

Keys for Christian Living



Pastor Tony Mathias
Kingdom Seekers International
Mumbai, India

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'Keys for Christian Living' is a 'Basic Self-Study Course' consisting of 12 Lessons. It was originally termed as 'Bible Correspondence Course Basics,' for Bible Students inland [India] and overseas. The questionnaire appears at the end of each lesson and the answers at the end of the book.

'Keys for Christian Living' is an easy-to-understand guide for new Christians, an indispensable foundational keystone for all believers, an excellent teaching resource for all leaders and an effective reference tool for ministry.

'Keys for Christian Living' gives you what you need to develop a strong, balanced life of faith. Students are strongly urged to also read my books 'Spiritual Food for Victorious Living,' 'Success Unlimited' and 'Prayer Mantle,' which will aid their spiritual growth with firmly implanted biblical knowledge and memory verses equipping and empowering them to excel in their Christian walk and other areas of life.

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LESSON ONE

“BORN AGAIN”

In this lesson we will examine four areas in the life of a ‘Believer.’

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|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Intimacy | ‘My Sheep Hear My Voice’ |
| 2. Caretaker | ‘Feed My Lambs Feed My Sheep’ |
| 3. Soul Winner | ‘You Shall Be My Witnesses’ |
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1. INTIMACY - My Sheep Hear My Voice

When a person is born again he receives a new godly nature, enabling him to live a godly life in right relationship with God. The old sinful way of living is now curbed. He does not want to deliberately sin or do wrong, because, he has God’s life in him making him a new creation [2Cor5: 17]. How did this happen?

He realized his old sinful nature made him sin, do wrong. He felt helpless unable to be free from the load of sin and guilt despite his religious observances, good works, and education. He was dead spiritually [Rom6: 23]. One day he heard the good news how Jesus bore his sins and sinful nature on the cross [which had the nature of spiritual death] paid the penalty for his sins, washed away his sins by His own precious blood, forgave him, died in his place, rose again the third day, offering him eternal life, God’s nature. He was excited. He willingly acknowledged and repented of his sinful life, accepted Christ in true faith as his Savior, proclaimed Him as Lord [Rom10; 9-10]. All at once a miracle took place. He was instantly born again [Jn3: 3, 6]. He felt clean, the burden of sin rolled away and he began to experience transformation. His Old sinful nature that compelled him to sin lost its hold on him and the new nature of God’s life in him took over giving him godly desires, power over sin, and the ability to live a holy life [Rom6: 14]. He noticed that if he did sin his conscience would trouble him and fellowship with God would be broken. But if he confessed, repented, forsook his sins he would have mercy, forgiveness, and restored fellowship [1Jn1: 7-9; Prov28: 13]. [No one can boast that he or she is good enough to get to heaven, or that Christ is just one of many paths to God which is simply not true [1Jn5: 11-12; Jn3: 36]. Everyone sins. Truly Salvation is found in Christ alone [1Jn5: 12]. A beautiful thing happened. His fellowship with the indwelling Father, Son and Holy Spirit began to grow. Hearing His voice and being led by His Spirit became more routine [Rom5: 5; Jn10: 27; Rom8: 14]. In order

hear God's voice, we must first belong to Him, next, become spiritually intimate with Him, which is personal and private born out of love for Him. Spiritual revelation comes to those who hunger and thirst for it.

At the point of salvation we experience His love and grace we begin to know Him. We cannot deeply love a person we barely know [Jn14: 9]. to get intimate with Him, we must spend time in His presence. We have loved God and trusted people. We must love God and others, but trust in Him alone [Prov3: 5; Ps118: 9]. Things don't happen when we talk to God but when He talks to us [Lk7: 7].

Jesus taught the multitudes Mt4 & 5. They witnessed His mighty miracles where He spoke of them as helpless sheep without a shepherd. Good teachings, miracles, revivals are important but incomplete without a shepherding ministry. The harvest is plentiful but there must be enough shepherds Mt9: 37. Jesus the good shepherd Jn10: 14 wants to express His shepherding ministry through men and women who are given a shepherd's heart.

Jesus said: 'Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men' Mt4: 19. He told Peter, 'feed my lambs and feed my sheep' Jn21: 15-17. We are called to be shepherds at every level. Jesus says, 'I am the door' Jn10: 9. Likewise we are the door or opportunity God will use to draw people to His Son. - Jesus. He said: "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me" Jn10: 27 If he doesn't know them, they are not His sheep Lk13: 27. 'Knowing them' speaks of intimacy and transparency. We too should have this kind of relationship. If you are His sheep you will hear His voice, then you can follow Him. With growing intimacy the voice of the shepherd grows more distinct and clear.

MEMORIZE: Mt4: 19; Rom10; 9-10

2. CARETAKER - Feed My Lambs & Feed My Sheep

Jesus spoke thrice to Peter Jn21: 15 – 17. "Simon, *son* of Jonah do you love me more than ...feed my lambs...feed my sheep." - Peter was earlier called Simon bar Jonah, the son of [Jonah] the dove. Simon earlier received revelation of the identity of Jesus Mt16: 17; the dove is the emblem of the Holy Spirit. Mature sons are led by the Spirit Rom8: 14; Like Peter we also need to be led by the Spirit.

We soon realize that there is a difference between lambs and sheep. - What is the difference? - Jesus told Simon Peter to feed His lambs and sheep. - Lambs are the young of the flock, who feed on milk. New believers [lambs] are young in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and his Word. They should be fed on the milk of God's Word in its simplicity. Whereas Sheep are the more mature ones of the flock who are fed on solid food / grass. The more mature believers [sheep] should be fed on solid food – God's Word again! - Lambs feed on milk 1Pt2: 2 Sheep feed on solid food [grass], give milk and birth to lambs. A baby feeds on milk, but when he grows up he needs solid food. 1Cor3: 2; Heb5: 12-13 the more mature ones can bear up insults, hardship, as their emotions are under control. The Word of God is both milk [simple word] for baby Christians and meat [stronger word] for more mature Christians. Babies are tossed around by every kind of teaching Eph4: 14. The more the young are taught the better; it will keep them from being misled. Every church has little lambs, [new believers] which should be looked after carefully. They must be taught the whole truth [God's Word] step by step in the way they can understand so that they can grow in grace and victory, protected from error and evil doctrines. Generally the lambs and sheep are 'takers' [being fed]. The shepherd is the caretaker. A lamb should grow into a sheep, and in turn give birth to lambs, finally becoming the shepherd of one or more flocks. The Lord desires none to be lost. Sheep must take care of lambs; the shepherd should lead one or more flock.

Christ the Chief Shepherd Jn10: 14, 27-28 insists that we be His sheep and take that which He freely offers us as our Shepherd and through his under shepherds. Having few shepherds looking after a multitude of lambs, feeding them [God's Word], tending to their wounds [counseling] seems an impossible task. This work must be left for the sheep [others] to do.

When we look at the word 'feed,' we find a difference between feeding a lamb and feeding a sheep. The second "feed" means the work of a shepherd, pastor, not only to lead them to pasture, but bring them back, take charge, guide, guard, discipline and manage them. . The first 'feed' instructs children in the faith. The reward for looking after lambs: "Inasmuch as ye have done ... least of these, ye have done it unto me" Mt25: 40. Young believers should make an open confession of their faith, and be folded with the rest of the flock of Christ Mt25: 40The role of the shepherd is to 'feed,' make provision, take the flock to fresh pastures to receive guidance and instruction from the Lord to where the flock should go and how long it should stay in any pasture and when it would have to go to the next. His job would be to lead them from

one level to another from lamb to sheep to shepherd. He would have to see if they are straying away [backsliding, not coming to church] so he can get them back to where they were earlier and take them still further to new levels of deep intimacy with the Lord. Like the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd believers like David Ps23 need to cultivate listening ears by reading scriptures, also by hearing inspired sermons and spending time with the Lord. God speaks through his Word. To hear him speak is part of His shepherding ministry and unless we are shepherded by Him how can we shepherd others? The shepherd also must see if the sheep are hurting, to find the cause and the cure. We are asked to be shepherds and to be sheep. Remember Jesus the Good Shepherd, is also called: 'The Lamb of God.' We like to be busy in his service but he wants us to lie down peacefully in rest doing his work without anxiety. Listen, abide, have fellowship and enjoy Him Ps23.

The Lord made it clear that if Peter loved Him he would feed His lambs and sheep. The important thing to know is that the lambs and sheep belong to the Lord not to us. We are only caretakers an extension Acts20: 28 of his shepherding ministry... Paul says, "Feed the Church of God." Peter says "Feed the flock of God." Next, the proof of loving the Lord is to feed His lambs and sheep. He says: "If you love me, keep my commandments." - If ye love me, feed my lambs - show it, by doing good to others, helping others. Love grows by active exercise. Jesus spoke thrice to Peter: "Do you love me...feed my lambs...My sheep." He wanted Peter to know that he was aware of how much he loved him. –"Lord; you know I love you." This goes for us as well. What Jesus wanted him as well as us to know that He loves us so much that he relies on us to be shepherds of His sheep that He purchased by His precious blood Acts20: 28. We are to care for His lambs & sheep out of love. Maturity comes from being fed. As we learn from God's Word, we will grow in grace. We must be willing to not only tend the flock, but also feed them with spiritual food Heb5: 12-1. Let us be willing to follow Christ to fulfill the calling on our lives.

MEMORISE: Mt25: 40

3. SOUL WINNER - You Shall Be My Witnesses

Christ made salvation possible for everyone by dying on the cross in our place and for our sins. In order to be saved each person must first hear the good news of Christ and respond positively. God's wants everyone who is saved to be filled with the Holy Spirit [Eph5: 18] and then witness to others

for Christ [Acts1:8] so that the whole world will know of him. Christians working together in this way can prepare for the return of Christ. Christians who faithfully witness will be rewarded Phil4: 1; 1Tess2: 19. They will also see souls in heaven won through their testimony. Unfaithful Christians who failed to witness about Jesus will have to answer God for lost souls.

Christians are called to be witnesses first of all for Christ Jn12: 32. They should uplift Jesus broadcast the fact that He rose from the dead and that He is alive! This is done effectively by the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul's testimony is a pattern for all Christians. It was a personal experience; pointing to Jesus, and confirming scriptures. Personal testimony is the most powerful way to win souls to Christ. The greatest hindrance to effective Christian testimony is 'the spirit of fear'— The remedy to dispel fear is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Prayer is the greatest weapon a Christian needs to break down barriers to their testimony. When there is a clear-cut choice, one must choose to obey God rather than man Acts5: 29.

Christ means 'Messiah' or 'Anointed One.' Jesus became the Anointed One after the Holy Spirit descended and abode in him when John the Baptist baptized Him Mt3: 16. His whole earthly ministry became possible by the Holy Spirit anointing Lk4: 18. In his earthly ministry Jesus was completely dependent on the Holy Spirit. Before the Holy Spirit descended upon Him at river Jordan, He never preached a sermon or performed a miracle. After that, all He did was by the power of the Holy Spirit. Acts10: 38. When He was about to leave His disciples, he promised to send them the Holy Spirit to comfort them and supply all their spiritual needs. This was fulfilled at Pentecost when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. God wants it for Christians 1Jn2: 20, 27 who are the 'anointed ones.' To be victorious the disciple has to depend on the Holy Spirit just as Jesus did.

The Holy Spirit seeks to fulfill his ministry to glorify Christ and his message through his people. All through the New Testament, the baptism-in-the Holy Spirit is confirmed by supernatural evidence of speaking with other tongues. At the close of this age God has promised a final worldwide outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian has the right to ask God for his gift. The Baptism-in-the Holy Spirit supernaturally equips and empowers a Christian to witness and serve effectively and live a normal Christian life with direct and continual communion with God by speaking in unknown languages, which the Holy Spirit gives along with the gifts and the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Multitudes in Samaria were wonderfully saved and healed, when Philip ministered. But this was not sufficient for the apostles. They expected all new converts to further receive the Baptism-in-the-Holy Spirit. Then Peter and John were sent to administer this experience to those converts of Samaria.

Impartation of the Holy Spirit came through the laying on of hands at times, not always, some believers received without it Acts2: 2-4; 10: 44-46. Not only did the Apostles do it, but the disciples too. Ananias was a 'disciple' Acts9: 10. Again this experience did not always come together at salvation; the Ephesian disciples received it after salvation. The experience culminated in speaking with tongues and prophesying Acts2: 4; 10: 46.

After receiving Baptism-in-the-Holy Spirit, the primary use of speaking in another tongue is for personal prayer and worship. The believer does not understand with his mind what he is saying, but his spirit builds direct communion with God and in this way he is able to build himself Jude20. Then there are other gifts like the gift of interpretation given to understand the message given in an unknown tongue in public. The gift of prophecy enables both speaker and listener to understand a message given by the Holy Spirit.

A 'gift' is given in an instant. But 'Fruit' takes time and effort to cultivate 2Tim2: 6. It is like a Christmas tree with its gifts and an apple tree with its fruit. Spiritually gifts and fruits are both necessary but cannot replace each other. God provides Christians with both. Through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit Christians are able to minister to one another supernaturally on a level higher than that of natural ability or education - Jesus said: "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" Mk16: 16. - Believing in Christ produces an inward change of heart; being baptized in water is an outward act of obedience, by which we testify of the change that has taken place in our hearts. By this act we make ourselves one with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection; we are separated from the old ways of sin and defeat; we come out of the water to live a new life of righteousness and victory, made possible by God's power in us. Before being baptized in water a person should fulfill three conditions: - know the reason for the act; repent of his sins; believe in Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God.

MEMORISE: Acts10: 38

4. DELIVERER - Setting the Captives Free

Every person born in this world is immersed into spiritual warfare. There are two kingdoms in opposition: the Kingdom of God [the Kingdom of Light] and the Kingdom of Satan [the Kingdom of Darkness] Eph6: 10-12. The battleground is in the realm of the mind. Satan is seeking to captivate the minds of the human race. He is deliberately building strongholds in their minds to resist the truth of the gospel and the Word of God to prevent them from receiving salvation. It is the responsibility of Christians to break down these strongholds and set the captives free so that they can obey Christ.

A stronghold is a 'mindset' soaked with despair, that compels one to accept something that cannot be changed which is against God's Will. Strongholds are mental habits formed in our minds through trauma or shocking experiences.

The type of stronghold often in the minds of people is prejudice, which is a preconceived [beforehand] opinion. As someone said: prejudice is 'don't confuse me with the facts, my mind is made up.' Or, 'a person convinced against his opinion is of the same opinion still.' When a person's mind is made up in advance, no amount of facts, truth, evidence, reason can change it. People are driven and dominated by prejudice often to their own destruction. This is often found with cults, religious kind of people. A stronghold is something that binds and blinds people's mind. When people are in that condition, it is useless to argue with them. The more you argue the more they restate the error and the more firmly they get stuck in that error [you get what you say] Mk11: 23-24. Only spiritual weapons can break down these strongholds.

