk in the Spirit with a perspective far above those around us.

Conclusion

All that has been said so far can be summed up in five words of encouragement.

1. Stop looking at the door that has been shut and channel your energies on finding the open door that God has for you. With every trial/temptation there is a way of escape. (There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.) **I Corinthians 10:13** Find it and use it. It was made specifically for you.
2. You are not alone. Others suffer the same trials. (There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man. **I Corinthians 10:13**)
3. Resist the devil, knowing he will flee from you... **I Peter 5:8**
4. Walk in the Spirit and you will not be acting out the deeds of the flesh. (This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.) **Galatians 5:16**
5. Know that no matter what is going down, God will intervene and work it all together for good...If we love Him and are called according to His purposes.

God bless you as you grow in grace and experience His love.

The Battle of The Ages Introduction

I take pen in hand to formulate bible truths, personal experience and comments from noteworthy individuals in regard to, "The Battle of the Ages" which is to be understood to be between God and His enemies over the souls of mankind.

My purpose is to enlighten the reader as to said battle, educate on the enemy and expose the strategies use to capture and/or destroy the human soul. I also have specific goals that I will hopefully attain. They are as follows:

1. To bring to light the weapons of our warfare.
2. To educate on how to use these weapons.
3. To reveal specific Godly strategies that always win.

4. To provide a clear rationale for why such a battle exists, how it came to be and it's ultimate end.
5. To establish a foundation from which a believer can build a life and destiny through God.

The greatest battle of all times is the battle for the souls of mankind. It is a life and death struggle for every human being. It crosses ethnic groups, geographical borders, social status, and all other lines that segment people into different levels. No one is exempt. We are all targets for the enemy of God.

If you think this is not true, read **I Peter 5:8** "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:⁹ Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

This eBook is designed to expose our enemy and his tricks so we do not fall prey to his dominance and subsequent control. We will be looking at God's original plan for man and how Satan destroyed it. We will also be looking at God's provision for man after he lost his way.

The King James Version of the Bible will be the main source for knowledge and revelation as it is the inspired Word of God, written for our edification. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" **II Timothy 3:16**

The Enemy Of Our Souls

Peter describes our enemy as, "**your adversary the devil**" as he writes his second letter to various churches in Asia Minor sometime between 64 AD and 68 AD. He does not say Nero or the Romans in general are their enemy. Instead, he points his finger directly at the devil and tells them that this evil intenty is their adversary.

An adversary, according to the dictionary is, "a person, group, or force that opposes or attacks; opponent; enemy; foe."

The bible calls Satan by many different names, including the devil, but he is still the same sinister opponent that we have to face in battle every waking moment. Here's a list for your review:

Accuser

“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the *accuser of our brethren*, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.’” **Revelation 12:10**

Adversary

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” **1 Peter 5:8**

Angel of light

“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.” **II Corinthians 11:14**

Antichrist

“And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.” **1 John 4:3**

Beelzebub

“Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, ‘this fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’” **Matthew 12:24**

Belial

“And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?” **II Corinthians 6:15**

Deceiver

“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” **Revelation 12:9**

Devil

“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” **1 John 3:8**

Dragon

“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” **Revelation 12:9**

Enemy

“The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.” **Matthew 13:39**

Evil One

“I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.” **John 17:15**

Father of Lies

“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” **John 8:44**

God of This Age

“Whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” **2 Corinthians 4:4**

Lawless One

“8. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. 9. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10. and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” II **Thessalonians 2:8-10**

Leviathan

“In that day the LORD with His severe sword, great and strong, Will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan that twisted serpent; And He will slay the reptile that is in the sea.” **Isaiah 27:1**

Liar

“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” **John 8:44**

Lucifer

"12. How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13. For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; 14. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'" **Isaiah 14:12-14**

Man of Sin

“3. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4. who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” **2 Thessalonians 2:3,4**

Murderer

“44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” **John 8:44**

Prince of The Power of The Air

“1. And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2. in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.” **Ephesians 2:1,2**

Roaring Lion

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” **1 Peter 5:8**

Rulers of The Darkness

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” **Ephesians 6:12**

Ruler of This World

“31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. 32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.” **John 12:31,32**

Satan

“And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.” **Mark 1:13**

Serpent of Old

“So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” **Revelation 12:9**

Son of Perdition

“3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” **2 Thessalonians 2:3,4**

Tempter

“Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.’” **Matthew 4:3**

Thief

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

“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” **Ephesians 6:16**

This list of names for Satan has been taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.

There may be other names for Satan in the Bible. This is a partial list on the Internet developed by Nora Roth, a bible student. I offer her list because it is very accurate.

It should be evident by now, from all the names, that our enemy is bent on killing us or at best, keeping us from learning the truth about God and His love. These names form a portrait of evil. However, they also reveal how Satan operates.

It's like we have been given the playbook of the opposing team so we can learn their plays and develop a defense against them. Here's what I see:

1. We will have to deal with lies that are made against us.
2. We will be accused day and night by evil forces that watch our every move.
3. We will be tempted with stuff that appeals to our own lust and fallen nature.
4. We will be fighting deception on every hand
5. We will see the truth becomes a lie and the lie accepted as truth in our society.
6. We will have to guard our hearts and protect our stuff against a masterful thief that stalks us day and night.
7. We will have to exercise a lot of faith to keep from being hurt by “fiery darts” being hurled by the Wicked One.
8. We will have to wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places who are bent on our destruction.

The Devil’s Crowd

It is true that our battle is with demons who are spiritual beings bent on our destruction. However, the devil also works through people. I call them, “The Devil’s Crowd” This group consists of folks that deny Jesus as coming in the flesh. They are those that the Bible calls, “Antichrists”. They support abortion, same sex marriage, child pornography, wife swapping, and all the other liberal agenda currently being pushed in our society.

Sadly enough, these folks are in many instances, our parents, kids, neighbors, political officials and co-workers. Satan uses them to spread his Anti-Christ gospel message.

My wife, just for the fun of it, searched the Internet for crime in our area. She found all sorts of evil going, all within one mile from our home. Now that’s scary. However, Satan will use anyone that is not on guard spiritually to attack another. He has a host of demons that do nothing but make suggestions to us to be a certain way or do inappropriate things from off color jokes to hostile acts.

Evil Spirits To Watch For

People will reflect the evil spirit that controls them. Here are a few to watch for. You’ve seen them before but didn’t know that they were evil spirits. We say, this person has a spirit of: Jealousy, Dominance, Suicide, Murder, Homosexuality, Criticism, Anger, and so forth.

I know that the deeds of the flesh portray the same things but when you see more than a passing attitude, you can rest assured that there is probably a demon behind it. They drive the individual to over react and display their own evil nature. It’s how they live. It’s through those who they control. The major sign that shows a demonic attachment is Abnormality, Excessive or Extreme.

I guess it’s clear that we are truly in a life and death battle with Satan and our eternal soul hangs in the balance.

The Battle

The battleground, where all the fighting takes place, is in your mind. You may be on a playground, at work, with family or friends but victory or defeat is all about how you think. Listen to what Paul told the early church.

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

Here the voices of the Old Testament Prophets

“And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: **for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.**” 1st **Samuel 17:47**

“And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.” **I Chronicles 14:15**

“Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” **Psalms 24:8**

“Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of **battle**: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.” **Isaiah 42:25**

“Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms;” **Jeremiah 51:20**

There is some good news so don't get too depressed.

First, *The battle is the Lords.* “ Thus saith the Lord unto you, be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.” **II Chronicles 20:15** God wants us to know that He has everything under control.

Secondly, *God has given us His amour to wear so we don't get hurt.* “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” **Ephesians 6:10-18**

Thirdly, Jesus has already defeated every evil power. “ And having despoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”

Colossians 2:15 The victory was at the cross where He died as a sacrifice for sin. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:” **Romans 8:3**

Finally, God wants us to walk in the Spirit so we do not fulfill the deeds of the flesh. “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” **Galatians 5:16** The deeds of the flesh are listed in Galatians 5. It is the flesh that causes us all the problems.

Paul tells us in **Romans 8** that living in the flesh is to be carnally minded and that cannot be blessed of God or favored in any way. It brings only death to our souls. God is in the business of bringing life not death to our souls.

A sobering thought...this evil nature that is seen in Satan, who is our mortal enemy, has somehow manifested his nature in us. The deeds of the flesh are identical to the personality of the devil. How can this be? God did not create us this way.

The Creation of Man, His Fall And Restoration

“²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” **Genesis 1:26-28**

Note that God created man in His image and likeness. What do we know about the likeness and image of God? Only this...it is a Holy Image and a Righteous likeness. **(Galatians 5:22)** There is no sin in Him. Yet man is all of a sudden filled with another image...that of Satan. Paul tells us all about what really happened to Adam and how it affected our destiny.

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” **Romans 5:12**

Adam was a prototype, the 1st of many to come. However, with his disobedience came sin instead of Holiness. Instead of righteousness flowing from Adam to his descendants, sin overtook them all. Instead of the image of God remaining in Adam and being duplicated in his descendants, the nature and character of Satan filled the souls of man. Paul refers to Christ as the 2nd Adam. “And so it is written, the first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” **I Corinthians 15:45**

Some will disagree with me about Adam falling from God's grace and creating a world of sin. They will say that we are all children of God. However **Romans 8:14** tells us, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

There is another logical argument for the fall of man. It is in Genesis. It would be wrong to say that God created man in His own image, verse 1:26, and that image was both good and evil. To say such a thing is to say that God is also the devil, which is ludicrous. God is pure and morally righteous. He does not change. There is no darkness in Him. That means that man had to change. He chose to disobey God and lost his innocence. Instead of God's image, he accepted the image of Satan.

Here's how that all happened, according to the bible. It's recorder in **Genesis Chapter three**, "Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" **2**The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3**but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" **4**"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. **5**"For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Note the lie that Satan tells Eve. The lie is three-fold

1. "You will not surely die"
2. "You will be like God"
3. "You will know good and evil"

They were already like God, in that...they bore His image and likeness. They were not supposed to know evil. It was not in God's plan for man. What really happened was they knew evil by nature but lost the ability to know good.

Death was swift and sure but not physical, only spiritual. Physical came later. The Spirit's breath put into Adam was taken away and therefore it could not pass on to his descendants. That's why the New Testament says we must be, "Born Again".

Satan always tells lies to deceive us. If we buy the lie, we live out that destiny. If, on the other hand, we know the truth, it will set us free to shape our own destiny in accordance with God's will.

Knowing the truth is the greatest weapon we can have and use against evil influences. If you are not sure of what is truth, read the Bible. It is full of God's Word. Here's an example of how to use it to defeat Satan.

The enemy says to you, in the form of a thought that pops into your head, "You can rob a store and get the needed cash to buy that thing you've always wanted" "If no one sees you, you're Scott Free" "That company is insured anyway and will not miss what you steal" A simple declaration of truth will dispel the lies and keep your mind in focus with God's

Will. Here's the declaration, "**Thou Shalt not Steel**" The truth of God's Word will always dispel the lie and expose its source.

So Adam fell from God's grace when he disobeyed God. His transgression was so bad that God could not fix it without violating man's free will to choose his own destiny. Adam chose to experience evil and he did...and so did we. However, there's always a, "But God" in every Divine story.

Man Is Restored By God

But God didn't leave Adam and Eve to a hell-bound destiny. He, from before the foundation of the world, had a plan to redeem His greatest creation. The apostle John records Jesus as He tells Nicodemus, a religious leader, the plan of redemption. **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

It's important to note that salvation is available/given to every, "**Whosoever**" that believes. All that is necessary is to believe that God sent Jesus, His only Son to redeem mankind. Jesus is the only way to God and that is through the, "Born Again" experience.

Just, "One Way To God?" True or False?

It is hard for most folks that are not "Born Again" to understand why there is just one way to God, yet it is true. There is only one way and that is through Jesus Christ. The Bible is our source to prove that the one-way doctrine is valid. **Acts 4:12** says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Jesus is the only way to attain salvation. All the world religions cannot save us. Joining a church or specific faith cannot save us. It must be an acknowledgment of our sin, our cry before the throne of God for forgiveness, and our invitation for Jesus to come into our hearts and save us. His name is the only one that can get us through death into eternal life.

Here are a few scriptures that support the only "One-Way" doctrine.

1. ...There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (**I Timothy 2:5-6**)
2. ...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved... (**Acts 16:31**)

3. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. **(Romans 10:9-10)**

The skeptic would say, "You mean to tell me that all the religions of the world are wrong and only Christianity is the one true religion?" Remember, Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship born out of love between man and the one true and living God. There is no one true religion. Religion, in itself, will not get us to God. It is the blood of Christ that unlocks the door and our confession of faith in Jesus that makes it all happen. **(John 14:6)**

Why is Jesus the only way to God? ...Because God planned it that way. He set the penalty for sin, which was death. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.* **(Ezekiel 18:20)** In fact, Jesus was the slain Lamb of God before the foundation of the world. **(Ephesians 1:3-7)**

Jesus Himself said, as recorded in **John 14:6**, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh to the Father but by Me". Christianity states that the God of the Bible is the only true God and salvation is only possible by accepting Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son as Savior and Lord. **II Corinthians 5:21** says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

God validated His Son as the only way in multiple ways so we could be assured that Jesus was indeed the only way to Him. Here are some to consider.

1. He claimed to be the only way as in John's record 14:6 says but validation came through miracles that proved He was who He claimed to be.
2. Eyewitnesses saw Jesus' miracles and validated them as authentic. Over 500 followers saw Jesus, after His resurrection, and watched Him ascend into heaven.
3. The prophets foretold of His coming, where He would be born, that He would be God in human flesh and lots more...all prophetic statements were realized in Jesus, even those like in Isaiah chapter 53 that were uttered hundreds of years before Jesus came.
4. God Himself validated Jesus as His sole pathway to Him. "While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him!"**(Mathew 17:5)**
5. The Apostles lost their homes, wealth, and even their lives preaching the gospel. Would they do that if it were a lie? I don't think so. They testified to the truth and were willing to die for it if necessary. **(See Foxes Book of Martyrs)**
6. Thousands of Believers, over several centuries have testified of how Jesus helped them and blessed them.

7. I can personally testify that I have seen the hand of the Lord in my life and communicate with Him daily. I know He is the Christ.

The provability that one man could fulfill all prophecies about a Messiah that God Himself said would come, (**Gen. 3:15**), and perform fantastic miracles while here on earth, and be raised from the dead, and ascend into heaven while hundreds looked on is astronomical. But Jesus did just that...fulfilled everything that was foretold about the coming Messiah. He had to be who He said He was and therefore is truly the only way to God.

Question: How does my salvation overcome the attacks of the devil? The answer is in the Bible. God is calling all of us to Himself so we can be set free from sin, death and the wilds of the devil. If we do not rely on Him, we are not blessed and protected.

Here's a scripture that explains it further. "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." **Psalm 34:7** The key to being protected is to fear (Reverence) the Lord. When you do, His angel sets up his camp, that is filled with waring angels, all around you. Those that do not believe do not reverence and therefore do not qualify for The Angel of The Lord's Campfire.

You may be saying, "The bible is just a book and not a final authority. Let's look at this more closely."

The Bible As The Final Authority

I use the Bible as my main source to validate all that I say. But most people, including Christians, do not read the Bible with any regularity and therefore do not know the God of the Bible. They know only what their pastor or others tell them. Here's a brief history lesson.

The history of the Bible starts with a phenomenal account, the creation of all things. It's not one book like many think -- It's an ancient collection of writings, comprised of 66 separate books, written over approximately 1,600 years, by at least 40 distinct authors. The Old Testament contains 39 books written from approximately 1500 BC to 400 BC, and the New Testament contains 27 books written from approximately 40 to 90 AD. The Jewish Bible (Tanakh) is the same as the Christian Old Testament, except for its book arrangement. The original Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic, while the original New Testament was written in common Greek.

Starting in about 40 AD, and continuing to about 90 AD, the eye-witnesses to the life of Jesus, including Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter and Jude, wrote the Gospels and letters that eventually became the Bible's New Testament. These authors quote from 31 books of the Old Testament. They widely circulated their material so that by about 150 AD, early Christians were referring to the entire set of writings as the "New Covenant." During the 200s AD, the original writings were translated from Greek into Latin, Coptic (Egypt) and Syriac (Syria), and widely disseminated as "Inspired Scripture" throughout the Roman Empire and beyond. In 397 AD, in an effort to protect the scriptures from various heresies and offshoot religious movements, the current 27 books of

the New Testament were formally and finally confirmed and "canonized" in the Synod of Carthage.

What I hope you will see from this snapshot of the Bible in history is that God took great pains to validate His Word to man over many years, keeping it clear, and indisputable as the only true source of His revelation. These eyewitness accounts and prophetic revelations all connect to make a complete proof of God's existence, character, power, love, salvation, judgment, compassion, mercy and forgiveness. His entire plan of salvation and the ages to come is all written down so we could benefit from them.

Time and time again I have asked the Lord questions and found the answers in the Bible. I can remember one in particular. I was attending a small Christian fellowship that met in a barn. The leadership was teaching that God's judgment upon America was to come soon and that they could escape it by leaving the states and going to a remote desert-like place in another country. Several families had already moved to this undisclosed location. I was a very young believer and not as knowledgeable as I am now in the scriptures...so I turned to Jesus and asked Him if these people were correct and if I should go with them. Here's what I read during my prayer and Bible reading.

Mathew 24:26 "Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not."

This is just one example of many that God has communicated to me through the Bible. Try it...when you are troubled, confused or worried about life or just need an answer to life's never ending questions, pray and ask Jesus to show you in His Word, the Bible.

The Bible was written under "Inspiration" from the Holy Spirit. The word, "inspire" means "To breathe upon or into something". God revealed Himself through individuals who penned the written word.

As a young Christian, I often witnessed to un-believers, using the Bible as my source. Some of those I talked to told me that the Bible was not a source they would believe. I went to my pastor and asked him what I should do because folks were not open to hear what the Bible had to say. He led me to **Hebrews 4:12** and said. "Use it anyway," for the reasons stated in chapter four. Listen to what it says. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (**Hebrews 4:12**) I did just that and began to see the words of the Bible break down barriers and soften hearts.

I know that anyone who is really seeking God and wants to know about Jesus will find everything in the Bible. Words will leap off the page, bringing fresh revelation, historical facts, wisdom, divine counsel and victory over life's every trial. All you have to do is spend some time every day in prayer and Bible reading.

Tricks of The Devil

Satan has many tricks and plays them on humans all the time. www.beliefnet.com Offers Six tricks or lies that are meant to capture your soul and leave you helplessly void of God's grace. I have chosen five to use in my book. Here they are:

1. That Happiness Is Unattainable

The Devil wants you to stress about things outside of your control so that you don't rely on Christ, the One who strengthens, but that you will rely on the Enemy, the one who will do everything in his power to make you doubt all forms of joy and happiness. He wants you confused, anxious, and even angry about your life circumstances so that you will eventually become distant from God, and rely on your own understanding.

Read more at <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Galleries/6-Things-the-Devil-Will-Trick-You-into-Believing.aspx?p=2#140xM9X7WlWr5FyS.99>

2. That God's Word Isn't Real

The devil wants to trick you into believing the Bible is a collection of myths, in hopes that you will doubt God's Word and even His existence. He also wants you to believe that the Bible, written nearly 3500 years ago is no longer relevant in our modern world because it was written so long ago. But God's Word is real and has real significance. Not only was it written by more than 40 different writers over a 1600-year span with remarkable consistency, it explains life and the human experience in a way no other book has or ever will.

Read more at <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Galleries/6-Things-the-Devil-Will-Trick-You-into-Believing.aspx?p=3#Ai6oWQMlERswSOLI.99>

3. That You Aren't Significant

While God wants you to live a life filled with purpose, the devil wants the opposite. He doesn't want you to think or care about your thoughts, attitude, words or actions and will trick you into believing you aren't significant. If he gets you to believe your life is without purpose, then you will live a life of sin, out of tune with God. But your life is significant. God knew you before you were even born. Remember, He knows the plans He has for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (**Jeremiah 29:11**).

Read more at <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Galleries/6-Things-the-Devil-Will-Trick-You-into-Believing.aspx?p=4#jdKQfLADEkhhkjmQK.99>

4. That Gossip Does No Harm, And Your Words Can't Hurt

The devil wants you to spread gossip and bad news so that you will focus on the negative and not believe in God's goodness or His blessings. If he tricks you into thinking gossip does no harm, you will then believe there's nothing wrong in spreading harmful or malicious words which can hurt the people you love, and allow you to develop a negative view of the world around you, which has an impact on all that you do.

Read more at <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Galleries/6-Things-the-Devil-Will-Trick-You-into-Believing.aspx?p=6#O1jqXrjxaOeOZ7Bm.99>

5. That The Physical World Outweighs the Spiritual World

If the devil can get you to believe the physical world is more real than the spiritual world, he can trick you into pursuing things like money, power and fame and have you believing that materialistic things are more important than being in a relationship with God. If you think this, then you won't seek first the kingdom of God. But there is far more greatness in God's Heavenly Kingdom than any material possession we acquire while in physical form on Earth. Remember, Earth is now. Heaven is forever.

Read more at <http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Galleries/6-Things-the-Devil-Will-Trick-You-into-Believing.aspx?p=7#jdpfcEDktTQbly7P.99>

Weapons of Our Warfare

It's obvious that we need to know what our weapons are and how to use them...so lets look at some spiritual weapons. (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) We will 1st look at the **Armor Of God** as presented in **Ephesians 6:13-17**.

“Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. **14**Stand firm therefore, Having Girded Your Loins With Truth, and Having Put on the Breastplate of Righteousness, **15**and having shod Your Feet With The Preparation of the Gospel of Peace; **16**in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17**And take the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

So, we have Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Faith, Salvation and the Word of God or Bible...Six weapons, five defensive and one offensive. This represents the full armor of God to be worn and used so that we can resist in the evil day.