Another major stronghold that most Christians struggle with is 'inferiority complex.' If you are one of those, you may have been raised in harsh situations. No matter how hard you tried, you couldn't please your parents, teachers, pastor or God. You have found that your efforts were never quite good enough. So you constantly search for acceptance that you missed as a child. There are other kinds of strongholds: un-forgiveness; secret sins; sexual sins; the past and so on. These are strongholds and they must be knocked down for you to walk in the freedom of who you are in Christ.

Satan's key weapon against God's people is 'guilt.' He accuses us Rev12: 10 to make us feel guilty, because then we cannot defeat him. Guilt is the key to our defeat, and to his victory, while Righteousness is the key to our victory

and his defeat. The starting point of our victory is to know, that Christ already defeated Satan and his army totally and forever. Col2: 13-15. We must understand that when we put our faith in Lord Jesus, all our past sinful acts have been forgiven. The divine exchange took place where Christ was made sin with our sinfulness that we might be made righteous with his righteousness Col2: 13-14; Rom10: 4; 2Cor5: 21

We are triumphant [Col2: 15]. A 'triumph' is the celebration of victory. Jesus demonstrated to the whole universe his victory over the entire satanic kingdom. He won this victory for us to enable us to demonstrate it Mt28: 18-20. When we hold fast to these facts, the devil cannot make us feel guilty anymore.

A good affirmation worth repeating is: 'The Lord is before me; the Blood of Jesus is above me; the everlasting arms of God are under me; Mercy and goodness are behind me, following me all the days of my life.'

We need to saturate our mind with God's Word so that there is no room for the devil's thoughts. When a thought lingers in your mind it finally becomes a stronghold and then allows other similar likeminded thoughts to dominate your thinking. It can be a good or bad thought. Thoughts that are captivating become strongholds and subsequently imaginations. When you repeat aloud what Satan put in your thoughts you become fearful and live in torment. When any contrary thought comes to your mind, speak God's Word to it: 'it is written.' The man who meditates on God's Word daily is the one who can pull down strongholds. Therefore pull down the stronghold, cast down the imagination, by the Word of God, bind the tormenting thought under the Blood of Jesus and cast it into the pit from where it came. Rebuke every devilish thought and replace it with God's thoughts. When you accept God's thoughts and promises and repeat them aloud in faith they will bring peace to your heart.

In the wilderness, Jesus defeated Satan on His own behalf. On the cross Jesus defeated Satan on our behalf for us. It is now our turn and responsibility to demonstrate and administer the victory of Jesus always and everywhere.

A Christian warrior is a prayer warrior. The battleground is the mind, thought life, area of our thoughts, where Satan has built up strongholds to keep people away from receiving the gospel. It is Satan's primary place of attack. Therefore we need to meditate on God's Word daily and receive His thoughts

in our mind. We need to break down mental strongholds and release men and women from Satan's tyranny, deception and captivity through prayer and spiritual warfare. Without the battle dress on, you could easily become a casualty. We must continually be arrayed with spiritual armor for an all round protection and to minister with authority.

In this spiritual battle, there are 'weapons' of 'defense and offense.' At this point it would be good if you get a copy of my book, 'Prayer Mantle,' some of these things have already been mentioned over there. Since the war is spiritual, in a spiritual realm, we need spiritual weapons.

Let us briefly examine these spiritual weapons: Paul lists six pieces of equipment a Roman soldier would wear which also has spiritual significance Eph6: 10-17

1. Girdle of Truth - Honesty; putting away saying, doing meaningless things; a clear understanding of God's Word
2. Breastplate of Righteousness - We put on Jesus our Righteousness; We obey His Word
3. Gospel Shoes - To understand, communicate the gospel of peace scripturally, testify, and transmit peace to those who believe, & obey the gospel, to be ready, prepared to do what God wants are those who wear 'shoes of the preparation of the gospel.'
4. Shield of Faith - Complete safety under the Blood of Jesus Christ
5. Helmet of Salvation - Protects the mind from turning away from the truth
6. Sword of the Spirit - God's Word in Action

Having repented and having come into a right relationship with God and others, we keep the armor 'on' in faith by believing in our heart and declaring with our mouth, what God's Word says regarding the armor. We need to keep it on continually. It is true that every one of us is involved in spiritual warfare. Denying the battle doesn't stop it—it just guarantees that you will lose. Satan's only power is deception. He doesn't have any physical power or authority, except what we give to him when we yield to his lies. The Bible says: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" John 8:32. Knowing the truth is what sets people free - Finally: As a man thinks in his heart so is he! Prov23: 7

You cannot sow seed thoughts of sickness and live in an atmosphere of health. You cannot sow seed thoughts of defeat, fear and live in an atmosphere of victory. You cannot sow seed thoughts of poverty and live in an atmosphere of prosperity. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind Rom12; 2.

At this point it may be very helpful to get a copy of my book 'Success Unlimited.' It will help you to reprogram your mind by erasing the old negative programming and replacing it with a new positive productive programming to change your world.

MEMORISE: Lk4: 18

LESSON TWO

“PRIMER”

[Basic Biblical Truth]

Truth is always hidden. It needs discovery. It has taken thousands of years for man to discover atomic power, the power of steam, secrets of creation. The process of discovery continues. Biblical truths answer man's questions and solves his problems Jn8:32. God reveals his secrets to those who fear Him Mt13:11; Ps25:14. It is vitally important to learn these truths and follow them in order to enjoy all that God has provided for us. If not, we will dwell carelessly and suffer destruction Hos4:6. Many are unaware of how prayers are answered, how faith is exercised, how to remain in divine health? The Holy Spirit reveals biblical hidden truths if we seek His help.

[Students are strongly urged to read my books 'Spiritual Food for Victorious Living' & 'Success Unlimited.' It will aid their spiritual growth with firmly implanted biblical knowledge and memory verses equipping and empowering them to excel in their Christian walk and in other areas of their lives].

In this lesson we will be dealing with three areas of basic bible truth:
Discovering God's Will; Communion with God; Christian Family

1. DISCOVERING GOD'S WILL

Many Christians are ignorant of God's Will for them. Some understand God's Will Jer29:11 for them but are plagued with doubts about it. On the other hand God does make His Will clear to everyone in different ways. God's Will and Purpose for mankind is clearly stated in the Bible Ps40:7-8. His Will is not mysterious or difficult to find. The problem is that God's children are not sensitive to discern His Will and to listen to His voice. Those who do not seek God's will live according to their own will and what pleases them. The more you understand God's Word, the greater will your knowledge be of His general Will for mankind and specific Will for you.

God's Will is His desire, plan, and purpose of creating mankind [general] and His purpose or plan for a person's life [specific]. If we don't know God's will we will run into serious problems. Until God's Will and purpose is fulfilled in our lives we will live empty meaningless lives, plagued with depression, worry, fear, timidity, discouragement and guilt. Why? - Because God created man in His likeness and image, a spiritual being, to have a close friendship and to commune with Him. Man will never feel happy till he discovers and fulfills God's Will and purpose for his own life. Due to lack of knowledge he will dwell aimlessly, fruitlessly, lack self-confidence and peace; feel rejected, worthless, unloved by God, and miserable.

What happens if he does find God's Will and pursues it? - His life will be meaningful, rich, productive and fulfilling. He will have assurance that God has accepted him. He will be bold, worry-free and successful. - Based on God's Word we can undoubtedly say that it is part of God's general Will that people enjoy good health, safety, success, provision, promotion, prosperity, long life, eternal life, anointing, to put away bitterness, wrath and anger Eph4: 31, overcome temptation 1Cor10; 13, repent and be baptized Acts2: 38, preach the gospel Mk16: 15 be a witness Acts1: 8 win souls Prov11: 30 make disciples Mt28: 11, do the works of Jesus Jn14: 12, love, serve, worship Him, love others, overcome the enemy, Lk10: 19 love one another, Rom12; 10 love our enemies, Mt5: 44 not to be weary in well doing, Ga6: 9 not to worry Phil4: 6, give thanks for everything 1Tess5: 18 bring in the tithes and offerings Mal3: 10 be doers of the Word not hearers only Jas1: 22 and so on. God created every one of us with a plan and purpose. No one was born in this world accidentally. God gave everyone freewill to do whatever one pleases, with a conscience to discern what is good or evil and thereafter make the choice. Along with it comes the great responsibility to exercise his right properly Lk12; 48 If he chooses to do wrong, he will sin willfully. You must also find God's specific Will for your life from time to time in your daily living, e.g. job, ministry, business, groceries, shopping, direction etc. The most important thing about God's will is to be always in the center of His Will and be led by the Holy Spirit.

MEMORISE: Jer29: 11

2. COMMUNION WITH GOD

In the book of Genesis Gen1:26 we read how man was created in God's image and likeness, to love and fellowship with Him. God walked and talked with Adam in a close intimate relationship. But he sinned by disobeying God and was separated from Him. Sin is a barrier to communicate with the Lord Ps66:18. Repentance and confession 1Jn1: 7-9; Acts3:19 of our sins restores communication with God.

Throughout biblical history we find that God spoke to his servants and children. He spoke with Cain cursing him.²³ He spoke with Noah saving him.²⁴ He spoke with Abraham promising to make him great.²⁵ He sometimes spoke to His prophets. For example God spoke to the widow of Zarephath through prophet Elijah.²⁶ This show that God speaks, directly as well as indirectly to man. There are various ways in which God speaks – through prophets, angels,²⁷ audibly,²⁸ dreams,²⁹ appearances,³⁰ etc, and more importantly through His Word.³¹

God is love. He wants to be our friend. He lovingly communicates with us [though often we don't realize it], to bless, warn, promise, guide, direct, tell us His plans in advance, declare His approval and so on. Because we are His sheep we must hear, recognize His voice.³² Otherwise how can we know His plan, will, work for us? When we run to Him at times of need or wish to express our love to Him we must be able to hear Him. A

dialogue or conversation involves at least two people. When we speak to God, we must hear Him speak to us. Wouldn't you like to know how to hear Him? We may hear Him through prayer, dreams, visions, prophetic word, our own desires, circumstances, ideas, opportunities, reading God's Word or hearing it spoken to us. We must commit ourselves to obey His written Word [Logos] in the Bible but also when He speaks in line with His Word [Rhema] to our heart from time to time.³³

God's voice in our hearts sounds like a flow of spontaneous [spur-of-the-moment] thoughts. It is important to still, quieten, your own thoughts and emotions, so that you can sense God's flow of thoughts and emotions within you. As you pray, concentrate or fix your thoughts on Jesus, you will see dreams and visions in the invisible realm of the spirit. You need to write these down in your diary. You can also write out your prayers and the answers God gives, in this way. Ask Him to confirm what He speaks to you. He certainly will! Be sure to obey Him. Soon you will grow in intimacy with God communing with Him ever more and more. As you continue hearing His Voice daily, you will find yourself busy excitedly serving Him in many ways with great peace in your heart and you will be blessed to be a blessing!³⁴

MEMORISE: Ps119: 105

3. CHRISTIAN FAMILY

God made man and woman in His likeness and image³⁵ with personalities that could relate to each other. Right from the very beginning God never wanted man to be alone.³⁶ So He instituted or established the family unit by creating woman as helpmate³⁷ of man with the idea of having a godly family with godly children and that such family units would form the church. However, we notice in our days that many marriages end up in divorce. I believe the reason is that husbands and wives fail to keep the principles and laws of marriage according to the written Word of God, and not so much the excuse of incompatibility. It could be either lack of knowledge to God's laws of marriage or deliberate disobedience to them.

A family is a social unit consisting of husband, wife and children with certain kinds of relationship between them, duties, responsibilities, rules, regulations, leadership, values, beliefs, religion, occupation, culture, location and so on. Since God instituted the family, he has provided and made promises to them. He has planned for them salvation,³⁸ protection,³⁹ provision, prayer, perpetuation [continuation of the family tree] blessings,⁴⁰ and so on.

³⁵ Gen1: 26; ³⁶Gen2: 18; ³⁷ Gen2: 18; ³⁸Acts16: 31; ³⁹ Ps91: 10; ⁴⁰ 1Pt3: 7; ⁴¹ Ga5: 22; ⁴²Prov24: 3; Isaiah38: 1; ⁴³ Eph5: 21, 22, 25; 6: 1-2; Eccl 9: 9; 1Pt3: 7; Prov22: 6, 23: 22; 31: 27; Esther1: 20; ⁴⁴ Prov24: 4; Lk12: 15;

God instituted the family so that they could be secure and not lonely, that they would be under authority and discipline with spiritual covering, to care for each other, bear each other's burdens, share with each other, enjoying sweet fellowship, friendship with each other, growing spiritually in love, and the fruit of the Spirit.⁴¹

It is very important to set up our house in order and run our homes well with wisdom.⁴² The family should pray, worship, study God's Word, and do things together in united love. Husbands should love their wives, live joyfully with them, giving them honor and be a good spiritual leader as husband and father. The wives should submit themselves to their husbands, give them honor, be good housekeepers, be good mothers. The children should obey and honor their parents.⁴³

The house we build and its atmosphere should give us joy, peace, satisfaction, fulfillment, contentment despite how big or small it is along with the things in it although it is good to have some good things in it.⁴⁴ In such a home built with wisdom and understanding you may find that the same house is like a church, music studio, library, hotel, play ground, garden, child care center and so on making it a delightful place to stay in and not be dull and boring. As some one said, home represents the immediate family and the church represents the extended family of God.

MEMORISE: Joshua 24: 15;

LESSON THREE

“PRINCIPLE”

[DOCTRINE]

This is a day when all believes should know who they believe, what they believe and why they believe. All religions true or false, all cults are founded on various doctrines or teachings. When believed and practiced they determine the character, behavior and destiny of individuals. What a person believes is either shaped by philosophies of men or by the inspired Word of God. There is need for sound doctrine or teaching¹ and the ‘Study of God.’ It is absolutely necessary to be founded on the doctrine of Christ. For the time has come when people do not accept sound teaching.² People are turning towards philosophies of men and doctrines of devils. Why? Because they are deceived into thinking that their experience is more important than doctrine. Or, that it matters only who you believe not what you believe.