The evil day is the hour of temptation when Satan seeks to deceive us and draw us away from God. It is also when fiery darts are flung at us by demons. The deceptions are suggestive in nature that contradict God's will but seem logical such as, "everybody's doing it. It must be ok" or "drugs can't really hurt you." The fiery darts are insults like, "You're not good enough", "Not worth anything", "Never amount to anything"...all are negative in nature that are meant to cause a low self-esteem, depression and even suicide.

The Sword of the Spirit is really cool because it's fashioned from over 3,000 promises of God...things like; "You are accepted in the beloved" **Ephesians 1:6**, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." **Galatians 2:20**,"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." **Romans 8:37**

All of Satan's efforts are designed to establish strongholds in our lives. How many has he established in you? What's a stronghold? Try theses on for size: Over eating, drugs, smoking, anger, homosexuality, pornography, and all of the deeds of the flesh listed in Galatians chapter five. He'll try and try until he gets you hooked on some sort of vice. If you follow him, he takes you deeper and deeper into it until a stronghold is built which is really an outpost for demonic activity. Not to worry because the Sword of the Spirit can cut that evil stronghold into peaces and bring its efforts to naught.

K. N. O. B. S.

As a young Christian, I learned an acrostic that helped me to remember my primary weapons.

K = Knowledge Of God..." Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" **II Corinthians 10:5**

Note: Anything that sets itself against what you know to be true, you cast it down and away from you.

N = Name Of Jesus... "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;" **Philippians 2:10**

Note: We can use our lord's name to stop the evil attack. Say it out loud if need be..."I cast you out and bind your influence from me, In The Name of Jesus, be gone.

O = Obedience... "And bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" **II Corinthians 10:5**

Note: we are to bring every thought into captivity. In other words...hold every thought against the truth of the Word of God to be sure it is not a deception or trap.

B = Blood Of Christ ...” If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Note: through confession, His blood can cleanse us from our sin. That means when Satan accuses us, we can put it under the blood in confession before the throne of God and know it will fade away. Satan will try to use it anyway but we can stand against it, saying we’ve been forgiven.

S = Sword Of The Spirit... “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” **Hebrews 4:12** **Note:** We can use the Word of God to fight back. It will always win.

Other “Word” Weapons

Consider these:

- Give No Place To The Devil...”Neither give place to the devil.” Ephesians 4:27

Note: The best thing you can do is do not argue, negotiate, compromise or allow any negative or suggestive thoughts into your mind.

- Prayer & Praise.... “Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. ²As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Psalm 68:1 & 2

Note: Prayer always works as a weapon and when you add praise, you have a powerful combination that Satan cannot overcome.

- **Trust In The Lord At All Times...**”Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” **Proverbs 3:5-6**

Note: Too many folks worry, cry and cuss over their circumstances. Learning to trust requires an absolute allegiance to Jesus, knowing He will direct you in and through every situation.

- **All Things Work Together For Good...**” And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” **Romans 8:28**

Note: Here's a great weapon because its foundation is the knowledge that God has a master plan and He is always working everything together for good in the lives of those who are called to salvation, all those, "Whosoever" of **John 3:16** who love the Lord. If that is you, you can know that God is ever in your background, making things right.

- **Let The Peace of God Be The Referee...**"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to **the** which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." **Colossians 3:16**

Note: If we can allow the peace of God to rule in our hearts, it will keep out all the clutter that Satan tries to fill our minds with. It's another great weapon in defensive warfare.

- **Stand Fast...**"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" **Galatians 5:1**

Note: With all of the above weapons available to us, we should not fear Satan. He is a defeated foe. He has to steal your power to have any of his own. If we treat him accordingly, as a defeated foe, by standing fast to our confession of faith in Jesus and applying the scriptures against his attacks, we will no doubt remain peaceful, happy and free to serve our Lord.

I am sure that you'll find more weapons. Our salvation set us free from the bondage of sin. Going back into that lifestyle is just not an option. We need to recognize the battle, learn about our enemy and use the weapon of choice to fit the attack. Failing to fight is to lose before you start and settle for a life in captivity.

Fighting Demonic Spirits

When we discuss fighting demonic spirits, it is easy to fall into error. One error is that we begin to believe that there's a demon behind every situation. That is just not so. It is easy to say, "The devil Made Me Do It" instead of owning up to our own lust, anger or other failures.

People have a "Free Will" to make decisions and they often times use poor judgment and make wrong decisions that can affect others. Blaming demons is popular because it hides the evil in our own hearts. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it" **Jeremiah 17:9**

Jesus said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." **Mathew 15:11** So blaming evil forces for what we do is not religiously correct.

The other error in fighting demonic influences is...not believing that demonic activity is real and that it never affects you. Jesus cast out demons. His disciples did also and for centuries the church has faced demonic activity.

Here's a partial list of situations that might indicate that you are under demonic control or attack.

- Thinking thoughts "that are not you."
- Having sudden depression.
- Having suicidal thoughts.
- Having fits of anger or rage that are unusual for you.
- Feeling hopeless.
- Your pets start acting differently around you.
- Your close friends start questioning your thinking or behavior.
- Excessive fatigue.
- Not being able to do what you know is good or right.
- Feeling like you are being pulled to do the wrong thing.
- Feeling like you are being pressured to do something you don't want to do.
- Hearing voices or thoughts in your head that are negative, persuasive, or commanding you to do something.
- Deep or severe personality changes like fear or wanting to be isolated all the time.
- Suddenly having creepy or scary feelings.
- Recent feelings that an area, like in your house, there is something heavy, depressive or oppressive.
- Feelings of being under attack or threatened when others don't.
- Finding it hard or impossible to pray.
- Finding it harder or impossible to spend time with Christian brothers or sisters.
- Sudden and unexplainable anxiety.
- Sudden development of Lupus or other auto immune system disease.

Some medical problems can cause similar conditions. It could be from a new bad habit or an encounter with a sinful situation or circumstance. If this is true, you know what to do. Repent and move on with your life. Trust Jesus. (The above list is an excerpt from Pastor Thomas of The Joseph Plan World Wide Ministry) ministry@thejosephplan.org

The best way to dispel demonic activity in your life is to call upon the name of the Lord and command that demon to leave you, **in the name of Jesus**. Then draw close to God, through prayer and seek His Divine revelation as to what to do next.

He will most likely send you to the bible to read and listen as He speaks to you from the pages of the bible. You will get all the direction you need to overcome and demonic influence.

Remember, Resist the devil and he will flee from you. To resist is to quote scripture, as Jesus did in the wilderness.

Why Me Lord

If you are like me, you probably said, “**Why Me Lord**” There was a time when I thought I could be neutral, just doing my own thing but still believing in God. The problem with that sort of thinking is that can not be.

We were created to be the image and likeness of God here on this earth. God went to a lot of trouble to create and enact a plan that would accomplish this. With the fall of Adam and the entire human race, we were left with being the image of Satan. Now our “Free Will” choice is to stay with the deeds of the flesh, which is the nature of evil or to be, “Born Again” and receive the Spirit of God. There is no neutral ground.

Joseph Mattera, bishop of Resurrection Church and Christ Covenant Coalition offers some insights that are worthy of our investigation. Here’s what he says... There are some believers who falsely believe that if they have a lot of faith they will not undergo any suffering, severe tests or satanic attacks. Nothing could be further from the truth! Actually, the opposite is true.

First Peter 5:8-9 teaches that Satan roams the earth seeking someone to devour. When we read the context, we can come to the conclusion that the devil's main focus is to thwart, divert, distract and disarm the servants of God who are promoting the rule of God on the earth as it is in heaven. Heaven is the only realm in the universe where everything is perfectly aligned under King Jesus, since the devil was displaced from there (Rev. 12:7-12).

Consequently, when someone on earth wants to bring the influence of the kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven, Satan erupts with fear and anger against them since he doesn't want to be thrown out of another place!

This is why it seems as though a person following the will of God will sometimes have the most difficult tests, trials and resistance, as opposed to some saints who are casual seekers of God.

Satan is no dummy, why should he attack a Christian who is a bad example to others and who is already deceived and in his grip? He will focus the most on those who are the biggest threats to his desire, to do a power grab from God over the earth realm! Remember: God gave Adam a commission to have His rule over the whole earth (Gen. 1:28), and immediately after that the devil came and convinced both Adam and Eve to disobey God and abandon their posts as God's vice regents over the earth (**Gen. 3:1-8**).

Since that time Satan has been jealously attempting to protect his control over the earthly realm he stole through subverting Adam, including its systems of government, commerce, media, the arts, science and education.

Those who attempt to bring God's influence in these realms will most likely experience some of the highest levels of satanic resistance. The apostle Paul had a messenger from Satan follow him everywhere he went that caused riots and persecutions (**2 Cor. 13:1-8**), only because he was turning the present world system upside down (**Acts 17:7**).

So, if you are sold out for God, don't be discouraged when you are attacked or allow yourself to be deceived into thinking that the only reason you are in intense spiritual warfare or tribulation is because you may have missed God. It may be the opposite.

You are being targeted because you are hitting the divine bull's eye! This is why Paul admonished believers to stand strong in the Lord: "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against principalities, powers and the rulers of darkness in high places" (**Ephesians 6:10-13**). Notice: Paul said "our struggle" meaning he was including himself in this struggle. Every time there was an open door for ministry he had many adversaries. This is a biblical principle (**read 1 Corinthians 16:9**).

Do not ever think that just because God is calling you to do something that it will be easy. Jesus did the will of God and He was crucified, and church history tells us Paul was beheaded! It's not how many years we live, but what we do with the years we live that matters!

So, what do we do when we are in a time of spiritual warfare that Paul calls "the day of evil" in Ephesians 6:13? Paul tells us in this passage to be strong in the Lord and to stand firm; in other words, do not quit (Eph. 6:10-13).

The apostle Peter also tells us to resist the devil, standing firm in the faith (1 Pet. 5:9). Peter knows firsthand that faith in God is the key to standing firm in the midst of the day of evil because, when he denied Christ three times, Jesus prayed for him that his "faith" would not fail (Luke 22:31-32).

So, do not be afraid when you are in tribulation, because Jesus has already overcome the world (John 16:33)!

Joseph Mattera is overseeing bishop of Resurrection Church and Christ Covenant Coalition, in Brooklyn, New York, and author of numerous books, including *Ruling in the Gates: Preparing the Church to Transform Cities*. Follow him on Facebook or visit him online at josephmattera.org.

We are privileged to stand up for our faith and belief in Jesus Christ. We should take every opportunity to share our faith and stand for what is right, no matter what others think.

What To Do Next

The Bible gives us clear instruction on how to keep ourselves free, healthy and happy in a world that is a battleground where Satan seeks to kill, steal and destroy. (John 10:10) Here's a recap of what we can do next to keep our hearts:

Be transformed-...Romans 12:2; Cast down imaginations-...2 Corinthians 10:5; Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Be spiritually minded-Romans 8:6; Put off the old man-Ephesians 4:22; Be renewed in your mind-Ephesians 4:23; Put on the new man-Ephesians 4:24; Let the mind of Christ be in you-Philippians 5; Let no man beguile you-Colossians 2:18; Let no man spoil you-Colossians 2:8; Be fully persuaded in your mind-Romans 14:5; Do not have a doubtful mind-Luke 12:29; Do not be soon shaken in mind-2 Thessalonians 2:2; Do not Be troubled-2 Thessalonians 2:2; Gird up the loins of your mind-1 Peter 1:13; Be sober-1 Peter 1:13 and Hope to the end for the grace of God-1 Peter.

I am sure you will find more things as you read the scripture but these will make a great starting place. Just remember, God is always with you. He is not mad at you, nor does He expect you to win every time. Your salvation does not hang in the balance. If you fail, He will just pick you up and help you along the way until you can sit, walk and run.

Signs of The End of The Age And The Rise of Satanic Influences

We have all been told that the end of the world is at hand. Hollywood has even made movies on how it might happen. I want to show some of the rise of Satanic influences and how it will affect us. Let's first look at what Jesus said about the end times as recorded in Matthew 24.

“See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will lead many astray. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you ^dare not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. ⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are but the beginning of the birth pains.” Matthew 24:4-8

“And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold: Matthew 24: 11-12. “For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.” **Matthew 24:24**

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;: **II Thessalonians 2:3**

Here’s what I see in these scriptures

1. Many will come in His Name saying they are Christ. This, in my opinion, refers to false Christians. They say they are of the Christian Faith but do not follow the doctrine that the Apostles taught. The Mormons call themselves Latter Day Saints and have changed the gospel to fit their own perspectives. They are deceiving many and taking them away from the true Gospel.
2. Other groups, known as the Occults do the same thing.
3. Modern day churches, both Protestant and Catholic are full of folks that example doctrine of devils, yet they claim to be Christians.

It is obvious that false prophets have come onto the world stage, as though they were a “Pied Piper”, and they have led many astray. It is also obvious that there has been, over the last 50 years, a great falling away from the faith and doctrines taught by Jesus and His apostles.

I said all of that to say this. The same demons that led many to follow false prophets to believe in doctrines of devils are still here, hard a work, to take us down. We need to recognize what is happening around us. We need to discern the times we live in and we need to discover and apply the weapons of our warfare so we do not get lost in the crowd that is being led astray.

Conclusion

The battle of the ages is for the souls of mankind. It all takes place in the minds of every human being. Before wars break out between countries, battles are fought and lost in the minds of the leaders of those nations. To survive in a life and death struggle for our soul, we will absolutely need to be able to recognize our enemy, know his dirty tricks and schemes, and what weapons God has provided for us to defend ourselves and even win the battle.

We will need to realize that Jesus has defeated every evil force and given us power over them. We need to know that this battle of the ages is the Lords. He knows exactly what to do, when to do it and who to send into the battle to take back what the devil has stolen.

We need to realize that God rested on the seventh day of creation from all His works. That means He knew all about us, our temptations, concerns, needs and how to cause us to attain victory.

In other words, He has a master plan that is being worked out in the earth. All we need to do is trust Him, believe His Word, apply His counsel and rest in His finished work of Grace.

I hope this eBook has helped you to understand and to motivate you to become a partner with Christ in the Battle of The Ages.

The Devil's Toolbox

Introduction

The devil, otherwise know as Satan, Beelzebub, The Evil One, The Thief, The Prince of Darkness, The Serpent and many other names has a, "Toolbox" full of tricks and devices that he uses against human beings and especially the children of God. Most folks are unaware of the "Wiles" of the devil. In fact, over 40% of Americans do not even believe that there is a real devil, only that he is a symbol for evil. (Pew Report)

The Bible tells us about his tricks. His purpose is to snare us with one or more of his tools thereby creating a, "Stronghold" in our lives, from which he can lord over us.

The literal meaning of a "Stronghold" is a fortified armed encampment that can be protected.

A "Snare" is a device or trap that is used to capture a prey. It can be a hunter's trap for small game or a net that is used to catch fish in the sea.

The purpose of tricks, snares, and other tools in "The Devil's Toolbox" is to capture you, and dominate your thoughts and actions with the ultimate goal of manifesting his evil character through you. Hear what Jesus said about the thief, as he referred to the devil.

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10

Whatever you call this, "Evil Being" you have to know, without a shadow of a doubt, that he is real and he is after you to steal your dreams, kill any hope of happiness and destroy everything that is good in your life. He wants you dead but not before he torments you for a lifetime.

News Flash

The good news is that Jesus has defeated the devil and he has no power over you but what you give him. That's right, he has to get you to use your own "Free Will" to accept his lie. That's how he takes control. Let's see what the scriptures say so you know that I am not making this up.

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he (Jesus) made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Colossians 2:5

Jesus spoiled all evil principalities and powers. That is a total defeat. Then He made an open shew...this denotes an old Roman picture of conquest over enemies. The evil king and leaders were tied by a rope to the back of a chariot and led down the middle of the city streets in a procession of conquest so everyone could see and laugh at the defeated foe. This is total victory.

Adam & Eve were not forced to submit to the devil when he was tempting them in the Garden of Eden. They had to engage their free will to do what the devil suggested. Take a read:

There's Always A Choice

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field, which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." Genesis 3:1-5

The serpent is another name for the devil. He challenged the Word of God and persuaded Adam and Eve that God was a liar, when in fact the liar was the devil. However, it was the free will of Adam and Eve that chose to believe the devil and disobey God.



The Devil's Toolbox

We have already seen one tool that is in the devil's toolbox. It is, "The Lie" Jesus, speaking to some religious leaders of His day, said this...

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." John 8⁴⁴

1. Lies That Kill, Steal & Destroy

How many times have we believed a lie? The politicians promise all kinds of things but never deliver. Are they lying? We believe their lies and then what?

Here are a few lies that the devil uses to cause us to do what he wants.

1. Drugs can't really hurt you. Try some and see for yourself.
2. Smoking is not really addictive.
3. Sex before marriage doesn't really hurt anyone.
4. Living is ok as long as no one is hurt.
5. Taking a pen from work is not really stealing.
6. Drinking alcohol is ok. It's cool.

Now let's look at some other lies that are active in modern societies

2. Idolology That Contradicts Bible Truth

The way you think is the basis for how you act and the way you live your life. There are certain lies that seek to alter your thought processes thereby changing your viewpoint. Here are a few:

There Is Only One True Church.

All the others are false. You must belong to our church in order to be saved. We are the true church of God.

This idolology is so untrue. Salvation does not come as a result of a church membership. Nor does it come from a, "True Religion" It comes from the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. He paid the price of sin with His own blood/death. Hear what the scriptures say...

"Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God

through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.” Romans 5:9-11

You Don’t Have To Believe In Jesus To Attain Eternal Life.

The truth is, you do have to believe in Jesus to be saved and will not see heaven unless you accept Him as Savior and Lord. Hear what was said to the people of Israel.

“Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone, which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:10-12

We Are All Children of God

Listen again to the scriptures. They reveal the truth.

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:” Romans 8:14

If I Try To Be Good, That’s Enough, Right?

The Bible tells us that even religious leaders will not see God’s kingdom unless they are, “Born Again” We must be, “Born Again” in order to see God’s Kingdom. That’s what Jesus said. Keep reading for the proof text.

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” **John 3:3**

There Are Many Ways To Heaven.

The lie is that we’re all climbing the same mountain but by different paths. In other words, there are many ways to attain eternal life. This is in direct contrast to what Jesus said. Listen...

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:” Matthew 7:13

The narrow gate is Jesus. He said Himself that...well, read it for yourself...

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” **John 14:6**

3. False Religions That Teaches Heracy

How often have you heard someone say. “It doesn’t matter what religion you follow. You’ll still end up in heaven.” This lie extends to multi culturalism as well. People say it doesn’t matter if you are Hindu, Muslim, Jew, Sikh, Buddhist, Catholic—whatever. It’s not a religion that saves us but rather a relationship with Jesus Christ.

There are many false religions in this world. I call some of them, “Isms.” They teach heracy and lead people astray. They distort the truth, deny the diety of Christ and create a bondage that is very hard to break. Here are a few “Isms” to stay clear of. These are Anti-Christ.

Relativism – Relativism is the idea that there is no such thing as truth. The devil doesn’t want you to believe in truth because if there is not truth, then there is also no right and wrong, and if there is no right and wrong, then anything goes. He can tempt you into sin much more easily if he can first get you to believe there is no such thing as sin. Relativism is everywhere in our society. It takes many different forms.

Under Relativism I can do my own thing. I can ignore any truth that does not line up with what I think. I am right all the time because there is no right or wrong, just whatever I want. This makes me my own god. How sad!

Utilitarianism – In Short...universalism is a theological doctrine that all human beings will eventually be saved: the principles and practices of a liberal Christian denomination founded in the 18th century originally to uphold the belief in “universal” salvation is now united with Unitarianism.

Here is the melting pot of all kinds of beliefs. You can believe anything you want and still be a member of this church because there is no standard or rule of practice, only what you think is right. The problem is...what we think is right is often wrong and with the devil lying to us; we can be easily misled unless we know God’s truth. Jesus said...

“Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.” Luke 11:35

Jesus knew that much of what was being presented as truth or light was not truth at all. It was actually darkness. We need to stay away from such as this.

Atheism - Atheism is defined as the disbelief or lack of belief in the existence of God. Whereas, Theism is the belief in the existence of a God, especially belief in one God as creator of the universe, intervening in it and sustaining a personal relation to his creatures.

This non-religion premise has in modern times become a religion unto itself. It denies God any place in reality and sets man up as his own god. The end of this can only be eternal death.

“There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”
Proverbs 14:12

Mormonism - The Mormon religion, (Mormonism), whose followers are known as Mormons and Latter Day Saints (LDS), was founded less than two hundred years ago by a man named Joseph Smith. He claimed to have received a personal visit from God the Father and Jesus Christ who told him that all churches and their creeds were an abomination. Joseph Smith then set out to begin a brand-new religion that claims to be the “only true church on earth.

This doctrine is a lie and a distortion of the truth. It is a humanistic approach to religion that denies the deity of Christ, The God Head, The Gifts of The Spirit and many other Bible norms.

Socialism - By the late 19th century, socialism emerged as "the most influential secular movement of the twentieth century, worldwide. It is a political ideology (or world view), a wide and divided political movement" Socialist parties and ideas remain a political force with varying degrees of power and influence on all continents, heading national governments in many countries around the world.

Today, some socialists have also adopted the causes of other social movements, such as environmentalism, feminism and progressivism. They reject religion, faith and are anti-God

Satanism - is a group of ideological and philosophical beliefs based on Satan. Contemporary religious practice of Satanism began with the founding of the Church of Satan in 1966, although a few historical precedents exist.

Prior to the public practice, Satanism existed primarily as an accusation by various Christian groups toward perceived ideological opponents, rather than a self-identity. Satanism, and the concept of Satan, has also been used by artists and entertainers for symbolic expression.

Liberalism - Unlike traditional liberalism, there is a certain element of tyranny within the modern liberal movement. In past centuries, liberalism was used to literally liberate people from the rule of kings and tyrants.

Modern liberalism is now imposing its imoral beliefs onto people who are not interested in focusing their lives around how their state can help them; it is a forced movement that is functioning more like a tyranny than any other liberal beliefs have ever done. The premise of liberalism is mainly centered in anti-conservitivism which rejects moral laws and respect for tradition.