False doctrine corrupts, alters the pure meal of God’s Word with its evil influence like yeast or leaven³ spreading its influence in a lump of dough. It is like wind that can uproot trees.⁴ This is what can happen when believers fall a prey to false doctrines, they can be uprooted and fall away. True doctrine is heaven sent teaching of God’s Word that refreshes, restores, and revives. The cycle of rain is symbolical of the cycle of the Word.⁵

True doctrine must be sound.⁶ It must be pure and holy⁷ and scriptural.⁸ When true biblical teaching is accepted, believed and practiced,⁹ it will develop our nature and character to release the fragrance and presence of Christ within us. As like attracts like, it will draw believers walking in the light with the same beliefs into a sweet fellowship.¹⁰ Other who are zealous and sincere but believe wrongly avoid for they are sincerely wrong.¹¹ Who and what we believe affects our eternal destiny. It is our relationship to Christ that affects our eternal destin.y¹² In Christ is light and life, outside Christ is darkness and death. All said and done, love is the greatest doctrine of the Bible and if adhered to, all other doctrines would take their proper place¹³

God reveals or unveils Himself to man and communicates truth to his mind which he cannot discover in any other way.¹⁴ Man made in the likeness and image of God has been give the ability to receive revelation from God. Unless God takes the initiative and

¹ Lk1: 1-4; ² 2Tim4: 3; ³ Mt16: 5-12; ⁴ Eph4: 14; ⁵ Isaiah55: 10-11; Deut32: 2; Heb6: 1-9;

⁶ 1Tim1: 10; 2Tim4: 2-4; Titus1: 9; 2: 1; Mt22: 29; Ga1: 6-9; ⁷ Job11: 4; ⁸ 2Tim3: 14-17; ⁹ Rom6: 17; 1Tim6: 1-3; ¹⁰ 1Jn1: 1-7; ¹¹ Rom10: 2-3; ¹² Mt16: 13-19; 22: 42; 27: 22; ¹³ 1Cor13; 1Jn4: 16;

¹⁴ Mt11: 27; 16: 17; 1Cor2: 10;

reveals Himself to man, it is not possible for him to discover or know God.¹⁵ God reveals himself in nature,¹⁶ in our conscience, in history,¹⁷ through miracles.¹⁸ He reveals Himself in prophecy, for example the coming of Christ –seed of the woman,¹⁹ seed of Abraham,²⁰ Tribe of Judah,²¹ born in Bethlehem,²² anointed by the Spirit,²³ sold for thirty pieces of silver;²⁴ crucified;²⁵ rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, sat at the Father's right hand.²⁶ To look at Christ is to look at God, for Christ is the expressed revelation of God in human form.²⁷

The Holy Scriptures are inspired,²⁸ revelation of God, coming from God and flowing to and through human vessels. They are the only inspired and infallible divine revelation given to man with supreme authority in all matters of faith and morals. The Holy Spirit breathed upon human vessels His thoughts and words He wanted written. He guarded and preserved every thought & word from error, omission & inaccuracy.

The Bible is the Divine Library consisting of Sixty-six separate yet related books, making it one unified book. The Bible is divided into two sections related to two major covenants: the Covenant of Law [Old Testament] and the Covenant of Grace [New Testament].

God likens His Word to Fire,²⁹ that burns and cleanses; Hammer,³⁰ smashing and destroying evil; Lamp³¹ dispelling darkness Mirror³² showing us what we are and what we can be; Milk³³ nourishing the young; Meat³⁴ stronger food for the grown-ups; Sword³⁵ separating fleshy and spiritual things; Bread³⁶ and so on.

The Holy Scriptures are 'inspired' or 'God-breathed.' Webster's dictionary defines inspiration as: "the supernatural influence of the Spirit of God on the human mind, by which the prophets and apostles and sacred writers were qualified to set forth Divine truth without any mixture of error." Revelation is receiving the truth. Inspiration is recording the truth. Illumination is the in-sight of truth brought by the influence of the Holy Spirit.³⁷

The Bible does not attempt to prove that God exists, it simply declares it as a fact.³⁸ A Christian believes that unless God takes the initiative and reveals Himself to man, he will stumble in the darkness.³⁹ He also believes that God has revealed Himself in the

¹⁵ Job11: 7; 1Cor1: 21; 2: 11-16;¹⁶ Ps19: 1-6; Gen1: 1-5; Jn1: 1-5; ¹⁷ Exo9: 12; Rom9: 17; Jer46: 14-26; ¹⁸ 1Cor10: 1-6; ¹⁹ Gen3: 15; Mt1: 20-23; ²⁰ Gen12: 1-3; Mt1: 1; ²¹ Gen49: 10; Heb7: 14; ²² Micah5: 2; Mt2: 6; ²³ Isa61: 1-2; Lk4: 18-20; ²⁴ Zec11: 12-13; Mt26: 15; ²⁵ Ps22; Isa53; Mt27; ²⁶ Ps110; Mt22: 43-45; ²⁷ Jn1: 1, 14; 18; Heb1: 1-3; ²⁸ 2Tim3: 16; ²⁹ Jer23: 29; ³⁰ Jer23: 29; ³¹ Ps119: 105; ³² James1: 23; ³³ 1Pt2: 2; ³⁴ Heb5: 14; ³⁵ Heb4: 12; ³⁶ Mt4: 4; ³⁷ 1Jn2: 20-27; ³⁸ Gen1: 1; ³⁹ Eph4: 17-18;

Scriptures. We must rely on the Bible's description of God. The Bible tells us that God is Spirit.⁴⁰ He is Light,⁴¹ Love;⁴² Fire.⁴³ He is our Father. He is Eternal;⁴⁴ Self-Existent – He is the I AM, the self-existent one; Omnipotent - all powerful;⁴⁵ Omniscient – all knowing [1Sam2: 3]; Omnipresent – all present;⁴⁶ He is Holy⁴⁷ He is good;⁴⁸ Compassionate full of mercy and grace.⁴⁹

As clearly as the Scriptures teach that God is one, so clearly do the same Scriptures teach that God is three. The Bible teaches the tri-unity of God. The union of three in one. One God manifested in three persons. There are three distinct persons in the Godhead – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each having distinct ministry and function, yet one in mind and will, one in essence and one in the purpose, plan and operation of redemption. The following scriptures will make it more clear:

The Father's Voice spoke from heaven; Jesus the Son of God stood in Jordan waters of baptism; The Holy Spirit descended bodily in the shape of a dove.⁵⁰

Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.⁵¹

The Father hears the prayer of the Son; The Son prays to the Father; The Holy Spirit the Comforter to be given.⁵²

Access to the Father; Through the Son; By the Holy Spirit.⁵³

There is One Lord the Son - One Spirit, the Holy Spirit; and One God the Father.⁵⁴

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ - the Son; The Love of God - the Father; The communion of the Holy Spirit – the Spirit.⁵⁵ There are three that bear record in heaven: The Father; The Word [The Son]; The Holy Spirit. And these three are one. That is tri-unity, One God, manifested and distinguished in three persons.⁵⁶ There are three revealed in these chapters. The one on the throne, the Father God. The Lamb before the throne, the sacrificial Son and the Seven Lamps of fire before the throne, the Holy Spirit in His fullness.⁵⁷

Illustrations of Tri-unity:

Light is manifested in three major colors: *yellow* [golden]; *red* [scarlet]; *blue* [heavenly];⁵⁸

Water is manifested in three forms – ice, water, steam

Sun manifests as light, fire, energy

⁴⁰ Jn4: 24; ⁴¹ 1Jn1: 5; ⁴² 1Jn4: 17; ⁴³ Heb12: 29; ⁴⁴ Deut33: 27; ⁴⁵ Rev19: 6; ⁴⁶ Ps139: 7-12; ⁴⁷ Lev19: 2; ⁴⁸ Ps145: 9; ⁴⁹ Mt9: 36; Titus1: 4; 2Tim1: 2; ⁵⁰ Mt3: 16-17; ⁵¹ Mt28: 19; ⁵² Jn14: 16-17; ⁵³ Eph2: 18; ⁵⁴ Eph4: 4-6; ⁵⁵ 2Cor13: 14; ⁵⁶ 1Jn5: 7; ⁵⁷ Rev4 & 5; ⁵⁸ Gen1: 1-5;

Space has three dimensions – length, breadth, depth
 Eternity manifests as past, present, future
 Triangle has three sides
 Man is threefold – spirit, soul, body

LESSON FOUR

“PRACTICE”

[Faith Ablaze]

In this lesson we are will deal with four important aspects of Faith, namely: ‘Essence,’ ‘Purpose,’ ‘Source’ and ‘Lifestyle.’

THE ESSENCE OF FAITH

What is the ‘Essence’ or the real meaning of faith? It is spiritual ‘Substance.’ The Bible tells us that: “Faith is the Substance of things Hoped for, the Evidence of things not seen.”¹ Faith is the substance of things hoped for or what we look forward to. We can have faith, the God-kind of faith because God says so.² When we do have this kind of faith for whatever we are asking, it in itself is the evidence or proof that what we are looking forward to or expecting already belongs to us because we have the invisible substance of it in our possession. All we need to do is to make it visible. How? By acting out our faith.

At creation God imparted his own nature to man by creating him in his own image and likeness³ breathing into his nostrils the breath of life.⁴ God’s Words are spirit and life.⁵ The Word of God is the Word of faith.⁶ Faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God.⁷ God and his Word are one.⁸ Faith is a fruit⁹ and a gift¹⁰ of the Spirit. So putting it all together, faith is a spiritual substance. It is spirit. It is spirit substance, part of God’s nature. It is also the proof that we have, in the invisible, what we are looking forward to.

Faith is beyond our understanding. intelligence or physical reality.¹¹ God and his Kingdom are spiritual so is faith. The law of faith is spiritual. The spiritual realm is God’s realm. In fact physical things were created by spiritual things – the ‘seen’ was made out of the ‘unseen’.¹² Faith is believing in the heart [spirit]¹³ without the evidence of seeing [what we are asking for] with our eyes, or understanding with our minds. Once you have

¹ Heb11: 1; ² Mk11: 22; ³ Gen1: 26; ⁴ Gen2: 7; ⁵ Jn6: 63; ⁶ Rom10: 8; ⁷ Rom10: 17; ⁸ Jn1: 1; ⁹ Ga5: 22; ¹⁰ 1Cor12: 9; Rom12: 3; ¹¹ Prov3: 5;;

God's specific Word spoken to you in your specific situation [Rhema] you have faith. You then need to act out this faith. Faith is receiving 'now' in the present tense, not future.¹⁴ Let this be your slogan: "If God said it, I believe it and that settles it." This shows unquestioning faith. God keeps his Word.¹⁵

When faith comes to a person,¹⁶ he has inward assurance¹⁷ in his spirit that what he believes has taken place. To have this assurance he must believe that the Bible is God's Word and it is true, and that his Word will come to pass. When he does this, his faith becomes unshakable despite contrary circumstances because he knows that God will keep his Word. He must continue to believe in the Holy Bible, God's Word and all the truth it contains whether historical, prophetic, spiritual and provisional.

Finally should anyone have any questions regarding what is written in the Bible, he should find the answer in the Bible itself. The Bible must interpret the Bible alone. The author of the Bible is God Himself. He has inspired many holy people to write it. The Bible which is God's Word, is unique. It is spirit, life and truth. It is the highest authority. For a person to believe God's Word in his heart he must be spiritually mature and also willing to serve.

MEMORIZE: HEB4: 12

THE PURPOSE OF FAITH

The Bible says that without faith it is impossible to please God¹⁸ and that whatever is not of faith is sin.¹⁹ If we love him we will please him by living a life of faith. By faith we obtain God's promises²⁰ and live victoriously.²¹ The promises of God cover every area of our lives including provision, prosperity, protection, good health and so on. We will do the works Jesus did and greater works, if we believe, because he said so.²² Fear leaves when faith arrives, because fear is the opposite of faith. One kind of fear many have is in giving. They fear they will lose what they give. But God's Word says the opposite, that they would be blessed.²³ To be a giver you need to give in faith trusting in God and in his Word. We have seen how salvation is received by grace through faith.²⁴ We are justified by faith,²⁵ which means that God sees us just as if we have not committed any sin. So it is with faith for healing, prayer, and so on.

¹² Heb11: 3; ¹³ Rom10: 9-10; ¹⁴ Heb11: 1; ¹⁵ Rom4: 21; Jer1: 12¹⁶ Rom10: 17; ¹⁷ Heb11: 1;
¹⁸ Heb11: 6; ¹⁹ Rom14: 23; ²⁰ Heb11: 33; ²¹ 1Jn5: 4; Mk9: 25; ²² Jn14: 12; ²³ Lk6: 38; ²⁴
 Eph2: 8; ²⁵ Rom3: 28; 5: 1; Ga2: 16;;

Unbelief stops the flow of God's power as it did in Nazareth the hometown of Jesus.²⁶ Faith is necessary to receive God's blessings. Believe and you will receive what you desire.²⁷

MEMORIZE: Heb11: 6

THE SOURCE OF FAITH

God is the only source of faith. He alone can give us faith because faith is part of his nature that nature resides in us. Yet we need to meet with certain conditions to grow in faith. First and foremost Jesus the author and finisher of faith has given each of us an equal measure of faith.²⁸ This faith as God's initial gift to us enables us to believe his Word. To grow further in faith we need to hear the Word of God.²⁹ The more we know God's Word the more our faith grows. This is done, by hearing and reading the Word of God. However, to get a deeper insight, revelation, deeper meaning of the truth hidden within the Word we must study the Word of God. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to bring us spiritual enlightenment to discover these deep truths. The written Word must become Rhema - God's specific Word to us in our spirit, in the specific situation. It is the anointing that teaches us all truths.³⁰ God has also set ordained teachers to benefit the Church.

Some of us have stronger faith in some areas and weaker in other areas. We all need to grow in faith in the entire counsel of God little by little as we study God's Word in all the different areas whether salvation, healing, deliverance, prayer or whatever. To receive faith we must have knowledge of God's Word and also believe in it. To enjoy the benefits we must release faith by acting on God's Word. Rejecting a truth we know is serious offence.³¹ There are many today who neither desire to know the truth nor believe it³²

It is very important to meditate on God's Word. By doing this, our faith gets deeply rooted in the Word of God. As we meditate on the Word of God day and night³³ it will sink into our mind and then into our heart.³⁴ It must enter through the 'eye gate' and the 'ear gate' and then into the 'heart gate' to make it's dwelling place. And then at the right time it will flow out from the heart through our mouth bringing forth miracles and make us prosper.³⁵ The purpose of true meditation is to remember and obey it.

Meditation on God's Word also helps us to believe and obey it. There is a direct relationship between what we meditate on and what we believe in. People confess with their mouth what they believe in their hearts.³⁶ From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.³⁷ When a person confesses what he believes, his faith is strengthened.

²⁶ Mt13: 58; ²⁷ Mk11: 24; ²⁸ Rom12: 3; ²⁹ Rom10: 17; ³⁰ 1Jn2: 27; ³¹ Jn3: 18-19; ³² 2Tim3: 5; ³³ Ps1: 1-3; ³⁴ Col3: 16; ³⁵ Prov4: 20-23; Jos1: 8; ³⁶ 2Cor4: 13; ³⁷ Mt12: 34;

Confessing or saying what God's Word says causes one's faith to grow. We will see results when we hear God's Word, believe it in our hearts and confess it with our mouths. The woman with the issue of blood got healed when she said audibly that if she would go and touch the hem of Jesus' garment, she would be healed. When Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, Isaac asked him where the sacrifice was. At that time, Abraham said that the Lord would provide. Just as he confessed with his mouth, the Lord miraculously provided the sacrifice. At this juncture it would profit you much to read my book 'Prayer Mantle,' on positive confession and faith declaration.