The devil pushes liberalism more on the young, encouraging imoral behavior or anything that is anti-God.

Leagleism... (or nomism), in Messianic/Christian theology, is the act of putting the Law of Moses above the gospel, which is 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, by establishing requirements for salvation beyond faith (trust) in Jesus Christ, specifically, trust in His finished work - the shedding of His blood for our sins, and reducing the broad, inclusive, and general precepts of the Bible to narrow and rigid moral codes.

It is an over-emphasis of discipline of conduct, or legal ideas, usually implying an allegation of misguided rigour, pride, superficiality, the neglect of mercy, and ignorance of the grace of God or emphasizing the letter of law at the expense of the spirit.

Here are a few non “isms” but equally anti-God:

Witchcraft – This is the practice of magic or sorcery by anyone outside the religious mainstream of a society. This term is used in different ways in different times and places. Witchcraft is part of the Occult that deny God and rejects Jesus as Lord. It is centered in mysticism and preys on unformed folks that seek spiritual answers.

Jehovah’s Witness - The Jehovah's Witnesses are best known for going door-to-door. You have probably seen them in your area, and more than likely they have knocked on your door. They recently spent over 1.2 billion hours in one year proclaiming the so-called "good news of Jehovah and His Kingdom".

Jehovah’s Witnesses reject the Trinity, believing Jesus to be a created being and the Holy Spirit to essentially be the inanimate power of God. Jehovah’s Witnesses reject the concept of Christ’s substitutionary atonement and instead hold to a ransom theory, that Jesus’ death was a ransom payment for Adam’s sin.

New Age - The **New Age** is a term applied to a range of spiritual or religious beliefs and practices that developed in Western nations during the 1970s. Precise scholarly definitions of the movement differ in their emphasis, largely as a result of its highly eclectic structure. Although analytically often considered to be religious, those involved in it typically prefer the designation of "spiritual" and rarely use the term "New Age" themselves. Many scholars of the subject refer to it as the **New Age movement**. It is very close to Universalism in that it believes in the spiritual but denied the truth of One God, One Lord and One Spirit, which is the centerpiece of Christianity.

Islam - “The source of the word, (Allah), who is the Islamic god, goes back to pre-Muslim times. Islam calls Allah god, which is not the God of the bible. Allah has about 1.6 billion followers worldwide. In 2010, Muslims made up 23.2% of the global population. According to the Encyclopedia of Religion, Allah corresponded to the Babylonian god Baal, and Arabs knew of him long before Mohammed worshipped him as the supreme god.

Before Islam, the Arabs recognized many gods and goddesses; each tribe had their own deity. There were also nature deities. Allah was the god of the local Quarish tribe, which was Mohammed's tribe before he invented Islam to lead his people out of their polytheism. Allah was then known as the Moon god, who had three daughters who were viewed as intercessors for the people.

Demonic Suggestions

We could go on and on but you get the point, right? There is a suggestion made by the devil to us that is a lie. It is presented as truth. If we believe it, we fall prey to the devil's manipulation and eventual take over. He wants to be the, “Voice In Your Head” that lord's over you. He wants to lead you away from all that is Godly.

All that has been mentioned above deal with lies that if accepted and believed will capture you and lead you from the light of God's glory into darkness.

4. Pitfalls In Personality...The Deeds of The Flesh

Now here are a few inward traps that cause sickness in our bodies and hasten our demise. These character flaws are used by the devil to capture us and take us down the road to destruction. They are a product of our own fallen nature. The Bible calls them the “Works of The Flesh.” There is a full list in Galatians 5:19-21

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Galatians 5:19-21

All the devil has to do is to suggest a plan of action that involves one or more of these character flaws and if you buy it, you're off into the flesh that cannot please God. If he tells you that your brother's wife is sexy and you probably could have her and you start thinking of the reality of that encounter, you have committed Adultery. Lust takes over and ego soars and imaginations rule. You don't have to do the act, just think about it.

The same is true of Pornography. If you are just looking it's still fornication in your mind and that will distort your sense of morality and steal your Godly values.

“But I say unto you, that whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Matthew 5:28

The devil doesn't make you do it. He only suggests that you do. It is your own will that takes you down the road to hell.

5. Accusations That Destroy Self-Confidence

The Bible says that Satan, (the devil) is the accuser of the brethren. Here is the exact scripture...

“And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:10-11

The, “They” in Verse 11 is us, The Brethren. We can and do overcome this accuser with The Blood of The Lamb, The Word of Our Testimony and Because We Loved Not Our Lives Unto Death. See?...we can have victory.

You may be wondering what types of accusations are made against us. Here are a few:

1. You are ugly and stupid.
2. You are not worthy of anyone's love.
3. You cannot be saved because you have done too many bad things.
4. You are a bad person so go ahead and be bad.

Demonic accusations are meant to cause doubt, fear, low self-esteem and worry among other things. However, the scripture (12:11) also says that the accusation is against you but before the throne of God. He accuses you in front of all the host of heaven. All the things you do wrong are brought before the court of God's Justice. He is constantly telling God what you have done wrong. If we are “Born Again” Jesus, who is seated at the right hand of God, The Father, is interceding on our behalf, saying in effect, “He or she is mine. Their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. They've been washed in my Blood.”

6. Demonic Strategies That Attack Right Thinking

Larry R. Lawrence offers these four demonic strategies that the devil uses to defeat God's Children. We need to know what they are and look for them in our daily experiences so we can stop them from hurting us.

Temptation... Satan nags us to act on addictive urges and to entertain selfishness and greed. How can we resist this direct temptation? Jesus used a two-step defensive technique: first, He ordered Satan to leave; then He quoted scripture. You have the right to tell Satan to leave when you are confronted with temptation. There is great power in

memorizing scripture, as Jesus did. Scripture power not only intimidates Satan, but it also brings the Spirit of God into your heart. Listen again to the scriptures...

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”. I Corinthians 10:

Deception... The devil has been called “the great deceiver.” He attempts to counterfeit every true principle the Lord presents. Although Satan will lie to you, you can count on the Spirit of God to tell you the truth. That’s why the gift of the Holy Ghost is so essential.

The devil will try to deceive you at every turn in life. He will try to get you to believe that right is wrong and wrong is right. Immorality is not wrong. It’s just different. Abortion is not wrong. It’s just a women’s health issue. See how it works?

Contention... Satan is the father of contention. He delights in seeing good people argue. When there is contention in your home or workplace, immediately stop whatever you are doing and seek to make peace. It doesn’t matter who started it.

“Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger rests in the bosom of fools.” Ecclesiastes 7:9

We do not want to be counted with the fools of this world. However, the devil wants us there so he and the rest of the inhabitants of planet earth can laugh at us.

Discouragement... Satan effectively uses this tool on the most faithful Saints when all else fails. President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) gave suggestions for fighting discouragement. They include serving others; working hard and avoiding idleness; practicing good health habits; seeking a priesthood blessing; listening to inspiring music; counting your blessings; and setting goals. And above all, as the scriptures teach, we are to pray always so we can conquer Satan.

When we get discouraged, it is usually because we didn’t get our way. Something hindered us from being on top. Instead, we got fired, lost in a card game, watched as our souse left us, or some other bad thing.

There is an easy remedy for discouragement. That is to make Jesus the Lord of your life and trust Him in every circumstance. This takes the burden of responsibility off of you and allows God to work out everything for good.

7. Materialism That Denies The Hereafter

I’m not talking about going to the mall to shop until you drop. That’s a minor form of materialism. The deeper problem is the growing conviction that there is no supernatural realm. God, the angels, demons, heaven and hell are just a myth. There’s no invisible world.

The church is just an institution of man's making by which he controls the masses. The pastors, priests and church leaders are no more than social workers. Marriage is just a piece of paper, and salvation is not necessary because there is no after-life. That's materialism. Do you recognize it?

It is anti-God in every way because it rejects any future existence after death. The irony is that this type of thinking makes life a total waste. The fact that we exist has no meaning. If we become rich and powerful or just live life normally makes no difference. Whatever we do is without purpose because it really does not matter because there is no after life, judgment or reward. We need to resist this type of reasoning at all cost. It's a lie. God does exist. There is an after life. We will be held accountable for our actions.

8. Situational Ethics That Replaces Absolute Truth

This is another name for moral relativism. The idea is that nothing is right or wrong except for the intentions and circumstances of the moral choice. If you mean well and the circumstances justify it, then what you've chosen to do is okay. Huge numbers of Christians have accepted this premise to justify abortion. If it feels right, it must be ok. However, feeling right is not the same as God's Moral Laws. His Word is absolute, no matter what you or I feel.

The devil will always invoke a situational ethic into the mix so as to divert our thinking away from the absolute truth of God's Word. Here's an example of situational sin...

We all know that it is wrong to steal. It is so said in the 10-Commandments that man shall not steal. However, if I am hungry and have no money and am down on my luck, it's ok to swipe a loaf of bread from a supermarket or a candy bar from a drug store. Right? Wrong! Wrong! Wrong! The situation does not over through God's law. It is always wrong to steal, no matter why we do it.

9. Scientific Facts That Contradict Biblical Revelation

This is the idea that the only kind of truth is scientific truth. It's a powerful lie of Satan because it is one of those things, which is simply assumed in society.

"We all know that science has disproved the Bible right?" Wrong. All truth is God's truth and true science is always the sister of true theology. Scientism is an offshoot of atheism. "There is no God. There are just the laws of science. That's all." No! No! No!

This Godless doctrine ushered in evolution back in the 18th century. It was the devil's way of offering a believable platform for those who did not want to follow God. As you may know, this theory says we evolved over millions of years into what we are today, with no divine influences. Thus we are our own gods and masters of our own destinies. Hitler used this theory to killed six million Jews in WWII. African Americans were once considered sub-standard beings because of this theory. Hear what the Bible says...

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. ” Hebrews 9:27-28 We should be looking to Jesus, not science.

10. A “Snare” or Trap That Captures The Unaware

The devil will use anything he can to capture us and use us to do his will. It can be hate, jealousy, pride, sex, gluttony, fame, fortune, power and the like. All he has to do is set the trap, dangle the bait in front of us and wait for us to engage our free will to go after it. Christians, “Beware!”

11. False Prophets & Teachers That Lead people Astray

Here’s what the Bible says about false prophets and teachers...

“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.” Matthew 24:11 Mark 13:22 says it this way...”For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.”

It is clear that the goal of these false prophets is to deceive. Their teachings are false. Their efforts are for self-empowerment. Their doctrines are demonic in nature. Have you ever heard of Rev. Jones that took his congregation overseas and killed them all... but only after abusing the females and stealing their wealth?

Let’s bring this on the level of the average Christian who can also be a false teacher. Here again what Jesus said to His disciples...

“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.: **Matthew 24:5** The term, “Christ” literally means Anointed. What is really being said is that there will be many that claim to be anointed of God, like Jesus was anointed. This is the mark of a Christian but these false Christians are not anointed. They just claim to be. They will be able to talk the talk but do not follow the truth of the gospel message. A good example is the Mormon Church. These days they claim to be the Latter Day Saints and call themselves Christians. However, they believe very differently. Their doctrines are anti-Christ. These false believers are sprinkled throughout all main line denominations.