The Bible declares that faith without works is dead. We are also called to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.³⁸ When a person believes in something he will do it. When a person steps out in faith to do what God tells him to do, his faith level increases. We must remember that faith works by love.³⁹ Unless we are filled with love, which is God Himself⁴⁰ our faith will not work. And love is the greatest commandment Jesus gave to mankind.⁴¹ Finally, it is important to know how to receive answers to our prayers from God, by faith. Prayer is asking, while faith is receiving. Believing is receiving. We can pray time and time again, but we have to stop asking at some point of time when we feel our prayers are answered. At that point we have to stop asking and start thanking Him for it, expecting it to come.

MEMORIZE: Prov4; 20-23

THE LIFESTYLE OF FAITH

This means that we must live like Jesus, a supernatural or spiritual life. A person who lives by faith will not walk by sight⁴² or by his own understanding.⁴³ He will not be discouraged by circumstances. He will not rely entirely on resources at his disposal. His trust is in the Lord. He believes every promise God made – healing, protection, prosperity, protection, divine supply, etc, belongs to him. Jesus was the most successful man though he had no worldly position or possession. He came to do his Father's Will and did it perfectly.⁴⁴ The success of a man can be measured only when he attains his own goals.

Jesus was operating in the supernatural power of God. The life of Faith is the highest form of spiritual life. He could live in the spiritual realm while he was on earth in the human form. This same life is available to us through Jesus. Living a life of faith is living in the Kingdom of God here and now, enjoying and operating God given spiritual gifts. Jesus worked miracles. He was in constant communion with God listening to his voice and acting under his direction. We too are expected to live like him and do the works like he did.

³⁸ James2: 17, 1: 22; ³⁹ Ga5: 6; ⁴⁰ 1Jn4: 7-8; ⁴¹ Jn13: 34; ⁴² 2Cor5: 7; ⁴³ Prov3: 5; ⁴⁴ Jn4: 34;

If we are living by faith, we are living like Jesus - a victorious abundant life, doing his Will, giving his word first place in our lives, obeying and serving him, living supernaturally without fear, doubt or confusion, pleasing God at all time, giving liberally and cheerfully, experiencing continual peace, receiving answers to prayer, enjoying divine health, using creative ideas and imaginations, and so on. If your life is not like that, you should examine yourself. Are you meeting the spiritual requirements?

The Bible says: - If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed you can say to this mountain move! And it will move! And nothing will be impossible to you!⁴⁵ - You can transform your life and future if you discover and release the faith you have, to move your mountain. You can do so with the following steps.

DREAM – This kind of faith begins with a dream. All success begins with a dream. You can measure the size of a man or woman by the size of their dreams. The Holy Spirit helps you to dream.⁴⁶ Dare to dream, the dream or vision, insight, creative idea God gave you,⁴⁷ of what he wants of you. If you don't have a dream, how can your dreams come true? Faith begins in the imagination, for we were created in his image and likeness. Ask God to give you dreams. Dream big dreams for you have a big God. Paint a picture of your dream on the screen of your imagination. Reject all impossibility thinking. If you want what you dream, strong enough, you will plan, organize, reorganize and work till you get it.

DESIRE – The desire God put in your heart to fulfill the dream ⁴⁸ he gave you, has to grow strong and burn within you. Faith is shattered by lack of desire. No one will believe he can move a mountain unless he really desires or wants it to move. If you want to succeed you will! To begin with, you must know what you want? What is the desire God put within you?⁴⁹ Visualize it clearly.⁵⁰ If you have a confused and messed up picture of what you are going after, do not be surprised if you fail. After you know what you want, screen the desire by asking questions - Would God want this? Can I ask God to be my partner in what I am dreaming of? Pray to be sure that what you are asking for is God's Will. And if it is so, your faith will become strong.

DARE - With God on your side you will dare to be a risk-taker rather than a caretaker or undertaker. Faith makes a decision based on the Word of God given to you, which is the only guarantee of success. This brings excitement that in turn brings enthusiasm and releases divine energy or spiritual substance.

BEGIN - It is not enough to dream, desire and dare. Mountain moving faith begins. It acts as if nothing is going to stop the dream from succeeding. You have nothing to fear

⁴⁵ Mk11: 23; ⁴⁶ Acts2: 17; ⁴⁷ Job33: 15-16; ⁴⁸ Ps21: 2; 37: 4; ⁴⁹ Phil2: 13; ⁵⁰ Jn4: 35;

for the Lord Jesus is the author and finisher of your faith. There has to be a beginning and you can expect a joyful end.

The Bible says: "In the Beginning..."⁵¹ It also says that he is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end. What he has begun he will complete!⁵² Get started with the dream God gave you! Beginning is half done!

EXPECT – Expect that what you hope for is finally yours. When a man or woman expects to win, they hold nothing back, they give their all to do whatever is required to win. When you expect success, you must hold nothing back. Do your best be confident you will succeed knowing that Jesus is with you! Dedication leads to success.⁵³

AFFIRM - Faith affirms success before it becomes visible. It shouts out victory before it is achieved. Mountain movers are people who boldly declare success. Affirming produces enthusiasm that in turn strengthens faith. Affirm success and you will visualize yourself winning.⁵⁴

WAIT - Men or woman who really succeed are men or woman who know that with faith and patience you possess God's promise, which is yes!⁵⁵

SURRENDER - We all face situations when our mountain does not move despite what we do. At that time breathe a prayer of surrender – Lord let your Kingdom Come and your Will be Done in this situation. Let go and let God take over your dreams or problems.

As someone said: - If your mountain does not move, surrender it to God. He will either move it or show you how you can turn it unto a mine or a monument as a part of His greater plan.

MEMORIZE: 2Cor5: 17

⁵¹ Gen1: 1; ⁵² Phil1: 6; ⁵³ 1Cor9: 24-25; ⁵⁴ Job22: 28; ⁵⁵ Heb6: 12; 2Cor1: 20;

LESSON FIVE

“PRODUCE”

[Fruitfulness]

Life is precious. It is you alone who decides the path of life you take. Are you wasting your life or investing it. Satan the thief ¹ comes to steal, kill and destroy. He will do his best to rob you of your precious life. And you shouldn't be surprised how people and circumstances assist him? One can be robbed of life because of impatience, selfishness, addictions, discouragement, lack of knowledge of God's Word and a host of sinful activities.

We need to know who we are and why we are here? Jesus tells us ² that we are the branches and he is the vine. We have become branches in the vine by trusting him as our Saviour and Lord. We need to have a living relationship with Christ by faith. As the branch gets its life from the vine so do we from our Lord Jesus Christ. Fruit is the result of life. We are here to bear fruit, which is the result of letting God's life run freely in and through us. The reason we are saved is to bear fruit to feed people starving for spiritual reality. The secret of life is to bear fruit.

The branch cannot bear fruit for the branch itself to eat, but for others to eat. We need to share this fruit joyfully with others. And the fruit cannot remain unless we as branches abide or stay close to Jesus. We don't bear fruit by straining but by abiding, by allowing the life giving sap of the Holy Spirit to flow through us. So here is another secret that tells us that to bear fruit we must live or abide in Christ.

Fruit bearing is a beautiful process. First come the leaves, then the flowers and then the fruit.³ God provides water from beneath and sun from above. Day by day branches develop and fruit is produced. Instant fruit is not possible. Fruit must be cultivated. This is done by constantly obeying the Lord. When you do this, his life will continue to flow through you. The secret of living in him is to obey him. God put you in the vine where you are to produce fruit in that place where no one else but you. Have you found your calling, place and function in the church body of believers? - One thing is sure you will not obey him if you don't love him. Another secret –Keep on loving him and you will obey him.

¹ Jn10: 10; ² Jn15: 1-17; ³ Mk4: 28;

You cannot love someone you barely know. It is the same with the Lord. You cannot love him without getting more intimate with him. This means you must know him. That is another secret in yielding fruit.

Many may have heard of the fruit of the Spirit⁴ but there are other fruit as well. For example: 'soul winning.'⁵ To win others to Christ, see them saved, healed, delivered, we must allow his life to flow through us and bear fruit. At the same time the fruit we bear is firstly for our Heavenly Father, the Gardener who wants to also see whether we bear the character of Christ the fruit of the Holy Spirit.⁶ This will draw others to Christ.⁷

God chose us as his disciples to bear fruit for him. To be fruitful for God we need to overcome fear, pride, disagreement with God's Word. The Word of God says: "How can two walk together except they be agreed."⁸ If the Lord is our senior partner we must walk in agreement with his Word. Our walk should match our talk. Fruitfulness comes when we respond to God's ways in the challenges of life. We must not allow Satan to get a foothold in our lives through hurt feelings, discouragement, disappointment, disagreement, gossip, comparison and so on.

There are several areas we need to make a study of. For example a fruitful person should manifest the fruit of the Spirit; He should have a fruitful mind being transformed by the renewing of his mind.⁹ His actions should bear fruit.¹⁰ He should have a fruitful fellowship.¹¹ Fruitfulness is also connected with using the gifts profitably.¹²

It is the little foxes that spoil the vine and render us unfruitful.¹³

If we live with criticism we will learn to condemn.

If we live with tolerance we learn to be patient

If we live with encouragement we learn to be confident

If we live with praise we learn to appreciate

If we live with fairness we learn justice

If we live with acceptance and friendship we learn to find love in the world

A follower of Christ must bear fruit. This includes all he does for the glory of God. When we do good deeds we bear fruit for the glory of God and help to spread the gospel.¹⁴

⁴ Ga5: 22; ⁵ Prov11: 30; ⁶ Ga5: 22-23; ⁷ Jn15: 8; ⁸ Amos3: 3; ⁹ Rom12: 1-2; ¹⁰ Col1: 10; 1Pt3: 10; ¹¹ Heb10: 24-25; Ps133; ¹² Rom12: 4-6; ¹³ Song2: 15; ¹⁴ Jn15: 8;

John the Baptist emphasized the necessity of fruitfulness and the danger of not bearing fruit. "...every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."¹⁵ Jesus also emphasized the necessity of fruitfulness and the danger of not bearing fruit – being cut off.¹⁶

If we neglect God's Word, and disobey him in our daily walk, we will become dry, wither; pass from the pruning stage [to bring fruitfulness] to the cutting off stage [for destruction]. Our being cut off from God can spread death to the spiritual life of everyone connected with us. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. He who has God's wisdom is full of good fruits.¹⁷ Paul prayed that the Philippians would be filled with the fruits of righteousness¹⁸ and that the Colossians would be fruitful in every good work.¹⁹ Paul refers to the gifts he is taking to the poor saints in Jerusalem as fruit from the believers in Macedonia and Achaia.²⁰ The branches can only bear fruit if they remain in the Vine.²¹ A disciple bears fruit by doing good deeds and helping those in need. Through every good work done a disciple bears fruit for the glory of God. We also bear fruit by giving thanks to God.²² When we walk by the Spirit the fruit of the Spirit will be seen in our lives.²³

The church is a body with many members. Not every member has the same function²⁴ One brother may teach another give aid or do acts of mercy. One should not despise another because his function is different.²⁵ Each one must bear fruit by exercising his own function in the body of Christ. The gospel must be preached in the whole world²⁶ including countries that show no responsive or are even hostile to the gospel. Each disciple should do what he can to spread the gospel of Christ (according to his gifting, abilities and opportunities God gives him. We need disciples who sow, water and gather fruit for eternal life. We need reapers in the kingdom of God. But the reapers should not despise the sowers or vice-versa because they are co-builders. "...I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors"²⁷ We need disciples who give financially so others can go into all the world,²⁸ visit the sick and serve in other ways that brings glory to God²⁹ We are fruitful if we do good deeds to the glory of God according to our own ability and our own function in the body of Christ.

MEMORIZE: John15: 5-8

¹⁵ Lk3: 8-9; ¹⁶ Jn15: 2; Lk13: 6-9; Mt13: 22; ¹⁷ James3: 17,18; ¹⁸ Phil1: 11; ¹⁹ Col1:10; ²⁰ Rom15: 26-28; ²¹ Jn15: 4-5; ²² Heb13:15; ²³ Gal 5:16,22,23; ²⁴ Rom12:3-8; ²⁵ 1 Cor12:12-26; ²⁶ Mt28:19; Mk16:15,16; ²⁷ Jn 4:36-38; ²⁸ Rom10:14,15; ²⁹ Mt5:14-16;

LESSON SIX

“PROGRESS”

God created man in His likeness and image. He created man above all other living creatures as a spiritual being. Man has a spirit, soul and body. God passed on His own divine nature to man. Therefore he has the potential to grow and become like Him. He grows spiritually when he develops the nature of God within him. He grows physically in height and weight by eating food and doing physical exercises. He grows intellectually through education and spiritual through spiritual food and spiritual exercise. For spiritual growth to take place he must first become spiritually alive through the Born-Again experience [Eph2:1; 1Jn3:3] that comes through the Word of God [1Pt1:23]. Then he will begin to feel spiritual hunger and thirst for God, Word of God, living in righteousness and so on. As he feeds on the Word of God he will begin to grow spiritually.

The spirit is the real you living inside your physical body. To grow spiritually you must become more and more like Christ. Jesus was given all authority and power in heaven and earth that he exercised it in his ministry [Mt28:18; Acts10:38]. We too have been given the same to use for God's glory in fulfilling the Great Commission' [Mt10:1; Lk4:18; 10:19; 24:49; Mk16:17-18; Mt10:8; Acts1:8; 2Tim1:7; Rom8:11; 1Cor2:4; 1Cor12:9-10; Mt16:18-19]. God wants us to be wise like His Son Jesus having knowledge knowing the mysteries of the Kingdom [Mt13:11; Ps25:14; Jn8:32; 1Cor2:16; Phil2:5; Col 1:9-10]. We must bear the fruit of the Spirit, the character of Christ [Ga5:22; Rom5:5]. From babes we must progress and grow up to be mature sons of God [Jn1:12; Rom8:14]. The old ways of selfishness and sinfulness must go and be replaced by holiness [2Cor5:17]. We must progress spiritually, be transformed, become more godly and less worldly.

As mature sons of God we will realize our full potential, reign as an heir and enjoy loving relationship and fellowship with God bearing the fruit of the Spirit. Christians who do not bear the fruit of the Spirit sufficiently are not progressing. It will be a good witness and testimony for God if we bear the fruit of the Spirit which represent the nine characteristics of God. People in this world will know we are Christians the disciples of Jesus by our love.

As many as receive Him receive power to become sons of God [Jn1:12]. However this is a process of spiritual growth ending in becoming mature sons of God. Such people will literally rule and reign with Christ, exercise authority over Satan, destroy the works of the devil, extend the Kingdom of God, be an ambassador for Christ, maintain peace and order.