How many Folks do you know that profess to be a Christian but have no knowledge of what it really means? Some even claim to be anointed when they operate in the flesh and promote a secular gospel than is a kin to Humanism.

12. Sickness & Disease That Kills The Body

The devil will use sickness and disease to steal our strength, destroy our health and kill our healthy cells. However, we are challenged to believe another report. This time it's not the doctor's diagnosis but the Divine Healer's Report.

The question is, "Does God Want You To Be Healed" or Will He Say No To Your Plea? I was a Baptist, way back when. Our prayer for healing always started with, "If It Be Thy Will" We never knew if it was God's will to heal or not. Maybe there was a reason why He didn't want us to be healed. Then I looked into the scriptures and found these declarations:

Healed By His Stripes

- "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:3-6 "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" Isaiah 53:1

Note: This suffering servant, spoken of by Isaiah, has borne our grief and carried our sorrows. He was stricken of God. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him....and With His Stripes We Are Healed.

The only person that qualifies in all these areas is Jesus. Isaiah clearly said that our healing is in His stripes, which were the beatings and burses and wounds. His blood and subsequent death brought healing to those who believed his report.

Healed By The Prayer of Faith

- "Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven." James 5:14-15

Healed Through Worship

- "Worship the LORD your God, and his blessing will be on your food and water. I will take away sickness from among you..." Exodus 23:25

Healed By The Lord, Just Because

- "But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds,' declares the LORD" Jeremiah 30:17

Healed By God, No Strings Attached

- "I have seen their ways, but I will heal them; I will guide them and restore comfort to Israel's mourners, creating praise on their lips. Peace, peace, to those far and near," says the LORD. "And I will heal them." Isaiah 57:18-19

All Your Needs Met Includes Healing

- "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19 Healing is a need.

Healing By God's Divine Will

- "He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his stripes (wounds) you were healed." 1 Peter 2:24

Healing By Increasing Strength

- "He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak." Isaiah 40:29

Healing By The Word of God

- "Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He sent out his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave. Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind." Psalms 107:19-21

Healing For The Broken Hearted

- "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." Psalms 147:3

All Were Healed...No One Was Rejected

- "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness." Matthew 9:35

The Devil Uses Sickness & Diseases To Oppress The Children of God

The Bible tells us "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

"And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and, kneeling before him, said, "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he has seizures and he suffers terribly. For often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. And I brought him to your disciples, and they could not heal him." And Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him here to me." And Jesus rebuked the demon,² and it came out of him, and the boy was healed instantly" Matthew 17:14-18

"Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ¹⁴But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" Luke 13:10-16

Is there any question as to God not wanting His children to be healed? There was no time when someone did not get healed. Sometimes it was because they asked to be healed. Other times God just healed them.

We should never say, "If It Be Thy Will." Based upon these scriptures, we should now know that it is and always will be God's will that we be healed.

Why Then, In Our Day, Do Many Not Get Healed?

That is a good question. I have prayed for some and seen them receive their healing. I have also prayed and saw nothing happen. Here's what I have surmised after more than 50 years of following Christ.

Some folks just do not believe that Jesus can or will heal them. Some have more faith in doctors and pills than they do in Jesus. Some secretly like their condition because they get sympathy and attention that they would ordinarily not get if they were well. Some get disability checks and do not have to work and like it that way. Some are reaping what they sowed and have to endure it. Some are weak in faith and lose hope before they are healed.

Still others just do not get healed and do not know why. They pray, they cry, they plead and nothing happens. The woman with the issue of blood was bound for 18 years. The blind man was blind from birth so God's power could be used to glorify the name of Jesus. Sometimes there are reasons why things don't go, as we so desire.

This one thing I do know...It is God's will that all of us be in good health and prosper. Until He tells me otherwise, I will continue to seek Him for my healing and believe that I have what I ask for. In fact, I regularly call forth healing into existence. It is an unseen reality that is and is not but will soon to be.

Sickness can come upon us from several sources. If we smoke and get lung cancer, it is our fault, not the devil's or even God's. If we drink alcohol in excess and become an alcoholic, whose fault is it? If we work ourselves to death and come down with a cold or get sick, is it anyone's fault other than our own?

In a world tainted by sin, sickness and disease, death will always be with us. We are fallen beings, with physical bodies prone to disease and illness. Some sickness is simply a result of the natural course of things in this world. Sickness can also be the result of a demonic attack. However, sickness does not originate with God.

The Bible, again says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." **2 Peter 3:9**

If God does not want us to perish, that is a clear indication that He does not afflict us with a sicknesses or a disease that would cause our demise. It's just not logical.

I believe I have made a good case against, "If It Be Thy Will". All these scriptures lead me to one big conclusion...It is God's will that we be healed and stay in good health.

13. Expectations That Discourage "Free Will" Choices

The devil often uses people to do his bidding. It could be a parent, co-worker, teacher or even a friend. Their efforts to impose expectation on you can be very painful. It could be an immoral act, a restrictive influence or even a command that goes against what you feel is right.

This type of expectation puts pressure on you to be or do what they want instead of what you feel is right. It is a form of oppression.

On the other hand, God's expectations are designed to give you the greatest freedom and blessings. Hear what the psalmist said many years ago, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." **Psalms 62:5**

If you feel that what others are expecting of you is not in God's plan for your life or that you just do not have peace about what is expected of you, reject it, no matter who it is. Your peace is more important than their expectations. That will keep the devil at bay and you free. We should

always look for what God would expect of us and reject the expectations of others. By the way, God's expectations are clearly revealed in the Bible.

14. Illusions & Mind Games That Confuse And Manipulate

The devil will also use illusions to confuse you or cause you to think that he has power over you or cause you to think that he owns the world and even people in it. Listen to how he tried to trick Jesus...

“The devil said to him, (Jesus), "I will give you all the power and glory of these kingdoms. All of it has been given to me, and I give it to anyone I please.” **Luke 4:6**

The devil did not own the kingdoms of the world. Nor did he have the power and glory of those kingdoms. They belong to God. “The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.” Psalm 24:1-2

As the story goes, the devil took Jesus up to the pinnacle of the temple to show Him all the kingdoms of the world. The problem is, you cannot see all the kingdoms of the world from that vantage point.

The devil likes to play with your mind and manipulate your imagination. He will play mind games with you in hopes that you will engage your imagination to mentally see what is being suggested. It all takes place in the mind and it is usually a bold faced lie.

Here's how it works with folks today. A thought enters the mind of a kid from the devil or one of his demons. He is in a store looking at a toy truck. The suggestion is, “Take it, no one is looking. The kid mentally sees himself playing with it and sees all his friends being envious of him because he has the new truck and they do not... so he steals it.

It could be a lonely guy wishing he could find a girl. Suddenly a thought enters his mind. It's of an old girlfriend. Another thought tells him, “Boy I could really ...*you can fill in the rest*. Now he is mentally engaged in a sexual act that is not real...thus, he falls into sin, gets depressed because he realizes he is still alone, hates himself for thinking that way and becomes suicidal.

The devil will always suggest that you picture things that you don't or cannot have. He does this because it is tormenting and he loves to torment us as he takes us down the road to hell. His ultimate goal is to drive you to a place where you will act out your fantasies. Thus comes rape, murder, watching pornography and all the deeds of the flesh listed in Galatians chapter five..

The thing to realize is...*not all of our thoughts are ours*. We get some from the devil, from our own sinful nature and even some from the Holy Spirit. We have to try the spirits to be sure they are from God before we act on them. Hear what the apostle John says...

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that

confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” I John 4:1-5

Jesus used the scriptures to defeat the devil. He said, “**IT IS WRITTEN.**” **He knew the Word of God and used it to put down the lie and dispel the illusion.** This means if we want to defeat the devil, we also need to know what is written so we can use it at the appropriate time. I am referring to the written Word of God, the Bible. If we are tempted to steal, we can say, it is written, “Thou Shalt Not Steal” **Exodus 20:15** This will dispel the illusion. Then we can tell the devil to take a hike.

Knowing scripture is essential to winning the battle. Here’s what Paul said to the Corinthian church back in the first century, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself above the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” **II Corinthians 10:4-5**

If we know the scripture, we can cast down every imagination that is against the knowledge of God. That is what Jesus did. He knew that God said that man was not to steal and He used that truth to overcome the devil.

Conclusion

Remember, what God did in the Old Testament was then. We are now in a New Covenant where God’s grace (Unmerited Favor) rules the day. God does not punish His children with disease or sickness. His loving hand is extended towards all who believe, He wants them all to come to repentance.

I am sure you will find other tools that should be added to the devil’s toolbox. I have shown you enough to open your eyes to the, “Wiles” of the devil in hopes that you search out ways to defend yourself. We are in a fight for our lives that has eternal consequences.

The Apostle Peter gave us a clear and present danger with an assurance of victory. Here’s what he said, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” I Peter 5:8-9

The Apostle Paul said this about that, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ”2 Corinthians 10:4-5:

The Apostle John leaves us with this...”And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.” **I John 2:28**

The Believer's Authority

Introduction

I write this eBook to call attention to the authority that a believer in Christ has. It is an easy read with large print for the vision impaired.

We will be looking at Bible verses that document real authority given to followers of Christ that was given by Jesus to the 1st century followers and is still available today.

We will look at some myths, some logic and some Biblical examples to gain a full picture. We will discuss the now and how and when this authority operates.

We will hear from other leaders and draw knowledge and perspective that will change the way we view and live out our Christian life.

The biggest and most powerful lie that Satan uses to defeat the church of Jesus Christ is, "You do not have the authority to take charge and rule over evil forces." The devil keeps telling us that when Jesus ascended after his resurrection He left us powerless.

The lie that has persisted in Christian circles and has become a dogma is that all that miracle working power ended with the death of the Apostles. This heresy is now commonplace and believed by most evangelicals.

Do you have power from on high to overcome evil by casting out demons, healing the sick, binding Satan from your thoughts or changing the outcome of a circumstance? Most folks are afraid to even try. They shy away from seeking the lord for a Word of Wisdom or a Word of Knowledge that would help them to better know and accomplish God's Will.

Do you read the Bible, as it were, a history book? Or is it alive with revelation and truth that stirs up your faith and builds your confidence to act upon what is being communicated by the Holy Spirit?

What if I told you that you have authority as a believer? The same authority that Jesus had and still has is yours. All you need is to engage your believer and receive it.

You can become the head and not the tail. "And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do *them*:" **Deut. 28:13**

You can live a victorious life. You just need to believe. How do I know, because Jesus said so? "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly." **John 10:10**

The Source of Your Authority

We can all agree, I think, that the source of our Spiritual authority comes from Jesus. It was He that spoiled the principalities and powers of evil. “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” **Colossians 2:15** It was He that died for our sins as a penalty. “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” **II Cor. 5:21**

It was Jesus that gave His followers authority over unclean spirits and sent them out two by two. “And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;” **Mark 6:7**

It was Jesus that said, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.” **John 14:16** This other comforter is none other than the Holy Spirit that baptized the 120 in the upper room on the day of Pentecost.