In order to grow spiritually you need spiritual food and spiritual exercises. God has also instituted the method of discipleship to help a person grow spiritually. In fact Jesus Himself disciplined twelve. Spiritual food we are talking about is the Word of God. We feed our spirits by attentively hearing reading understanding, studying, meditating and obeying the Word of God [Ps1:1-3; James1:22;]. If we don't do this we will not grow spiritually and we will live aimlessly and carelessly [Hos4:6]. The written Word [Logos] must become alive in our spirits as Rhema – we must receive divine revelation about hidden truths in the Word of God.

Spiritual exercise is practicing the Word of God in every situation [Lk6:47]. Knowing the Word of God alone or believing the Word alone does not save. It is when you know and believe and then do what the Word says you get saved. We must practice love, be good, gentle, humble and exert self-control. Growth is a gradual process which can be measured as you measure a growing child's height. How do you do this spiritually? – Set goals. Say, not only do I want to pray, but I also want to pray thrice daily. As you work towards completing your goals it will be easier for you to measure your progress.

If you are in the habit of losing your temper and you want to get victory over it, note the times you got angry during that day and for what reasons. Pray about it. Resolve that you will make every attempt not to get angry for those reasons; soon you will find that you have more control over your temper. Consider some key areas to grow by doing spiritual exercises; loving your neighbour; having patience; giving according to biblical principles; being full of joy; forgiving those who offend you and so on.

Another method for growing spiritually is submitting yourself to a bonafide spiritual leader. The teacher, leader or trainer will serve as a role model. There should be transparency and mutual trust between the leader and the disciple.

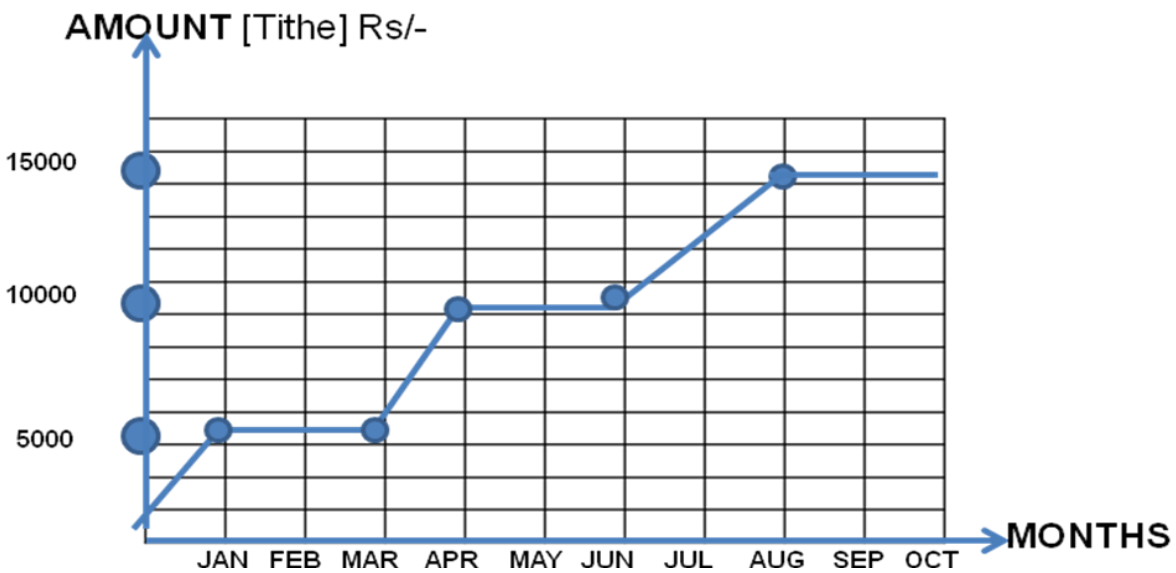
We need to have a greater knowledge of spiritual things. If we want to be humble we must first clearly understand what humility is, why we are to be humble and how we are to be humble, so also with other areas of our lives. When you know the truth you will be set free [Jn8:32]. You also must have a burning desire to grow spiritually. There must be a holy restlessness that we are not doing the best we can to be mature and we should be willing to pay the price for it.

Recognize specific areas where you need to grow spiritually, areas of weakness. Admit the reality of these areas. Seek help, counsel, prayer and deliverance and do spiritual

exercises to be an overcomer. Decide that you are going to grow spiritually. For example, we have received salvation today because we decided to receive salvation. We are water baptized today because we decided to take water baptism. Decision is so important to fulfil all righteousness. We need to have a definite plan of what to do to grow spiritually. If we fail to plan, we plan to fail.

It would be worth the effort if we make a progress chart of spiritual growth for ourselves. For example: "The Tithe Chart" – [Do for other areas too – Bringing souls to Church; Distributing Gospel tracts; Giving your testimony; Attending Church programs; Teaching Sunday class; Daily hours of personal prayer; Daily hours of meditation etc]

AMOUNT / TITHE – Rs/-



LESSON SEVEN

“PROMISE”

God gave us many promises in the Bible [Ps91:116; Isa65:24; Lk11:9-10; Jn15:7; Mt18:19; Mk11:24]. And if He has promised He will keep His Word [2Cor1:20; Jer1:12]. He promised to supply all our needs and give us our heart's desire. We must take hold of these promises and make them ours through faith and walking in holiness in right relationship with God.

Here are some promises: - Promises when you feel lonely [Mt28:20; Isa41:10; Deut31:6]; Promises when you are in financial trouble [3Jn2; Mt6:31-33; Ps37:25]; Promises when tempted [1Cor10:12-13]; Promises when mentally disturbed [2Tim1:7; 1Cor14:33; Ps147:3; Ps34:17; Isa61:3]. There are so many promises in the Bible for every one of your needs – you only need to find them.

We are all accustomed to promises. We are also accustomed to seeing them made and broken. Anyone who has lived for a number of years would certainly never lay claim to having kept every promise made. There are many reasons why this is true. Sometimes we forget, sometimes we are negligent and sometimes it may be due to circumstances beyond our control.

A broken-hearted young lady will often say, “But he promised to marry me.” And the answer comes back: “Yes but I changed my mind.” People do change their minds and break promises.

What is a promise?

“Words said or written, binding a person to do or not do something;”

When a person makes a promise, he is giving his word that he will do something or he will not do something.

People make promises and people sometimes break promises – for example:

“If you lend me Rs.1000/- I will pay you back tomorrow.”

“I will surely pray for you.”

“Mum and Dad I will do better on my next report card.”

Many times people break their promises and they ought to take the blame for it. Maybe they forgot, changed their mind or just failed to do what they said they would do. Sometimes people break their promises because of circumstances and situations beyond their control [bad weather, flat tire, sickness etc].

What about the promises of God? How certain are they? - A promise is of no more value than is the ability of the one who makes it to carry through. We know that God is able to keep His promises [Eph3:20; Jer1:12].

God promised Abraham a son [Gen18:10]. He kept His promise [Gen18:14; 21:1]. God told Abraham that his son Isaac would have children [Gen21:12; 17:19] and he did. Even though Zacharias and Elizabeth were old and childless, according to God's promise they got a son John the Baptist [Lk1]. God promised Mary a son and Jesus the Son of God was born of her. God keeps His promises.

He has promised to supply all our needs including food, clothing, shelter, companionship, love and salvation through Jesus Christ and even luxuries thought of as needs [Phil4:19]. God has promised that His grace is sufficient for us [2Cor12:9]. In fact our salvation is by His grace through faith [Eph2:8]. God has promised that His children will not be overtaken by temptation. He has provided a way of escape [1Cor10:13; Jude24]. God has promised us victory over death. He assured our resurrection by first raising Jesus from the dead [Acts2:32; 21Cor15:3-4]. He gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ [1Cor15:57]. God promised that all things work together for good to those who love and serve Him faithfully [Rom8:28]. God keeps His promises.

There are conditional as well as unconditional promises. We must fulfil conditions attached to conditional promises [1Jn3:22]. Also verbally declare these promises and make them ours. Let us first examine "Conditional Promises."

Conditional Promises – Many of God's promises are conditional. God promises to do something if man does something. God will do His part if man does his part. Sometimes a parent may give their children a conditional promise: "If you finish all the food on your plate I will give you some dessert." Likewise if we are careful to do our part God will do His part.

A command from God is something we should do: a promise from God is something God will do. A command must be obeyed; a promise must be believed. When God issues a command He says, "You Will" [Deut6:5; Mt4:7, 10] When God makes a promise He says, "I Will" [Exo6:6-8].

Men break their promises, but God never breaks His promises. A man may not keep His Word but God always keeps His Word! He is faithful, promise keeper! Are there any circumstances beyond God's control? Does He ever get sick? Is He ever surprised at bad weather? Does He ever have transport problems? Would He ever say, "I wanted to keep that promise but I couldn't because the unexpected happened?"

Unconditional Promises – When God gives an unconditional promise, there is no “If.” God says, “I Will Do Something” He does it whether man likes it or not, believes it or not. An unconditional promise means that God Will Do what He promised to do no matter what!

Jesus said, “I will come again” [Jn14:3]. If some people don’t want Him to come again, or don’t believe He will come back again, will that change that promise? Jesus is going to keep His promise no matter what!

God says, “I will never leave thee” [Heb13:5]. God will never leave the believer! That is God’s promise! What if the believer sins? Will God break His promise? No, He will be right there convicting him, dealing with his heart till things are made right!

E.g., God gave Abraham a promise. He told Abraham that His son Isaac would have children [Gen21:12; 17:19]. Then God commanded Abraham to kill his son Isaac [Gen22:2] Thus, God gave Abraham a Promise and a Command. The Promise that: Isaac would have children and the Command to kill Isaac. Now Abraham was faced with a great problem: How can a dead son have children? Yet it was important for him to obey God. So the only way God could keep His promise was to raise Isaac from the dead [Gen22:10; Heb11:19]. That is why Abraham told his servants [Gen22:5] that he and Isaac would go and worship God and come again, which meant that he would kill Isaac and God would raise him from the dead, then both of them would return. As it turned out God did not allow Abraham to kill Isaac, but provided a substitute. God allowed Abraham to prove that he believed God’s wonderful promise about his son!

Finally when we receive God’s promise for our needs by finding it in the Word of God we must claim it.

There is a promise for the job you need: “But seek ye first the Kingdom of God And His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you” [Mt6:33]. There is a promise for the guidance you are seeking: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God [Rom8:14]. Consult the Lord, not horoscopes! He will answer your “request” with “peace” – His inner green go-ahead light [Phil4:6-7].

Do you lack joy? Read Philipians. Do you lack faith? Read Hebrews. Are you suffering? Read 1 & 2Peter. Are you tempted? Read Mt4 & Lk4. Do you need encouragement? Read 2Cor. Find scriptures that spur you to pray for, and help the poor, needy, fatherless, widows [Jas1:27; Ps41:1; Mt25:35]. Are you praying for revival and renewal? [2Cor7:14; Hab3:2; Acts2:17]. Learn to live by every Word of God [Lk4:4]. Someone has said we should never pray without reading the Bible and we should never read the Bible without praying!

God's promises must be mixed with faith. God's wonderful promises do us no good unless we believe them! Consider how the children of Israel were given a promise but they did not believe it. God's Word will not profit us unless we mix it with faith [Heb4:1-2] We need to learn to claim the right promises for each and every situation in which we find ourselves,

MEMORIZE Ps91.

LESSON EIGHT

"PARABLE"

"He began to teach them many things in parables." (Mark 4:2)

A parable is generally a short story told to reveal a lesson, moral or hidden truth. It helps the listener to discover the deeper meaning of the underlying truth. Jesus used simple stories and images to convey important truths about God, his kingdom, lessons of life and so on. For example, the parable of the leaven¹ describes the simple change of dough into bread by adding yeast. Likewise, we are transformed when we allow God's Word and Spirit to be deeply rooted in our hearts. We in turn are called to be like leaven or yeast that transforms the society in which we live and work.

We must search parables more deeply to discover the divine meaning. Thereby we will also partake of his divine nature. E.g., Why would a shepherd go through so much trouble or even risk his life to find a lost sheep when ninety-nine are safely with him? This tells us a lot about God's concern for his children.

Jesus told his disciples that not everyone would be able to understand his parables.² Did Jesus mean to say that he was deliberately confusing his listeners? No. He was speaking from experience. He was aware that some who heard his parables were closed to what he was saying even refusing to understand them. They had already made up their minds not to believe. Secrets of God's kingdom will only be revealed to those who are humble, who trust in him, acknowledge their need for God and for his truth. If we approach parables of Jesus with an open mind and heart, ready to let them

¹ Mt13: 33; ² Luke 8:10;

challenge us we will be enlightened. If not, we will look but not see, listen but not hear or understand.

Very often the details are clear, but sometimes difficult to understand. For example, why would a rich man allow his dishonest steward to take care of his inventory?³ Each parable will typically present a single point. Therefore when reading parables it is important to study the main points. Next, Jesus often provoked a response to his parables. If we are humble and listen with faith we will be able to understand what Jesus is trying to tell us. Jesus used simple word-pictures, called parables, to help people understand who God is and what his kingdom and rule is like. Jesus used images and characters from everyday life to illustrate his message. His stories were liked by everyone. Jesus loved to use illustrations, word - pictures to reach the heart of his listeners through their imagination. A good picture can speak more loudly and clearly than many words. His parables are like buried treasure waiting to be discovered.⁴

How can ordinary everyday images and stories, such as hidden treasure, a tiny mustard seed, a determined woman looking for her lost coin, a barren fig tree, the pearl of great price, the uninvited wedding guests, reveal deep truths? Jesus taught by the use of comparisons.⁵

The Pharisee and the Publican⁶

What did Jesus wish to tell his hearers in the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector? Luke gives us a hint: Jesus warns us about the danger of despising others, judging who is good and who is evil. This story offended those who thought that "tax collectors" were not worthy of God's grace and favor. How could Jesus put down a "religious leader" and raise up a "public sinner"? His parable speaks about the nature of prayer and our relationship with God. It does this by contrasting two very different attitudes towards prayer.

The Pharisee represented those who took pride in their religious practices. He considered himself better than others. In his prayer he boasted of what he did and he despised others. The Pharisee tried to defend himself; which only God can do. The tax collector represented those who were despised by religious people. He humbled himself before God and begged for mercy. God heard his prayer because he was sorry for his sins. He had a repentant heart. He was seeking God with humility rather than with pride.

³ Luke 16:1-8; ⁴ Mt13: 44; ⁵ Mark 4: 30-31; ⁶ Lk18: 9-14;

Pride leads to delusion and deception. Humility helps us to see ourselves just as we are and leads us to God's grace and mercy.

God dwells with the humble who recognize their sinfulness and need of God's mercy and saving grace.⁷ God cannot hear us if we despise others. Do you humbly seek God's mercy and do you show mercy to others, especially those you find difficult to love and forgive?

PRAYER: "Lord, may your love control my thoughts and actions that I may do what pleases you. Show me where I lack love, mercy, and forgiveness towards my neighbor. Help me to be generous in giving to others what you have so generously have given me."