Now Hear This...When the Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, He filled everyone with His presence and power. They spoke in other tongues and eventually went out from the upper room to preach, teach, do miracles and walk in the Spirit. Jesus did not abandon them. He sent His Holy Spirit to deliver His power and authority to His church and to become the source of continued power to live in Christ.

Listen to what Paul said to Timothy. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. **II Timothy 1:7** “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts. **Zechariah 4:6** Thus, our authority is given by God, through Jesus and made accessible through the Holy Spirit.

Here are a few thoughts from Full Gospel Family Publications

One of the most astounding teachings in the Bible is about the Christian's authority in the spiritual realm -- which ultimately affects what we see in earth's natural realm. For many years this concept has been ignored, and only in very recent times has it once again gotten the attention of the Church. I would like to examine the authority of the believer, by comparing it to the authority of our earthly law enforcement system.

We understand that police officers have authority that is backed up by the government, which they serve. There is no question in your mind or the police officer's that when you hear the sirens and see the flashing lights, you had better pull over. This is assuming you are a law-abiding citizen.

We who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ should understand that in His Name we have an even mightier authority than that of the police officer. In **Matthew 28:18**, Jesus said, ...all power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Jesus has given this authority to us, His followers.

Luke 9:1, 2 says, Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and **authority** over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

Mark 13:34 tells us, for the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. ... And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. **Mark 16:15, 17, 18.**

Clearly, Jesus has promised His authority to those who are His own. The problem is that we do not believe it, and therefore do not exercise it effectively.

Many Christians refuse to believe that Christ's authority belongs to the Church today -- although there is no Scripture that in any way hints that His authority would **not** be available to the Church through all ages. Many are content to get goose bumps by reading about the miracles that take place in third world countries when the authority of Jesus is put to use there. Some of us may go so far as to dare to command a sickness or a devil to be gone from someone we are praying for, but we are fairly complacent when nothing happens. It is what we were expecting anyway, isn't it? What we are forgetting is that the devil is not a law-abiding citizen. He is the lawless one.

What happens when the police officer attempts to use his authority, and finds himself resisted? Does he shrug his shoulders and say, "Well, I guess that didn't work!" No, he turns up the heat of his authority. He pursues and subdues the law-resister. Sometimes there is a stiff fight -- but the lawful authority wins in the end!

So it is with our authority as believers. We need to understand that the infinitely powerful government of heaven backs us up. Jesus Himself is the one who has given us authority in His Name. Sometimes -- in fact, most of the time -- there **is** going to be a stiff fight. Hell doesn't want to let go of its victims all that easily. We need to pursue, press in, and insist on being obeyed. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. -- **Matthew 11:12**. Sometimes the police officer needs to use force. Sometimes the believer does, too, in the process of obtaining the desired answer.

There are some qualifications, which we must meet in order to have rightful authority in Christ. Let's continue to look at parallels between the police officer and the Christian.

1. The police officer must be under authority himself, obedient to his superiors. He goes where he has been assigned, not outside his jurisdiction. We believers must be doing what Jesus has said, according to the Bible and His personal word to us as well. We cannot be out doing our own thing for our own pleasure. A clean, submitted heart is imperative.

2. The police officer must continue to stay in contact with his superiors, and must get their direction as needed in difficult situations. We need to be in constant communication with our superior officer -- Jesus.

3. The police officer must know how to use his weapons, or his opponent will run roughshod over him, and maybe kill him. We must be skillful in the use of our weapons -- the Blood of Jesus, the Name of Jesus, our faith. Especially, we have to know the Word of God and use it properly. Appropriate the Word.

4. The police officer must understand the law and not step outside its boundaries. He can't arrest people if they haven't broken the law. We must understand what Jesus has given us and what He has not. If it's in the Book it's ours to use. If it's not clearly in the Book, we're on shaky ground. We need to research from Genesis to Revelation to make sure we're getting it right. Know the Word.

Remember whose authority it is in which we operate. We have no authority to come against the powers of darkness in our own strength. We come against them in the *Name of Jesus*. It is His authority, not ours.

Attempting to execute authority for anything other than His plans, His will, His desires is presumption. It will most certainly fail --and may put us in grave danger as well.

If something is important to you, you will go after it. The things God has promised us in His Word should be vitally important to us -- enough so that we are prepared to take hold and struggle for them at any cost until we obtain them. Anything worth having is worth fighting for. (Article prepared by **Lee Ann Rubsam**)

A Kenneth E. Hagin Perspective About The Authority of The Believer

I'll be honest with you. I don't know whether it's my righteous indignation that gets stirred up or whether I just get plain mad, but something rises up within me when I hear preachers teaching people to fear the devil:

"You'd better be careful! The devil might hear you."

"You'd better be careful. The devil might try to lay sickness and disease on you."

I have authority over myself and my house. If the devil ever comes knocking at my door with sickness, poverty, lack, or oppression, I tell him, "Don't come to my house. You'll have to go peddle that junk somewhere else because I won't receive it!"

But I don't have authority over the devil in your life. Ultimately you'll have to learn to stand against the devil for yourself. Of course, if you are a baby Christian, I can make my faith work for you. But in the final analysis, God will expect you to take authority over the devil for yourself.

If you've already accepted sickness or disease (or anything else the devil tries to bring your way), then you've got a mess on your hands, and you'll have to do something about it. But, thank God, something can be done in the Name of Jesus.

If you give someone else permission, they can pray for you in faith, but, really, you need to do something about taking authority over the devil for yourself. That's one way you grow in who you are in Christ.

Take authority over Satan, sickness, disease, or whatever the enemy is trying to get you to receive. Stand against it for yourself in the Name of Jesus. Believers make a mistake by accepting what the devil brings to them.

You will be defeated if you don't recognize Who is in you and the authority you have in Christ. By failing to recognize that the Greater One dwells in you, you will allow the devil to take advantage of you.

It's one thing for Satan to dominate unsaved people who are in the kingdom of darkness; they're under his authority. But Satan and his cohorts are dominating too many Christians who don't know their authority or don't exercise their authority.

That's why the believer needs to come to prayer understanding that all those spiritual forces have been defeated by Jesus. When the believer prays, he needs to pray from a position of victory because he is seated with Christ in heavenly places, looking down on a defeated foe.

When you come to prayer, pray from a seated position in Christ, far above principalities and powers, where you have joint-seating with Christ. Jesus' victory is your victory. Because of what Jesus did, you are free from Satan's dominion.

Too often Christians just hang on and try to do the best they can, not realizing what their inheritance in Christ really entitles them to. Instead of taking their rightful place in Christ as victors, they magnify the devil, and that gives him access in their lives.

You can dwell on the negative side of things and you will become what you dwell on. What you are thinking about and dwelling on is what you are believing. What you are

believing is what you are talking about. And eventually what you are believing and talking about is what you will become.

This applies in the area of demons and demonic activity too. If you think the devil's thoughts, you will become depressed, oppressed, and you can get into error. Or you can think on the Word, and your thinking can become enlightened, illuminated, and flooded with light.

You can go around preaching how powerful the devil is, or you can get on the positive side where the eyes of your understanding have been enlightened to see the wisdom of God. Then you will be on the scriptural side and the victory side where you belong as a believer because of your triumph in Christ.

Because I know Jesus defeated the devil, that's what I think on and talk about. And the Greater One puts me over in life and causes me to succeed because I'm giving place to God and the power of His Word, not to the devil. <http://www.cfaith.com>

Duane Vander Klok of walking By Faith, A ministry of Resurrection Life Church, says this about that....

You have an enemy. While he might not be visible through natural eyes, Satan, or the devil as he is known, is very real. He is not an imaginary, mythical character, but a spirit being whose number one goal is to “steal, kill, and destroy” (**John 10:10**). The devil is at the root of everything evil, and he works in an attempt to cause destruction to believers and the work of Jesus Christ.

This does not mean that you need to be fearful because, while the devil is against you, God is for you! He has provided everything you need to walk in victory over the devil and his works. 2 Timothy 1:7 reminds us that, “God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Before you read further, know this: those who have victory are not those who have no struggles, but those who persist and keep going forward. Without struggles, there would be no need for the power to overcome them. Also, know that no one walks in authority by following a formula; it is about a realization of who the enemy is, and it is about knowing who you are and what you have been given in Christ.

Exposing The Enemy

Whether you realize it or not, Satan knows your strengths and weaknesses. He is watching for opportunities to catch you off guard so he can slip in and cause trouble for you. When that happens, he hopes you will be like many Christians and put the blame elsewhere.

As a subtle manipulator of circumstances, the devil tries to hide his activities by making you blame events, people, or even God for the destructive things he does. Make no

mistake about it: your parents, your spouse, your children, your pastor, your employer, God – none of these are the real enemy.

Who is the enemy? Ephesians 6:12 says, “We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” The devil is the real enemy!

“Like” A Roaring Lion

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NIV) advises us to: “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...” Notice that this verse does not say the devil is a roaring lion. It says he is like a roaring lion. He wants to make you believe he has more power than he really does, and he manages to fool the majority of people. The truth is, the devil’s only weapon is that of deception. He has no legal authority over believers.

When Jesus died and rose again, He not only saved you from an eternity in hell, He also redeemed you from Satan’s power and dominion over you on the earth. **1 John 3:8** tells us, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”

Not only that, but it is recorded in Colossians 2:15 that Jesus “disarmed principalities and powers,” and “He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them...” The devil is already defeated, and his power has been dismantled by the finished work of Christ on the cross.

You Have Authority

Jesus said, “Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (Luke 10:19). That is a great deal of authority!

How is it, then, that the devil is able to keep causing believers so much trouble? It is because many do not exercise the authority God has given them. They are not walking in the understanding that, even though Jesus won the victory, they need to enforce that victory in their daily lives.

Think of it this way: it is illegal for someone to break into your house, but don’t you still lock your doors to discourage thieves and to protect your property? In the same way, when it comes to Satan trying to gain entrance into your life, you need to exercise your blood-bought right to close the door in his face. By resisting the devil and standing firm in the faith, you are actively enforcing Jesus’ victory.

God has given you all the authority you need to be able to stand against the devil and his works. He has also provided you with armor and spiritual weapons for your warfare

against Satan. In his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul describes these items and defines how to use them. He writes, *“Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand”* (**Ephesians 6:10-11, 13**).

Paul made it clear that, while God has provided the armor, it is the believer’s responsibility to put it on and stand against the enemy. We must take our position of authority and use what God has given us.

In The Name of Jesus

The name of Jesus is powerful. Philippians 2:9-10 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth...” When you use Jesus’ name, Satan’s strongholds cannot stand (**see 2 Corinthians 10:4**).

Think of using the name of Jesus the same way you would use a key to unlock a lock. It doesn’t matter if the key belongs to you or not, if you have it in your hand you can open the lock. It is the same with the name of Jesus. Jesus won the victory. Power over the devil is rightfully His, but He has given you the authority to use His name. You have His key in your hand.

Begin today to take authority over the devil and his works in the name of Jesus. When you command him to leave, he must obey just as if Jesus were commanding him (**see Mark 16:17**). You can say, “Sickness, go in the name of Jesus” or “Depression, you must leave in Jesus’ name” or “Devil, in the name of Jesus, get out of here!” He has to leave because of the authority that is in Jesus’ name.

Keep The Devil Out

Ephesians 4:27 tells us not to give any place to the devil. Whether you have been a believer for twenty days or twenty years, keep building your relationship with God through daily Bible reading, meditating on the Word, and praying. Be involved in a good, Bible-believing church, and develop the practices of fasting, worshiping, and giving. When it comes to keeping the devil out, there is no substitute for godly living.

You do not want to be one who unintentionally gives the devil access by entertaining sin, by being disobedient, or by rebelling against God. Make sure you are quick to forgive others as Christ has forgiven you because having an unwillingness to forgive others can give the devil a foothold in your life (**Mark 11:25**).

James 4:7 instructs us to, “Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” Because Jesus resisted the devil by submitting to God, He could say, “...he (the devil) has

nothing in Me” (**John 14:30**). He left no room for the devil to take advantage of Him. Likewise, when you submit to God and resist the devil in the authority Christ has given you, the devil must leave.

Finally...

The victory Christ won, He won for you. After He rose from the grave, victorious over death, sin, and the devil, He proclaimed, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (**Matthew 28:18**). When you received Christ as the Lord of your life, **Colossians 1:13** says you were delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed into God’s kingdom.

You can take a bold stand against the devil and his works because of your position in Christ and because you have been given authority over Satan in the name of Jesus. As **Proverbs 28:1** says, “The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.”

Submit to God, boldly exercise the authority He has given you, and stand firm because, “He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (**1 John 4:4**).

Five Reasons Believers Don't Walk In The Power And Authority They Have In Christ. (Presented by Charisma Magazine)

1. Sin.... When we habitually sin, we come under Satan's authority, and he has legal rights over us until we repent. That is why Jesus said, "The ruler of this world is coming, and has nothing on Me" (John 14:30, NKJV). Jesus was without sin, so the devil could not get a foothold in His life.

James 5:16 declares, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." This verse points out that authority is given to the righteous. Carlos Annacondia, an Argentine evangelist, once told me that he believes God gave him more authority when he became ruthless about his sin and the sin in his family's life.

Along the same line, we have to be under authority before we can exercise authority. If we are rebellious toward our parents or the authority of our church, we won't have much authority over the evil one.

2. Ignorance.... In Hosea 4:6, God declares, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." The Lord showed me that His people are being destroyed by the ignorance of their authority in Christ. Yet the Bible makes it clear that we are not powerless against the enemy.

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

Many believers tend to see the cosmic struggle through the lens of the Asian philosophy of yin and yang, which contends that good and evil forces are opposite each other but equal in power and authority. In reality, Satan is a loser. He is a created being, one of God's fallen angels.

God, on the other hand, is the uncreated Creator who always has been and always will be--He is self-existent. To a believer who is walking in God's authority, Satan is like a toothless lion. It is not that Satan doesn't have some real power--he does. But when we compare his power with God's--there is no comparison.

When David confronted Goliath, Goliath compared his physical prowess with David's. Goliath was insulted that the Israelites would send a mere shepherd boy against him.

However, David didn't compare himself with Goliath; he compared Goliath with God. God was so much greater than Goliath that the match was over before it had a chance to begin (see 1 Sam. 17:41-50).

In observing God's people, I have noticed that way too many of us tend to be ignorant about the source of evil. Satan, not God, is the cause of all the evil in the world. When we have a warped perspective of the sovereignty of God, we become passive in fighting sickness and evil.

After the historic 9/11 tragedy, I was amazed to discover how many people attributed the terrorist attacks to God's judgment. The Bible tells us that Satan--not God--is the one who comes to kill, steal and destroy (see John 10:10) and that we are to put on the full armor of God and stand firm against the evil one (see Eph. 6:10-18).

3. Unbelief.... Unbelief is a serious sin. Romans 14:23 reads, "But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin." The book of Hebrews also calls unbelief sinful: "See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God" (3:12). Unbelief is so serious that Jesus could not do many miracles because of the people's lack of faith (see Matt. 13:58).

We can measure the level of our belief or unbelief by asking ourselves, Do we really believe that Jesus defeated the enemy? If we don't, we are unlikely to see the results we desire when we lay hands on the sick.

4. Fear.... Second Timothy 1:7-8 declares, "God has not given us a spirit of fear." Fear paralyzes us and keeps us from wielding the authority we have in Christ to bring healing to others.

First **John 5:18** teaches us that "the wicked one does not touch [whoever is born of God]" (see also **Luke 10:19**). But some people have suffered backlash from the enemy when they engaged in spiritual warfare and are now afraid.

There are many reasons for backlash. Here are some ways to guard against it: Be led by the Spirit; make sure that Satan has no legal right to attack; and obtain prayer covering.

After taking these steps, we can confront the darkness because we have the authority to do so. We need not be afraid of obeying God's directives even if it requires engaging in strategic warfare.

Luke 12:32 gives us wise counsel: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

5. Prayerlessness.... **Luke 18:1** establishes the importance of prayer: "Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up" (NIV).

Ephesians 6:18 elaborates on this point: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."

Evangelist Winkie Pratney once told a story about a pastor's wife who was jogging one day when she saw a man dressed in white standing in a cornfield. The pastor's wife had been going through a difficult trial, and when she saw this man, whom she recognized as Jesus, He said to her: "Don't you know who I am? Don't you know who you are? When you know this, it is not really as hard as you think."

There is a lesson here for all of us. When we know who God is and the authority He has, and when we know who we are in Christ, having faith is not that difficult. And when we have faith, we will begin to release the spiritual authority necessary to perform signs, wonders and miracles.

(Article written by Ché Ahn is senior pastor of Harvest Rock Church in Pasadena, California, and founder and president of Harvest International Ministries, a worldwide network of approximately 1,000 churches and ministries.)

The Now And The How And The When **This Authority Operates**

Today's Christian's want instant results. I prayed for healing so why didn't it happen? It's been 10 minutes already with no change. I thought it would be NOW not later or not at all. HOW does this authority/ Power, work? WHEN will I see results?

Sometimes there is a pathway on which we must walk to our healing or to see results. Sometimes we see it immediately. The final result is up to God. We are to pray, believe and proclaim in the name of Jesus. He will make it happen as He sees fit.

I can remember a time we prayed for a lady to be healed. It actually took seven months of continual prayer and continual proclaiming of God's Word. My wife prayed for a lady's leg and vein problems. She was healed in that very hour.

The point is, don't give up because you do not see any change. You declare the Word, Believe the Word and Stand in faith until what you have declared comes into existence. (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) **II Cor. 5:7**

Remember, it is the Word that carries all the power and it is your faith and trust in Jesus that what He said is true that gives you the authority.

Some Myths And Some Logic

1. **Myth...**We don't have to do anything because Jesus did it all. **Logic...** If that were true, Jesus would not have commanded us to go into the World and preach the gospel. He would have done it Himself.

We are privileged to participate and see God's power transferred from God to Jesus to His Holy Spirit to us. What a joy to actually see Satan run away at the mention of Jesus and his evil works spoiled at the speaking of the Word of God. We are the head, not the tail. The devil is defeated.

2. **Myth...**There is no evil force that sways our thinking. It is all our decisions. **Logic...**Yes we do make bad decisions and some even sinful or in rebellion to God. But, the apostles told us that we have an enemy that is out to get us. Who do we believe, those that were taught by Jesus or those who deny God and mock our faith?
3. **Myth...**The Bible is just a book and has no final authority over us. **Logic...** The Bible is actually 66 books. It took thousands of years to come into being and translated into multiple languages. It is full of history, faith, and promises from God, counsel, and a lot more. It is the source of Faith to the believer and a lifeline

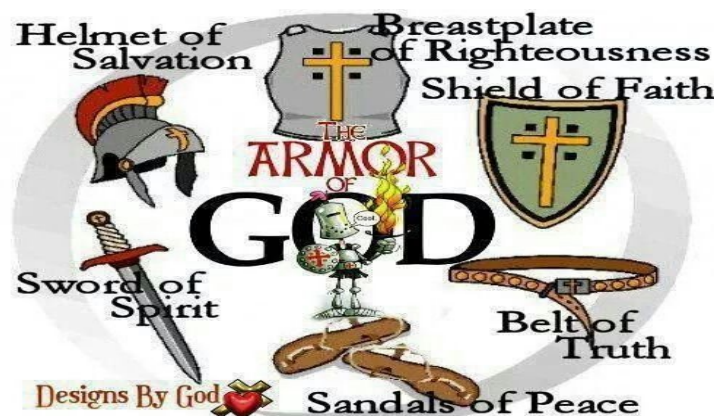
to divine revelation. It has outlasted wars, heretics, atheists, and all the rest of Satan's attacks. One only has to read it to discover that it is indeed the Word of God and His will for their lives.

4. **Myth**...The believer's authority was given only to His immediate followers. When they died, the gifts stopped. **Logic**...It was the gifts that proved that Jesus was who He said He was. It was the passing on of the gifts by the laying on of hands that became a blessing to future believers. The world has 20+ times the population as was in Jesus' day. Doesn't it seem logical that the gifts would be even more in demand and needed in our day? To end them abruptly is to leave us comfortless and Jesus said He would not do that.

Two Biblical Examples of The Believer's Authority

Ephesians 6:10-18 ..."Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness," ... **God has given us His armor but we must put it on and use it.**

Matthew 14:25-29..."And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. ²⁶ And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. ²⁷ But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. ²⁸ And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. ²⁹ And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus"...**Jesus has the authority or power to walk on water. Peter did not until Jesus bid him to come.** Then he stepped out by faith, trusting in that power or authority and walked on the water... until he took his eyes off of Jesus and looked at the raging sea. He still had the power but decided, because of the fear, to cry out for help. It's called, "Faith Failure". We have them all the time.



Bible References Related To The Believer's Authority

Mark 16:17 ...And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues;

James 4:7 ...Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Luke 10:19 ...Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

1 Peter 5:8 ...Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.” In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Revelation 12:11 ...And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

Mark 11:23 ...Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Acts 1:8 ...But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

John 14:12 ...“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

Luke 10:17-19 ...The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

Mark 6:13 ...And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.

Ephesians 6:10-18 ...Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ...

Matthew 28:18-20 ...And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Psalms 91:13 ...You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

Acts 2:39 ...For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

Matthew 10:1 ...And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Acts 16:18 ...And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.

Acts 3:6 ...But Peter said, “I have no silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”

Luke 10:1-42 ...After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’ ...

Acts 2:1-47 ... When the day of Pentecost arrived; they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ...

Revelation 12:10 ... And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

1 Corinthians 12:8 ...For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,

Conclusion

We have the Spiritual authority or power of Jesus at our disposal. We can use it or not. If we don't, we will remain defeated and live in a carnal world being plagued by evil forces at every turn. It's far more to our advantage to stand up in the Lord and the power of His might and declare our freedom and walk in His Will.

As in most promises of God, it's up to us. God will not invade our free will. He will sit quietly by and watch us fall and then pick us up and start again to teach our hands to war so we can be victorious.



**I Am A Believer & I Have
Authority To Spoil The
Works of The Devil**

In The Name of Jesus