MEMORIZE: Isaiah 57: 15.

BCCB NINE
LESSON NINE
“POWER”

God is the source of all power. He is omnipotent, all powerful. He created the whole universe, heavens and the earth and controls all that happens there, reigning over the living and the dead, in control of everything [Heb1:3], every source of power whether solar, nuclear, chemical, magnetic, muscular, natural, supernatural or whatever. We need to recognize and know that His supernatural power is available. We must know how to use it in real issues of life. The Bible reveals His omnipotence, plan and will. Wherever God got involved in human history something supernatural took place.

No one can have power, authority unless God allows it [Lk10:19]. God is able to intervene supernaturally in any situation wherever and whenever necessary. God's Will is being done in heaven by angels, saints serving Him. Two thousand years ago when Jesus came to earth He established His spiritual kingdom but when He returns again He will literally reign and rule the earth for a thousand years with the saints of God from 'New Jerusalem' which is presently in the process of being built [Mt6:13].

⁷ Isaiah 57:15;

God has put natural sources of power on this planet earth – atomic, chemical, electrical, magnetic, solar, oil, money and so on. But it depends on how this power can be used or abused – profitably or destructively. The Bible says that the Kingdom of Heaven is spiritual. In fact it extends to the earth. A man that is spiritually reborn [born again] can discern the sources of power in the spiritual kingdom. In fact the spiritual created and creates the physical. This spiritual power is locked up in the Word of God; Praise; Blood of Jesus Christ; Name of Jesus; Holy Spirit; Prayer; Fasting; Unity; Love; Faith; Spoken Word; Thoughts; Sowing; Giving; Tongue; Gospel etc. If we know these sources we can release spiritual power locked within by following the Word of God [Jn8:32]. The truth is always hidden and mysterious. We need to seek the truths and find them by the help of the Holy Spirit, then declare them and receive the benefits. Meditating on God's Word helps to seek, find and unlock. As we continue to discover the sources of power we will grow powerful and live victorious Christian lives.

Let us examine some of these sources of power that can be released.

Word of God [1Pt2:2; Ps119:9; Rom1:16; 10:17; Heb4:12; Mk11:20; Jn14:6; Ps33:6]. In these scriptures we see the power of God's Word for conversion, healing, producing faith, creative, destructive, nourishment, cleansing and so on. We release the Word of God from our mouth by declaring in faith what it says, when we know it is His Will and when it becomes Rhema [God's specific Word spoken to us in a specific situation].

Praise [Ps22:3; 100:4].

We release the presence of God or come into His presence when we praise Him.

The Holy Spirit

Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit and to receive Him before going into the world to preach the gospel [Lk24:49]. When a person receives, is filled with the Holy Spirit, he receives power [Ats1:8], exercises the gifts [1Cor12:8-10], and becomes a bondage breaker [Isa10:27].

The Blood of Jesus Christ

It is alive with the life of God Himself [Lev17:11; Jn6:53]. It cleanses us from all sins [wrong doings] [1Jn1:7], forgives our sins [Mt26:28], and gives boldness to enter God's holy presence [1Pt1:2]. We need to plead the Blood by declaring in faith what the Word says what the Blood does [Rev12:11].

The Name of Jesus Christ

We have the 'power of attorney' to use the Name of Jesus in every situation whether it is casting out demons, healing the sick, salvation, anything [Acts4:12; Phil2:10-11; Mk16:17; Jn14:13].

Prayer

Through prayer we can commune and fellowship with God, coming right before Him seated at the throne [Mk11:24; Heb10:19]. There is more power released when two or more pray in agreement [Mt18:19; Deut32:30; Eccl 4:12]

Fasting

When we fast and pray a greater spiritual force is released. In some cases resistant demons have been cast out through fasting. People have reached spiritual heights, heard angels singing, received a greater anointing ordinations have been empowered and so on. Jesus fasted for forty days and came forth in the power of the Spirit. Moses fasted on top of Mount Sinai without food and water and received the Law [Ten Commandments]. Fasting for varied lengths of times does bring results.

We also see power in unity, love, faith, thought, the tongue, in the spiritual act of giving and in other ways too.

We read in the Bible how God mightily used His servants. Let us reflect on a few:

Elijah the miracle worker brought rain from heaven, raised a dead child, divided the river Jordan, brought fire from heaven, multiplied the little meal and oil that a widow had to last during the season of famine.

Elisha had twice the power that Elijah had, because he asked for it. He divided the Jordan River, healed the waters, supplied water, multiplied the widows oil raised the dead to life, struck Gehazi with leprosy, caused iron to float, smote the Syrians, caused mocking children to be torn by bears. Even after his death his dead bones had power to raise a dead man to life.

Peter after being filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost healed a man lame from birth, his shadow healed sick people [Acts5:15], he healed the eight year paralyzed man [Acts9:33], raised Dorcas who had died, struck Elymas the sorcerer with blindness [Acts13:11], healed a man cripple from birth [Acts14:8-10], and so on.

In Old Testament times the power of the Holy Spirit was given for a short time to selected priests, kings, prophets, judges for specific reasons. But in the New Testament times the same Holy Spirit anointing is promised to every believer [Acts1:8; 2:38-39; Mk16:17; Lk24:49; Jn14:12; Mt10:1]. Accordingly we see them doing the works of Jesus and even greater works, casting out demons, healing all kinds of sicknesses and diseases. The Holy Spirit is given to all believers to be witnesses of Jesus that they may continue His works. If Jesus needed the anointing so do we [Lk4:18; Acts10:38]. The harvest is great and the laborers are few, millions of believers are anointed with the Holy Spirit to finish the task of reaching the world with the gospel.

Every believer needs the Holy Spirit to live a victorious Christian life. What we refer as the 'anointing' is the Holy Spirit being poured upon believers to be filled and overflow. When the same Holy Spirit is given to a person in a larger measure to the degree of overflowing he is able to minister to the needs of others [Jn4:14; 7:38].. When we receive the Holy Spirit we receive God Himself with His attributes of power, wisdom, love, riches, creative ability [workmanship or special skills for the need]. Apart of the anointing of the Holy Spirit is the anointing of power that gives boldness to witness, heal the sick, cast out demons and perform miracles [Acts1:8]. When a believer receives a rich anointing of the Holy Spirit his whole body is filled with God's supernatural power. There is an anointing for the head for wisdom [James3:17]; an anointing for the heart for love [Rom5:5]; an anointing for the house for riches when we tithe and give in offerings [Mal3:10]; an anointing for healing – transmission of power from the believer to the sick person to bring healing [Mk16:18]; When there is anointing, at times even without any physical contact people fall under the power [slain in the spirit].

The power of God is manifested in many ways – dead man came to life by touching Elijah's bones; touching handkerchiefs and aprons that were earlier touched to Paul's body healed sick people; many times those who fall under the power of God go into a trance, etc. There have been emotional experiences like singing, laughing, crying, screaming, dancing, shaking, jumping, seeing light, feeling breeze and so on. There have been spiritual experiences like seeing visions, speaking in tongues, prophesying, being baptized in the Holy Spirit, getting delivered of evil spirits, being healed and so on.

Many believers pray believing and yet do not get the answer. According to Eph3:20 it may be due to insufficient power or lower degree of anointing of the Holy Spirit in them although the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in them [Rom8:11]. So as far as the anointing of power is concerned there are different degrees of anointing where at one end the person is not healed and at The other hand even the dead are raised to life. The more the Holy Spirit is allowed to take over our lives the more results we will see.

In summing up, two vital questions are often asked. How do we answer them?

Why do we need the anointing?

Because it gives us the ability to do God's Will; break every yoke of bondage [Isa10:27]; receive answers to prayer [Eph3:20]; get healed of diseases [Rom8:11]; heal the sick [Mt10:1, 8]; cast out demons [Mt10:8]; live a victorious Christian life [Lk10:19]; be a witness [Acts1:8]; preach the gospel [Mt10:7-8]; be filled with the love of God [Rom5:5]; to have divine prosperity [Mal3:10]; to do good and bless others [Acts10:38] and so on.

How do we receive the anointing? [This pre-supposes a person is born-again]

Receive a full understanding of anointing; have a hunger and thirst for it; ask for it; use it to bless others only for God's glory and not personal gain; be a partner of and co-laborer with the Holy Spirit; keep the company of anointed people; obey the Lord unconditionally; live a holy life.

LESSON TEN

“PROSPERITY”

Poverty came as a result of sin. But we are freed from the curse of sin.¹ Christ became poor that we might be rich.² Christ desires that we be prosperous. Many have failed to claim God's blessings of prosperity. Many receive their ticket to heaven through faith in Jesus Christ and think no more. But there is also a promise of abundance. If you want to be prosperous, realize that Christ already laid the groundwork.

Next, search your heart and find your true motives. Those who desire money along with fame, never touch the heart of God. He does not give lasting blessings to those who have selfish ambitions. You must have a right motive. Do you want to be prosperous in order to see to the spiritual welfare of others? Do you want to be to be a channel God can use to bring more people into his Kingdom? Then put God first in your life and let your desire be primarily to build his Kingdom.³ Remember, man's purpose is to be God's temple.⁴ Tithing brings many benefits that include protection and prosperity.⁵ You need to give your tithes to the local church you attend.⁶

Deut30: 19-20 is our scriptural basis for prosperity. “I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life that both you and your seed may live...” This promise applies to us New Testament believers because we are included in the covenant made with Abraham and his seed.⁷ We are the ones who must choose. God will not make the decision for

¹ Ga3: 13; ² 2Cor8: 9; ³ Mt6: 33; ⁴ 1Cor6: 19-20; 3: 16-17; ⁵ Mal3: 10; ⁶ Mt23: 23;

⁷ Ga3: 13; ⁸ 2Cor9: 8; ⁹ Ga3: 13-14; ¹⁰ Ps35: 27; ¹¹ Gen26: 12-14; ¹² Gen30: 30; ¹³ Gen39: 2-3; ¹⁴ Gen17: 20; ¹⁵ Exo1: 7; ¹⁶ Hosea4: 6; ¹⁷ Jos1: 8; ¹⁸ Gen39: 2-3; ¹⁹ Phil4: 19; ²⁰ Deut8: 18; ²¹ Prov28: 8; ²² Eph4: 28;

us. If we don't choose life, curses will automatically come on us. Deut 28 lists curses for disobedience and blessings for obedience. We must know that poverty is a curse and the Bible says we have been redeemed from it. The Book of Proverbs says much about wealth and riches. Solomon who wrote Proverbs was the wealthiest man who ever lived. As someone said, Jesus came to minister to the poor. Why? - To make them poor? No. The Bible says he became poor that we might become rich.⁸ He bore the curse of poverty in order to get us out of it, not leave us in it.⁹ The Bible says that God takes pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.¹⁰ We must choose the blessings and not the curse by being obedient to his Word. Prosperity is a blessing. Choose prosperity. God prospered Isaac and made him very great;¹¹ God prospered Jacob.¹² He made Joseph a prosperous man.¹³ He also blessed Ishmael and made him a great nation.¹⁴ The children of Israel prospered despite being in terrible circumstances.¹⁵

Almost every promise in the Bible is conditional. If we meet the conditions, we can lay hold of the promises of God and make them ours. If we obey the Word of God we can enjoy divine prosperity and success. When we obey the laws of God we ourselves benefit. If we disobey the reverse takes place. If we disobey the laws of electricity we have serious problems. Ignorance of these laws is not an excuse. In the same way God's people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. They are destroyed because they reject knowledge and forget the law of God.¹⁶ If we meditate on God's Word with the desire to apply it in our lives and then do so we will prosper.¹⁷ Meditation on God's Promise itself will take several steps – memorize; personalize; visualize; vocalize and finally it will be realized in our lives.

God want us to prosper. One of the problems people have with regard to divine prosperity is lack of clear understanding about it. God made Joseph prosper.¹⁸ We also know by his Word that he will meet all our needs.¹⁹ It is God who gives us the power to get wealth in order to establish his covenant.²⁰ The purpose for abundance is to preach the gospel, feed the poor, meet the needs of others.²¹ God gives us the increase so that we can increase our production of the Word. We are here for the reason of establishing his covenant. God doesn't prosper us financially only to make us comfortable with luxuries. He doesn't heal us so that we can watch immorality on television. He doesn't prosper us just to put plenty of food on our table, but more importantly to provide food for the starving.²² Prosperity enables us to meet the needs of others. If we give it will be given back to us abundantly.²³ We must be givers. We need to choose life and blessings

We must realize that divine prosperity is God's plan and will for his people. It is a life of contentment, peace and joy. It can come through holding fast to the promises of God that promise prosperity. Outwardly even though a believer may not be seen as

possessing abundance of riches or material things, yet he will not lack any good thing and he will receive whatever he needs whenever he needs them and he will be contented. Also unless we have more than enough we may not be able to bless others with our giving and the work of the gospel may also be restricted. This divine prosperity is guaranteed to all of God's children but only when we obey the scriptural conditions attached to the promises of God.

Divine prosperity includes supply of needs, fulfillment of our desires, success in life, fruitfulness, no lack, promotion, abundance, satisfaction, being able to give liberally for a good cause. It is God's plan, will, desire, promise, grace and anointing. It is only by giving that one can receive; by sowing one can reap; by emptying one can be filled; by losing one can gain. To be prosperous and enjoy God's blessings we must carefully follow his laws.

God's Kingdom is unlimited. There is no inflation. The supply is always on time with all needs supplied,²⁴ there is no lack of any good thing.²⁵ The return on investments in God's Kingdom is hundredfold with no risk at all.²⁶ In God's Kingdom we are given to enjoy richly all things. We can enjoy divine prosperity with all its rights and privileges by becoming a citizen of God's Kingdom where we serve, obey, tithe and make investments.

To understand more about divine prosperity we must meditate on the relevant scriptures.²⁷ We must also meditate on words in the Bible that are used to speak of prosperity: - success; fruitfulness; increase; abundance; plenty; multiply; exceeding; riches; wealth; possessions; abound; overflow; blessings; sufficiency; promotion; silver and gold; barns; treasure etc. God provides for his children generally in natural ways. But when supplies and provision cannot be met through natural means, he uses supernatural methods. E.g., the miracle of the multiplication of loaves and fishes;

When we become prosperous, we are contented, joyful, live in peace, have partnership with God, richly enjoy all things,²⁸ abound in every good work²⁹ and others get blessed through us. If there is one thing that hinders the ministry of men of God today, it is lack of financial resources. If a person says he is not interested in divine prosperity, it could mean that he does not want to accept responsibility; he does not want to build God's Kingdom; he does not want God's plan to be fulfilled; he does not want to be a channel of God's blessings.

²³ Lk6: 38;²⁴ Phil4: 19; ²⁵ Ps34: 10; ²⁶ Mk10: 29-30; ²⁷ Gen32: 12; 1Kings2: 3; 2Chr24: 20; Prov11: 25; Prov28: 13, 25; Jer29: 11; Job22: 21; Ps128: 2; Prov21: 21; 2Chr20: 20; 3Jn2; Ps35: 27; Ps112: 3; Deut8: 18; Prov13: 22; Ps67: 6;

Finally by giving according to biblical principles we will receive abundantly.²⁹ If we sow or invest abundantly our money for God's work we will reap abundantly.³⁰ If we sow sparingly we will reap sparingly.³¹ That is where tithe and offering play an important part in our obedience to God. The secret of receiving is giving. This is the principle of sowing and reaping. Many are interested in a great harvest but they do not sow or invest. Again some people sow one thing and expect to harvest something else. You don't sow mango seed to get banana trees. When a person is in need of money, he should sow money.

At this point it would be good to meditate on what things you are lacking in life. Sowing money is only one aspect. This is one area that God observes specially. Stinginess in giving towards the work of God's Kingdom incurs a curse and is a sin. If we give to the poor we lend unto the Lord and he will bless us. If we ignore the poor and do not help them God is also offended. However, we need to find out other areas of sowing in our daily life. For example, if we don't pray for others we sin. If we pray for others God will answer prayers even for our own selves.

Consider other areas like sowing love, forgiveness, kindness, patience, service, godly counsel in areas of sinfulness, and so on. This will bring back a harvest of the same. What we give will be multiplied back to us. On the other hand beware of giving the wrong things – hatred, unforgiveness, criticism, jealousy, anger and so on, it may come back to us pressed down, shaken together, running over.

We may also think of sowing God's Word in our own lives in areas of temptation – lust, greed, worry, fear, selfishness, weakness, sickness and so on. It will render the temptation unfruitful and we will get victory and be prosperous in those areas as well.

Let us determine to be prosperous in every area of life for it is God's will for us.

MEMORIZE: 3Jn2

LESSON ELEVEN

“PROTECTION”

It is common to see Christians coming under spiritual attack. We remain victorious, by putting on the whole armour of God and staying within God's protective covering. In this

²⁸ 1Tim6: 17; ²⁹ 2Cor9: 8; ²⁹ Mal3: 10; Lk6: 38; ³⁰ Prov11: 25; ³¹ 2Cor9: 6;

way we will not suffer spiritual or eternal loss [Eph6:10-18; Lk21:17-19]. We can go to God for protection [Ps18:2]. He is always ready to help [Ps46:1-3]. God doesn't promise a world free of danger, but He promises help when we face it [Ps91].

The Lord is our deliverer [Ps18:1-3]. But before He can be our deliverer, we must first know Him as our personal Saviour. Before we can say "I love Thee O Lord," we must know Him or realize we need Him in our life, and then we can say, "I love You Lord." In order to take refuge in "The Rock," you have to "Know the Rock." This psalm is David's praise when God delivered him from the hand of Saul. All the way from the jaws of death to Jehovah's Throne. Let us take a look at some of the insights in it.

Vs1: "I will love thee O Lord my strength." When was the last time you told Jesus you loved Him? His strength implies that He preserves us and provides for us watching over us. Jesus is our strength.

Vs2. David calls the Lord his strength, rock, fortress and deliverer. He is truly his Saviour. David then uses the words, 'shield' [protection]; 'horn' [power]; 'fortress' [place of protection and vision for life]. In the Old Testament times, when a person took hold of the horns of the altar he would be safe from his attacks. This is how we need to hold on to our God today.

Vs3. Worship is expressing "worth" to the one who is worthy. David said, "I will call upon the Lord," why? Because- "He is worthy to be praised." If we are going to be delivered from our enemies [things against the Word of God], then like David we must call upon the Name of the Lord with praise and worship.

Jesus brought us out of bondage to sin when He was crucified for us. He defeated Satan on the cross, but we have to let Him protect us from Satan and the evils of this world. Many times even after we accept we accept Him as our personal Saviour we go back into the bondage of drugs, alcohol, sex and all other things that hurt Him. When we are tempted we go back to old habits, we need to run to Jesus for protection.

God promises to prevent evil from coming near the home of the believer who has put his trust in Him and in His provision. Satan cannot touch God's saved ones unless God steps aside and specifically allows it [Ps91:9-11]. God similarly protected Job His servant [Job1:10; Prov1:33].

We live in perilous times in a dangerous world. God's all powerful protection from harm is a reassuring promise in the face of the dangers. Who wouldn't want to "live in safety...without fear of harm?" – dangerous times, violent crime, terrorism, psunamis. We must go to the Bible and listen to what God says about His protection. The write to the Hebrews states that God provides an angel as a ministering servant to all those who are saved [Heb1:14]. God's protecting angels rush to prevent one of God's saved from even a minor injury such as "dashing a foot against a stone."

God provides us protection in many ways. One of them is through His angels. Lord Jesus Christ Himself often spoke of angels. They even ministered to Him [Mk8:38; 13:32; Mt13:41; 2Tess1:7; Jn1:51; Heb12:22]. These angels are servants of our Creator who minister or serve [Heb1:13-14; Ps103:21]. The ministry and function of angels is primarily twofold: worship and service [Rev4:11; Heb1:13-14]. If the Lord were to open our eyes we would see the innumerable company of His angels surrounding us for our protection and welfare [2Kings6:15-17]. For example we see how Lot was rescued [Gen19:1-24]; Elijah was strengthened [1Kings19:5-7; 2Kings1:3, 15]; Daniel was preserved in the lion's den [Dan6:22]; The three Hebrew youth were preserved in the fiery furnace [Dan3:20-28]; Angels ministered to Christ after His temptation [Mt4:11; Lk4:10; Mk1:13; Ps91:11-12]; An angel opened the prison doors for the apostles [Acts5:19]; An angel rescued Peter [Acts12:5-11]; Each of us has a guardian angel [Mt18:10; Acts12:5-16]; We must thank God for the unseen ministry of these angels. The angel of the Lord encamps around those that fear the Lord [Ps34:7; 35:5-6].

What can secure God's protection for you?

[Ps91; 84:11; 41:1-2; 63:7-9; Prov12:21; 16:7; 18:10; Exo12:12-13].

1. "Make the Most High your dwelling...your refuge."
2. Love Him and He will rescue you
3. Acknowledge Him and He will protect you
4. Call Him and He will answer you
5. Fear Him and His angels will defend you
6. Walk blamelessly uprightly before the Lord and He will shield you
7. Please Him and your enemies will live peacefully with you
8. Call upon His Name – Jesus and you have a safety tower
9. Relationship with Jesus through His Blood protects you from the worst harm
10. Have regard for the weak then God will guard and defend you
11. Stay close to God, cling to Him

What is God's shadow of protection?

God has a plan of protection when the storms of life come against you. The Psalmist mentions protection from war, disease, calamity and so on. There is a condition however: "If you make the Most High your dwelling – even the LORD who is my refuge." [Ps91:9]. You must make the Most High your dwelling. How?

We often mistakenly expect God's protection when we are in rebellion to His Will for our lives. We cannot expect God to protect us when we do not submit to Him. Since God is light and in Him there is no darkness and He is the Father of heavenly lights who does not change like shifting shadows [1Jn1:5; Jas1:17] then what could the statement "shadow of the Almighty" imply? How could God cast a shadow? God's authority

extends past His direct Sovereign Authority to His indirect, delegated authorities in the earth [Rom13:1-2]. These delegated authorities are government; church; family; social departments established by God. They are institutions God made to protect us.

People complain, “But there are so many crooked leaders, so how could God delegate His authority to them? The truth is: all authorities are in some way imperfect some may even be dishonest. These are shadows of God’s protecting arm. God is perfect but governing institutions are not. They are shadows while God is light but they are extensions of God’s authority.

Look at the devil’s sin: he rebelled against the authority of God by declaring: “I will ascend above the top of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” [Isa14:14]. He rebelled against God’s authority.

Think of man’s first sin. The original couple – Adam & Eve ate the fruit that God commanded them not to eat. The couple disobeyed God’s command. That was their sin of disobedience. [Rom5:19].

Sin comes through disobedience. Disobedience can only exist when someone is under authority.

For example, a pastor cannot disobey his wife, children or church members because they do not have authority over him. He can disappoint them but he cannot disobey them. Of course he can disobey God’s direct authority and other authorities he is under. On the other hand they can disobey him because they are under his authority. Again as an employee your boss can disappoint you but he cannot disobey you, because you cannot give orders to him. When we really dig deep into what real sin is we conclude it is disobedience either to God or to his delegated authorities.

People make excuses for not following orders. A teenager might say: “Dad I know I am late in coming home, but I didn’t do anything wrong staying out late.” – They think that because they did not do some immoral thing like sex or drugs that they have not sinned. Little do they know that disobeying their parent’s instruction was sin. You cannot justify disobedience because you didn’t do anything wrong, instead you believed you did right. This is often why people disobey. They think they have the right to alter instructions of those in authority because they believe the leaders are wrong in their instruction. Even if they are wrong, you are wrong in disobeying their directive [except if they ask you to do something sinful]. God will deal with those leaders directly or will use other leaders over them to bring them discipline, but it is not for those in submission to disobey them. When you disobey you bring judgment on yourself. You lose the protection of Ps91. You have rejected God’s shadow.

You may complain that no one understands the terrible situation you are under – horrible husband, foolish parents, stingy angry boss or uncaring selfish pastor. But God

put them in authority over your life for a reason Satan even made Adam and Eve question God's motives. "Why doesn't God want you to be wise?" – was Satan's argument. And when they finally ate the fruit they realized they lost their covering of protection. They sewed fig leaves to cover their nakedness.

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft [1Sam15:23]. You cannot mention a worse sin than witchcraft. As someone said so aptly: You don't need to look for a woman flying on a broom ['witch'] – she may be just in church sweeping the floor. You don't need to look for a witch stirring a pot – she may be in her own kitchen cooking for her husband. A 'witch' is not just one who vanishes in thin air but could be one who promises to help the pastor but disappears from his sight. Many are depressed fearful, filled with anxiety. Demons have come and you want them to leave but they will not leave until you submit to authority.

A minister of deliverance on a national scale said these words: "Ever since God launched my ministry, I have received many calls from people asking for deliverance. They often have serious mental and emotional problems. I have learned to ask one question: "Are you submitted to a pastor?" About 80% of the people would answer, "No." Then they give their excuses:

"My pastor doesn't understand me."

"I have been asked to leave church because they say I won't obey."

"There are no pastors that drive out demons."

He says further, "They are hoping that I could drive out the demons from their lives even when they are in disobedience. I can pray a long prayer for deliverance over them but the demons will not leave until they submit to authority."

James says, "Submit yourselves then to God; Resist the devil and he will flee from you." [James4:7]. You cannot successfully resist the devil until you first submit to God. To submit is to joyfully obey God's sovereign and delegated authorities. When you do this you are under God's covering of protection.

You need to know how to plead the Blood of Jesus, what to plead it on, what to plead it against and how often to plead it to get God's maximum protection. This form of offensive prayer can be used not only to get God's protection on you before adversity strikes, but it can also be used for physical, mental, emotional healings, battling demons and battling the adversity that comes your way. Many are getting robbed, raped, assaulted, murdered, sexually and physically abused, slandered, and cheated and so on. Watch the daily news and its horrors. A number of Christians are being attacked by demons, bad and evil people, because they are ignorant of the spiritual armor, spiritual weapons and spiritual authority they have.

The Bible has already warned us that evil, lawlessness and immorality will abound in the end times. There are verses telling us that in the end times men will become .lovers of self, unholy, blasphemers, having no self control and only living life for what they can get out of it. The Bible tells us that the love of many will grow cold during these times and many people will live for whatever pleases them.

There are scriptural grounds for pleading the Blood of Jesus. There are three things contained in the Blood of Jesus – forgiveness [Mt26:28; Eph2:13; Lev17:11], deliverance and protection [Heb2:14; Col 1:13; 2:15; 1Jn3:8; Rev12:11].

What defeated Satan and all his dark powers? – Physical death of Jesus on the cross. What did Jesus do when He died that day on the crops for us? – He shed His Blood! The only thing remaining is for all Christians to fully realize this fact, and to grab a hold of this powerful truth and not to be afraid to use it when needed – especially when demons or other bad and evil people are attempting to come against them with any type of unjust action or attack.

All Christians have God’s supernatural power and anointing available to them to use when they go through the dark side of this life [Lk10:19]. We have God’s power over all the power of our enemies not just against some or part of their powers. This means we have the ability to come out completely victorious in some of life’s battles and struggles, but only if we learn how to properly use what is now available to us as it was available to the apostles [Lk9:1; Dan11:32]. If we have God’s power available to us to defeat all demons, we also have God’s power to defeat any and all humans that come against us with unjust action or attack.

“Knowing their God,” would imply that we need to spend, quality time to establish an intimate, personal relationship with the Lord. This verse says that if we do this, then God will strengthen and empower us to carry out His Will [2Chr16:9].

You can also plead the Blood of Jesus on specific things you want protected before any adversity strikes – like your body, house, car, finance, etc. So pleading the Blood is a preventive as well as offensive to the attack. In the shedding of the lamb’s blood on the Day of Atonement [Old Testament] there was a temporary covering for the sins of the Jewish people. In the New Testament Jesus shed His Blood to give all believers complete and total forgiveness for all of their sins and healing for all their illnesses.

In the Old Testament the blood of the lambs was shed for a temporary covering of sins, and used for divine protection at the “Passover.” In the New Testament we read that the Blood of Jesus was shed for permanent total forgiveness of all our sins and divine

protection as well. In order to plead the Blood of Jesus for any kind of deliverance or protection you need, fulfill two requirements – ‘Salvation and Surrender.’

You must be a saved and born-again Christian. A non believer cannot use the Blood of Jesus. In the story of the Passover, only God’s chosen people were allowed to apply the Blood of the Lamb on their doorposts to get full protection. Similarly only born-again Christian believers can use the Blood of Jesus for deliverance and protection.

You must completely surrender your spirit, soul, body and life over to God the Father. Many Christians are saved but they have not fully surrendered their lives to God the Father. As a result, God is not working with full force in their lives. The only way to get His full protection is to fully surrender to Him. The Bible tells us that God is All-powerful and there is nothing He cannot do or accomplish. Nothing is impossible with God. You have limited powers, wisdom and knowledge. But God has infinite power wisdom and knowledge to do whatever He wills. Pray this prayer right now to make full surrender to Him. Do it a couple of times in a year.

PRAYER

Father in the Name of Jesus I surrender myself to You, spirit, soul, body and life. Lead and direct me. Keep me in the center of You Will all the days of my life. Thank You Father.

There are two ways to plead the Blood for protection – One is before being attacked [Preventive] which is the best. The other is after being attacked [Deliverance].

How to plead the Blood of Jesus for Protection.

Make a personal list of everything you want God to protect

[Basics] Your spirit, soul, body, family, house, clothes, car, finance, work...

[Object] Plead the Blood on the object you want protected and against anything that could come against it.

Make a statement of faith to the Father that you believe He has protected the object.

PRAYER

Father in the Name of Jesus,

I plead the Blood of Jesus on my spirit, soul, body, family, house, clothes, car, finance...

I plead the Blood of Jesus against demons and demon motivated humans that are against me.

I plead the Blood of Jesus against accident, calamity, and sickness trying to strike at me

I declare by faith the Blood of Jesus protects me against all things I plead the Blood on

Thank You Father

Take an index card and write at the top of it the words:

“Pleading the Blood of Jesus” – On the front of the card, write down and number each item you want protected by the Blood of Jesus [including the basics]; and on the back side – the prayer given to you. You have to plead the blood at least once daily, but definitely when you sense danger.

For those who own a house with property surrounding it, you can walk around the entire property ‘Pleading the Blood of Jesus’ as you walk. What you are doing is applying the Bloodline around your property. Christian farmers have done this to protect their livestock and flock from attacks. Pleading the Blood and applying the Bloodline around your house and property can also help protect you from earthquakes psunamis, calamities and so on.

Another area in which you can plead the Blood on is whenever you are getting ready to get on a train or plane to go out of town. Simply Plead the Blood on the train or plane either right before you get ready to board it or do it the night before.

Next, how do we plead the Blood for deliverance of those already attacked? – It may be sickness, addiction, depression, demonic attack – The persons may not be saved and you may have to get them saved before God can move in to deliver them. Or they may be saved yet are not walking in full surrender to the Lord. You may have to get that person to make a full surrender before God helps him out.

The Bible tells us that all Christians carry the full power of God on the inside of them through the person of the Holy Spirit. The Bible tells us that we are all soldiers of Jesus Christ. If God is telling us that we are all soldiers of His Son Jesus Christ then this means we have all God’s power at our disposal in which to engage and defeat any enemy that may try and come against us.

You need the help of the Holy Spirit in spiritual warfare. Use the spiritual weapons God has given you by declaring with your mouth what God’s Word says about them. Some of the excellent spiritual weapons to be used are the Name of Jesus, the Word of God, the Blood of Jesus, and praise. Keep the spiritual armor on you. At this point please refer to my book ‘Prayer Mantle.’

Be sure to repent of your sins, confess them and forsake them. It would do you well if you meditate on the following scriptures so that they are lodged in your heart and come forth when needed.

Exo14:13-14; 17:15; Deut33:27; 1Chr16:22; 1Sam17:47; Job22:25;
Ps8:2; 27:1; 28:1; 32:7; 34:7; 46:1; 91; 107:2; 121:7; Prov18:10;

Isa10:27; 41:10, 13; 54:17; 59:19. Hosea 4:6; Joel2:32; 3:10; Mt18:18; Mk16:17; LK10:19; Jn8:32, 36; Rom1:16; 8:31, 37; 10:13; 2Cor2:14; 2Cor12:10; Eph1:19-22; Eph6:10, 12; Col 1:12-13; 2:15; 2Tim1:7; 4:18; James4:7; 1Pt5:8-9; 1Jn3:8; 1Jn4:4, 18; Rev1:18; Rev12:11.

MEMORIZE Ps91:1

LESSON TWELVE

“PRAYER”

Many of us are disappointed with God because He has not answered our prayer, and half the time we have not even prayed. Some of us are hurt because people we helped the most are not available when we need them. Perhaps you have been calling the wrong person. God said, "Call unto me and I will answer." ¹ God says that if you call on Him, He will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

We look at prayer only as a means of getting things for ourselves. Yes, there is a time for asking for our own needs. But he says "Seek ye first the Kingdom..." ² Most people pray according to their own desire, asking God to fall in line with what personally satisfies them, instead of doing the reverse. Prayer is actually interrupting our own personal goals and ambitions, telling God; we are submitting ourselves to his plans and purposes, which will satisfy him. It is not what is on our agenda but what is on his agenda. Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will be Done.³ It is when we seek first his kingdom & his will that we begin to realize what it is to actually talk with God. He wants us to commune with him so that his character and nature can flow through us. The bible says, we get what we ask in his name, it. So we think, let us get what we want by asking in his name whether it is his will or not. No, that's not so.

The bible says that because we are born again his love nature is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. [Rom5: 5] Jesus promised only to be at prayer meetings where two or three are gathered together in his name meaning in his nature. The only reason we can talk with God is because of the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus Christ. His blood bought and empowered you. When you pray, you don't put on an act, just talk with Him.

¹ Jer33: 3; ² Mt6: 33; ³ Mt6: 10;

We like him to be our Saviour, Deliverer, Healer, Provider. So that we can run to him when we need salvation, deliverance, healing, provision. But do we acknowledge him as our Master? Do we base our prayer merely on our needs, forgetting who paid the price for it? When you pray, God does not respond not so much because you are hurting or sorrowful, but more importantly because his Son went through the agony, pain, crucifixion, death and burial, and that he raised him up. When you pray in his name because you belong to him, submit your agenda to his, next pray for your needs. Put God and his Word first in your life, then your needs.

A successful prayer life is something many Christians struggle with. One of the big reasons is because of wrong teaching they have received about it. Before Jesus taught what prayer was, he taught what prayer was not. He made the startling statement that hypocrites love to pray.⁴ There are right and wrong ways of praying. Prayer serves many purposes, but the number one purpose of prayer is communion with God. We spend much time in prayer, repenting, confessing our sins praying for needs, interceding, [which we ought to] but very little time communing with God.

Wrong praying gets wrong results. There needs to be a change in the kind of praying. Jesus taught us about prayer in Matthew 6. But before He taught what prayer is, he taught what prayer is not. He tells us that hypocrites love to pray. It is still true today. If the attitudes of the heart are wrong prayer itself could turn carnal or devilish. Prayer is a powerful weapon, like any other, there is a right and wrong way to use it. Just like we can't give a gun to a child and trust he will always use it correctly in the same way we can't tell people to pray without proper instruction.

In Jesus' day, the Pharisees prayed daily in synagogues and street corners. They actually hired people to blow trumpets before them to call people's attention to their prayers. Jesus said the reason they did that was to get recognition from others. That was all the reward they got. God doesn't hear or answer prayers that are made for show. This does not mean that we should not pray publicly. Jesus himself did so. It means our prayers should always be sincere and personally directed to the Lord, not to those around us.⁵

Religion preaches that long prayers are the best. But Jesus said the opposite, that long prayers were of no value to the Lord.⁶ He does not need to be informed about our problems. God knows our needs better than we do. People often rehearse all the bad news of their situation to him as if he needed to know. This depresses us and hinders our faith.

Many are taught to intercede by pleading with God like Abraham and Moses did.⁷ Moses was a mediator between God and man in his prayer.⁸ A "Mediator" acts as an

⁴ Mt6: 5; ⁵ Mt6: 6;

intermediary, especially to seek to resolve differences between two or more conflicting parties. Moses stood between a holy God and unholy mankind to plead for God's mercies. But that was under the Old Covenant. The good news is that Jesus is the only Mediator under the New Covenant. The ministry of Jesus forever changed the nature of prayer.⁹ All those who keep mediators between God and man, trying to replace Jesus as the ONLY Mediator are anti-Christ.

In the case of the parable¹⁰ of the man who pleaded with his friend to give him some food for a guest, Jesus is not being compared [it is a contrast] to the friend who didn't want to supply this man's need and had to be pestered till he gave in. Just the opposite! Jesus says in the next verse: "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."¹¹ Can we imagine a friend like the one in the parable treating us rudely, denying us a genuine need, and giving it to us eventually to get rid of us? God is so infinitely more loving than that—just ask and receive.

Again can we imagine an earthly father giving his son a rock for a piece of bread or a serpent in place of a fish or a scorpion for an egg? If we would treat our children better than this, how much more will our heavenly Father give us things we need? Jesus is showing us from human compassion that our heavenly Father is much better than we could ever expect men to be.¹² And we don't have to plead with God our Father he has already supplied all our needs through Christ. It's a matter of receiving what is already ours, not pleading for things that are not yet given.

The purpose of prayer is first of all to commune with God in love and thanksgiving. This should normally take the major part of our prayer time. Scriptures do teach that it is proper to ask and receive but that should occupy a smaller part of our prayers. Adam and Eve communed with the Lord.¹³ They didn't have sins to confess nor clothes, houses, cars, or needs to "believe for." There were no demons to cast out, strongholds to tear down, people to intercede for. Yet, they communed with the Lord in prayer. To many people if they subtracted all their requests, intercessions, and spiritual warfare from their prayers, they would no time left to commune with God. That is wrong! The Lord does want to supply our needs. It is proper to pray for others, and ourselves but we need to keep the main thing the main thing. The heart of prayer is simply, loving God and worshiping him. How would you feel if your children only came to you to get what they wanted? You would want to bless them, but you would want relationship and fellowship with them most of all. God is the same way. If we would seek first a loving relationship with the Lord, everything else would work better.

Yes there must be some time allotted for repentance, confessing sins, petitioning, interceding and spiritual warfare, but not all the time. We should fill much of our time in

⁶ Mt6: 7-8; ⁷ Gen18: 23-33; Num16: 44-50; ⁸ Gal 3:19; ⁹ 1Tim2: 5; ¹⁰ Lk11: 5-9; ¹¹ Mt7: 7; ¹² Lk11: 11-13; ¹³ Gen. 3:8;

thanking, praise & worship. In the presence of the Lord there is fullness of joy.¹⁴ Depression, worry, and fear would leave if we just stayed in the presence of the Lord. If we would put loving God first, all our physical needs would be granted to us so that we would have no anxiety about them.¹⁵

Prayer is a powerful weapon. But, there is a right and a wrong way to pray. Just like any other powerful weapon, without the proper instruction, it may be useless or someone could get hurt. *Wrong prayer is not only ineffective, it can release the power of the devil.*

There is a right way to pray for our nation. The war between God and man is over. That's what the angels proclaimed at the birth of Jesus.¹⁶ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. These angels were not saying that from then on, peace would reign on earth and wars between people would cease. That hasn't happened. They were proclaiming the end of the war between God and man. The war between man and man is not over. Jesus, by his precious blood paid a price infinitely greater than the sins of the whole human race. God loves not only the church, but also the whole world. He's already paid for their sins.¹⁷ In the Old Testament, God punished individuals and entire nations. But in the New Testament, his judgment was poured out on Jesus. Now, God's mercy and grace are ours. Through His mercy, we avoid getting bad things we deserve, and through His grace, we receive good things we don't deserve. Jesus has made all that God is and has, available to us, and it is through faith that we access that grace¹⁸

So to make intercession to an angry God, asking Him to turn his anger away from this sinful world is the wrong way to pray. They did this in the Old Testament where it was necessary. But there is a major difference between the Old and New Testaments. Jesus made this difference. Jesus forever changed the way to approach God and his favor.

When Moses pleaded with God for the nation of Israel who had committed idolatry, even though God was angry and wanted to destroy them, he repented according to Moses request.¹⁹ Now many in our days have adopted this pattern of prayer that does not seem the right way to pray. In those days it was right for Moses to act as a mediator²⁰ to intercede for his nation, pleading with God who wanted to destroy this nation to turn from his wrath. And God repented. This is because Jesus had not yet come, and the atonement for man's sins had not yet been made. God and man were not reconciled. But now, because of Jesus, God is reconciled [brought into friendship] to man. All that is left is for man is to be reconciled to God, and that should be our message.²¹ To approach God as an adversary who is ready to destroy us is to approach God without Jesus. It doesn't honor Jesus the mediator.²² When Jesus became our Mediator, He put all other mediators out of business. We need to pray in the New Testament way.

¹⁴ Ps16: 11; ¹⁵ Mt6: 25-33; ¹⁶ Luke 2:14; ¹⁷ 1 Jn 2:2; ¹⁸ Rom. 5:2; ¹⁹ Exo32: 12; ²⁰ Ga3: 19;;

How should we believers intercede for our nation? - By praising God for what he already accomplished through Jesus. Then taking our place in what Christ already did, using our authority as believers to speak God's blessing on our nation instead of cursing it. There is tremendous authority given to us if we will use it, and awesome power in our blessing.

That doesn't mean that a country is safe from the consequences of continuing in its evil sinful path. God won't judge it; He has already judged Jesus on its behalf. But the farther it walks away from the Lord, and his plans and purposes the farther it will get away from his protection and blessings. Without a change of heart and direction they will forsake their own mercies²³ and reap death instead of life.²⁴ You need to honor Jesus by approaching a loving God who has already made every provision for the revival this nation so desperately needs. Speak words of faith that release the goodness Jesus has so graciously provided. Then, do your part sharing this good news with others.

Many are praying for a move of God, but you need to pray for a move of God's people. God has already done His part. It's up to us to take this good news to the world. God isn't mad anymore. God loves us. "Glory to God in the highest and, on earth," Once you have received Jesus as your personal Saviour and continue to proclaim him as your Lord, you need to pray with victory in line with God's Word.²⁵ As you abide in the Lord and his Word abides in you, you can ask whatever you will and it will be given to you.²⁶ Know that God answers prayer. Check your motives and attitudes in prayer.

You can pray privately²⁷ and collectively²⁸ but always be in line with his Word. You need to pray to the Father, in the name of Jesus and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.²⁹ You need to pray systematically with persistence, understanding, in the spirit with praise, thanksgiving and worship. Please read my book 'Prayer Mantle' that deals more about it.

If you have a specific problem, do a Bible word search, or get a concordance and do a search for every verse in the Bible that relates to that specific problem. Then meditate and examine each of those verses. Read and discuss each verse with God and ask him to do for you, what he has done for others with similar problems. For example if you have a health problem, look up all the verses that relate to the healing of sickness.³⁰ When trials and tribulations come your way you are tempted to worry and be fearful. Worry and anxiety does not bring clarity. It simply paralyzes us, clouds our minds and prevent us from seeing God's solution. But you can prevent mental distress from coming into your life, if you look to Jesus Christ the very moment you enter a difficult time enter. If you can immediately concentrate on the Son of God and not on the problem, then

²¹ 2 Cor.5:19-20; ²² 1Tim2: 5²³ ²⁴ Rom.6:16; ²⁵ 1Jn5: 14-15; ²⁶ Jn15: 7; ²⁷ Mt6: 6; ²⁸ 1Tim2: 8; ²⁹ Jn16: 23-24;; ³⁰ Exo15: 26; 23; 25; Deut7: 15; Jer30: 17; 33: 6; Ps103; 1-3; Ps107: 20; Isa53: 3-5; Mt9: 35; 10: 1;

worry and fear will never be able to gain a foothold. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous. But the Lord delivers them out of them all"³¹

Prayer changes us, not God. Through prayer God gives us courage and peace to trust in him, over matters beyond our control. One of the hardest things to believe is that God is intimately involved in our lives when everything is going wrong in our life. But what prayer does is transform doubt into trust.

³¹ Psalm 34:19